

# 2021 Not Your Grandmother's Houseplants Any More

by Vicki Bruning

My grandmothers grew the most lovely African violets, ferns, begonias and hoya plants on sunny windowsills. In the shady windows were the mothers-in-law tongue, aka, bar plant, and wandering dudes (note the name change of this tradescantia.) Many of the plants were gifted to them as a little slip by their friends; rarely were the plants purchased.

Today's young houseplant collector is looking for plants with exotic names—*Monstera deliciosa*, *alocasia* 'African Mask,' philodendron 'Hope' and 'Prince of Orange,' crassula string of dolphins, and more.

There are many Facebook groups in which members exchange information about plant care, pests and diseases, and even buy and sell plant starts. Among my favorite 'haunts' is the WNY Houseplants page.

I've noticed that color, shape and texture are the qualities that attract these enthusiasts. These folks will post a photo of a plant in the store that is selling it, along with the price, and sometimes the number of plants remaining on the shelf.

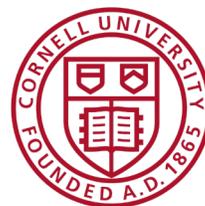
Within a few short hours, these recently-minted plantaholics have swooped in and purchased the coveted plants. Plant hangers, stands and greenhouses are fashioned out of imaginative materials. Macramé is back in style. Discarded curio cabinets become tropical greenhouses in which carnivorous plants reside.

It's a fascinating peek into today's houseplant lovers. Some are beginners, others experienced, and despite the differences in levels of know-how, they share the passion of discovery, of observing growth, and learning the responsibility of best practices of plant care.

These eager indoor gardeners will be among our buyers at our annual plant sale. Will we be ready for them and their quest for the next exciting house-plant? I bet we will!



Photo by Jan Haerer



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