

Formosa Banana

Musa itinerans 'Formosana'



Formosa Banana
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Taiwan Banana

Description:

A medium sized ornamental banana, producing small reddish fruits in winter (fruits are more for show than for eating); best suited to warm temperate climates and can take light freezes; a nice landscape accent or container plant

Ornamental Features

Formosa Banana is a wonderfully ornamental plant with characteristically tropical foliage and a distinctive habit of growth. Its attractive enormous glossy oval leaves remain green in color throughout the season. The brick red fruits are held in clusters in late winter.

Landscape Attributes

Formosa Banana is an herbaceous tropical perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its wonderfully bold, coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced garden composition.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Formosa Banana is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Formosa Banana will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 5 feet from the ground. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

Bananas are curious plants in a botanical sense. Strictly speaking they are perennials, with individual shoots rising up from underground rhizomes and maturing in one to two years, then ultimately dying after producing fruit, to be replaced by new shoots from the base. However, given their ultimate size and coarseness they almost behave as small trees in the landscape. This plant 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 somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Formosa Banana is a fine choice for the garden, 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 growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.