



ARIZONA-SONORA  
DESERT  
MUSEUM

## ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM PLANT CARE INFORMATION

### Chaste Tree or Monk's Pepper

*Vitex agnus-castus*

**DESCRIPTION:** This is an attractive plant in the Verbena family. Long, narrow spikes of flowers cover this plant in the summer months. Although the flower color can range from white to dark purple, most trees have been selected for the darker flower color. They are fragrant and attract bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. After blooming, narrow spikes of round, dark brown seeds are produced. Monks in southern Europe and Asia, where this tree is native, reportedly used the seeds of this plant as a substitute for pepper, hence its common name. This tree can be untidy at times, shedding all of its leaves in the fall, and dropping old flowers and seeds throughout the year. However, its aromatic green leaves and long, profuse bloom period go a long way toward making up for the litter!

**RECOMMENDED USE:** Can be an accent, specimen, or used for shade or a screen.

#### CULTURE:



**Hardiness:** Chaste tree handles our hot summer heat like a champ, as well as tolerating temperatures below 0°.



**Sun tolerance:** Full sun for best flowering and growth.



**Watering and feeding:** Moderate water use. Fertilize in the spring.



**Soil requirements:** Any soil.



**Pruning:** Chaste tree is very shrub-like, but can be shaped into a tree form. Single or multi-trunked, it will eventually reach a mature size of 25 feet tall and wide.