

XERISCAPE
NATURE'S CHOICE OF LANDSCAPE



Prosopis
Mesquite

Prosopis, commonly known as mesquites, are extremely adaptable and tolerant to a wide range of growing conditions. They adjust to little or abundant water, and will survive during times of drought by slowing down their growth. Some specimens have a twisted character that some believe is a result of having gone through drought periods; others attribute this as a result of pruning techniques. Mesquites have supplied shade, food, and medicine for people of the desert for ages.

Mesquites have dark green leaves, rough, dark bark, and a nice sculptural growth habit. They produce yellowish cream colored catkin flowers in the spring, followed by seed pods varying in shape and size. Depending upon the variety, the canopy spreads to a mature width between 20 to 35 feet. Mesquites must be encouraged to develop extensive roots in order to maintain stability. This is done by watering along the perimeter of the canopy and not at the base of the trunk.

All mesquites, twisted or not, blend in well with a garden or natural landscape. Mesquites are most attractive when grown as a multi-trunk tree. Once a mesquite has grown to the desired size, reduce the irrigation to slow future growth. Most mesquites have thorns on immature growth, but thorn production will decrease as the tree matures and growth slows.

Prosopis chilensis

Chilean Mesquite

Chilean mesquite is the species most often used in the landscape. A form is available without thorns or with very small thorns. This vigorous tree has a wide spreading crown, deep green leaves, and is deciduous. Grows either singly or multi-trunked. Chilean mesquite is not recommended around pools.

Prosopis glandulosa

Honey Mesquite

Prosopis glandulosa has a wide spreading form to about 30 feet tall by 30-35 feet wide. The leaves are bright green, with widely-spaced leaflets. The leaves look very similar to those of California Pepper (*Schinus molle*). Its smooth gray bark provides a wonderful contrast to the green foliage. Texas honey mesquite is completely deciduous and tolerates temperatures down to 0° F.

Prosopis velutina

Arizona / Velvet Mesquite

Arizona mesquite, or velvet mesquite, is native to the Arizona desert. Its soft, feathery leaf structure is gray-green in color, it has long white thorns, and its dark trunk can reach up to three feet in diameter. These mesquites are useful as a specimen tree in the desert landscape or informally in naturalized areas. They will survive on rainfall, but like monthly deep watering during the summer.