

Giant Aloe, *Candelabra Aloe*, *Tree Aloe*, *sabbar alo*

Tubular scarlet flowers make this Giant Aloe, sabbar alo in Arabic, a striking eye-catcher in early spring. Inflorescences sprout straight up from the centre and top the plant. It eventually develops a tree-like appearance in time. Native to South Africa, it thrives well in heat and reaches 2 metres in height with an additional 60 cm in flower. Very occasionally, it may grow into a 4-metre-high tree when mature. Aloes are very tolerant of soil pH, tolerating alkalinity, but they require good drainage, often growing on rocky slopes in the wild. Too much water damages the root system. Giant Aloes will tolerate full sun, but may develop brown leaf tips if sun exposure goes hand in hand with prolonged drought. Dead leaves are retained for many years, unless removed by the gardener. Dead floral stems should also be cut off, to achieve a neat appearance. Although they survive with little water, the foliage may become dull green in extreme drought. They soon recover from discolouration when watered. Frost immediately causes damage, beginning with flabby leaf tips up to total loss in just one night. Its pointed, light-green leaves are succulent and spines are aligned along the margins. This armour should be reason enough not to place it next to pedestrian areas. Giant Aloes make accent plants in rock gardens and are easy to combine with other succulents. Being used to little amounts of soil, they make very good container plants. They are usually reproduced by offsets or seeds.



GENERAL

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

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: resistant
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: low
Salinity/ppm	: high (5000 ppm)
Hardiness	: -3°C

SHAPE

Type	: cacti, succulents
Height	: 1 m-3 m
Spread	: 1.5 m-4 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: red, dark orange
Size	: 60 cm - 80 cm
Period	: April - May

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 0.8 cm