



MING ARALIA and other ARALIAS

The beautiful, graceful Ming Aralia (*Polyscias fruticosa*) is a tropical shrub native to the Pacific Islands. Familiar relatives of the Ming include English ivy and the Schefflera.

Arguably one of the most beautiful of indoor plants, the Ming Aralia is prized for both its form and its foliage. Feathery, lacy green leaves grace willowy arching branches on dark stems that are mottled with white spots. Ming aralias make wonderful specimen plants, and their growth habit makes them desirable as indoor bonsai subjects.

LIGHT: Bright indirect light to direct morning sun. Avoid hot, mid-day sun.

WATER: Good drainage is necessary to prevent root rot, and Mings prefer a light, well-draining potting mix. Water thoroughly, and then remove any excess water in the drainage saucer. Allow the soil to dry slightly between waterings.

TEMPERATURE: Ming Aralias need warm conditions (65°F or better) year round. If exposed to cold or to cool drafts, they will shed their foliage.

HUMIDITY: The Ming prefers higher humidity, but will tolerate normal home humidity.

FERTILIZER: Use a flowering plant formula every three weeks from October into March.

MAINTENANCE: Prune the Ming as needed for shape or size. Mist foliage frequently early in the day to discourage mites. Watch for aphids on new growth.

Other Aralias to try include:

Black Aralia (*Polyscias guilfoylei* 'Crispa'): dark green, crinkled leaves, upright habit.

Balfour Aralia (*Polyscias balfouriana*): attractive rounded foliage, green or variegated varieties, grow very large.

Chicken Gizzard (*Polyscias crispatum*): quilted and irregularly indented leaves.

Fabian Aralia (*Polyscias scutellaria* 'Fabian'): large-leaved aralia, new growth shiny light green above and burgundy beneath.

False Aralia (*Schefflera dizygotheca elegantissima*): dark mottled stems and narrow palmate leaves (thicker with maturity), fast-growing to 10' or better; several new cultivars include a compact, broader-leaved 'Olympia' and a brightly colored 'Variegated Galaxy'.