Pride of Madeira

By Margaret Missiaen

The shrubs flowering along the waterfront by Marina Green are pride of Madeira (Echium candicans), named for its native area, the island of Madeira in the Canary Islands. This flowering shrub is well-loved for its colorful panicles of flowers, ranging from pink to purple to blue. These drought-tolerant plants have woody stems and slender grey-green leaves that appear in early spring. Growing 8 feet tall and 10 feet wide, it makes a dramatic landscape addition.

Pride of Madeira is an introduced species that is highly adaptable to salty air, wind, and bright sun and grows rapidly, even in rocky and low-nutrient soil.It tends to reseed, and in some regions, it is considered invasive due to its rapid growth and ability to outcompete native plants. It is invasive in coastal regions, especially in southern California.