

Arabian Jasmine

GENERAL

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

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: low (600 ppm)
Hardiness	: -3°C

SHAPE

Type	: shrub
Height	: 2 m-3 m
Spread	: 2 m-3 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: white
Size	: 2 cm - 3 cm
Period	: March - October
Smell	: aroma, strong, gives freely of its scent, flower, sweet

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: berry
Fruit size	: 1 cm
Toxicity	: edible when processed

Centuries ago, merchants brought the Arabian Jasmine from its native habitat in southern Asia along trading routes westwards. This is a popular shrub in Arriyadh, which somehow never looks its best. The evergreen leaves are leathery, glossy and grouped in twos or threes along the twining stems. They differ from those of other species by being entire. In summer, clusters of white, tubular flowers are borne to emit the outstanding fragrance that jasmines are known for. In other seasons, flowering is sporadic. Full or partial sun is required to produce abundant inflorescences. A fertile, well-drained soil allows vital growth so that this climber will stand some drought when established. However, it appreciates frequent irrigation and generally remains free from pests and diseases. General purpose fertilisers should be applied in two split doses during spring to support new growth first and development of flower buds later on. Transplanting is best done in autumn. Low temperatures are no problem, but Arabian Jasmines should not be exposed to prolonged frosts. They need to be trained along a support such as a trellis or a pergola reaching about 3 metres in height. Plants will also grow in containers and tolerate pruning at any time to form a shrub, for instance, but not a climber. It may also blanket the ground with its attractive dark-green foliage. Cuttings and sowing are handy methods of propagation. In China, the dried flowers are used to make the famous jasmine tea and they may also be processed to yield perfume.

