

Shantung Truncatum Maple

The real reason most people pick a plant in the first place is the aesthetics value it brings to a landscape. A Shantung maple does not fall short there. It has interesting bark that lends value even as the tree loses its foliage. The foliage, though, is what steals the show when it comes to this landscape treasure. The tree's leaves emerge as a purplish maroon in the early spring before turning a dark green through the summer before bursting into their autumn brilliance of yellows, oranges, reds, and purples.

There are very few “no-brainer” trees, but the Shantung maple falls into that category. It is an excellent tree to choose when looking for an ornamental maple.

Botanical Name	<i>Acer truncatum</i>
Common Name	Shantung maple, purple blow maple
Plant Type	Deciduous tree
Mature Size	20 to 25 ft. tall, 15 to 20 ft. wide
Sun Exposure	Full sun, part shade
Soil Type	Average, medium, well-drained soil
Soil pH	Acidic
Bloom Time	April
Flower Color	Insignificant
Hardiness Zones	USDA 4-8
Native Area	Korea and Northern China

Shantung maple trees are very easy to grow, pest and disease resistant, and pollution tolerant. As with most easy to care for trees a large part of their success and longevity depends on where you decide to plant them and the conditions of that site.

When considering placing a tree near a home or any infrastructure, you need to be aware of power lines and foundations. The Shantung maple is small enough not to risk interfering with overhanging wires, which saves the necessity of pruning the crown because of a right of way issue. The other infrastructure issue that is less of a concern with the Shantung is its roots, which are fibrous and deep. Roots of this type are less likely to damage pipes and foundations allowing the tree to be planted closer to a structure. They can quickly mature and live 100 years.

Light: Shantung maples are adaptable and will tolerate both full sun and partial shade. Be aware though, that planting the maple in full sun will ensure the best fall color as long as watering is maintained through the summer.

Soil: While the tree can be easily grown in various soil conditions, it will thrive in moist average soil well-draining. When it comes to soil pH Shantungs prefer acidic, neutral, to slightly alkaline soil.

Water :Shantung maples benefit from a consistent watering schedule until they are established. Once the tree has established itself, watering is needed if it is evident that the tree needs supplemental irrigation. You can tell by leaf yellowing, wilting leaves, mainly if it has not rained in some time or there is an extended dry spell, the tree may need a drink.

Temperature and Humidity:

A native to Northern China where temperatures can range from as low as 1 degree Fahrenheit in January to 87 degrees Fahrenheit in July, the Shantung maple is acclimated to dealing with temperature extremes that give most ornamental maples serious issues. This adaptability makes it the perfect tree to plant in the United States since the hardiness zones run the gamut from balmy to frosty, too.

Besides temperature, the Northern Steppes, which the Shantung call home, are also notoriously arid. The lack of regular water has allowed the tree to develop a level of drought tolerance that is not seen in many other ornamental maples.

Because of the extreme conditions of its native habitat the Shantung maple can do well in a vast range of temperatures, thriving in the warm summer heat and cold subfreezing temperatures that hover just above zero. It will also do well in areas subject to low moisture as those susceptible to drought. The USDA recommends it is planted in Zones 4-8.

