



Cleopatra Camellia *Camellia sasanqua 'Cleopatra'*

03-20



<u>Hardiness</u>	<u>Exposure</u>	<u>Soil</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Height</u>
Zones 4-9, 12, 14-24	Best out of strong sun	Acidic fertilized soil	Moderate to regular watering	Rose pink semi doubled, with narrow curving petals, lightly fragrant	Ranges from 1 ½ feet tall to 12 feet tall

There's nothing matronly about Cleopatra. The lacy rose-pink sasanquas, a cousin of the camellia, has an earlier bloom season and does well in sunnier locations.

But any plant can appear unimaginative if unhealthy, ill-sited or repeatedly subjected to the gardener's pruning whims. When you consider its host of good qualities, camellias really are complex, with blooms in many forms that are at home in either sunny or shady spaces. They possess glossy foliage, blooms that appear in the plant's dormant season and forms that generally look better if you DON'T prune them. How many plants do you know that can deliver all that?

One of the best things about planting classics is that while they'll sometimes be overshadowed by newer, sexier plant choices they'll always come back in style.

Fortunately that time is now and there are plenty of styles to choose from.

The standard is a large, heavy-looking plant with dark green stiff leaves and thick flowers. The mature plant can resemble a small tree, as a stroll through Descanso Gardens in La Canada will quickly prove. Sasanquas are the new kid on the block, a smaller, wilder cousin of the camellia with an earlier bloom season (October/November), a smaller flower, a taste for more sun, and a more relaxed form.