Mission Olive

Olea europaea 'Mission'



Mission Olive foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 25 feet

Spread: 25 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 8a

Description:

This popular variety features a vigorous erect habit, with a medium canopy; fragrant white flowers in spring give way to green drupes that darken to a glossy brown, then black; can be grown as an ornamental as well; a beautiful accent tree or screen

Ornamental Features

Mission Olive is bathed in stunning panicles of fragrant creamy white flowers along the branches from mid to late spring. The fruits are showy green drupes which fade to black over time, which are carried in abundance from mid summer to mid fall. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. It has dark green foliage with grayish green undersides which emerges chartreuse in spring. The glossy narrow leaves remain dark green throughout the winter. The smooth gray bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

This plant is primarily grown as an ornamental, but it's also valued for its edible qualities. The oval pungent fruit is most often used in the following ways:

- Eating When Cooked/Prepared
- Preserves

Landscape Attributes

Mission Olive is an evergreen tree with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It is a good choice for attracting birds and butterflies to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Disease

Mission Olive is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- Hedges/Screening
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Mission Olive will grow to be about 25 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 25 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live to a ripe old age of 300 years or more; think of this as a heritage tree for future generations! While it is considered to be somewhat self-pollinating, it tends to set heavier quantities of fruit with a different variety of the same species growing nearby.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under average home landscape conditions. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Mission Olive is a fine choice for the yard, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.