

Specialty & Other Exotic Fruit Trees

Fruit Salad / Fruit Cocktail

The fruit salad trees are remarkable, multi-variety trees that combines several stone fruits—apricots, nectarines, peaches, and plums—grafted onto a single tree. The fruit cocktail tree is a fruit salad tree that has a variety of cherry as one of the grafts. These unique hybrids allow gardeners to enjoy multiple fruits in a small space, making it ideal for urban gardens or those with limited planting areas. Each variety ripens at different times, ensuring a continuous harvest throughout the growing season. The tree itself has a spreading canopy, offering both beauty and shade, and its diverse fruit selection means you can enjoy a range of flavors from sweet to tart. Not only does it provide delicious fruit, but it also showcases stunning blossoms in spring, adding ornamental value to any landscape.

Pollination: The fruit salad or fruit cocktail tree are self-pollinating, meaning it does not require another tree for fruit production. However, if you have space, having other stone fruit trees nearby may help improve yields.

Plumcot

A plumcot is a fascinating hybrid, created by crossing Asian plums and apricots. This fruit offers the best characteristics of both, with smooth, plum-like skin and an interior that has the sweet, tangy flavor of apricots. The flesh is exceptionally juicy, with a rich balance of sweetness and acidity, making it perfect for fresh eating, pies, preserves, and even savory dishes like chutneys and salsas. Plumcots also have a higher sugar content than traditional plums, giving them a naturally sweeter and more complex flavor. Their trees are low-maintenance and hardy, making them an excellent choice for home orchards.

Pollination: Though plumcots can self-pollinate, they produce better yields when planted with another plumcot or a Japanese plum variety like Beauty, Shiro, Santa Rosa, Satsuma, or Methley.

Cherry Plum

Cherry plums are a delightful hybrid between Japanese plums and cherry plums, creating a small, round clingstone fruit, with bright red or purple skin. Their firm yet juicy texture makes them enjoyable for fresh eating, and they are also excellent for preserves, jellies, and sauces. The flavor is milder than a traditional plum, with a pleasant balance of sweetness and tartness. Cherry plum trees are compact, hardy, and easy to grow, making them ideal for smaller gardens. In early spring, they bloom with delicate white flowers, adding ornamental appeal before setting fruit. These trees are also highly disease-resistant, requiring minimal maintenance while providing both beauty and productivity.

Pollination: Cherry plums need another Japanese plum variety like Beauty, Shiro, Santa Rosa, or specific cherry plum varieties like Delight or Sprite for optimal pollination.

Pluerry

Pluerries are an exciting hybrid that combines the sweet, juicy qualities of cherries with the firm texture and tartness of Japanese plums. These round, glossy fruits range in color from deep red to purple, with firm but succulent flesh. One of their most unique features is their late season ripening, typically at the end of summer or early fall, which allows gardeners to enjoy fresh fruit beyond the typical stone fruit harvest period. The extended season makes pluerries a valuable addition to any orchard, providing a flavorful crop when other fruits have finished. Their high sugar content and rich taste make them versatile for fresh eating, baking, jams, jellies, and even savory dishes.

Pollination: Pluerries require another pluerry variety or a Japanese plum tree like Beauty, Burbank, Santa Rosa, Satsuma, or Methley for successful cross-pollination and optimal fruit production.

Pluot

Pluots are an innovative hybrid, consisting of 75% Japanese plum and 25% apricot. They closely resemble plums but have a noticeably sweeter flavor and smoother flesh. Their texture is rich and juicy, with an apricot-like depth that makes them stand out from traditional plums. Pluots thrive in cooler, wetter climates, making them a great option for regions where plums may not perform as well. Their trees are highly productive and are relatively low maintenance, producing large harvests each season. Pluots are excellent for fresh eating, baking, and making preserves due to their vibrant flavor and high sugar content.

Pollination: Pluots require another Japanese plum, such as 'Santa Rosa,' or another pluot variety for proper pollination and fruit set.

Fig (*Ficus carica*)

Figs are fast-growing, deciduous trees that can reach heights of 15-30 feet, depending on the variety. Thriving in full sun and well-drained soil, they are particularly well-suited for home gardeners. Figs are unique in that they do not require pollination to set fruit, making them easy to grow with little maintenance. Most varieties produce two crops annually—one in early summer and another from late summer into fall. Their rich, honey-like flavor makes them ideal for fresh eating, preserves, or drying. Figs also attract pollinators such as bees, contributing to a biodiverse garden. Their ability to adapt to various climates and their prolific fruit production make them a valuable addition to any orchard.

Pollination: Figs are self-fruitful and do not require cross-pollination, though certain varieties may benefit from fig wasp pollination in specific climates.

Jujube (*Ziziphus jujuba*)

Jujubes, or Chinese dates, are compact, hardy trees that reach about 20 feet in height. Juvenile trees will have thorns. With a zig-zag branching pattern, the jujube tree is very ornamental during the winter months. Exceptionally drought-resistant, these trees thrive in dry / arid conditions where other fruit trees may struggle. The small, reddish-brown fruit is sweet and crisp, similar in texture to an apple, and can be eaten fresh or dried for later use. Jujubes are packed with vitamins and are commonly used in teas, snacks, and traditional medicines. The trees produce fragrant white flowers in spring, adding a touch of beauty to their functional appeal.

Pollination: Jujubes are mostly self-fertile, but planting multiple varieties can improve fruit set and yield.

Mulberry (*Morus*)

Mulberry trees are large, deciduous trees known for their high productivity, often growing over 30 feet tall and wide if left unpruned. They produce an abundance of sweet, blackberry-like fruit that is excellent for eating freshly, freezing, or using in jams, pies, and wines. Unlike many fruit trees, mulberries are highly drought-tolerant, making them well-suited to dry climates. Their leaves are also edible, similar to grape leaves, and can be used in cooking. The trees attract wildlife, especially birds, making them a great choice for biodiversity.

Pollination: Mulberry trees are self-pollinating, meaning they do not require another tree for fruit production.

Paw Paw (*Asimina*)

Paw Paw trees are slow-growing, tropical-looking trees that produce large, oblong fruits with a creamy, custard-like texture. The flavor is often compared to a blend of banana, mango, and melon. Paw paws require full sun and well-drained soil, and they are one of the few North American native fruits that thrive in temperate climates. The trees are typically grafted to ensure consistent fruit production.

Pollination: Paw paws require at least two different varieties for cross-pollination to set fruit.

Persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*)

Persimmon trees are small, ornamental trees that produce two types of fruit; astringent and non-astringent. Astringent persimmons are best picked and ripened until soft and nearly mushy before they are sweet enough to eat. These are the sweeter, richer and juicier than non-astringent and are nice as a dried delicacy. Non-astringent persimmons can be eaten fresh right from the tree and are crisp like an apple. Non-astringents have a more mellow sweet flavor like cantaloupe or sugarcane. Both types of fruit are high in fiber and full of vitamins A and C. The fruit can be eaten fresh, naked in desserts, or in salads.

Pollination: Asian persimmons are self-fertile, while American persimmons require another tree for cross-pollination.

Quince (*Cydonia*)

Quince trees are compact and have a similar look to an apple tree. These trouble-free deciduous trees produce aromatic pretty spring blossoms and pear-shaped fruit. The fruit is tart when raw but transforms into a sweet, fragrant delicacy when cooked. Quinces are commonly used for making jams, jellies, and baked goods.

Pollination: Most quince varieties are self-fertile, but planting another variety can enhance fruit size and production.

Sour Plum (*Goje Sabz*)

Persian green plums are native to Iran and are a popular fruit in the Middle East. They are often picked while still green and crunchy and are eaten fresh or cooked. They are hardy in zones 6 – 9. Trees will bloom in March and the green skinned / yellow fleshed fruit is tart and ripens in August. Persian green plum trees are relatively small so they make a great addition to any home garden with limited space.

Pollination: Persian green plums are self-fertile, but they can produce more fruit if pollinated by another European plum like Blue Damson, Green Gage, Italian Stanley, or Seneca.