



Congo Variegated Croton

Codiaeum variegatum 'Congo'

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ☐ ☒

Hardiness Zone: 10a

Other Names: Garden Croton, Variegated Laurel, Joseph's Coat

Description:

This woody perennial is a spectacular garden accent only in frost free climates, noted for its striking foliage; glossy, leathery, ovate or lanceolate leaves in a bright range of colors, yellow, pink, orange, red, bronze, green, and purple

Ornamental Features

Congo Variegated Croton features dainty racemes of white star-shaped flowers from late winter to early spring. Its attractive glossy oval leaves emerge lime green in spring, turning red in color with curious burgundy undersides and tinges of yellow the rest of the year.

Landscape Attributes

Congo Variegated Croton is a dense herbaceous evergreen perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its wonderfully bold, coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced garden composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Congo Variegated Croton is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Congo Variegated Croton will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an evergreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.



Congo Variegated Croton foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets.

Congo Variegated Croton is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use 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 growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.