

# *Platanus x hispanica*

## London plane, London planetree, Hybrid plane, Maple-leaved Plane



*Platanus x hispanica* (London plane) is a hybrid tree, created from a cross between *Platanus orientalis* and *Platanus occidentalis*. This plane tree is one of the most important ornamental trees in Western Europe and has been cultivated for centuries. It was described by botanist Otto von Münchhausen in 1770 and given the synonym *Platanus x acerifolia* by botanist Carl Ludwig Willdenow in 1805. It was given the English name "London plane" because it can withstand heavy air pollution and was therefore the most commonly planted tree in London. Under favourable conditions, the London plane tree grows into an impressive tree: it can eventually reach a height of twenty to forty metres, with a width of approximately eighteen to twenty-five metres. The crown shape is semi-open, usually broad and dome-shaped to round, with large spreading branches on a long, straight trunk.

The leaves are large and palmate, with three to five lobes. They are green in summer, turning yellow-brown in autumn. In spring, spherical, hanging flowers appear, usually in pairs. Both male and female flowers are formed on the same tree. After flowering, the typical plane tree fruits form: spherical, spiky nut balls, often in pairs. These remain on the tree for a long time. The bark is one of its most characteristic features: it peels off in irregular scales, giving the trunk a mottled pattern of grey-green, yellow and light brown areas. This gives the plane tree its typical camouflage-like appearance.

Thanks to its rapid growth, impressive size and large crown, *Platanus x hispanica* is an ideal shade tree and suitable for avenues, streets, parks and squares. It is widely used in urban contexts, where its high tolerance for air pollution, paving and compacted soils is particularly useful. The plane tree grows well in all soils. *Platanus x hispanica* tolerates heavy pruning, even into the older wood, which means it can be used as an espalier or pollarded tree.

### SEASONAL COLOURS



### TYPES OF PLANTING

**Tree types:** standard trees, multi-stemmed trees, trees for climbing, shade trees, characteristic trees | **Topiary on stem:** block, roof-trained, level, pollard, candelabra, branched candlestick, vase, multi-stem roof-trained, espalier, pleached

### USE

**Location:** avenue, square, car park / parking lot, park, central reservation, roof garden, large garden, cemetery, traffic areas, industrial zones, bioswale | **Pavement:** none, open, sealed | **Planting concepts:** Solid planting, urban planting

### CHARACTERISTICS

**Crown shape:** rounded | **Crown structure:** semi-open | **Height:** 20 - 40 m | **Width:** 18 - 25 m | **Winter hardiness zone:** 6A - 10B

### ASPECTS

**Wind:** tolerant to wind, slightly tolerant to coastal wind | **Soil:** loess, sabulous clay, heavy clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level:** low in nutrients, moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level:** dry, moist | **Light requirements:** sun, partial shade | **pH range:** acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Extreme environments:** tolerant to salt spray, tolerant to dryness, tolerates air pollution, tolerates heat, tolerant to short-term flooding

### PLANTKENMERKEN

**Flowers:** heads, discrete | **Flower colour:** yellow-green | **Flowering period:** May - May | **Leaf colour:** green | **Leaves:** deciduous, palmate, big, rough, dentate, lobate | **Autumn colour:** yellow-brown | **Fruits:** striking, capsule | **Fruit colour:** brown | **Bark colour:** grey-green | **Bark:** peeling, smooth | **Twig colour:** brown-green | **Twigs:** bare | **Root system:** deep, extensive, highly branched, roots push up surface