Black Sapote

Diospyros digyna

Height: 40 feet

Spread: 35 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Chocolate Pudding Fruit, Black Soapapple

Description:

A beautiful multi-stemmed fruit tree that is sometimes single stemmed; production of fruit requires both male and female trees; typically round-topped with an open, erect habit; ripe, edible fruit have a green-yellow exterior and chocolate brown interior

Edible Qualities

Black Sapote is a large tree that is commonly grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. It produces green round fruit (technically 'pomes') with brown flesh which are usually ready for picking from late summer to early fall. The fruits have a sweet taste and a soft texture.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Preserves

Features & Attributes

Black Sapote has dark green evergreen foliage on a tree with a round habit of growth. The glossy oval leaves remain dark green throughout the winter. The fruits are showy green pomes carried in abundance in late summer. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up.



Black Sapote
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Black Sapote foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This is an open multi-stemmed evergreen 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 is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

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

- Accent
- Shade
- Vertical Accent
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping

Planting & Growing

Black Sapote will grow to be about 40 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 35 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 3 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more. This is a female variety of the species which requires a male selection of the same species growing nearby in order to set fruit.

This tree can be integrated into a landscape or flower garden by creative gardeners, but is usually grown in a designated edibles garden. It 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 pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This species is not originally from North America.