

## The box tree

**Buxus harlandii, buxus sinicio.**

**Family:** Buxaceae.

**Origin:** Taiwan and China. Mediterranean area.

Difficult to believe because of their very slow growth, these trees can grow up to 10 meters. It has a very dense foliage with little dark green leaves. The bark is gray and very wrinkled, looking even young trees similar very old exemplars. These trees can be formed in all the possible styles as the wood is quite flexible.

**Temperature and exposure:** Box trees may be exposed to hot sunlight but also resist cold winter (contrary to what some authors say).

**Light:** Box trees need a good illumination and in summer they should be always placed outdoors. They love sunlight but also support very cold temperature (this fact is at least my experience, I have it outside the whole year and have had no problems with freeze. After a cold winter the growth is very intense in spring).

**Pruning and cleaning:** When the branches have developed 5 or 6 pairs of leaves, reduce the size to 2 or 4 pairs. Only prune during the vegetative period.

**Repotting / Soil:** Repot every two or three years during march, april and may. As box trees grow very long and abundant roots, be sure to eliminate at least the half of the roots. For my little forest I have used a deep light colored ceramic pot, but feel free to use any kind of ceramic pot. The mix that is use is composed of 1/3 of compost, 1/3 of humus and 1/3 of sand.

**Wiring:** They can be wired during the whole year as the bark is difficult to hurt, but anyway, don't keep the wires for more than three months.

**Watering:** Water frequently and with much water but be sure to let the soil dry out before you water for the next time. Reduce watering during the colder seasons. Vaporize at least once a day.

**Fertilizer:** I use solid fertilizer in spring and autumn, never apply in hot summers or winter.

**Diseases:** I have had no diseases on my box trees, be sure to vaporize a lot to prevent the typical diseases of warm countries as there is red spider mite.