

Cuban Royal Palm

The Royal Palm, native to Florida, Mexico and the Caribbean, has been planted throughout the subtropics and tropics as an ornamental tree. This tall and beautiful palm once lined an avenue in Arriyadh’s oldest park, the Foutah Gardens, just south of Murabba. The Royal Palm grows to a height of 20–30 metres with a spread of 9 metres; its trunk, up to 50 cm in diameter, has characteristic swellings, just below the long, bright-green crown shaft from which the large feathery leaves emerge, and a lesser bulge at the base. The smooth, light-grey bark has rings where the fronds once were. Arching, pinnate leaves, which can be up to 4 m long, are a lush green. The panicles of white flowers in summer are followed by small, berry like fruits, purplish-black when ripe. *R. regia* prefers deep, fertile, well-drained, neutral soil and full sun. Frost-tender, it withstands short periods of cold, but may be killed by temperatures below –4°C. It requires regular irrigation, but should never stand in water. Propagation is from small, round seeds. Being fast-growing, Royal Palms are highly recommended for roadside planting, on boulevards, ceremonial driveways and parks. Owing to their size, they are not suitable for small gardens. A disadvantage is that trees let large leaves snap off in order to reduce wind resistance, which can be a hazard. Maintenance is intensive, since Royal Palms are susceptible to many insects. especially palm leaf skeletonisers, palmetto weevils and Royal Palm bug. The fungus ganoderma will also quickly kill trees.



| GENERAL        |                                   |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Origin         | : tropical                        |
| Vigour         | : normal growth rate              |
| Humidity       | : very humid, extremely humid     |
| Propagation    | : sowing and pricking out         |
| Maintenance    | : moderate                        |
| CONDITIONS     |                                   |
| Urban climate  | : vulnerable                      |
| Dessication    | : vulnerable                      |
| Stagnant water | : vulnerable                      |
| Irrigation     | : high                            |
| Salinity/ppm   | : moderate (3000 ppm)             |
| Hardiness      | : 0°C                             |
| SHAPE          |                                   |
| Type           | : palms                           |
| Height         | : 15 m-30 m                       |
| Spread         | : 5 m-9 m                         |
| Foliage        | : evergreen                       |
| FLOWER         |                                   |
| Colour         | : white, pale yellow, light brown |
| Size           | : 150 cm                          |
| Period         | : June - August                   |
| FRUIT          |                                   |
| Type of fruit  | : drupe                           |
| Fruit size     | : 1.5 cm                          |