Olea europaea

(Olive Tree)

Olive trees can live for thousands of years. Some of the oldest olive trees in Lebanon are found in the village of Bchaaleh, in North Lebanon. Scientists used carbon dating on one tree and found that it was 6,000 years old!

In Lebanon people harvest olives after the first rain in autumn rain because it washes away the dust accumulated during summer. Clean fruits produce purer oil with a richer flavor. The rain also softens the soil, making it easier to collect the olives by shaking the branches or gently beating them without harming the roots. The rain also helps the fruit become mature: it swells and softens, becomes easy to detach, and produce more oil. Green and black olives are the same fruit; the difference is that green olives are still immature and they turn black when they mature.

In the past, many schools in villages that grow olives gave time off to school students during the harvest season. Olive picking is labor-intensive and usually done by hand, so families relied on everyone's help, including children. Schools would often close for a few days or weeks to allow students to take part in the harvest.

The olive tree was sacred in ancient Greece, where the Olympic Games were held to honor Zeus, the olive tree was considered sacred because, it was planted or blessed by Heracles the son of Zeus. Athletes winners in the Olympic Games received a crown made of olive branches symbolizing divine favor and glory.

To this day, the Olive branch is a symbol of peace, life, and new beginnings. This value is based on the story of Noah who wanted to know if the flood was ending so he released a doves. When one returned with an olive branch in its beak Noah knew that waters were receding and that life on Earth was starting again.



Plant Image

Landscape Information

French Name: Olivier Zaytoon :Arabic Name

Pronounciation: OH-lee-a yoo-ROH-pay-a

Plant Type: Tree

Origin: Asia

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

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

Uses: Bonsai, Specimen, Container, Edible

Size/Shape

Growth Rate: Slow

Tree Shape: Round, Spreading Canopy Symmetry: Irregular Canopy Density: Dense Canopy Texture: Fine

Height at Maturity: 8 to 15 m

Spread at Maturity: 10 to 15 meters

Time to Ultimate Height: More than 50 Years

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Flower Image

Botanical Description

Foliage

Leaf Arrangement: Opposite

Leaf Venation: Pinnate

Leaf Persistance: Evergreen

Leaf Type: Simple

Leaf Blade: Less than 5
Leaf Shape: Lanceolate
Leaf Margins: Entire
Leaf Textures: Medium
Leaf Scent: No Fragance

Color(growing season): Green, Silver

Color(changing season): Green

Flower

Flower Showiness: False Flower Size Range: 0 - 1.5

Flower Type: Spike

Flower Sexuality: Monoecious (Bisexual)

Flower Scent: Pleasant Flower Color: Yellow, White

Seasons: Spring

Trunk

Trunk Has Crownshaft: False

Trunk Susceptibility to Breakage: Generally

resists breakage

Number of Trunks: Single Trunk
Trunk Esthetic Values: Showy

Fruit

Fruit Type: Drupe Fruit Showiness: True Fruit Size Range: 1.5 - 3 Fruit Colors: Green, Black

Seasons: Spring

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Leaf Image

Horticulture Management

Tolerance

Frost Tolerant: Yes
Heat Tolerant: Yes
Drought Tolerant: Yes
Salt Tolerance: Moderate

Requirements

Soil Requirements: Loam, Sand

Soil Ph Requirements: Acidic, Alkaline

Water Requirements: Low Light Requirements: Full

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: Yes

Surface Rooting: No Life Span: More than 50 Edible Parts: Fruit

Pests: Scales

Plant Propagations: Cutting, Grafting

MORE IMAGES



Fruit Image



Bark Image



Other Image