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Artikel-Nr: 14000

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Bonsai - African Wisteria Tree- Cold House Bonsai

Bolusanthus speciosus

The long-lasting African Wisteria Tree is indeed one of the most spectacular indigenous trees of the subtropical South Africa. The small or mid-sized, ornamental leaf tree casts the leaves just for a short time during spring. Usually it grows multi-stemmed, but it can be pruned to build out only a single stem. The bark has a brownish-grey colour and is a rough and rugged view. The blue-purple coloured and aromatic butterfly flowers of the African Wisteria Tree, that grow spiral-shaped in panicles on the hanging branches, can sometimes cover the whole tree from spring until early summer. After blossoming it produces papery brown coloured fruit capsules that hang down from the branches in bunches.

Natural location: The natural habitat of the African Wisteria Tree is the subtropical South Africa, where it is even protected today and may not be felled.

Cultivation: Seed propagation indoors is possible throughout the year. To increase the germinability, you should initially keep the seeds for about 24 hours in a bowl with lukewarm water for priming. After that, plant the seeds about 5 cm apart from each other and 1 cm deep into moist potting compost and cover the seed container with clear film to prevent the earth from drying out. Don't forget to make some holes in the clear film and take it every second or third day completely off for about 2 hours. That way you avoid mold formation on your potting compost. Place the seed container somewhere bright and warm with a temperature between 20°C and 25° Celsius and keep the earth moist, but not wet. Usually it takes two to five weeks until the seedlings come up. Another five to eight weeks later you can prick out and plant the sprouts.

Place: Younger plants prefer a half-shaded place, whereas matured trees as African beauties want to be kept in a full sunny spot.

Care: Water the plant penetratingly - even during blossoming - as soon as the upper layer of the earth has dried out, and ideally spray the plant once a day. You may fertilise only modestly until blossoming, and then, until late autumn every two weeks with special fluid fertilizer for bonsai plants. Always let the tree develop four to five pairs of leaves before pruning back to two or three pairs. Matured bonsai plants should of course only be pruned after blossoming. Young trees can be shifted every year, while matured plants need repotting only once.

During the winter: Matured trees can tolerate light frosts - otherwise the African Wisteria Tree is not frost-hardy and should be kept indoors after it has cast the leaves in autumn. It best hibernates in a bright and dry place with a temperature between 5° and 10° Celsius. Water the plant only modestly, so the clogged roots don't dry out.