Redbud, Merlot

Cercis canadensis 'Merlot'

Height: 18 feet

Spread: 20 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5a

Other Names: Eastern Redbud, Judas Tree, Love Tree

Description:

A spectacular bloomer, with showy lavender-pink flowers held tightly on bare branches in early spring; glossy heart-shaped leaves emerge deep purple, progress to burgundy, then green in summer. Performs best with wind protection.



Redbud, Merlot foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Redbud, Merlot has lavender pea-like flowers with pink overtones along the branches from early to mid spring, which emerge from distinctive violet flower buds before the leaves. It has attractive dark green-variegated burgundy foliage which emerges deep purple in spring. The glossy heart-shaped leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color.



Redbud, Merlot flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Redbud, Merlot is a multi-stemmed deciduous tree with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Redbud, Merlot is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use

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Planting & Growing

Redbud, Merlot will grow to be about 18 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 20 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. This plant should be periodically fertilized throughout the active growing season with a specially-formulated acidic fertilizer. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selection of a native North American species.

Clean up Rating (1-5) 1=least effort 5=most effort

Clean Up Rate (3): Redbuds produce a few to many flat bean pods, 2 to 3 inches long. The pods generally don't germinate so clean up for all debris can be blown or raked onto the lawn and mowed or bagged. Redbuds need wind protection.



Redbud, Merlot in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder