

From Garden Classic to Summer Star: Gladiolus Takes Top Bulb Honors for 2026

Flowerbulb.eu Names Gladiolus Summer Bulb of the Year

PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, February 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The gladiolus has officially been crowned Summer Bulb of the Year 2026 by [Flowerbulb.eu](https://www.flowerbulb.eu), earning top honors for its dramatic beauty, wide color range, and pollinator-friendly appeal. Gladioli also go by the names glads and sword lilies. Planted in spring after the last frost, gladiolus corms reward gardeners with towering spikes of blooms in nearly every imaginable color later in the same season. A wide variety also offers a delightful fragrance and attracts hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, and bumblebees to support a biodiverse, vibrant garden.

Fragrance and Form

Among the hundreds of available varieties, large-flowered gladioli are the most popular, but shorter varieties are outstanding for containers. Miniature varieties grow between one and two feet tall. Modern hybrids can reach over four feet in height. These impressive plants produce long flower spikes lined with dozens of buds that open sequentially from bottom to top.

Hardiness

Gladiolus brings bold summer drama to gardens in USDA Zones 7–10. In Zone 7, they'll happily overwinter with a cozy blanket of mulch, while gardeners in warmer Zones 8–10 can leave them in the ground year-round to return bigger and better each season. In cooler climates, gladioli are just as rewarding—simply lift and store the corms for winter, or enjoy them as carefree annuals that deliver a full season of color.

Companion Plants and Staking

With their tall, elegant flower spikes, gladiolus appreciate a little extra support. A slim bamboo



Gladiolus Bulb of the Year

stake keeps them standing straight, but nature can do the job just as well. Plant gladioli among ornamental grasses for a soft, airy look that naturally supports them. Peonies make ideal partners, offering sturdy support and a romantic pairing—especially with pastel gladiolus. For pure summer wow-factor, combine them with dahlias and enjoy a bold, showstopping blend of color, texture, and height.

A Flower Rich in History and Variety

Gladioli symbolize pride, strength, and victory. Their name is rooted in the Latin *gladius*, meaning sword—a nod to their striking, sword-shaped foliage and the nickname sword lily. Native to South Africa, their corms were once used as food. Gladioli were first documented by European botanists in the 17th century. Centuries of breeding have produced today's wide range of sizes, forms, and vivid colors, including eye-catching bi- and multicolored blooms.

Tips for Growing Beautiful Gladioli

- Plant in well-drained soil in a sunny location with at least six hours of sunlight daily.
- For a cutting garden, plant generously, and harvest flower stems as soon as the first blooms open.
- Extend the flowering season by planting corms every two weeks through the end of June.
- Remove spent flower stems after blooming, but leave the foliage to support corm development.
- Water regularly during dry periods for best performance.

With its striking appearance, rich heritage, and exceptional versatility, gladioli has rightfully been recognized as Summer Bulb of the Year 2026.

[Learn more here.](#)

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