

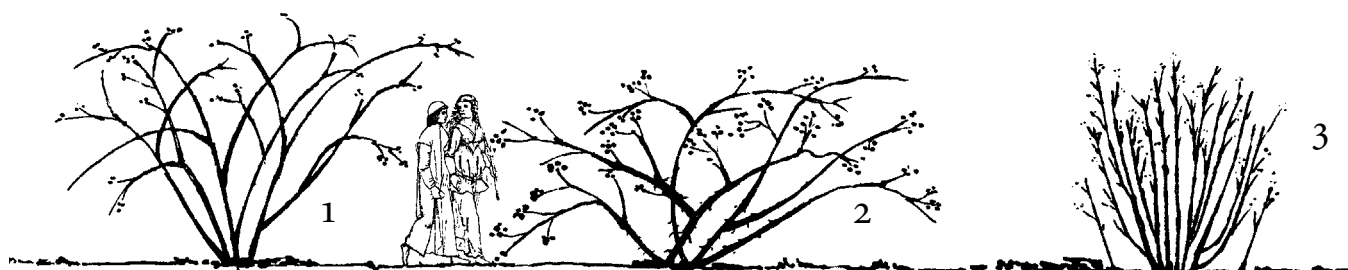
## Albas

The “White roses” are clearly derived from *Rosa canina*, the European species known as the “Dog Rose.” With it they share smooth stems, lightly armed with fine prickles, a grayish bloom on leaves and new canes, a tall fountain habit of growth, and pale fragrant flowers ranging from white to mid-pink. The scent of the Albas is special; what Graham Thomas calls a “purity of scent” is a fresh “face powder” fragrance lacking in the rich heavy complexity of the Damask roses. In some varieties like FÉLICITÉ PARMENTIER that fresh scent is intensified. Above all, the glaucous coloring of Alba foliage makes them useful today as a contrast to other greens in the mixed border, and their exceptional disease resistance recommends them to all gardeners.

### Habit

The Alba is typically a tall arching grower, narrow below, rather like a green umbrella, and reaching 6' to 8' tall, with lightly armed canes. Three versions of the habits of Alba growth give us a sampling.

1. (E.g., ALBA SEMI-PLENA) The archetype as described above.
2. (E.g., MAIDEN'S BLUSH) A broader, heavier-caned and thornier, arching plant, often broader than tall.
3. (E.g., CHLORIS) A few Albas of more mixed parentage with more upright growth, much less arching and spreading, very smooth stemmed.



#### AENNCHEN VON THARAU\*

["OAK GARDEN ALBA"]

A r/fff/1 Geschwind, 1886 [SJR/Lowe]

This beautiful pale pink Alba with about 25 petals and a delightful scent came into our collection with no name, a mystery in the San Jose collection. It is unlike any of the others in our collection, and has larger flowers than most of this type, with big petals and a ruffled appearance. The plant is large, arching, graceful and very full. Phillip has been able to identify this from an entry by Charles Quest-Ritson in his recent book, *Climbing Roses of the World*, as the Alba hybrid raised by Rudolf Geschwind in the late 19th century. Now, if only someone would teach us the pronunciation . . . !

#### ALBA 'FOLIACEA'

A r/ff/1 unknown, pre-1824 [Huntington]

In the classic mould of the Albas with semi-double white flowers opening from pink buds. In this form the sepals are exaggerated, although we question whether the variety we now grow is indeed as foliaceous as Redouté's portrait of the original.

#### ALBA MAXIMA

[JACOBITE ROSE]

A r/ff/1 unknown, old [Pickering]

Dark foliage with a grey finish on a moderately tall plant, with shapely, pure white flowers, loosely double with petals gracefully turned towards stamens. Late summer rebloom in California is reliable on mature plants that are well grown.

#### ALBA SEMI-PLENA

A r/fff/1 unknown, old [Pickering]

Semi-double blooms of delicate fragrance, white with golden stamens and a boss of styles. These flowers have the simplicity of an ancient garden; the unusual bluish-green foliage makes this one of the most useful of plants in modern gardens.

#### AMÉLIA (see CELSIANA under Damasks)

#### BELLE AMOUR

A o/fff/2 unknown, re-intro 1940 [Huntington]

A very warm pink rose with large-petalled flowers of rich, spicy scent. Not typical for an Alba but showing many affin-

ities to the class, including luxurious foliage. A very special rose and a graceful addition to the garden.

#### BLANCHE DE BELGIQUE

A o/fff/1 unknown, pre-1848 [Lowe]  
Of all the Albas this is the most beautiful, to my mind, bearing large, full flowers with a silky button eye, pure white, on a plant of great poise, tall and arching in habit, with grey-green stems and foliage. Without being formally shaped, the blooms are full and very lovely. We are never disappointed by this rose, and have even known it to produce flowers in the autumn.

#### BLUSH HIP

A o/fff/1 unknown, pre-1848 [Pickering]  
Cerise-pink buds open to pale pink flowers with a green eye; the foliage is rounded and more Damask or Centifolia than Alba in character. In full sun this has been a rather compact shrub for us, but with the growth of a tree overhead, we've observed tall, supple canes, and we wonder if this is the "scandent" habit alluded to by Graham Thomas and other writers.

#### CELESTIAL

[CÉLESTE]

A o/fff/1 Dupont, pre-1810 [unknown]  
Soft pink cupped flowers open to show pale stamens; this warm haze of color is set off by blue-green leaves and pale stems.

#### CHLORIS

A o/fff/3 Descemet, pre-1820 [Huntington]  
Small double blooms of ivory-blush coloring deeper with pronounced button eyes surrounded with a primrose glow. Nearly thornless, very erect growth to 6', sweetly scented.

#### CYMBAEFOLIA

[CANNABINA, ROSE À FEUILLES DE CHANVRE]

A rr/ff/2 Flobert/Pelletier, 1807 [SJHRG]  
An odd dog is the hemp-leaved Alba, with slender, distorted leaves, rather anemic, which in its profusion is reminiscent of cannabis. Flowers are small, yellowish white, making a button of small petaloids in the center, mixed with green stamens. A grand curiosity!

#### FÉLICITÉ PARMENTIER

[FÉLICITÉ]

A o/ffff/1 unknown, 1834 [Pickering]  
Tall and elegant with perfectly formed flowers of pearly pink, petals tightly packed and buttoned at the eye. I make a special trip to it as often as I can when it is in bloom, and always pluck a bloom to inhale the powdery fragrance.

#### GREAT MAIDEN'S BLUSH

[ALBA INCARNATA]

A o/ffff/1 unknown, c. 1738 [Pickering]  
In stature a large version of MAIDEN'S BLUSH with the same large, soft pink clustered flowers, the same sweet perfume.

#### JEANNE D'ARC

A r/fff/1 Vibert, 1818 [Pickering]  
Milky-white flowers, their lemony-whiteness blushing with pink as they age; semi-double and very sweetly scented. Tall and arching, and very full in its growth, this has been one of the most successful of the Albas for us.

#### KÖNIGIN VON DANNEMARK

[QUEEN OF DENMARK]

A o/fff/2 Booth/Flottbeck, 1826 [Pickering]  
The fullest, most richly colored of Albas, retaining that pale delicacy of shading that lights up all members of the class. A modest grower, spreading and stout of cane.

#### MAIDEN'S BLUSH

A o/fff/2 unknown, 1797 [unknown]  
Very large flowers of silky blush-pink in large clusters, up to 10 flowers in a bunch; this rose has a neat, innocent informality and a pure sweet scent. Though shorter and more spreading than GREAT MAIDEN'S BLUSH, it is also very stout of cane.

#### MME. LEGRAS DE ST. GERMAIN

A r/fff/1 unknown, 1846 [Pickering]  
There is more than pure Alba in the breeding of this exquisite rose. It has rather smooth foliage and stems, large habit of growth, and the flowers are white with a glow of lemon-yellow in the center. MME. LEGRAS DE ST. GERMAIN may have Noisette in its background, and it would certainly be worth growing in the South!

#### POMPON BLANC PARFAIT

A rr/fff/1 E. Verdier, 1876 [unknown]  
Blush-white, small, fragrant pompon flowers; growth habit compact and few-thorned. This rose makes a very upright bush with small, Noisette-like flowers but with the classic Alba fragrance. It reblooms in the fall.

#### PRINCESSE DE LAMBALLÉ\*

A r/fff/2 Miellez, pre-1830 [Pickering]  
Very lovely flowers of pure white tinted blush or cream, double, revealing stamens in the partly closed center, named for the lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette. A strong grower, sometimes rather upright and tall.

#### "SAPPHO"

A rr/fff/2 unknown, unknown[Sagmiller; Beales]  
A short plant with perfectly formed semi-double flowers, pure white to ivory, cupped, with lovely heart-shaped petals, "SAPPHO" may be a mystery rose but she is unique.

#### SUAVEOLENS (OF COMMERCE)\*

A r/fff/1 unknown, unknown [Pickering]  
What is offered today in commerce as SUAVEOLENS seems to be more double than original descriptions of this rose. A tall growing rose with handsomely double blooms of ivory white and a rich fragrance; the foliage deep grey-green.