



SUMMER PETUNIAS

BY ASHLEY SEARLE

Summer is the time of year when gardens come alive with colours and flowers, and petunias are terrific annuals to grow as hot weather plants. Here's how to create a stunning flower garden with petunias.

Petunias are easy to grow either from seed or you can buy them as seedlings. There are lots of different varieties to choose from - singles, doubles, picotees (with a contrasting edge), striped, veined, trailing types, dwarf strains, large blooms and petite blooms in just about every colour under the sun, and some are even scented. Which ever type you choose, their cultural requirements are the same and here are a few tips to ensure your petunias produce masses of colourful blooms until well into autumn.

First, petunias need full sun - this really brings on the flowers. They can be grown in garden beds, pots or hanging baskets providing they receive plenty of sun. When planting them in the garden dig through plenty of **Searles 5 IN 1® Plus** to enrich the soil. If growing petunias in containers it's important that the potting mix you use is of good quality. For the best results use **Searles® Terracotta & Tub Mix**. Make sure the soil is kept moist when the plants are young.

Now the real trick with petunias is to pinch out the first few flowers before they open. This will make each seedling bush out and your plants will ultimately produce more flowers and a far better display of colour. It will also give you the opportunity to check for pests. Snails and aphids are the main offenders and there are environmentally-friendly products available at your local garden centre to treat each problem swiftly and easily.

To promote and prolong abundant flowering, fertilise weekly with **Searles Flourish® Soluble Plant Food**. When your petunias finish flowering, just prune them back and you'll be rewarded with another flush of fabulous colour. They can easily last for up to a year with this care.

**Oasis
'Summer
sunset'
Petunia**



**Oasis
'Summer
shores'
Petunia**



Now here's your checklist for success:

- Make sure your petunias are in full sun
- Prepare garden beds before planting with **Searles 5 IN 1[®] Plus Organic Plant Food**
- For containers, use **Searles[®] Terracotta & Tub Mix**
- Pinch out the first flowers and prune after flowering
- Fertilise weekly with **Searles Flourish[®] Soluble Plant Food**

Now that will really bring your garden alive with **COLOUR!**



Oasis
'Summer storm'
Petunia

