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Plant Feature: Black Aralia



Bring bold, architectural drama and an unmistakable Asian-inspired elegance to your landscape or container design with **Black Aralia** (*Guilfoylei*) which is part of the *Polyscias* species. It is sometimes also referred to as **Wild Coffee Plant**. With its upright form and striking, crinkly dark foliage, this plant delivers a refined yet edgy look that instantly elevates gardens, patios, and interiors alike.

Why you'll love it:

-  **Distinctive Dark Foliage:** Black Aralia's deep, almost black-green, crinkled leaves create **texture and contrast** that few plants can match. The unique foliage holds its color well and adds **instant sophistication**, especially when paired with lighter or colorful underplantings.
-  **Elegant Upright Form:** Naturally **vertical and tidy**, this plant works beautifully as an accent or repeated throughout a garden for rhythm and structure. It doesn't sprawl or overwhelm nearby plants, making it **easy to design with**.
-  **More Forgiving Than Ming Aralia:** Often compared to Ming Aralia for its similar look and uses, Black Aralia is **noticeably more tolerant of transplant shock** and adjusts better when shifting out of pots and into the ground. It's a strong choice for designers who want the Ming aesthetic with fewer headaches.
-  **Light loving & Adaptable:** Thrives in high light and can even handle direct sun, but remains tolerant of medium light conditions. This flexibility makes it suitable for a wide range of placements.
-  **Low water needs:** Prefers to dry out between waterings and does not like to stay wet. Ideal for clients who want a refined look without constant watering.
-  **Container & Landscape Versatility:** Equally at home in decorative pots, as a focal point in mixed plantings, or integrated into rock gardens and Asian-themed landscapes. It can be used as a single statement plant or repeated throughout a space for cohesion.
-  **Versatile Styling:** Works well as a standalone statement piece in a decorative container or paired with low-growing underplantings such as pothos or philodendron for a layered tropical display.
-  **Size:** Our plants range from 4–7 ft when purchased, and have a maximum potential of around 12 ft over time. Our 7-gallon plants will reach approximately 10 ft in about 1.5 years, making them substantial without being overpowering. We plant multiple plants in each pot for an instantly full and lush presentation.

Sizes We Offer:

- 2 gallon – 4 plants per pot
- 3 gallon – 5 plants per pot
- 5 gallon – 6 plants per pot
- 7 gallon – 7 plants per pot

Additional Names: Black Aralia, Wild Coffee Plant, *Polyscias* (varieties related to Ming Aralia)

Perfect for:

Asian-inspired gardens, modern landscapes, rock gardens, patios, entryways, and interiors that need a strong architectural accent. Also excellent for designers looking for a less common, not-overused plant with high visual impact.

Additional Information:

Black Aralia is a tropical evergreen shrub known for its upright habit and deeply textured, dark foliage. Native to tropical regions of Asia and the Pacific, it naturally lends itself to Asian-themed designs and serene, structured landscapes.

Unlike many tropical ornamentals, it tolerates being kept in containers long-term and transitions well when planted into the ground. Its crinkly leaves are also more tolerant of environmental stress and transplant shock compared to Ming Aralia. We love that the Black Aralia is not as widely grown or overused as some tropical staples. Get yours today! 😊






Grower's tip:

- This plant can be **left in its pot longer than most**; upsizing the container reduces watering frequency.
- Water thoroughly, allow excess water to drain, and **do not water again until the soil is dry to the touch**.
- Avoid consistently wet soil.
- Use **neem oil as a preventative spray** to add shine to the leaves and provide light pest protection.

Pairs well with:

Low-growing plants that provide contrast in color or texture. Works especially well with lighter greens, silvers, or colorful foliage beneath it to highlight the dark leaves. Excellent in mixed plantings for Asian-style or modern rock gardens.

Key characteristics:

| Attribute | Profile |
|-----------------|---|
| Light |  High |
| Water |  Low |
| Pest Resistance |  Average |
| Growth Habit |  7+ feet |
| Popularity |  Stable |