

THE
Natural
GARDENER
Jujube

The Jujube, also known as Chinese Date, is native to China and has been cultivated for more than 4,000 years. Its fruit is known in China and Korea to have medicinal qualities. It is a vigorous, small, long-lived tree reaching up to 15 - 30 feet tall. It is extremely heat and cold tolerant. Jujubes are said to tolerate from -28°F to any amount of summer heat. While it is also drought tolerant, regular watering is necessary for fruit production.

Jujubes produce fragrant, inconspicuous white to yellow-green flowers in abundance over several months beginning in late spring. Jujubes are self-fertile, and they fruit on new wood. The fruits are slightly larger than a pecan, shiny and light green, turning reddish-brown with age. They ripen in August. Most people prefer the fresh fruit when they are still firm and half green, half reddish-brown. They have a unique taste and texture, like a sweet, dry apple. They may be eaten fresh, dried and candied like a date, or processed into other recipes, depending on the variety.

The jujube makes a nice landscape tree with beautiful shiny, dark green foliage, rough bark, and angular limbs. The leaves turn bright yellow in the fall. The jujube tree may have a few thorns. It sends out numerous thorny root suckers, so plant the jujube where you can mow around it.

Consult our handout *Planting & Maintenance Guide for Fruits, Nuts, & Berries* for more information.

Jujube Varieties for Central Texas – Size and shape of fruit; Ripening time; Fruit quality & use; Other qualities & information.

Lang – 1½ inch long, distinctly pear-shaped fruit; Mid- to late-August; Most often used fully reddish-brown as a dried fruit (may be allowed to dry on the tree) or processed; Tree is upright and virtually spineless.

Li – 1 to 1 ½ inch long, round, plump fruit; Mid-August; May be processed or eaten fresh; Picked at the yellow-green stage, it may ripen further off the tree; Many-branched, yet narrow and upright.