

Darren Everest  
Dahlias and Sweet Peas

Darren has been growing Dahlias for almost forty years and before you say it, no he doesn't look old enough, but it's true! The Sweet Peas came along a bit later but even so Darren has been growing these for around thirty years.

It wasn't until 2011 that Darren started doing large displays, beginning with his Dahlias at his local Edenbridge and Oxted Agricultural Show and then from 2014 with his Sweet Peas at the Kent County Show. After winning multiple Gold Awards Darren began to set his sights a little higher. Having moved to the Isle of Wight and with the outbreak of the Covid pandemic, the opportunity arose to apply to do the RHS Hampton Court Flower Festival which then led onto the chance to apply to do the RHS flagship Chelsea Flower Show.

It's been a whirlwind couple of years for Darren and his wife Dawn. Culminating in was has been an incredible few months. Firstly, back in March, Darren was awarded the National Dahlia Society Silver Medal for his services to the Dahlia. Not only from promoting Dahlias with his displays but by doing talks across the UK. Giving a full growing guide and offering many top tips to getting the best from your plants. Darren has also won numerous National Championship and trophy classes.

Then, in May, after a very difficult growing season, when, just three weeks before Chelsea, Darren was suffering from despair thinking that there was no way he would have enough Sweet Pea blooms to put on a display, the weather finally improved. It wasn't until the day before that Darren finally realised that he would have enough blooms. Not only did he have enough, but the quality was outstanding. So much so that the judges awarded him a Gold Medal, however, Darren insists that it's very much a joint effort, with his wife Dawn integral to their success.

Darren has since gone on to win Gold at the BBC Gardeners World Live event and most recently at the Blenheim Palace Flower Show.

So, can Darren and Dawn go onto yet more success at this year's Hampton Court Flower Festival? They are mixing things up this year with a mixed display of Dahlias and Sweet Peas which will be a riot of colour and a feast for the eyes.

With Darren set to publish his first book in the Spring of 2025 about his life with flowers, this year's achievements will make a fantastic final chapter to what has been an incredible journey with these beautiful flowers.

Darren can be contacted on 07808793862

Or by email [darreneverest@ymail.com](mailto:darreneverest@ymail.com)

[www.darreneverestdahlias.co.uk](http://www.darreneverestdahlias.co.uk)

[www.darreneverestsweetpeas.co.uk](http://www.darreneverestsweetpeas.co.uk)

