

Pistacia chinensis – Chinese Pistache

This is a reliable choice for street, lawn or patio planting. Chinese pistache forms a broadly rounded tree. It has good orange to red autumn colour even in the milder climates and will tolerate a wide range of soil conditions. Once established it is frost and drought tolerant.

When to Plant: Plant in the Spring or the Autumn.

Where to Plant: These trees will adapt to almost any soil. They grow best in moist, well-drained, fertile soils.

Germination: Soak seed overnight in initially warm water. Scrape the individual seed coat lightly with a sharp knife before immersion to assist water penetration.

Sow: In a media of one part sharp sand to four parts peat or medium seed propagation media. Maintain media in a moist but not damp state in a warm but shady position. Covering the propagation tray with clear polythene can assist in promoting germination. Germination requires a temperature of not less than 18°C. Prick out the young seedlings at about 3 to 4cm and pot up in a similar media in individual tubes. Protect against slugs and snails.

Plant out: Grow in a sunny position in a good well-drained fertile loamy soil in full sun after the danger of frost has passed.

Care & Maintenance: Your Chinese Pistache will probably need some pruning early on to form a good, straight crown. It is a good idea to leave lower branches on the tree for a couple of years to establish a stronger trunk. The tree has few pest problems and is very drought tolerant after becoming established.

Other Information: Pistache trees are dioecious (male and female flowers on separate trees). The female tree produces fruit which is attracts birds in the Autumn.