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Olive Guide

Olea 'Compacta' aka 'Little Ollie'

This uniquely **dwarf** olive has a place in everyone's yard. Slow growing to 6 feet. This attractive gray green foliage is excellent choice for a specimen plant, rounded in form, or can be used as a hedge. Some have used it as a row planting up their long driveway and in front of a row fence where it is hot and dry. Good choice for a container. Essentially fruitless, but can have some fruit as it matures. Not significant. Other attributes of 'Little Ollie', it is salt tolerant. Make Little Ollie your favorite.

Available in a Patio Tree form. Good choice for pots.

Olea 'Royal Fruitless' aka 'Majestic Beauty'

The olive most loved by designers as an ornamental specimen. Its compact size of 22 feet can be situated in ones landscape handily. This cutting-grown cultivar has graceful weeping branches with narrower leaves. This variety does not produce the messy and large fruit of its more infamous relatives. Thrives in full sun and is drought tolerant. Popular among homeowners desiring an olive tree without the fruit.

Olea 'Wilsonii'

The near fruitless variety of Wilsonii olive grows to 25' high and wide. Like Majestic Beauty, it is smaller in size compared to the fruiting olives, making this a fine specimen of an ornamental tree. Wilsonii has been grown along the coast of California where fog rolls in during summer. This variety was found in a grove of Manzanillo orchard in 1979. In rich soil, leaves can reach up to 4". Drought tolerant and needs little fertilization.

Olea 'Mission'

The popular olive of the old missions of California. Used widely for cold-pressed olive oil. Has a medium-sized deep purple to jet-black, oval fruit when ripe. Fruit ripens late and is good for pickling (green) and oil 22% (ripe). Mission is more cold resistant. It is a vigorous, fast growing when young and heavy fruit bearing variety that grows to around 30 feet plus with age. Accepts heavy pruning and can be kept shorter for ornamental or fruit production. Good pollinator. The Mission olive is prized as a dual-purpose variety, being used in green pickling and black for oil production.

Olea 'Manzanillo'

The most widely grown olive in California & Australia, originating from Spain. Manzanillo is a vigorous, and more spreading habit compared to other olives and slightly shorter than Mission. Also accepts heavy pruning and can be shaped to show a multi-stemmed tree. The apple-shaped fruit is light green and spotted with tiny whitish dots that resist bruising. The oil from this variety has the rich green color and abundant flavor characterizing the fall harvest varieties, combined with a slight tartness that adds zest to any food. This oil is known for its distinguished olive character and fruitiness. While Manzanillo is considered to be one of the world's outstanding table olives, it also produces high quality oil and has a laboratory tested oil content of 20.3%. Manzanillo oils received much acclaim at a Californian Organoleptic Oil Assessment (oil tasting) organized in late 1998 by International Olive Oil Council Panel Heads, Paul Vossen and Roberto Zecca.

Olea 'California Olive Queen'

This large olive used when ripe for eating. A delicacy among connoisseurs that generally stuff these large olives. In the same line as Sevillano. Self-fruitful, vigorous, and easy to grow. Grows to 25 to 30 feet. A single tree can produce enough olives for the connoisseur.

Olea 'Arbequina'

Arbequina olive (Spanish) is a very adaptable plant that produces abundantly in hot, dry regions. This variety (aka cultivar) has improved hardiness compared to other varieties and can endure temperatures as low as 5 degrees F. The rich brown fruit of this self-fruited olive tree and its high oil content and beautiful silvery green foliage make it a sought-after cultivar for olive oil producers.

Initially green in color, its tiny, meaty olives soon change to a pale pink hue before becoming glossy black after they have fully matured on the tree and are ready to be plucked. Weeping branches with lustrous, silvery-green leaves are characteristic of Arbequina olive trees, which thrive in warm regions and keep their color all year. At maturity, they reach a height of 15-20 feet and a spread of 8-12 feet, depending on the species. However, it can reach 35 to 40 ft. tall and 25 ft. wide in the canopy. Arbequina is exceedingly versatile and thrive in ordinary, slightly alkaline, well-drained soils. Watering appropriately when young is key to a more successful planting.

Olea 'Arizona' aka "Swan Hill"

Olea Arizona (aka Swan Hill). Name of the State where it was originated. The growth rate of the non-fruited Arizona Olive is considered to be 'moderate' and can be planted in both lawn and desert adapted landscape design. Generally, Arizona does not tolerate saturated soils, especially within the first 6 to 12 months following transplanting. Carefully pruned multiple trunk Arizona usually reach a mature height of 30 feet by 20-30 feet wide. Under ideal conditions they can easily grow to 35 foot tall by 30 wide in 10-15 years following planting. If allergies is an issue, this olive has significantly less pollen.

Olea 'Arbosana'

From Spain, maturing a bit later than Arbequina, this cultivar is considered more robust than the latter, well-known cultivar. It has a fruity flavor, along with nutty tones, and medium pungency. It's does well in high-density plantings and is commonly grown in Northern California. Have Grey-Green Leaves.

Makes excellent brined olives. Good for home orchards as it is **dwarfing**, growing only to about 12 feet in height and is self-fertile. Being 'wind pollinated', they need to be planted no more than 20' apart.