Friar Plum

Prunus 'Friar'



Friar Plum in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Japanese Plum

Description:

This variety is a heavy bearer of large dark purple fruit with sweet, firm amber flesh; an upright spreading tree that is quite compact and ornamental; needs full sun, well-drained soil and a pollinator

Edible Qualities

Friar Plum is a small tree that is commonly grown for its edible qualities. It produces deep purple oval fruit (technically 'drupes') with black overtones and gold flesh which are usually ready for picking from mid to late 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 firm texture.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Cooking
- Preserves

Features & Attributes

Friar Plum is smothered in stunning clusters of fragrant white flowers along the branches in early spring before the leaves. It has forest green deciduous foliage. The pointy leaves turn yellow in fall. The fruits are showy deep purple drupes with black overtones, 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 an upright spreading habit of growth. 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
- Disease

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

- Accent
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping

Planting & Growing

Friar Plum will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 4 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. This variety requires a different selection of the same species growing nearby in order to set fruit.

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. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid.