

The false cypress

Chamaecyparis obtusa, Chamaecyparis obtusa gracilis, Chamaecyparis de Lawson.

Family: Cupresaceae.

Origin: North America, Japan and Taiwan.

The false cypress can reach a height of more than 50 meters but if they are raised in private gardens or parks they rarely grow higher than 20 to 30 meters. The wood is very clear tending to white and is therefore indicated to create beautiful Jins. The foliage is dark green and brilliant and the form of the trunk is curved.

Light: Chamaecyparis prefer shadowed sites because direct sun and hot winds easily dry them out. The place should not be too dark as they need enough light to grow.

Temperature and exposure: As I already mentioned the false cypress does not like very high temperatures in combination with hot winds, but in counterpart do like humid winds. Chamaecyparis perfectly resist cold winters so you can leave the trees outside the whole year.

Pruning and cleaning: Chamaecyparis should be cleaned with care removing dry needles and branches because this is the most effective way to avoid parasites and other diseases. Also the base of the tree should be cleaned of fallen branches to not create perfect habitats for a lot of parasites. Prune the new sprouts in the vegetative period. Cut the branches always eliminating a group of pins, the best method is to use your fingernails.

Repotting / Soil: Repot every three to six years during march and april. Prune between 1/3 and a half of the roots and repot the plant in a bigger pot to increase the size of the tree. The mix that is use is composed of 1/3 of compost, 1/3 of humus and 1/3 of sand. The pot should be deep and the color depends on your preferences. I prefer earth colored pots for these kind of trees.

Wiring: These trees are wired to give them the desired form as with pruning it's difficult to do so. The wires should be applied with care to not hurt needles trapped between branches and wires. Don't leave the wires in the same position for more than eight months and repeat the operation every year if needed.

Watering: Water frequently keeping the soil humid but not wet. Be sure that the tree is not retaining the water at the bottom of the pot, a good drainage must be ensured. As they need a lot of environmental humidity, vaporize them a lot. Be careful to not dry out the roots as they die quite easily.

Fertilizer: I use solid fertilizer in spring and autumn, never apply in summer. In this case you can increase the dose in autumn to prepare the tree for the long winter.

Diseases: Be sure to keep the trees humid vaporizing them as often as you can, this avoids a them a lot of diseases. Red spider mite and aphids are their worst enemies. As I always recommend, use very dissolved doses of Compo anti red spider mite in the first, and of Folithion in the second case.