

The Fig Tree	<i>Ficus carica</i>	is-Sigra tat-tin
Common English name	Scientific name	Maltese name

Where is this tree found in the world – (Species Distribution)

The fig tree is found in many places across the world, is thought to have originated from Western Asia and then brought to the Mediterranean, where it has spread through human assistance due to the fruits it produces.

What is the preferred habitat for this tree?

It grows in relatively arid, warm temperate and subtropical areas, tolerating heat and drought, found in rocky, valley, woodland or scrubland habitats.

Is it green all year (evergreen), or does it change according to the season (deciduous)?

It is deciduous.

How tall can it grow? (Usual or maximum height)

It may grow to a max of 10m.

What are the leaves and flowers like?

Its leaves are large, broad, flat and with serrated edges. They have 3 to 5 lobes and thick veins. Their colour is bright, vibrant green. The leaf's top is rough, while the bottom of the leaf has tiny, stiff hairs. The fig tree also produces small female and male flowers.



What are the fruits like?

The edible fig fruit is a fleshy structure, internally filled with many tiny flowers. The fig would have a single opening that allows a particular fig wasp to enter and pollinate these flowers that later form seeds.



What do humans use this tree for?

This tree is mainly appreciated for its fruits – the figs, grown commercially and sold. However, fig leaves are highly fragrant, and on crushing the leaves, they release scents of coconut, peat, vanilla. The leaves have been used medicinally in the past, apart from being suited for cooked applications, commonly used as a wrap steamed with meats and vegetables to impart a smoky, fruity and coconut aroma. The fig tree has various other uses. For example, the white milk-like sap in its branches and leaves can be used to minimise the discomfort and swelling caused by a bee or wasp sting.

Does this tree have legal protection?

Although this species is not experiencing any kind of immediate threat to its survival, several of its sister species or varieties are rarer and require protection.