

Lentisk Tree	<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Id-Deru
Common English name	Scientific name	Maltese name

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

The Lentisk tree is indigenous to the Mediterranean coastal region, including those of the Maltese islands.

What is the preferred habitat for this tree?

It is found in dry and rocky areas, Maquis, valley sides, garigue and scrubland. It is also tolerant to saline environments, therefore also found near the sea.

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

It is evergreen.

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

It may grow to a max of 5m.

What are the leaves and flowers like?

Its leaves are leathery, dark green, long and oval. Its flowers may be male or female on separate trees and bloom from May to July.

What are the fruits like?

The female flowers produce inedible small bright red berries (drupes) that turn black when ripe in October.

What do humans use this tree for?

Apart from its ornamental value, the tree’s sap is the source of mastic, an aromatic resin used as a breath freshener and to flavour puddings and cakes. The resin is collected when it bleeds from small cuts in the bark of the main branches. Though it is liquid, it hardens when placed in a cold place.



Does this tree have legal protection?

The African tamarisk is protected within protected areas, in areas outside the development zone (ODZ), in green areas, and natural or rural/green enclaves in urban areas or in urban public open spaces. (according to the ERA 2018 list of trees and woodland protection regulations).