

## Fruit Trees & Exotic Fruit Trees

**Apples** - Apple trees come in different sizes, depending largely on the rootstock that they have been grafted onto. Pruning should be done in late winter to early spring. Apples can be used in many ways such as eating, fresh, canning, pies and even drying. Some of the best varieties for ripening in Western Washington include the following: Braeburn, Beni Shogun Fuji, Cosmic Crisp, Elstar, Fuji, Gala, Gravenstein, Honeycrisp, Jonagold, Liberty, Melrose, Mutsu, Rosey Glow, Spartan and Williams Pride.

### Pollination

Apple trees always need to have a pollinizer, unless you choose a combination tree, which has more than one variety grafted onto a single stem. The following varieties are not reliable pollinizers: Gravenstein, Braeburn, Red McIntosh, King, and Mutsu. These varieties are called triploid plants. That means that they must have another tree to pollinize themselves, plus the pollinizer will require another tree to pollinize it. Combination trees are great for gardens with limited space. Combo espaliered apple trees are also available in 2 tier and 3 tier. Another type of apple is in a colonnade form for especially small gardens or for potted trees on a patio.

**Apricots** - These deciduous trees can be grown quite successfully in the Pacific NW with some limitations such as late frosts. These late frosts can severely reduce the amount of blooms which in turn will limit the amount of fruit produced. Apricots are a good dual purpose tree making a nice ornamental as well as a fruiting tree.

### Pollination

All apricot trees are self-fertile.

**Asian Pears** - These beautiful trees are also called pear apples. The pears have a rough skin with crunchy flesh like an apple but gritty like a pear. Most Asian pears are large in size and very juicy. Trees tend to overbear, therefore, thinning the fruit to one pear per cluster is important in order for the tree to produce large fruit.

### Pollination

Asian pears need to have another variety as pollinizer. Nijiseiki and Shinseiki are somewhat self fertile in warmer climates. Most varieties will pollinate each other. Late blooming Asian pears will cross pollinate with early blooming European pears. Combination trees are also available and are great for gardens with limited space. These are also available in an espaliered 2 or 3 tier form.

**Cherries** - There are two types of cherries: sweet and sour. Sweet cherries are used for eating fresh off the tree or in canning and sometimes jams. Sour cherries are mainly used for pies and baking, but can also be eaten fresh from the tree. There is a new dwarf shrub cherry that is ideal for container growing. These varieties are Romeo, Juliet and Carmine Jewel. These types of dwarf bush cherries are a sour type of cherry but are still incredibly sweet in flavor and thus are self-fertile. The Gisela cherry tree is a unique dwarf rootstock making a mature tree grow only up to 8'-10'. Fruit yield is very productive and abundant. These dwarf Gisela trees are a big advantage in every aspect; from picking your fruit to the pruning, spraying and general care of the tree.

### Pollination

Cherries are self-sterile, meaning that another cherry tree is needed to pollinate it. Not all sweet cherries will pollinate each other. The following varieties though are self-fertile: Glacier, Lapins, and Stella. Sour cherries are self-fertile meaning that they do not need another pollinizer. It is advisable though to have another tree to pollinate for a better and higher yield of fruit. Do not rely on sour cherries to pollinate sweet cherries since the blooming time is different. Combination trees with 3 or 4 different varieties grafted onto one tree may also be an option, especially when space is a problem. These too come in an espaliered 2 or 3 tier form.

**European Pears** - The regular eating and canning pears are called European pears. Pear trees in the landscape can add strong vertical lines. Bees generally are not as attracted to pear blossoms as they are to apple blossoms. Pear trees make excellent espalier forms for your garden; not only making pollination easy but also great for harvesting. Do not let the pears ripen on the tree. Pick the fruit when the stem snaps off the tree as you hold the fruit vertically. Ripen the fruit in a dark area in your home.

### **Pollination**

Pear trees should be planted close to each other, within 100 feet or so. Some early blooming European pears will cross pollinate with late blooming Asian pears. Combination pear trees, with more than one variety grafted onto one stem are also available and a good option for small gardens. These too come in an espaliered 2 or 3 tier form.

**Fruit Salad/Fruit Cocktail** - This is a new introduction of a combination tree which includes several varieties of stone fruit. This tree has apricots, nectarines, peaches and plums all grafted onto one tree. Fruit ripens at varying times. This is a great way to save space in your garden. These are also available in an espaliered 2 or 3 tier form. Fruit Salad/Fruit cocktail trees are self-fertile.

**Peaches & Nectarines** - (All peaches and nectarines are self-fertile) - Peach and nectarine trees look alike and have the same cultural needs. All nectarines have a smooth skin. Peach trees start bearing large crops when three to four years old and peak at eight to twelve years of age. Peaches and nectarines tend to produce too much fruit if not well pruned. Remove (thinning) some of the excess fruit when they are about one inch in width. It is very important that every season at least 2/3 of the previous year's growth is pruned out. Peach and nectarine trees benefit from regular fertilization and hot sunny summers.

**Plums & Prunes** - There are two types of plums, Japanese and European. Most Japanese plums are used for fresh fruit only. With a few exceptions the Japanese plum is usually larger, a pleasant blend of acid and sugar and somewhat juicier. European plums are actually prunes. They have a higher sugar content, which enables them to be used for drying without fermenting at the pit. As a fresh fruit they are sweeter than a Japanese plum. There is a new plum-cherry hybrid called Nadia, which is self-fertile and is the size of a small plum with the juice and internal color of a cherry.

### **Pollination**

Japanese and European varieties of plums do not cross pollinate. European plums have been known to be self-fertile. Two different Japanese plum varieties will be needed to produce fruit. Combination trees with 3 or 4 different varieties grafted onto one tree may also be an option, especially when space is a problem. These also are available in an espalier 2 or 3 tier form. Nadia plums are self-fertile or act as a good pollinizer.

## **Exotic Fruit Trees**

**Fig (Ficus carica)** - Deciduous tree. Figs are a fairly fast growing tree reaching 15-30' in mature height depending on the variety. Fig trees are generally very happy in the Pacific Northwest. Success with figs depends on planting the right varieties. All of our varieties do well in this area. They like full sun, good drainage and most types of garden soil. Home garden fig trees do not need pollinizing and most varieties bear two crops per year, the first one in July and the second one in August to October.

**Jujube (Ziziphus jujuba)** - A Chinese native plant that features a compact growth habit and lacy foliage. Growth habit up to 20' tall and 12' wide with butter yellow fall leaf color. Profuse fragrant small white flowers. Jujubes are self-fertile but bear better when planted with another variety. Fruit can be eaten fresh or dried. Reddish brown fruit is sweet, crunchy and packed with vitamins. We have several varieties to choose from.

**Mulberry (Morus)** – Deciduous tree, not a bush. Mulberries can grow quite large if left un-pruned. Mulberry trees can be quite messy but there are so many great attributes to offset this. Mulberries are abundant producers. The berries can be used fresh, frozen, dehydrated or even for wine. Not only are their berries in abundance but their leaves are edible as well, just like grape leaves. Trees are drought resistant and hardy in all regions. Mulberries are quite popular with wildlife like birds and bees. They do not need a pollinator.

**Paw Paw (Asimina)** - Unique and popular tree, slow growing with exotic and tropical looking foliage which can reach a foot in length. Fruit shape is oblong and borne in clusters opposite each other. Flesh texture is custard-like, fruity and banana-like in flavor. This tree needs full sun. A combination of two varieties is needed for fruit production. All of our Paw Paws are grafted.

**Persimmon (Diospyros kaki)** - Asian persimmon is one of the most widely planted fruits in the world. A small very ornamental tree. Fall color is red, yellow and orange along with the fruit which hangs on to the tree long after the leaves have fallen. All of our Asian persimmon varieties are self-fertile. Persimmon fruit is seedless and similar in shape to an apple. Most fruit is yellow or orange in color and becomes sweeter as the fruit softens.

**Quince (Cydonia)** - These easy to grow fruiting and ornamental trees are strikingly beautiful with large white flowers. The fruit is used in baking and in preserves. Fruit is large, waxy and shaped like a lemon. The fruit is various shades of yellow in color and highly fragrant. Quinces are self-fertile and like at least a half day of sun. This is a small tree that grows to 10-12' tall and naturally compact in growth.