

# *Liriodendron chinense*

## Chinese tulip tree



*Liriodendron chinense* (Chinese tulip tree) belongs to the *Magnoliaceae* family and was widespread in prehistoric times, but later on only grew in Asia. In 1875, the species was found in the Chinese province of Hubei by the botanist Charles Sparque Sargent, and it was cultivated in 1901. In its area of origin, the Chinese tulip tree grows in river valleys and on the hills, along with *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, *Cornus controversa*, *Ginkgo biloba* and *Davidia involucrata*. There, the tree grows up to about 15 metres high; it grows up to 9 metres high in cultivation.

The name 'tulip tree' is an apt description of the shape of the flowers that appear around the end of May and the beginning of June. *Liriodendron chinense* blooms at an older age, and has smaller flowers than the *Liriodendron tulipifera*. Its leaves are much larger than those of its American counterpart. It has the same quadrifoliate tulip shape with the characteristic tapered leaf tips and is glossy green with a blue-green underside. Its autumn colour is a gorgeous bright yellow. Its grey bark is slightly furrowed and its twigs are violet-brown with lenticels.

The Chinese tulip tree naturally occurs in rich and fertile soil with a lot of space to root. With its deep taproot, the species is very wind-proof and can handle drought very well. But the wood is brittle, and to prevent the branches from blowing out, the tree should be planted in an area that is sheltered from the wind. The fleshy roots cannot handle soil that is too wet. *Liriodendron chinense* is somewhat sensitive to frost and young branches will therefore partially freeze during harsh winters. The tree will fully recover from this. This makes it a beautiful park or garden tree in nutrient-rich, permeable soil in the sun.

### TYPES OF PLANTING

**Tree types:** standard trees, feathered trees, shade trees

### USE

**Location:** park, large garden, cemetery | **Pavement:** none, open

### CHARACTERISTICS

**Crown shape:** rounded | **Crown structure:** semi-open | **Height:** 8 - 10 m | **Width:** 6 - 8 m | **Winter hardiness zone:** 8A - 10B

### ASPECTS

**Wind:** intolerant to wind | **Soil:** loess, sabulous clay, peaty, heavy clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil, all soils | **Nutrient level:** moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level:** dry, moist | **Light requirements:** sun | **pH range:** acidic, neutral (6.1 - 7.5)

### PLANTKENMERKEN

**Flowers:** tulip-shaped, discrete, small | **Flower colour:** yellow-green | **Flowering period:** May - June | **Leaf colour:** buds red-violet, blue-green, underside blue-green | **Leaves:** deciduous, palmate, big, polished, lacinate | **Autumn colour:** golden yellow | **Fruits:** striking, winged, nut, cones | **Fruit colour:** brown | **Bark colour:** grey | **Bark:** furrowed, slightly furrowed, striped | **Twig colour:** brown-violet | **Twigs:** bare | **Root system:** deep, extensive, fleshy roots, tap root

