**Description**

‘Andromeda’ grows up to 1.5 metres tall, with bright red/orange flowering bracts, flowering all year round. The flowers make beautiful cut flowers which can last up to 3-4 weeks in water and will stay fresh on the stem even longer. Best when planted in large groups.

They can be grown in containers and kept indoors in bright light, although more sun is best for flowering.

‘Andromeda’ is one of the most cold tolerant Heliconias.

**At a glance:**

- **Suitable for Zones:** 9 - 12 (see the Zone Hardiness map page in my eBay store) – root hardy down to Zone 8 if rhizome is protected from freezing
- **Sun requirements:** Full Sun to part shade (up to 50% shade)
- **Flowering times:** All year round except perhaps mid winter.
- **Moisture requirements:** Moderate to high
- **Size when fully grown:** 1-1.5 metres - will grow taller in the shade
- **Reasonably frost tolerant**

**Cultivation**

Heliconias are adapted to full or part sun. Height will tend to increase if the plant is subjected to shade.

Heliconias have simple requirements: fertile well drained soil, warm humid temperatures and adequate water. They do not like frosts.

All of the eastern coast of Queensland, northern stretches of New South Wales, and most areas of humid Northern Territory and Western Australia are perfect for heliconia growing. They will grow in other areas if you can provide the right microclimate and you select the right cultivars (ie some are ultra tropical and just won’t grow in the southern states).

Heavy mulching is recommended to protect the soil from drying out, and to enhance the soil organic matter. In areas where rainfall is low, additional irrigation is important.

Diseases are rare but wet feet, especially in winter, can rot the root system.

**Planting instructions**

**Please plant as soon as possible after you receive the rhizome.**

The rhizome should still have growing ‘buds’ or new shoots as well as the leaf stem.

The rhizome should be planted with the top (leaf stem/new shoots/buds pointing upwards) no more than 3-4 cm under the soil. New shoots or larger buds should be above the soil. You can often look at the rhizome and see where the soil line had been while it was growing.

**It is very important not to plant the rhizome too deep,** as this will invite fungi and cause root rot. Freshly planted rhizomes need oxygen to grow new roots and will die if the planting medium is too dense or too wet.

After planting, water thoroughly, then do not water again until soil is getting dry. Keep evenly moist, but not wet, when shoots to grow and leaves start to unfold.

If planted in pots, these should be of sufficient size - at least 10 to 15 cm wider than rhizome size. Keep the pots in a warm, sunny place. When leaves start to unfold the plants can be planted out - again in well drained soil.

A slow release fertilizer is ideal in the beginning. Larger and already established plants require more fertilizing and more water.