

"Tamora" Rose of the Month - March, 2002

By Dona English, Mesa-East Valley Rose Society



Over the past several decades, the English rose hybridizer, David Austin, has almost single handedly revolutionized modern rose culture. With the gradual spread of his new hybrids, known as “English Roses”, the world has rediscovered the rose as a valuable addition to the landscape. The return of fragrance with the old-fashioned bloom style of his roses has changed the industry. The larger, more prolific hybridizers around the world have tried to copy his unique, though varied, modern roses of antique rose form. They have had a difficult time catching up, however, as Mr. Austin has produced an abundance of roses to select from in this new shrub category.

Of all the many beautiful Austin roses to select from, one variety stands out to me as most representative of this group. The multi-shaded peach rose, ‘Tamora’, is the most important to me of the many Austins I have both grown and seen growing. ‘Tamora’ has exquisite color, which varies with the weather from pale peach to nearly an orange-peach. ‘Tamora’ has wonderful myrrh scented fragrance, burgundy stems and medium green seven-leaflet foliage. The moderate size, averaging in temperate climates about 2 ½’ wide by 3’ tall, makes it a rose for all gardens, whether in a classic mixed border, a cutting garden or rose only bed. ‘Tamora’ can be grown in a large container because of its size. It produces an abundance of heavily petaled blooms that make excellent, long-lasting flowers for cutting or exhibition. As an added bonus, they are quite disease resistant and hold up well in the summer heat of the Southwest.

Introduced in England in 1983, ‘Tamora’ is from a cross of the Austin rose ‘Chaucer’ and ‘Conrad Ferdinand Meyer’. The name comes from Shakespeare’s ‘Titus Andronicus.’ The Austin roses have become more widely available over the last several years. In addition to various local nurseries and on-line catalogues, the web site www.davidaustinroses.net/american/ site will sometimes have the best selection of his roses overall. For ‘Tamora’, however, they are sold out until Fall, 2002!