Purple Japanese Barberry

Berberis thunbergii 'Purpurea'



Purple Japanese Barberry
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Description:

A beautiful shrub for bringing color into the landscape; rich purplish-red foliage all summer long, finally turning to brilliant yellow in fall, also has attractive flowers and showy red fruits after the leaves fall

Ornamental Features

Purple Japanese Barberry is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. The fruits are showy crimson drupes carried in abundance from early to late fall. It has attractive plum purple deciduous foliage. The small glossy oval leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding yellow in the fall. It features tiny clusters of yellow flowers hanging below the branches in mid spring.



Purple Japanese Barberry flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Purple Japanese Barberry is a dense multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and can be pruned at anytime. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny

Purple Japanese Barberry is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use

Planting & Growing

Purple Japanese Barberry will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.