



## Strawberry Guava

As a landscape plant, strawberry guava (also called cattley guava) has everything going for it - subtle beauty of form and foliage, beautifully patterned bark, and delicious fruit.

Need a large shrub to plant right next to the house? This plant is the ideal choice.

Because of this plant's shallow root system, it works perfectly near the house as an architectural accent, shade for a too-sunny window, or as a wildlife attractor. Placement outside a large window is an ideal spot.

Little white flowers appear in spring, followed by berry clusters that ripen in summer. When the berries reach a deep cherry red color they're ready to eat, with a sweet/tart strawberry-like flavor.

### What Guavas Like

**Exposure:** Guavas enjoy full sun & thrive in heat. Guavas are very tough plants that adapt to a wide variety of climates & growing conditions. Guavas will grow on steep slopes, windy areas or areas near the coast, & in large containers. These Guavas grow well in Sunset zones 18 through 24 (these Guavas are hardy to 25 degrees).

**Soil:** Guavas grow best in loamy rich well drained soil; however they are tolerant of rocky, clay, & sandy soils. Guavas have shallow surface roots that absorb nutrients & water quickly. These trees resent being planted in saline, heavy, or poorly drained soils. Adding a layer of organic compost, once or twice a year as mulch will also increase the soils fertility.

**Irrigation:** Guavas require infrequent deep irrigation about one to three times a month during warm weather & active growth. Guavas are drought resistant especially in winter, during winter irrigate sparingly.

**Diet:** Feeding Guavas once a season (or once every three months) provides evenly spaced feedings that will sustain growth year round. Fertilize with organic granular fertilizers.

**Pruning:** Guavas need little pruning, they are tame & stay somewhat small. Remove all dead & crossing branches whenever noticed. Dwarf & container grown trees benefit from being staked. It is beneficial to keep the branches off the ground & away from fences or buildings. Care must be taken to quickly remove any foliage & branches that sprout below the graft union (the place where the fruiting upper portion of the plant is grafted onto the lower rootstock portion)

**Harvesting:** Spring & summer are the peak season for the Guava fruit harvest. The fruit are ready when they turn color, become fragrant, & are slightly soft to the touch.

**Pollination:** Guavas are self fertile.

**Frost Protection:** When the temperature drops below 32 degrees but stays above 28 to 25 degrees we experience a "light" or "white" frost. This type of frost causes superficial damage to young growth. When the temperature drops below 28 to 25 degrees we then experience a "black" or "killing" frost. This type of frost causes greater damage to the plant tissues. The duration of any frost is also important to consider. The longer the temperatures are below freezing the greater the damage.

### Light:

Full sun, a southern exposure is best.

### Temperature:

Prefers temperatures above 40 degrees, protect if temps failing below 40 degrees.

### Humidity:

Preferably 50% of higher; however, they will tolerate low levels with no harm.

### Watering:

Bring soil to a state of visual dryness between watering. When watering, thoroughly saturate soil until a little water runs out of the bottom of the pot. Growing in a clay pot will help maintain a healthy root system.

### Fertilizer:

Go easy on the fertilizer. Apply monthly or bi-monthly using ½ tsp of fertilizer per gallon of water. Use a balanced fertilizer like a 15-15-15 or a blooming fertilizer like a 7-9-5.

### Pruning:

Prune plants after fruit harvest or whenever growth is excessive.

### Insects and Disease:

Resistant to most insects; occasional mealy bug problems. They are susceptible to root disease if kept too wet and cool.

