

Cordyline terminalis Ti Plant¹

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Introduction

The colorful ti plant is perfect for creating a tropical landscape effect, with its smooth, flexible leaves ranging in color from variegated light greens and pinks to very dark reds. Performing well in full sun or partial to deep shade, ti plant needs fertile, well-drained soil and can tolerate only brief periods of drought. Leaf coloration is more pronounced in sunnier locations.

General Information

Scientific name: *Cordyline terminalis*

Pronunciation: kor-dil-LYE-nee tur-min-NAY-liss

Common name(s): ti plant

Family: *Agavaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Fig. 1)

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: specimen; container or above-ground planter; suitable for growing indoors; accent; mass planting

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

Description

Height: 3 to 10 feet

Spread: 2 to 4 feet

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: open

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium



Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: spiral

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: linear

Leaf venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 8 to 12 inches; 12 to 18 inches; variable

Leaf color: purple or red; green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow

Flower characteristic: spring flowering

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Ti plant can be bothered by leaf spot diseases.

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: red

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

Current year stem/twig color: reddish

Current year stem/twig thickness: thick

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: poor

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

It grows well as a house plant in a sunny location. It is used in outdoor landscapes as an accent, either planted alone in a small garden or in mass in a larger-sized landscape. The leaves are used in Hawaii to make dancing skirts. Plant on two to three-foot centers for massing in the landscape.

Cultivars include: 'Amabilis', glossy, dark green leaves spotted with rose and white; 'Baptisii', dark green leaves striped with pink and yellow; and 'Tricolor' with leaves marked with green, pink, and white.

Plants are easily propagated by cuttings or by sections of stem laid horizontally in a peat moss-sand mixture, and kept moist.

Pests and Diseases

While relatively easy to grow, problems include a sensitivity to nematodes, mealy bugs, mites, and fluoride damage.