

# Edible Flowers

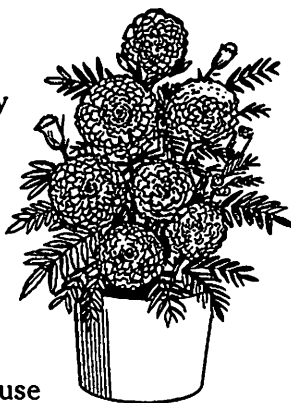
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## **Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus*)**

The unique flower of the snapdragon spike is a very familiar sight in most gardens. The flowers cover the color range from soft, pastel yellows and pinks to warm red, burgundy and bronze. They flower abundantly from May to frost. The plants come in a variety of sizes and are used for everything from edging borders to tall cutting flowers in the back of a bed. Snapdragons self-sow, yet are rarely intrusive. To maintain well-developed, free-flowering plants, be sure to pinch the plants. Plant snapdragons six to twelve inches apart, depending on the final plant height. Snapdragons like rich, well-drained soil that is high in organic matter. Soil pH should be neutral to slightly alkaline. Plant in full sun. Snapdragons are fairly heat tolerant.

## **Marigold (*Tagetes spp.*)**

One of the most easily recognized of all garden flowers is the marigold. Today we can find single or double flowers in colors including yellow, gold, oranges and bicolors with red or brown stripes. There are several types of marigolds, ranging in size from a few inches tall to three feet. The flowers may be as small as one inch across to as large as five or six inches. Marigolds need adequate water, but watch it, because they will rot easily in a soggy soil. They don't need pampering and, in fact, will do better if they receive only a minimum of attention. Marigolds will also reseed, but if you have started with hybrid plants, don't count on the new plants to be like your originals. Depending on the final size of the plant, marigolds should be planted six to eighteen inches apart. Marigolds are tolerant of dry soils but prefer moist, well-drained loamy soils. Sunny locations are best. However, heat may cause the plants to stall or slow growth and flowering.



## **Nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus*)**

Give nasturtiums the coolest spot in your garden. They are native to the high elevations of the Andes Mountains and do

their best in locations that are cool with high humidity. Nasturtiums come in forms all the way from compact, great for containers, to the trailing types that do well on a trellis. They need support to climb, since they don't have any means of holding on by themselves. Be careful not to give nasturtiums too much nitrogen. This will cause the plants to produce all leaves, which are beautiful and great in salads, and no flowers. Nasturtiums will grow well in poor soil, but they do need to be kept moist but not overwatered. There are a variety of colors available, so for the most interesting and vivid color, be sure to select a named variety. Nasturtium should be planted eight to twelve inches apart in well-drained soil. As mentioned, too much fertility will reduce flower numbers.



### **Pansy (*Viola x Wittrockiana*)**



Pansies provide brilliant color to a garden. They are often used as a border plant and can be used alone to provide an interesting bed. Pansies, like the wild violets they have been developed from, are actually perennials but are treated as annuals. They are not heat tolerant, although in recent years, new varieties have been introduced that last longer in the summer. To get the most out of your pansies, plant them early in a cool location in your garden. Even with this, you may want to plan on replacing the pansies with a more heat tolerant annual later in the season. Plant pansies four to six inches apart in a sunny spot.

### **California Poppy (*Eschscholzie californica*)**

The California poppy is at its best in dry, well-drained locations. It is an informal flower that will reseed itself freely. It is a wonderful plant for naturalizing areas, if you remember that the plants that reseed themselves will not be just like the parent plant but will revert to the yellow and orange of the nonhybrids. Seed should be sown in the early spring. Make sure that California poppies have plenty of water for germination. Poppies prefer sandy locations with alkaline, well-drained soil. They are tolerant of poor and dry soils. If starting with transplants, plant six to eight inches apart in a full sun location for best results. However, they will tolerate partial shade.