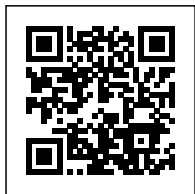


## JUST PEACHY

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A peony that really stood out from the rest in the beginning of this season was 'Just Peachy'. It's a sibling to Dreamtime, Kathy's Touch, Nelda's Joy and probably some others as well, all deriving from the same cross 'Pink Vanguard' x 'Salmon Dream', and I think it's the best one from this range of cultivars. There's some 75% Salmon Dream genes in them all as 'Pink Vanguard' is a result of 'Blushing Princess x Salmon Dream'. No surprise then that the plant resembles Salmon Dream very well. If you grow them side by side, you might think they're the same the first weeks, only after a while do the differences become apparent. Earliness, foliage all the way down to the ground, sturdy stems, healthy and large leaves are common characteristics.

Plant habit before flowering

Foliage down to the ground

It is a plant that was originated by Bill Seidl, the well-known American peony hybridizer who is alas no longer amongst us. He was very partial to this one: (footnote: Seidl, Bill. "'Just Peachy', a new hh cultivar." Online at: *Yahoo Peony group*, message 16343, Oct 30, 2011.)

*The flowers of this seedling are white, but not pure white. Theresa G. saw the plant in bloom this spring and said it had just a little peach coloring, dubbing it "Just Peachy". It bore single, semi-double, and double flowers all on the one plant.*

*I advised Nate not to sell any divisions less than \$200. It's that good.*

*Nate reports that he got "many" divisions off the big rootball he picked up at my garden, but that they were small and needed two years growth to become saleable plants, thus 2013. He counted 47 stems. There were 13 on three other divisions, making a total of 60 stems on a seedling that grew for 31 years, never divided or transplanted, in the same spot. (The seed germinated in 1980, and I am subtracting that date from 2011. The sdlg number, 79H5-8, indicates 1979 was the year the cross was made and the seed planted.)*

*Nate said there were "cavernous" openings in the main root. Understandable in an old plant as old roots decay away and are replaced by new ones. But there was no disease.*

*The parentage is Pink Vanguard x Salmon Dream. Pink Vanguard is sdlg # 71H17 from the cross of Blushing Princess x Salmon Dream. So "Just Peachy" has a double dose of Salmon Dream in its pedigree. Sixty stems can find no room to all grow upwards. Instead of just leaning outwards and demanding support, the outer ring of stems, at about four inches of growth, reflexed sharply and grew parallel to the ground. At bloom-time the buds reflexed upward so that the flowers faced the sun and bloomed almost at ground-level, but did not rest on the ground or break off. It made for a mound of flowers, the central flowers on stems about 2 ft. high, inviting such names as Snowdrift, Snowbank, Snow Pillow, etc.*

*Paul asked what makes Just Peachy so "good". The flower itself won't measure up to the lacti whites but, being an herbaceous hybrid, it blooms earlier. (Most hh's do, overlooking Old Faithful which blooms with the late lactis.) That's a big plus. Add on self-supporting stems and disease-resistance and you have a good overall package.*

Just Peachy is somewhat shorter, some 55 cm here (22 inches) and this results in a cultivar that will have less use as a cutflower because taller stems are usually needed there. But as a garden plant it is truly outstanding with the healthy foliage and sturdy stems.

I cannot recall when I got the first plants of Just Peachy, but I planted them, with hindsight easy to say, in a very bad spot where the ground stayed wet during the Winter. They barely survived, but that's better than most other plants that were growing there as most simply disappeared (nearly all my plants of Patelegance amongst them, one of the most expensive mistakes I've made with peonies). Two years ago they were replanted to a better spot and thus I now had some two-year old plants. And do they look good! There were some 5-6 stems and flowers on each of them, thus they grow very well. Not too much stems, you might say, given the 60 that Bill Seidl mentioned in his comments, but his plant was over thirty years old of course. Still the plants already looked very nice and 'full'. What immediately struck me was the very attractive buds. They are somewhat pointed (unlike Salmon Dream) and very large. The colour of the buds and flowers is very attractive and rarely seen. When open you have a large semi-double flower with petals beautifully placed creating the looks of an airy double flower.

It does have some fragrance, although not especially much, but the earliness and health, combined with those very attractive flowers make it highly recommended for any gardener that likes to have something different that is also outstanding. It's not easily available at this time, but that will surely change in the years to come.

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