Tea Plant

Camellia sinensis

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 7a

Description:

A slow growing evergreen shrub or small tree, that is primarily grown to produce tea, but is also adorned with lovely, fragrant white flowers in fall, over green, glossy leaves; great for shady landscapes; provide rich, acidic, moist, well-drained soil

Edible Qualities

Tea Plant is a woody herb that is typically grown for its edible qualities. The glossy pointy dark green leaves which emerge light green in spring are usually harvested from mid spring to early fall. The leaves have a pleasant taste and a distinctive fragrance.

The leaves are most often used in the following ways:

- Tea

Features & Attributes

Tea Plant has attractive dark green evergreen foliage which emerges light green in spring on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth. The large glossy pointy leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. It features showy lightly-scented white round flowers with yellow eyes and gold anthers at the ends of the branches from mid fall to early winter.



Tea Plant flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Tea Plant in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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This is a multi-stemmed evergreen woody herb with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition. This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Tea Plant is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Tea Plant will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This plant is typically grown in a designated herb garden. It does best in partial shade to shade. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth, but will die in standing water. This plant should be periodically fertilized throughout the active growing season with a specially-formulated acidic fertilizer. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in both summer and winter to conserve soil moisture and protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

Tea Plant is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.