

Myrtus communis

(Myrtle)

This beautiful evergreen shrub or small tree with a round, compact and spreading shape is a true Mediterranean species that is native to Europe. It has been cultivated since Biblical times both as a commercial source of perfume oil and as a garden plant. In the wild it can be found on poor soils in protected locations. It has a small, pointed, glossy bright-green leaves are held on a dense, twiggy structure. When clipped, the leaves release fragrant oils. Myrtle blooms in early summer, bearing abundant, small, white flowers with beautiful fluffy stamens. The flowers are fragrant and followed by small black berries that mature in the fall. This shrub prefers less fertile soils and good drainage is essential, as is occasional deep watering for maximized drought tolerance. If pruned into a single or multiple trunk in youth, this shrub can produce a lovely small tree with gnarled twisted branching. When left natural it will develop a dense habit that is ideal for privacy screening or use as a windbreak. It withstands maritime exposure extremely well. Myrtle is a great alternative to boxwood in the xeriscape garden and an essential part of any Mediterranean landscape scheme.



Plant Image

Landscape Information

French Name: Myrte, Myrte commun ou Nerte

Pronunciation: MER-tus KOM-yoo-nis

Plant Type: Shrub

Origin: Mediterranean

Heat Zones: 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Hardiness Zones: 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

Uses: Hedge, Container, Windbreak, Edible, Medicinal, Wildlife

Size/Shape

Growth Rate: Moderate

Tree Shape: Round

Canopy Symmetry: Symmetrical

Canopy Density: Medium

Canopy Texture: Fine

Height at Maturity: 1.5 to 3 m

Spread at Maturity: 1.5 to 3 meters

Time to Ultimate Height: 5 to 10 Years

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Flower Image

Botanical Description

Foliage

Leaf Arrangement: Opposite

Leaf Venation: Pinnate

Leaf Persistence: Evergreen

Leaf Type: Simple

Leaf Blade: Less than 5

Leaf Shape: Lanceolate

Leaf Margins: Entire

Leaf Textures: Waxy

Leaf Scent: Pleasant

Color(growing season): Green

Color(changing season): Green

Flower

Flower Showiness: True

Flower Size Range: 1.5 - 3

Flower Type: Solitary

Flower Sexuality: Monoecious (Bisexual)

Flower Scent: Pleasant

Flower Color: White

Seasons: Spring, Winter

Trunk

Trunk Susceptibility to Breakage: Generally resists breakage

Number of Trunks: Multi-Trunked, Can be trained to one trunk

Trunk Esthetic Values: Not Showy

Fruit

Fruit Type: Berry

Fruit Showiness: True

Fruit Size Range: 1.5 - 3

Fruit Colors: Blue

Seasons: Spring, Winter

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Leaf Image

© Photo by Monika Fabian

Horticulture Management

Tolerance

Frost Tolerant: Yes

Heat Tolerant: Yes

Drought Tolerant: Yes

Salt Tolerance: Good

Requirements

Soil Requirements: Clay, Loam, Sand

Soil Ph Requirements: Acidic, Neutral, Alkaline

Water Requirements: Moderate, Low

Light Requirements: Full, Part

Management

Toxity: No

Invasive Potential: No

Susceptibility to Pests and Diseases: Yes

Pruning Requirement: Little needed, to develop a strong structure

Fruit/ Leaves/ Flowers litter: No

Surface Rooting: No

Life Span: 25-50 years

Edible Parts: Fruit

Plant Propagations: Seed, Cutting

MORE IMAGES



Fruit Image



Other Image