

protea

Fascinating to consumers because of their form, texture and colors, these exotic flowers can set your shop apart from the competition.

name game Botanically named *Protea* (PRO-tee-uh, pro-TEE-uh), these distinctive blossoms are commonly known overall as sugarbushes due to the amount of nectar they produce (some species more than others). Each species has a different common name, including king (*P. cynaroides*), queen (*P. magnifica*), duchess or rose spoon (*P. eximia*), princess (*P. grandiceps*), prince (*P. compacta*) and jester (*P. obtusifolia*) while some are referred to commonly by their variety names, such as 'Pink Mink' (*P. neriifolia*), 'Pink Ice' (*P. hybrid*) and 'Holiday Red' (*P. obtusifolia*, a.k.a. jester). (See the photo glossary on Page 20.)

physical examination Although they vary in size and shape by species, *Proteas* have relatively large blooms (4 to 6 inches long or 4 to 12 inches in diameter). Flower heads are either dome shaped or cone shaped and are surrounded by stiff colored bracts ("petals"), which are often feathery or velvety in texture, giving the flowers a crownlike or cuplike form. Stems are woody, with leathery leaves.

color schemes Color varies by species and cultivar, and bract ("petal") hues include red, burgundy, pink, rose, green, cream and white, often with fringing black, white and silvery edges. Centers are most often white, pink or burgundy, sometimes with black "hairs."

always available *Proteas* are available year-round, but periods of availability vary by species. Much of the U.S. supply comes from domestic growers, primarily from California and Hawaii, and also from foreign sources, including Australia.

on arrival Unpack *Proteas* immediately, and check quality. Remove from the stems any foliage that would be under water in storage containers. You also can clip off upper leaves that cover the colored bracts to reveal more of these exotic flowers' beauty.

food and drink Recut the stems at an angle with a sharp blade, removing at least 1 inch of stem. Immediately place stems into storage containers partially filled with properly proportioned flower-food solution (see "Leaf Blackening"). Change the flower-food solution and recut stems every day or every other day.

cold care Immediately after processing, place *Proteas* into a lighted floral cooler at 33 F to 36 F (these flowers are *not* tropicals), and allow them to hydrate for at least two hours before using or selling them.

leaf blackening Black spots on leaves, a common malady, is due to low carbohydrate levels, so it is important to use properly proportioned flower food solution (one with glucose rather than



Protea hybrid 'Trish Compacta'
Photo: Rainbow Protea

sucrose) and to provide light during storage for these flowers.

not an issue These botanicals' sensitivity to ethylene gas is low; however, always take precautions to reduce levels of the harmful gas in your cooler(s) and throughout your shop.

facts of life Vase life at the consumer level can range from 10 to 20 days. Longevity varies by species and cultivar, care and environmental conditions, and maturity at the time of sale.

life goes on Most species and varieties of *Proteas* will air-dry nicely either standing upright in a container or hanging upside down in a cool, dry, airy, dark room.

family matters *Proteas* are members of the *Proteaceae* family. Relatives include *Banksia*, *Leucospermum* (pin-cushion), *Leucadendron* (cone-bush), *Telopea* (waratah), *Grevillea* (spider flower, silky oak) and *Dryandra*.

home sweet home *Proteas* are native to South Africa, where the king protea is the national flower.

what's in a name The genus *Protea* was named after Proteus, Greek god of the sea, who had the power to assume different shapes, alluding to the diversity of forms within this genus.

(SEE VARIETY GLOSSARY ON PAGE 20)



King protea (also King sugarbush, Giant protea)
Protea cynaroides
'East Cape'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



King protea (also King sugarbush, Giant protea)
Protea cynaroides, white
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Queen protea (also Bearded protea, Woolly-headed protea, Giant woolly beard)
Protea magnifica
California Cut Flower Commission



Princess protea (also Peach protea, Red sugarbush)
Protea grandiceps 'Amore'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Duchess protea, Rose-spoon protea (also Ray-flowered protea, Spoon-bract sugarbush)
Protea eximia
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Jester protea (also Limestone sugarbush)
Protea obtusifolia
'Holiday Red'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Jester protea (also Limestone sugarbush)
Protea obtusifolia, white
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



"Mink" protea (also Oleander-leaved protea, Narrow-leaf sugarbush)
Protea nerifolia 'Pink Mink'
California Cut Flower Commission



"Mink" protea (also Oleander-leaved protea, Narrow-leaf sugarbush)
Protea nerifolia 'Niobe'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



"Mink" protea (also Oleander-leaved protea, Narrow-leaf sugarbush)
Protea nerifolia 'Red Robe'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



"Mink" protea (also Oleander-leaved protea, Narrow-leaf sugarbush)
Protea nerifolia
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Sugarbush (also Honey protea, Common sugarbush, Cape sugarbush)
Protea repens 'Helen Pink'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Laurel protea (also Grey-leaf sugarbush)
Protea laurifolia 'Pink Owl'
Rainbow Protea



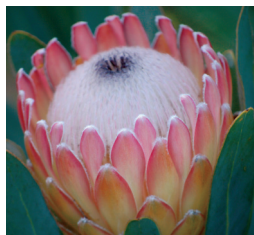
Laurel protea (also Grey-leaf sugarbush)
Protea laurifolia 'White Owl'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Wagon tree (also Waboom)
Protea nitida
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Queen protea hybrid 'Margo' / 'Margot'
Rainbow Protea



Queen protea hybrid 'Susara'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Shuttlecock protea (also Shuttlecock sugarbush)
Protea hybrid 'Ivy'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Protea hybrid 'Andrea'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Protea hybrid 'Brenda'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



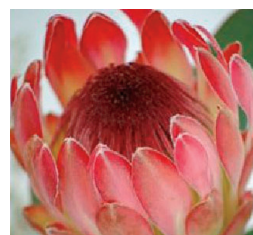
Protea hybrid 'Pink Duke'
Rainbow Protea



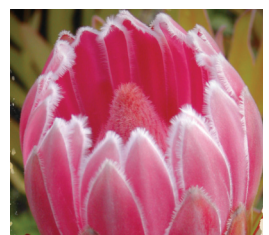
Protea hybrid 'Pink Ice' (also 'Silvan Pink', 'Camelot')
California Cut Flower Commission



Protea hybrid 'Red Baron'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Protea hybrid 'Sylvia'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers



Protea hybrid 'Trish Compacta'
Resendiz Brothers Protea Growers