

Cercis - Growing Guide

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Cercis are spectacular flowering trees all with heart shaped leaves which have the great merit, for smaller gardens, of not growing more than 30ft in full maturity. The flowers are brightly coloured and pea shaped usually in stalkless clusters on last year's new growth stems or on branches/stems that are much more mature. The flowers appear with us in the nursery and in the garden in April or May but are generally not still showing colour by the time of Chelsea Flower Show in late May. After flowering large flattened peapods of seeds gradually ripen on the tree and turn brown before spilling the seeds in autumn.

With a bit of effort Cercis can be grown and trained up walls. They can also be grown in large containers where the plants will also need regular pruning and shaping. In reality, however, these are best grown as freestanding specimen plants perhaps with pride of place in the middle of your lawn.

Full sun or dappled shade is fine in fertile, deep, well-drained soil. These can be greedy trees which relish additional feeding from regular mulching around the base of the tree. Cercis are perfectly hardy but, very occasionally, a late frost may harm the emerging leaves. The plants are normally quite resilient enough to grow through this.

The seed is easy to germinate when sown in the cold frame in the autumn.

Your choice of species should perhaps be determined by your preference for flower colour and growth habit:

C. canadensis, the American Judas tree or Eastern redbud, is a spreading, multi stemmed tree with purple to pink flowers which appear in clusters before the leaves. Good yellow autumn colour.



Cercis canadensis



C. canadensis
'Appalachian Red'



C. canadensis
'Appalachian Red'



C. canadensis
'Appalachian Red'



C. canadensis
'Appalachian Red'



C. canadensis 'Flame'



Cercis canadensis 'Flame'



C. canadensis 'Flame'



Cercis canadensis
'Lavender Twist'



C. canadensis 'Texas White'



C. canadensis 'Forest Pansy'



C. canadensis 'Forest Pansy'



C. canadensis 'Forest Pansy'



C. canadensis 'Forest Pansy'



C. canadensis 'Ruby Falls'



C. canadensis 'Ruby Falls'



C. canadensis 'Ruby Falls'



C. canadensis 'Ruby Falls'



C. chinensis 'Avondale'



C. chinensis 'Avondale'



C. reniformis 'Oklahoma Rosebud'



Cercis siliquastrum



Cercis siliquastrum



Cercis siliquastrum



Cercis siliquastrum



Burncoose Nurseries: Gwennap, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ

Telephone: +44 (0) 1209 860316 Fax: +44 (0) 1209 860011 Email: info@burncoose.co.uk

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