Cretan Date Palm

Phoenix theophrasti



Cretan Date Palm
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 25 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8

Description:

A compact, clumping variety, considered the hardiest of all the date palms; makes an excellent landscape focal point; showy ripe fruits are edible and sweet, but very small; grows in a wide range of conditions, in temperate and subtropical areas

Ornamental Features

Cretan Date Palm is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. The fruits are showy orange drupes carried in abundance in mid fall. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. It has attractive grayish green foliage with hints of silver. The large narrow pinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain grayish green throughout the winter. It has panicles of yellow flowers hanging below the branches from early to mid spring. The rough brown bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.



Cretan Date Palm fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Cretan Date Palm is a multi-stemmed evergreen tree with a towering form, with a high canopy of foliage concentrated at the top of the plant. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Cretan Date Palm is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Vertical Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- Windbreaks and Shelterbelts

Planting & Growing

Cretan Date Palm will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 25 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 5 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 60 years or more. 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 does best in full sun to partial shade. 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, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America..