



## BROMELIADS

There are many types of Bromeliads available today for enjoyment indoors. Their striking foliage and spectacular long lasting flower spike, make them a popular choice. The flower in fact often lasts for many months, giving a beautiful display in the home.

A bromeliad flowers just once, but usually by the time the inflorescence has faded a new plant is on its way in the form of suckers which appear around the base. When about one third the size of the mother these may be removed by cutting close to the old base and then rooted firmly in a good light soil mix. Usually the offset will bloom in two years.

In nature the root system of the epiphytic bromeliads are used chiefly as means of holding on to the tree limbs upon which they grow. As long as the inner cup holds water most bromeliads can survive without further moisture for a considerable period, a fact, which makes them easy to care for. They also do well when attached to driftwood or rocks, needing only a daily misting. However, when grown as container plants, most bromeliads develop good roots, an example of their adaptation to civilization, and do best if their soil is kept damp but never soggy.

### LOCATION

All bromeliads need an abundance of fresh, moving air, and they never attain their potential beauty in the home if they do not have a buoyant atmosphere. Most bromeliads need as much light as possible. They will do well at windows of every exposure, except direct sunlight. They thrive when their pots are placed in plastic trays that are lined with pebbles in which water can accumulate so that the plants have the humidity so essential to their well-being.

### POTTING

Bromeliads do not pose any great problems so far as potting mixture is concerned and make the adjustment from their epiphytic habits to container culture surprisingly well. They grow in any light, porous, acid soil mix firm enough to hold the plant but open enough to allow for immediate drainage. Such sterile mixes as Promix or a mixture of violet soil, peat moss and perlite or fine turface will work extremely well. The main criteria is good drainage.

### WATERING

Most bromeliads have a vase at the center of the plant which acts like a reservoir to feed water appropriately to the plant roots and soil as needed. Always maintain water in this reservoir. If the variety you have selected has no vase or reservoir, water the soil as needed to keep slightly moist at all times.

The bromeliad is an easy to care for, tolerant house plant which, because of its prosperity for producing lots of "suckers" or "pups", is a great choice for children to grow. The suckers can easily be removed with a sharp paring knife and will readily root in an well drained soil mix.