

Variegated Caribbean Agave

GENERAL

Origin	: Mediterranean, sub-tropical, tropical
Humidity	: very arid, semi-arid
Propagation	: direct sowing, division
Maintenance	: low

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: resistant
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (2000 ppm)
Hardiness	: 0°C

SHAPE

Type	: cacti, succulents
Height	: 0.9 m
Spread	: 1.6 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: yellow
Size	: 5 cm
Period	: March - May

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 7 cm

This Agave is the right choice for locations that are limited in size. It is easier to manage than its larger relatives. The stiff, lanceolate foliage is armed with terminal spines and features cream-coloured edges with small serrations. Leaves grow to some 50 cm length and about 10 cm width. Like other species, the Variegated Caribbean Agave may take many years to flower. This event only occurs once, and the rosette dies back entirely when a flower stalk of some 2.5 metres shoots up. Single flowers are borne in greenish-yellow and are 5 cm in length. Seedlings usually do not show any variegation, so that plants are generally propagated by suckers that are grown in abundance. This agave grows in full sun and, it is drought-resistant. It does best in well-drained soil with occasional watering, and other soils should be allowed to dry between water applications but before the plants start to wilt. It is well suited to containers and lasts for years in rootbound conditions. On the other hand, plants are vulnerable to stagnant water, especially when associated with low temperatures. Hard frost is not tolerated and immediately results in wilted leaves that do not recover. Plants are rarely infested by diseases or pests, but in adverse conditions they may be afflicted by scale. Variegated Caribbean Agaves look highly impressive in pots or containers and make valuable accent plants in smaller rock gardens or in any situation where greening must tolerate some neglect. Attractive specimens may be seen in the Diplomatic Quarter.

