

## Crape Myrtle

Native to China, the Crape Myrtle is a beautiful, tall shrub or small tree growing up to 5 metres high and wide, which makes a lovely accent in a garden. It is not very common in Arriyadh, because not all of its growing conditions can be fulfilled. However, some choice specimens can be seen in Olaya. Looking best with multiple trunks, *L. indica* has dark-green, oval leaves up to 5 cm long (light green with a copper tone in spring, turning brilliant orange or red in autumn) and clusters of delicate, crinkly petalled flowers. There are many cultivars with a wide range of colours from brilliant red to pink, purple, lavender and white. One of its most attractive attributes is the attractive, smooth grey-brown trunk and branch structure, appearing to be polished in winter, the bark of which peels off to reveal a pinkish inner bark. The tree requires sun and heat to flower well, with some wind protection, and although quite drought-resistant, regular irrigation and deep watering in summer are appreciated. The Crape Myrtle prefers well-drained, fertile, sandy soils. It will tolerate frost in Arriyadh. Propagation is usually by seed. A slow-release fertiliser, rich in nitrogen and potassium, can be applied twice or three times per year. Prone also to leaf burn and chlorosis, owing to irrigation with saline and alkaline water, the soil must be leached and treated with iron. Requiring only low maintenance and light pruning to encourage flowering, this tree is excellent on patios, in containers, and close to doorways.



### GENERAL

Origin	: Mediterranean, sub-tropical
Vigour	: fast growing
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi-humid, very humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out, cuttings
Maintenance	: low

### CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: low (700 ppm)
Hardiness	: -12°C

### SHAPE

Type	: tree, shrub
Height	: 5 m-10 m
Spread	: 3 m-6 m
Foliage	: deciduous

### FLOWER

Colour	: pink
Size	: 4 cm - 20 cm
Period	: July - September

### FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 1.3 cm