

The pomegranate tree

Punica granatum, punica protopunica.

Family: Punicae.

Origin: Oriental and occidental Asia and the whole Mediterranean area. Today it is cultivated in South America and the South of the United States.

There are only two species, *Punica protopunica* and *punica granatum*. Its branches are very fine with small long leaves and beautiful red flowers from June to September. After flowering it produces a red fruit with sweet eatable seeds. Maximum height is about 7 meters but normally it is below that.

Repotting / Soil: Repot every two years eliminating the third part of the fine roots and plant in a bigger pot. I prefer dark brown pots without coating with semicircular forms. The mixture I use is composed of 1/3 of compost, 1/3 humus and 1/3 sand. I normally add some clay in order to retain the water.

Watering: These trees grow very fine roots, a good draining is essential. Need much water in summer, soil should never dry out. Reduce moisture in wintertime.

Fertilizer: Organic solid fertilizer should be applied during spring, when flowering starts add some of the liquid type.

Diseases: Punicas in summer may suffer the attack of red spider mite on their leaves turning them dry in a short time. Shower the tree a lot of times during the day because water is the worst enemy of the microscopic spiders. If that doesn't help apply Compo anti red spider mite. Aphids are removed manually or apply a highly dissolved Folithion with a vaporizer.

Light: The pomegranate tree loves sun but in very hot countries in summer it should stay in half shadow.

Temperature and exposure: They love high temperatures and obviously are quite sensible against very cold winters, the fine branches die quite easily. It's not afraid of windy zones, it even needs appreciates changing air.

Pruning and cleaning: Keep the branches short, with only two knots each. The tree will get a very dense ramification with lots of little light green leaves. In autumn / winter they lose the leaves easily exposing the light and scary wood.

Wiring: Wire from spring to summer. Normally only the trunk and big branches are wired because the fine new sprouts break easily. Use raffia to protect the bark.