

# *Prunus serrulata* 'Shirotae'

## Ornamental cherry 'Shirotae'



*Prunus serrulata* 'Shirotae' (Ornamental cherry 'Shirotae') was distributed in Europe and America from the 20th century onwards under the name 'Mount Fuji', referring to the legendary white mountain as a symbol for the tree. However, that led to it being confused with *Prunus incisa* - otherwise known as the Fuji cherry - and therefore, the name is not recognised as a synonym. *Shirotae* is the Japanese term for a white textile, made of the bark fibres of *Broussonetia papyrifera*. The cherry tree was named after it, because the flowers of the cultivar - like the textile - are perfectly white and feel silky soft. *Prunus serrulata* 'Shirotae' has a very flat and wide shape. The selection can grow up to about 5 metres high and more than twice as wide. Branches that grow horizontally will hang more as the tree ages. To properly ensure its horizontal shape, it is best to breed the tree to improve. That will create a standard tree with a flattened, round crown.

*Prunus serrulata* 'Shirotae' blooms abundantly from late April, early May, even more abundantly than all other white Japanese cherry trees. The older the tree, the more overwhelming the blossoms. And that image is reinforced by its amazingly large, half-filled racemes that smell of almonds. Bees love to land on them! The large, serrate leaves bud light green, turn dark green in the summer and yellow-orange in autumn. In its youth, the selection has red-brown bark, and when it gets older it turns grey-green. The Ornamental cherry 'Shirotae' does not bear fruit.

Its low, wide and flat shape makes *Prunus serrulata* 'Shirotae' better for use in parks or gardens than in streets. As a multi-stem tree, it is a real eyecatcher in the springtime. The perfect environment for the Ornamental cherry 'Shirotae' is sunny and sheltered, in nutrient-rich and lime-rich, but very permeable soil.

### TYPES OF PLANTING

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

### USE

**Location:** avenue, park, central reservation, large garden, cemetery | **Pavement:** none

### CHARACTERISTICS

**Crown shape:** flattened spherical | **Crown structure:** semi-open | **Height:** 3 - 5 m | **Width:** 6 - 10 m | **Winter hardiness zone:** 6A - 8B

### ASPECTS

**Wind:** intolerant to wind | **Soil:** loess, sabulous clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level:** rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level:** dry, moist | **Light requirements:** sun | **pH range:** neutral, alkaline (7.8 - 8.2) | **Host plant/forage plant:** bees, nectar value 3, pollen value 3

### PLANTKENMERKEN

**Flowers:** striking, pendulous, half filled, big, scented | **Flower colour:** white | **Flowering period:** April - May | **Leaf colour:** dark green, buds pale green | **Leaves:** deciduous, ovoid, big, serrate | **Autumn colour:** yellow-orange | **Fruits:** no fruit | **Bark colour:** red-brown | **Bark:** slightly furrowed | **Twig colour:** brown | **Twigs:** bare, with lenticels, horizontal branches, pendulous | **Root system:** shallow, highly branched

