Nectarine

Prunus persica var. nucipersica

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 25 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 5

Description:

A popular fruit tree, bearing sweet, smooth red fruit in mid summer; quite ornamental, with showy pink and white flowers in spring; a low, spreading habit; susceptible to late spring freezes and disease, needs full sun and well-drained soil



Nectarine flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Nectarine in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Edible Qualities

Nectarine is a small tree that is commonly grown for its edible qualities. It produces red round fruit (technically 'drupes') with buttery yellow variegation and yellow flesh which are usually ready for picking in mid summer. Note that the fruits have hard inedible pits inside which must be removed before eating or processing. The fruits have a sweet taste and a juicy texture.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Cooking
- Baking
- Preserves
- Canning

Features & Attributes

Nectarine is blanketed in stunning clusters of fragrant pink flowers with white overtones along the branches in early spring, which emerge from distinctive rose flower buds before the leaves. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The narrow leaves turn yellow in fall. The fruits are showy red drupes with buttery yellow variegation, which are carried in abundance in mid summer. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up.

This is a deciduous tree with a more or less rounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition. This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Messy
- Insects
- Disease

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Nectarine is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping

Planting & Growing

Nectarine will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 25 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 3 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more. 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 is typically grown in a designated area of the yard because of its mature size and spread. It should only be grown in full sunlight. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This species is not originally from North America.