

A portrait of Michael Weinert, a man with short grey hair and glasses, smiling slightly. He is wearing a dark shirt. The background is a blurred image of pink flowers. A yellow rectangular box with the text 'SRGC125-027' is overlaid on the top right of the image.

SRGC125-027

***Cypripedium* 'Sebastian': Elegant and Easy Michael Weinert**

In issue 122 (January 2009) I described general growing conditions for *Cypripedium* hybrids in the garden. They are quite easy to fulfil because the hybrids are much less demanding than the species. We are just scratching the surface of their potential as we did 70 years ago with the tropical orchids. I would now like to recommend a hybrid which stands out because of its similarity to a highly valued, delicate species and its special colouration – *Cypripedium* 'Sebastian'.

This elegant hybrid captivates with its striking flower colouration and shape as well as the slender growth of its shoots. Everything about it is redolent of the wild species *Cypripedium montanum* from North America. *Cypripedium* 'Sebastian' forms many flowers, often two per stem, and is easy to cultivate in the garden, like all Frosch® hybrids. It grows up to 60 cm and flowers in the second half of May. The cross 'Ingrid' is a similar colour. To grow this jewel of the shaded garden, you need only obey a few simple rules.

Firstly, the right place: half or full shade - the north side of a building may be just right. Plant no competitive strong growers close to *Cypripedium* 'Sebastian' for they might

***Cypripedium* 'Gisela' & *C.* 'Ingrid' in
a very suitable shady position**

take away too much light, nutrients or water. For the same reason, big trees and vigorous shrubs can be problematic; the *Cypripedium* hybrid would not die but would neither flower nor increase the number of shoots every year. If the planting site is perfect, it is normal for the number of shoots of *Cypripedium* 'Sebastian' to double every year, as does the production of twin flowers. Secondly, watch for slugs, especially during springtime. I have been told that Ethisso® Slug & Snail-Lentils work best because they withstand even long periods of rain without losing effect. If you don't like chemical warfare, a metal slug fence gives perfect and permanent protection.

A photograph of a garden scene. In the foreground, there are several *Cypripedium* 'Sebastian' plants with large green leaves and small, bell-shaped flowers. To the right, there are large, variegated hosta leaves. In the background, there is a stone wall and a path leading into a shaded garden area. A yellow rectangular box with the text 'SRGC125-025' is overlaid on the top left of the image.

SRGC125-025

Opposite: *Cypripedium* 'Sebastian'

SRGC125-022





Cypripedium 'Sebastian' in a second colour form

Thirdly, the soil is not important; any average garden soil suffices as long as it is not permanently dry or wet. Last but not least, fertilize your Cypripedium 'Sebastian' during springtime with any normal garden fertilizer in half concentration. That's all there is to it: then relax and enjoy this beauty of the shaded garden!

Cypripedium hybrids like 'Sebastian' can be bought at mail order nurseries worldwide. Watch out for the trade mark and the 'Frosch®' logo, which guarantees flowering-sized, healthy rhizomes. If you need a source of supply in your country, just make contact via www.cypripedium.de. There you will also find lots of additional information and many photos as well as an international Cypripedium forum with more than 2500 postings.

Ease and elegance among the Cypripediums: C. 'Sebastian' to the left

