

Pineapple Sage – Plant Now for Late Season Flowers

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The botanical name of the herb Pineapple Sage is *Salvia elegans* with the specific epithet *elegans* meaning elegant, striking beauty, and graceful proportions. One just needs to grow this plant to experience the pineapple scent and taste of its leaves and the long spikes of edible, tubular, scarlet-red flowers to see that they fit all of those adjectives and many more. It is not only attractive to us, but is a favorite of hummingbirds, butterflies, and pollinators while being deer resistant.

Plants are available in nurseries and garden centers but don't be fooled by the small pot size. Once planted in a garden bed or large container, they will eventually reach 3 to 4 feet tall and wide in one season, so give them plenty of space to shine.

Pineapple Sage is a perennial in zones 8 to 10. Although it is tender for us in the cooler zones of central VA, it is well worth planting in mid-to-late spring after all danger of frost has passed and grown as an annual. A full sun location, medium moisture, and fertile, well-draining soil are just about all it needs. The plant will grow into a well-branched beauty with no pruning, primping, deadheading, or staking needed.

Abundant flowering begins in August and September and continues until frost. This is a time in the garden when there are few other flowers in bloom. So, why not give it a try. I bet you'll be hooked and start adding this herb to your landscape every year.



Photo by University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences Illinois Extension

References:

- <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/garden-scoop/2021-10-23-pineapple-sage>
- <https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=c764&fbclid>
- <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/salvia-elegans/>