

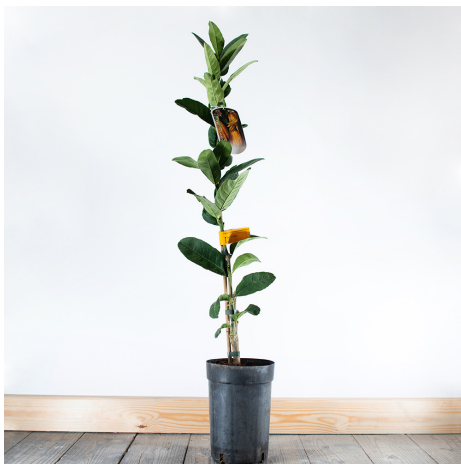
Buddha's Hand Tree (Citrus medica)



These trees produce spectacular looking fruits that are prized for their appearance and powerful aroma of both blossom and fruit. Believed to have originated in India and travelled to China with Buddhist monks there use is still popular in religious ceremonies. They are a symbol of good luck and happiness making them a popular New Year's gift in Japan.

Buddha's Hands are sensitive to temperatures below 5°C. Trees must be over wintered in a greenhouse, conservatory or a very well lit room in the house. Maintain good ventilation on hot days, when temperatures are reliably above 5°C they can be moved outside. Take care in the first week outside not to expose plants to full sun for long periods. Once acclimatised the more sun the better.

Blossom usually appears in the spring, local environments will influence timing and flowers can appear throughout the year. Buddha's Hands are self-fertile, fruits are very dark green initially, even a little purple, they quickly take on their unique many fingered appearance. Maturing as days shorten and temperatures drop, the fruits will usually ripen to large, yellow fruits in time for Christmas.



Caring for your plant

Water well so all compost in the pot is hydrated and allow compost to dry right out before watering again. This is a more suitable approach than watering little and often, never allow plants to stand in water. Like all citrus they are hungry plants so feed regularly with a citrus fertiliser following the products instructions.

Planting

Re-pot in spring and early summer, use a pot 25% larger than the existing one, for best results use a compost designed for use with citrus that is free draining and acidic.

Prune to the desired shape, controlling fast growing shoots, that occasionally grow much quicker than the rest of the plant, by pruning to match surrounding growth. A round, bushy appearance is the most common form for citrus trees and they will often take on this shape with little intervention. Capable of reaching heights of 5m, they can easily be controlled to maintain a smaller size.

Traditional citrus pests are red spider mite, aphid, leaf miner and scale insects. Mostly treatable with a soap based spray, it is good practice to rinse the plant with these once a month to prevent build up.

Harvesting

Wildly aromatic the fruit emits strong citrus notes that emanate from this alien looking centrepiece. Fruits have no juice, just peel and pith! Zest is added to vegetables or in baking and infuses very well into flavour vinegar, salt, sugar, syrup and sweet alcohol like 'cellos. The pith is less bitter than the pith of other citrus and can be used, raw, baked, pickled, preserved or infused.

Please don't hesitate to get in contact with The Wasabi Team if you have any questions

