

PERSIMMONS



When one thinks of an outstanding ornamental fruit tree, persimmons are among the first trees to come to mind. They have graceful form, attractive, leathery, dark green leaves that turn yellow to scarlet in the fall, with ornamental orange fruit that hangs on long after the leaves have fallen.

There are two main types of persimmons. They are either **astrigent or non-astrigent**. Astrigent Asian varieties are usually oval shaped and must be ripened off the tree, usually eaten when soft. Non-astrigent varieties can be eaten directly off the tree. They are usually flat and rounded in shape.

CARE: Persimmons are best planted in spring – take care to preserve the tap root when planting. Give all persimmons full sun and well-drained soil. Like most trees, persimmons require infrequent, deep watering. This means leaving a hose near the base of the tree on a slow trickle for about an hour. This will result in a deep-rooted tree and good fruit production. An established tree needs about 40” of water a year. Persimmons need little pruning, except to keep them manageable.

HARVEST: All the varieties we carry are self-fruitful. Fruit production begins about five years after planting. The fruit is borne on the current season’s growth. Heavy crops can break brittle branches so thinning may be necessary. Harvest non-astrigent types when they are fully colored and firm. Astrigent varieties are not edible until very soft. Fresh persimmons keep for about 2 months in the refrigerator. They may also be frozen or dried.

EARLY FUYU	Non-astrigent. Medium to large, flattened, glossy, reddish-orange fruit. The flesh is light orange, firm and crunchy with a rich, sweet, mild taste. Great all-purpose. Ripens September to frost.
EARLY JIRO	Non-astrigent. Large, sweet, reddish-orange fruit may be eaten when hard like an apple or soft like a tomato (when much sweeter). Early ripening, and naturally dwarf, to 10’.
FIRE CRYSTAL	Non-astrigent. Attractive, compact variety popular in China, with round, bright orange fruit. Early ripening and very productive.
NIKITA’S GIFT	Astrigent. Very hardy Asian/American persimmon cross bears flattened, oval fruit to 3” across. Flavorful fruit drops from the tree when fully ripe and soft.
SWEET FUYU	Astrigent. Round, bright orange fruit is deliciously sweet when fully ripe. Vigorous variety very popular in China. Ripens late Oct. through early Nov.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Persimmons break dormancy extremely late in the season. A young tree may not leaf out until late summer or even fall. If you think your tree may be dead, just lightly scrape a branch with your fingernail...if you see green, the tree is alive. Please be patient!