

Canary Island Date Palm

GENERAL

Origin	: Mediterranean
Vigour	: normal growth rate
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi-humid, semi-humid, very humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out
Maintenance	: moderate

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: resistant
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: high (5000 ppm)
Hardiness	: -6°C

SHAPE

Type	: palms
Height	: 6 m-18 m
Spread	: 7 m-15 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: bright yellow
Size	: 10 cm - 100 cm
Period	: February - June

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: drupe(fleshy/ juicy)
Fruit size	: 1.5 cm - 2.3 cm
Toxicity	: inedible, fruit

The Canary Island Date Palm, native to the Canary Islands, is a relative of *Phoenix dactylifera*, the true date palm. The difference between the two is easily recognized by Canary Island Date Palm's crown of dark green fronds (*P. dactylifera* has blue-green fronds) and the pineapple shape of the short, thick trunk (*P. dactylifera* is tall and straight). *P. canariensis* is widely planted as an ornamental plant, particularly in areas with a Mediterranean climate. It is often seen in Arriyadh, where the difference goes unnoticed, except by botanists. It is less frost- and drought-tolerant than *P. dactylifera*. It is a large-spreading, densely branched palm, up to 18 metres tall and 15 m wide. The glossy green leaves are pinnate, with sharp spines along the lower part of the stem. Fruit is produced on female palms as an oval, yellow to orange drupe containing a single seed, and is of poor quality. A slow-growing tree requiring full sun, it is frost-tolerant to -7°C for only a short period. *P. canariensis* prefers a rich, moist, alluvial, sandy soil: salinity tolerance is medium. Irrigation requirements are moderate. Propagation is by seed. Many pests attack this palm: giant palm borer weevils, leaf skeletonisers and scale. It is also susceptible to lethal yellowing, fusarium and ganoderma fungal diseases. The high maintenance of this palm involves trimming to enhance its appearance: they are often 'pineappled' to stop fronds from touching cars or pedestrians, as well as clearing fruit litter. It is best planted along roads and in parks.

