Pacaya Palm

Chamaedorea tepejilote



Pacaya Palm
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ●

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Tepejilote Palm, Palmito Dulce

Description:

A usually single trunked palm, but includes a rarer clustering variety; tall, thick. dark green stems rise up, with ringed leaf scars that produce a bamboo-like appearance; fast growing, with long, feathery, glossy green leaves; avoid any direct sun

Ornamental Features

Pacaya Palm has attractive dark green evergreen foliage on a tree with the bulk of the canopy held atop a towering trunk or stem. The large glossy narrow pinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. It is draped in stunning clusters of yellow flowers with orange overtones hanging below the branches from early to mid summer. The fruits are showy black drupes displayed from late summer to early fall. The smooth bark and dark green branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Pacaya Palm is an open evergreen tree with a strong central leader and a towering form, with a high canopy of foliage concentrated at the top of the plant. It lends an extremely fine and delicate texture to the landscape composition which can make it a great accent feature on this basis alone.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Pacaya Palm is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Vertical Accent
- Mass Planting
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Pacaya Palm will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 feet. It has a high canopy with a typical clearance of 6 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years. This is a dioecious species, meaning that individual plants are either male or female. Only the females will produce fruit, and a male variety of the same species is required nearby as a pollinator.

This tree should only be grown in a well-shaded location. 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 pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America..

Pacaya Palm is a fine choice for the yard, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants 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 grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.