

Guzmania Bromeliad



Bromeliads are used as an important local culture and identity to the indigenous communities of Las Margaritas, Chiapas, Mexico. They are collected on the Day of the Dead for ceremonial and religious festivities and to decorate the graves of loved ones.

Guzmania sp.

- **Use:** An ideal indoor or office plant and often used in large shopping malls and conservatory displays due to their long bloom times. An absolutely stunning way to add vibrant pops of color to your space.
- **Exposure/Soil:** They survive well in low light conditions and tolerant of artificial light. They cannot, however, be exposed to intense direct sunlight. They are epiphytic meaning they use their roots to attach to a host plant such as a tree rather than grow in the ground. They can be either mounted on a substrate or planted in a pot. Because their roots act primarily as an anchor rather than a source for water and nutrients, if they are planted in a potting mix that remains too soggy they will easily succumb to root rot. They take in water through their central tank and leaves in addition to their roots. Keep water in the bromeliad's tank, the space where the leaves meet and form a cup toward the base of the plant. Never put water in the bracts or flowering portion of the plant. It will shorten the life of the inflorescence.
- **Growth:** The plant can grow as tall as two feet and as wide as two feet. Once the mother plant reaches maturity it will produce babies at the base of the plant and die.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 10-11; Houseplant, Can keep on a shady porch in summer when temps above 50 degrees, must bring inside in the winter.
- **Foliage:** Long, flat, glossy green leaves with smooth margins. The leaves come together to form a star shape in the middle.
- **Flower/Fruit:** What is commonly mistaken as the flower on the plant is actually a grouping of modified leaves, called bracts. They are most famous for their brilliant pink or red flower bracts but can also be found in shades of yellow and orange depending on the variety. The true flowers are white and do not rise above the colorful bracts. The blooms can last 2-4 months.

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