

## ITOH PEONIES

I discovered this description of a tree peony that used to be too expensive and hard to grow. Apparently, that's changed. They are gorgeous and labeled for Zone 6. You might want to give 'em a try.

If you admire the colorful and exotic flowers of tree peonies, but prefer the perennial growing cycle of herbaceous Peonies, you will love the Itoh Peonies, also known as intersectional hybrids. They tend to resemble tree Peonies with a domed, vigorous growth habit and large double flowers with disease-resistant, lacy, dark green foliage. Once established, Itoh Peonies have an extended blooming period, with as many as 50 blooms in a single season due to their ability to produce primary and secondary buds. They will grow to three feet tall and wide and continue to improve with age.



Named for Toichi Itoh, the first hybridizer to successfully cross a tree Peony with an herbaceous Peony in the 1940's, these plants are in high demand, prized for their huge, beautiful blooms and lush green foliage. Historically, Itohs were challenging to grow and thus hard to find and rather expensive. But that's all changed. Monrovia has partnered with leading Itoh breeder, Don Smith who has spent over 20 years refining these unusual plants. You should check them out.

*Paeonia* (Itoh) 'Kopper Kettle' and *paeonia* 'Cora Louise' are two of the most striking ones, but there are many more available.

**Light Needs:** Partial to full sun

**Watering Needs:** Needs regular watering - weekly, or more often in extreme heat.

**Average Landscape Size:** Fast growing to 2-½ ft. tall, 3-½ ft. wide.

**Key Feature:** Prolific Flowering

**Blooms:** Late Spring

Young, Chris (2012, April). Itoh Peonies, *The Garden*, Volume 104, p.24

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