# Kembu False Holly

***Osmanthus heterophyllus 'Kembu'***



*Kembu False Holly foliage*
*Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder*

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6

Other Names: Tea Olive, Olive Holly, Holly-Leaf Osmanthus

**Description:**

This cultivar is similar in looks to holly, but it's actually related to lilac and privet; beautiful cream-variegated leaves are quite ornamental, with fewer thorns; subtle flowers are extremely fragrant, blooming in fall; more adaptable than holly

**Ornamental Features**

Kembu False Holly has attractive creamy white-variegated grayish green foliage with hints of buttery yellow on a plant with an oval habit of growth. The spiny pointy leaves are highly ornamental and remain grayish green throughout the winter. It features subtle fragrant white flowers along the branches in mid fall. The smooth khaki (brownish-green) bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.



*Kembu False Holly*
*Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder*

**Landscape Attributes**

Kembu False Holly is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a shapely oval 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 is a relatively low maintenance shrub, 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;

- Spiny

Kembu False Holly is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- Topiary

**Planting & Growing**

Kembu False Holly will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It has a low canopy, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. 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 is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.