The Mustard Seed
Landscaping & Garden Centers

Variegated Croton

Codiaeum variegatum var. pictum

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Garden Croton, Variegated Laurel, Joseph's Coat

Description:

This woody perennial is largely considered as a houseplant in colder climates, noted for its striking foliage; glossy, leathery, ovate or lanceolate leaves in a bright range of colors, yellow, pink, orange, red, bronze, green, and purple



Variegated Croton foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

This plant is native to the tropics and prefers growing in moist environments with evenly warm conditions all year round. In our climate, it is usually grown as an outdoor annual in the garden or in a container. If you want it to survive the winter, it can be brought in to the house and provided with special care, and then returned to the garden the following season. In its preferred tropical habitat, it can grow to be around 6 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. However, when grown as an annual or when overwintered indoors, it can be expected to perform differently, and its exact height and spread will depend on many factors; you may wish to consult with our experts as to how it might perform in your specific application and growing conditions.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets.



Variegated Croton
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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...the birds of the air can perch in its shade. Mark 4:30-32

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Variegated Croton is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden. Be aware that in our climate, most plants cannot be expected to survive the winter if left in containers outdoors, and this plant is no exception. Contact our experts for more information on how to protect it over the winter months.

-- THIS IS A TROPICAL PLANT AND SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO SURVIVE THE WINTER OUTDOORS IN OUR CLIMATE --