

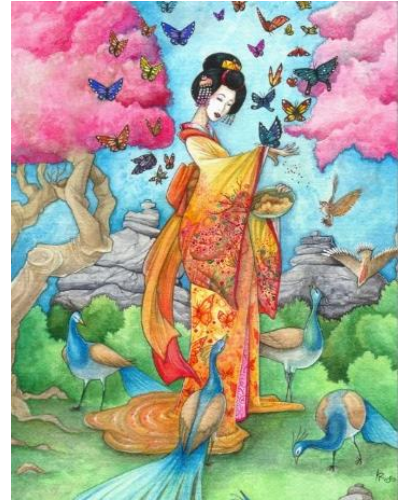
Memoirs of a Geisha Chive

Prepared by Kitty Courtney, Master Gardener Class of 2015

With the perfect taste of garlic, 'Geisha' is a beauty in the garden and for the palate. After a season's worth of culinary uses, including salads, soups, stir-fries, and compound butters, this perennial dances into blooms of star-shaped white flowers that butterflies find irresistible.

The Geisha Chive, a AAS award winner, is a variety of garlic chive. Garlic chives are also referred to as Chinese chives first recorded in China between 4,000-5,000 years ago. Like all garlic chives, Geisha is a perennial and can be enjoyed for many seasons. It is easy to differentiate between onion chives and garlic chives. Garlic chives have a flat, grass-like leaf, not a hollow one as do onion chives

The Geisha Chive is the first new variety of garlic chives to appear in quite a long time. A member of the Allium family, Geisha is aromatic as well as easy and quick to grow in full sun. It's great for containers, makes the perfect edging for the border because it keeps pests away from the more delicate flowering plants within, and is a stand-alone beauty all by itself as well as in large plantings.



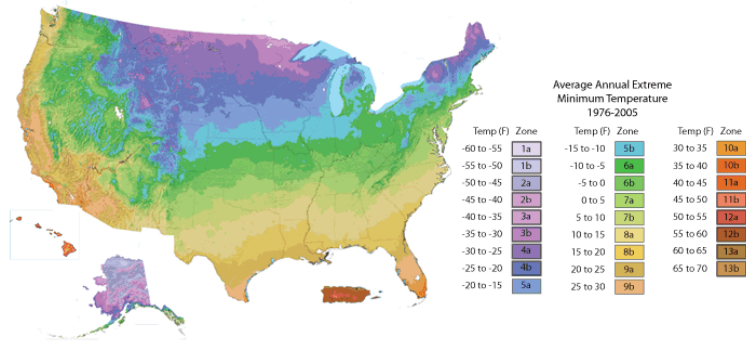
Plant Details

Genus	Allium
Species	tuberosum
Variety	Geisha
Planting Zone	3 – 9
Bloom Start to End	Late Summer
Days to Maturity	75
Fruit Color	Green
Habit	Upright
Plant Height	12 in - 15 in
Plant Width	8 in - 10 in
Additional Characteristics	Award Winner, Bloom First Year, Butterfly Lovers, Cut-and-Come-Again, Direct Sow, Easy Care Plants, Edible, Flower, Fragrance, Herbs, Indoor Growing, Pest Fighter, Season Extenders
Bloom Color	Light Lavender, White
Foliage Color	Medium Green
Harvest Season	Early Summer, Late Spring, Late Summer, Mid Summer
Light Requirements	Full Sun, Part Shade
Moisture Requirements	Moist, well-drained
Resistance	Disease Resistant, Heat Tolerant, Humidity Tolerant, Pest Resistant
Soil Tolerance	Normal, loamy
Uses	Beds, Border, Containers, Cuisine, Foliage Interest, Ornamental, Outdoor

Direct-sow the seeds anytime from spring through summer, placing several seeds together in the planting hole. The slender green shoots will appear within a few weeks.

Hawaii Planting Trials

Geisha chive seeds were planted at the Urban Garden Center in Pearl City on Feb 20 and kept in the shaded seedling nursery. Sprouts emerged between March 6 and 13. Half of the seedlings were outplanted on April 10. A glitch in the automatic watering system resulted in the death of all the outplanted seedlings. A second outplanting was accomplished on April 24 in two different planting zones, Pearl City (planting zone 12a) and Lanikai, and Niu Valley (both planting zone 12b). You can look up your planting zone by zip code on the Park Seed Company website (<http://parkseed.com/usda-zone-map/>). Planting zones 12a and 12b are characterized by the average annual extreme minimum temperature range of 50 – 55 and 55 – 60 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively. Seeds were sowed on February 20 with sprouts emerging approximately three weeks later. Overall, plant growth was weak in all locations. Very little change in growth occurred between March and May with plants maintaining only a few leaves. As the preferred planting zones are 3 to 9, much cooler than Hawaii, planting this variety at higher elevations might support a more rigorous growth or planting it in the shade of a tree could also boost growth. Another variety of garlic chive, planted under my lemon tree, has growth well for over 3 years.



Geisha Chive in Pearl City,
May 15



Geisha Chive in Niu Valley,
May 15



Geisha Chive in
Lanikai, May 15

References

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