



## Olives

While the olive has been around as a food source for thousands of years, it has only been since the early 1990's that we've tried growing them in Texas. The Texas Olive Oil Council reports about a dozen growers in Texas. They have determined South Texas as the most promising growing location, and Austin is right on the edge of this area. The olive trees we are selling are purported to withstand temperatures of 20 F°. Temperatures in the teens will likely cause tip damage, but temperatures falling to single digits could kill a tree outright. As olive trees mature, they become more cold-hardy. To be on the safe side during freezing weather, wrap the lower two to three feet of the trunk with piping insulation or similar material, protecting the tree's core. Maintain at least a three-inch layer of mulch over the root zone, and water the olive tree thoroughly before a freeze. Avoid putting mulch up on the trunk. If tip damage occurs, prune damaged parts after the last frost. Also, to avoid promoting tender new growth before winter, do not prune after mid-September.

The growing requirements for the olive tree are minimal. Olives require excellent drainage – heavy clay or poorly draining soils will not work. They need full sun. Consult our handout *Planting & Maintenance Guide for Fruits, Nuts, & Berries* for further instructions. Most olive trees take 4 – 5 years to begin producing.

---

### Spanish Varieties

**Arbequina** – (Lerida) Usually self-fertile, any other pollinator can increase yields. Early bearing, small fruit. Aromatic, fruity, and sweet oil. Can produce in about 2 – 3 years. Grows to 15'. Resistant to frost, to 18 – 19°F. Good for limited space, containers.

**Arbosana** – (Catalonia) Heirloom variety. Produces early. To 12' – 15'. Frost resistant to 21 – 24° F. Use Arbequina as pollinator. Used for oil and fruit.

**Manzanilla** – (Andalusia) Vigorous tree with bright green leaves. Requires Arbequina as pollinator - not available at The Natural Gardener. Makes a great ornamental tree. Medium freeze tolerance. Under 20' tall.

### United States Variety

**Mission** – (Planted in Spanish missions in California) Self-fertile, substantially better with a pollinator – Use Arbequina. Medium, elongated, inch-long fruit, green to purplish-black. To 20'. Good for oil or pickling. Beautiful ornamental tree as well. Most cold hardy olive, can survive to about 10° F.

### Italian Varieties

**Pendolino** – (Tuscany) Slow-growing cultivar with dense, dark gray-green foliage & a weeping habit. Small, assymetrical fruit matures to dark black. Produces a delicate, pleasant oil. Medium cold hardiness. A universal pollinator for other varieties; 20' + in height.

---

8648 Old Bee Caves Road

Austin, Texas 78735

Phone (512) 288-6113 Fax (512) 288-6114 [www.naturalgardeneraustin.com](http://www.naturalgardeneraustin.com)