

PRESS RELEASE

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Favourite Christmas Houseplant 2020: Paper Whites

In a year when no one knows whether Christmas is cancelled or not, we've had some virtual help selecting the favourite Christmas houseplant. The verdict gave the top spot to Paper Whites (*Narcissi papyraceus*).

These stately spring bulb flowers were mostly chosen for their 'divine fragrance' mentioned by all of the judges who voted for them.

This year's short list focused on a selection of white or red flowering plants for use indoors. Even though some of them traditionally fair better outdoors, they can make an interesting addition to indoor spaces during the festive season.

The short list

Our illustrious panel of judges, Lisa Wilkinson of Pro Landscaper, Matthew Appleby of Horticulture Week, Claudia de Yong, award winning garden designer, Rona Wheeldon of Flowerona, podcaster Jane Perrone and Michael Perry aka Mr Plant Geek, were asked to consider these six beauties:

- White Poinsettia
- Paper whites
- Red or white Phalaenopsis orchids
- Christmas rose (*Hellebore niger*)
- Red Anthurium
- Winter Cherry (*Solanum pseudocapsicum*)

Paper Whites had a total of five votes to Poinsettia and Christmas rose tying in second place and receiving four votes each. So it was a pretty close competition.

"For me it's all about the scent ... nothing can beat it! Plus it's so lovely to bring the outside inside by having a pot of *Narcissi* indoors adding fragrance to a room in the depth of winter." Was the top choice for Rona Wheeldon.

Claudia de Yong also put Paper Whites at the top of her list, "With most people now working from home, I choose Paper Whites because their clusters of fragrant blooms will make the whole room smell wonderful and they can be used in a variety of different arrangements either planted up as bulbs in soil with hazel twigs or simply in glass containers full of pebbles and water, with no compost."



Michael Perry aka Mr Plant Geek said that Paper Whites are 'a gift that keeps growing, the evolution of bulbs will be a joy to any age. Plus, that fragrance is divine.

He added, "The Christmas rose is somewhat less orthodox, it'll need a cool room, but the crystal white blooms will stand out in your Christmas display!"

"Paperwhites are the ultimate classy Christmas living arrangement, with a beautiful scent too." Was the comment from Jane Perrone from On the Ledge podcast.

Matt Appleby at Horticulture Week commented that "Poinsettia are good value, readily available, different to the mass of foliage houseplants that are everywhere, and provide a spectacular centrepiece at Christmas, with white being a more unusual than the more common red."

Another important industry voice, Lisa Wilkinson of Pro Landscaper, loved Hellebore which she described as "a beautiful flower for indoors and outside (which) always reminds me of winter and Christmas."

She also commented that Poinsettia, whatever the colour, is a sure sign that Christmas is around the corner.

We hope these choices inspire you to try some different houseplants for Christmas this year.

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