



# Emerald Goddess Gardens

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Botanical Name	Euphorbia milii American Beauty
Common Name	Crown of Thorns
Mature Size	3'x3'
Bloom Color	Blood Red
Bloom Period	Perpetual
Boom Form	Small Oval
Water	Drought Tolerant
Light	Full Sun to Light Shade
USDA Zone	9A & South
Fragrance	None
Uses	Anchor, Accent, Barrier
Special Features	Gnarly Twisting Growth Habit
Grower Notes	All parts should be considered toxic



**Euphorbia milii or Crown of Thorns** are spiny, upright growing, succulent shrubs that resemble cactus somewhat, but are not in the same botanical family.

**Crown of Thorns** are actually more closely related to poinsettias. The plant family is very large and very ancient, being named for *Euphorbus*, the Greek physician of King Juba II (about 50 bc to 19 AD) who is credited with the discovery of these types of plants.

*Baron Milius*, one of the governors of the isle of Bourbon, introduced the species into cultivation in France in 1821. Some accounts suggest the Kings physician may have used it to poison or sicken his enemies.

The common name comes from the legend that a larger cultivar of this plant was used to weave the thorny crown of Christ. The thorns are said to represent his suffering and the small oval blooms, droplets of blood. Legend has it that prior to the Crucifixion, plants of the *euphorbia* species grew straight, full, tall, and had large white flowers. After the Resurrection, the plant then grew gnarly and twisted, shrank in stature and would forever more 'bleed' red in shame for having been used to torment the Son of God.

The **American Beauty** cultivar is large growing, reaching heights of more the 3 feet when fully mature, and is almost always covered in blood red flowers (well actually the little flower is the white center and the red is a bract, a special kind of leaf, that turns red as poinsettias do.

It has a very interesting growth habit and is a very versatile plant with many attractive possibilities. It makes a great accent or specimen plant, or a nice potted plant and can be used as a front corner anchor and transitional item in the tropical landscape. They have high light needs, and supplemental lighting is generally required for indoor growing.

Like many of our botanical wonders, its beauty comes with some cautions, as all parts are considered toxic. However, it tastes horrible and is covered in thorns, so the chances of accidental ingestion are low. The sap can be irritating to the skin of some sensitive individuals.

**Crown of Thorns** are very drought tolerant and are a good plant choice for remote corners and other areas that lack constant irrigation.

For quick answers to your growing or planting questions, just email us at [service@emeraldgoddessgardens.com](mailto:service@emeraldgoddessgardens.com)

If you don't know your USDA Planting Zone, you can check the map on our website site at [emeraldgoddessgardens.com](http://emeraldgoddessgardens.com).

*This plant is intended for use as an ornamental, decorative item only. All parts of the Brugmansia species contain compounds that are scientifically validated as biologically active, and should therefore be considered toxic. Emerald Goddess Gardens does not recommended nor endorse the ingestion or other use of ornamental plants for homeopathic treatments, herbal remedies, spiritual experience enhancement, or recreation.*

## Care of Your Cactus or Succulent Plant

Here are a few basic guidelines for handling and caring for your new plant:

Direct planting of 4 inch starter sizes plants or plugs directly into the landscape is not recommended, with a few exceptions. So, for the best results with your new plant we suggest that it be re-potted into a larger pot and allowed to grow larger until the new pot is filled with roots before setting out.

- Immediately re-pot the new plant into a 6 to 10 inch diameter (a 6 inch pot is the recommended size for starter plugs) that can drain easily and thoroughly.
- Use a good quality commercial specialty cacti and succulent potting media.
- Apply a high quality, slow release plant food according to the label directions. DO NOT use hot, all chemical fertilizers like 6-6-6 or 10-10-10.
- Locate so that the plant can receive direct, full spectrum light all day.
- Take care not to over water. The primary cause of problems with cacti and succulents is over watered.
- Moisture crystals can be recycled for other plants if desired, but do not use them for cacti and succulents.
- Be sure excess irrigation water can drain out of the pot quickly and completely. Do not allow the bottom of the pot does not sit submerged in water.
- Supplement feed with a water soluble plant food every 2-3 weeks according to the label directions.
- Prune or pinch lightly and often when the plant is young and actively growing to strengthen the central stalk and encourage branching and build uniform shape. Be aware that a scar from pruning is unavoidable and inherent with many cultivars.

Most cacti and succulents can be grown as potted plants indefinitely, and can be successfully wintered over indoors in colder climates, so long as they are moved indoors well ahead of temps into the 30's and maintained in a warm environment (minimum 40 degrees F) with adequate, full spectrum light, air circulation, and are not over crowded or over watered.

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*Ornamental Plants sold by Emerald Goddess Gardens are intended for use as ornamental decorative items only. Emerald Goddess Gardens does not recommend or endorse any other use.*