

Mespilus germanica

Common medlar



Mespilus germanica 2.5-3.0m multistems

Mespilus germanica is a plant with a long history. It is known to have been around for over 3000 years and the fruit was commonly eaten from Roman through to Medieval times. Despite the name 'germanica' it is native to southwest Asia and southeast Europe. Widely grown in the UK, it has reportedly naturalised in southern parts where winters are milder.

Medlar is a distinctive, small tree which in ideal conditions can grow up to 8m though usually is smaller. Mature specimens can develop beautiful broad crowns formed into a natural umbrella.

It has long, leathery leaves which are hairy on the underside; the autumn colour is a brilliant golden yellow/brown. The self fertile flowers are simple with five white petals which open up in early summer.

The fruits (medlars) resemble a small apple with a hollow at one end. They are hard and bitter and can only eaten when they are bletted (softened), after a frost. There are few fruits that become edible in winter which is why they were popular historically (before modern storage facilities) and can be made into delicious preserves, medlar cheeses or jellies.

Ideally planted in a warm, sunny location on dry, slightly acidic soil, it will tolerate both heat and urban pollution.

This plant is available from Deepdale Trees as a multistem, standard or half standard plant.

Plant Profile

Name: *Mespilus germanica*

Common Name: Medlar

Family: Rosaceae

Height: up to 5m

Demands: Warm location on a well drained, neutral—acidic soil

Foliage: Elongated, leathery leaves

Flower: Attractive white flower with yellow centre

Bark: Grey-brown, cracked with age and scales may fall off

Fruit: Apple shaped, brown fruits. Edible in winter



Medlars on bare stems during winter

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Deepdale
 Despite its Latin name meaning Germanic medlar, it is indigenous to southwest Asia and southeastern Europe



Fruit and autumn foliage colour



18-20-25cm semi mature standards



Mespilus germanica half stem



2-3m multistems containerised at Deepdale Trees



Multistem specimens are often as wide as they are tall