

Cercis siliquastrum
Judas tree, Love tree



Cercis siliquastrum (Judas tree) is found in the eastern Mediterranean, Western Asia and the Caucasus. It often grows here in mixed forests and thickets - chiefly on chalky or well-drained soil - with, amongst others, *Quercus ilex, Pinus halepensis, Ceratonia siliqua* and *Acer opalus*, but also with shrubs such as *Cistus*, *Lavandula* and *Rosmarinus*. This species has been used as an ornamental tree in Europe ever since the seventeenth century. This naturally multi-stem tree or irregular single stem tree with a flattened rounded crown reaches around four to ten metres tall, and the same in width.

At the end of April and early May, the Judas tree produces pink papilionaceous flowers, appearing in loose clusters of ten to twenty flowers arbitrarily on the bare trunk and branches. It is an amazing sight and some trees produce such an abundance of flowers that the black branches, against which the flowers stand out, are hidden beneath the blossom. The Judas tree also has an attractive heart-shaped leaf with a round tip. The foliage emerges bronze-green in the spring, changing to matt green in the summer and bright yellow in the autumn. The green seed pods develop in early autumn and quickly turn red to red-brown. They remain on the tree all winter and are highly decorative. The pods are not especially palatable but the flowers make a fun addition to any salad, or can be battered or fried.

Cercis siliquastrum is often found in open areas and on slopes, on virtually any drier soil. Even chalky or poor soils are tolerated. This species fixes nitrogen with its roots. *Cercis siliquastrum* is a true sun lover. Juvenile trees are still somewhat tender in cold winter weather but older specimens are fully hardy. This small multi-stem tree or irregular standard makes a wonderful addition in streets, on squares and on roof gardens. The Judas tree also thrives in parks and gardens though and provides colour in the spring with its pink-violet haze of flowers.

SEASONAL COLOURS

jan	feb	mar	apr	mei	jun	jul	aug	sep	okt	nov	dec

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, half-stem trees, multi-stemmed trees, characteristic trees, solitary shrubs | **Topiary on stem**: multi-stem umbrella

USE

Location: street, square, car park / parking lot, park, central reservation, in containers, large garden, small garden, cemetery | **Pavement**: none, open, sealed | **Planting concepts**: food forest, urban planting

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: flattened spherical | **Crown structure**: semi-open | **Height**: 4 - 10 m | **Width**: 4 - 10 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 6B - 9B

ASPECTS

Wind: slightly tolerant to wind | **Soil**: loess, sabulous clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level**: low in nutrients, moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level**: very dry, dry, moist | **Light requirements**: sun, partial shade | **pH range**: acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Host plant/forage plant**: bees, butterflies, nectar value 3, pollen value 0 | **Extreme environments**: tolerant to dryness, tolerates heat

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: raceme, papilionaceous, striking, singular, small, flower-scented | **Flower colour**: pink-violet | **Flowering period**: April - May | **Leaf colour**: buds bronze, green | **Leaves**: deciduous, cordate, undulate, Nitrogen fixing | **Autumn colour**: yellow-orange | **Fruits**: striking, pod | **Fruit colour**: red-brown | **Bark colour**: grey-brown | **Bark**: furrowed | **Twig colour**: grey-brown | **Twigs**: bare, polished, zigzagging | **Root system**: deep, shallow, extensive, coarse roots

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