

## Home and Backyard Orchid Growing

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Imagine you get your dream come true, you get to build a greenhouse to grow your beauties. Then imagine that you have an accomplished orchid grower that will help you design and build your greenhouse. Linda is quick to laud praise on her brother Steve Hawkins, The Orchid Specialist, for helping her design and build her new 20' x 30' greenhouse.



Steve's design is simple yet elegant. The wet wall is on the long side of the greenhouse facing west and the 3 exhaust fans on the east side of the greenhouse move plenty of cool air through the greenhouse for a comfortable environment even in our summer heat. The greenhouse is covered in smoked polycarbonate that has a shade factor of 65% so additional shade cloth is required only for some of the real shade lovers. Steve also recommended double propane heaters for redundancy. If one fails on a cold winter night the second heater will prevent disaster in the greenhouse.

Once you step inside the greenhouse, you sense Linda's taste in orchids. Many are species but she is not a species snob, she likes any orchid that is delicate, unusual and attractive.



She has a wall of mounted orchids, many miniatures and all unusual and unique. With the automatic spray system on this wall set to spray daily, she found the orchids were staying a little too wet so she removed the sphagnum moss with tweezers.

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She has an area for her tolumnias, all in small clay pots with fine charcoal that bloom and bloom with their colorful flowers. She has mastered growing zygopetalums, the fragrant blue and bronze colored orchids that tend to be cooler growing. She is even experimenting with the miltoniopsis, the beautiful pansy orchids, that can melt in our heat. She has an area for oncidiums, a big favorite with their long lived blooms and phalaenopsis that bloom for months on end.



The greenhouse has 3 rods for growing vandas. She loves the delicate Neofinetias and their hybrids with their compact habit and floriferous nature, the Renantheras with their intense red flower coloration and the Vanda tessellata hybrids with their fragrance.



Linda has a little sitting area in the middle of her greenhouse so she can spend quality time with her orchids. Incredibly, Linda also has every orchid lover's dream, room for just a few more orchids!

