Lotus (Rose) Bamboo Care Instructions

Background
The lotus (or rose) bamboo is a member of the Dracaena family, and is a vital element in promoting positive energy flow in the home and workplace. The lotus bamboo grows slower than traditional lucky bamboo canes, with closely spaced leaf bracts on elongated canes with slight, graceful bends and arcs. Each lotus bamboo has thick, dark green, lush foliage that opens like a rose as the cuttings take root and grow. This foliage grows and unfolds in layers, creating the appearance of a palm tree from a side view, and a lotus blossom when observed from the top. This elegant cutting can be used in high-end floral designs, as well as in container or water garden plantings.

Unpacking the Lotus Bamboo
The lotus bamboo is packed with a gauze or paper sleeve to protect the foliage. This packing should be promptly removed, and the cuttings submerged and soaked in a bath of lukewarm water for several hours. This re-hydration process minimizes shock to the plants due to shipping. Place the cuttings in a vase with 2 inches of clean water and a few drops of bamboo fertilizer.

Light / Temperature / Water Conditions
The lotus bamboo prefers the same care as lucky bamboo canes. Moderate or indirect light is preferred, and the cuttings should be kept between 65 - 95 degrees F. Fresh, clean water is essential to maintain the plants, and it is recommended that the roots always be wet or at least moist. We recommend only 1.5 - 2 inches of water around the roots, and changing the water once every 7-10 days. Tap water is sufficient if chlorine levels are low, and an occasional fertilizing every 3-4 weeks will promote vigorous growth. We recommend a weak dilution of a well-balanced fertilizer.

Once the root system is established, we recommend transplanting the arrangement into good, high quality indoor plant potting mix. A local grower in the Pacific Northwest recommends a mix with higher peat concentrations and a bit of pumice (the hard-baked variety). A high quality bonsai potting medium is suitable, provided it is supplemented with additional peat and sand.

Ambient Air Conditions and Maintenance
Good air movement and occasional pruning are essential for maintaining the lotus bamboo’s quality appearance. The top foliage should have some room to allow air to evaporate any accumulated moisture, and any yellowing or browning foliage should be removed. The cuttings will grow 5 - 7 inches a year, and proper shaping and pruning adds beauty and strength to these arrangements.

Other Care Considerations
The lotus bamboo should grow for years under proper care conditions. Mold can develop on damp surfaces, and care should be taken to remove any signs of mold before it can spread to the canes. Remove the mold with cotton swabs dipped in rubbing alcohol. Insects, such as spider mites or mealy bugs, are best treated with several applications of mild insecticide soap.