

Hydrangeas - "antique" flowers

Glyn Church

Hydrangeas do a fascinating thing in the autumn, the flowers change colour. Sometimes this can be quite dramatic. For instance, white heads can turn to soft pale green or a hot red. If the plant is in the shade the colours tend to be more muted whereas in full sun they are more vibrant. Blue mophead flowers often take on a rather metallic blue-grey shade but these too can turn a splendid red-wine colour. In some cases the sepals, those big petal-like things, will turn turtle and as they do they change colour.

Hydrangeas are remarkable flowers because most of the so-called flowers are sterile. This is why they last all summer and beyond. Most flowers open, get pollinated by bees or insects and then fade away as their energy is put into making seeds. In the case of the sterile Hydrangeas, there is no pollination, so the flowers go on, and on, and on.

When the blooms take on the autumn shades they can be cut for indoor flower decoration. The professional flower growers call them "antique" flowers because of their "olde worlde" look. If you have Hydrangeas at home, simply cut a few heads with good long stems and place them in water for a week. At the end of the week, throw the water away and you'll have a wonderful dried flower to last all winter. It will fade a little during the winter months but can look good for up to a year. Isn't that good value?

Pukekura Park Hydrangea photos : click on a photo to view a larger image, use Back button to return

Near the chimney



Kaimata Street roadside planting



Stainton Dell



Fillis Street car park garden



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