



WRITING SAMPLE

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Ornamental Trees With Berries

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Ornamental, or specimen, trees can offer a home landscape a perfectly sized, attractive focal point. Even better, ornamental trees that feature berries offer two additional bonuses – copious spots of bright color and the visiting wildlife that frequents the trees to snack. Avian visitors, especially, are likely to grace your yard throughout fall and winter in search of ornamental trees' brilliant and tasty berries. Gardeners consider several factors when choosing an ornamental tree.

Poisonous or Safe

A prime consideration, especially for families with young children, is whether an ornamental tree's berries are poisonous to humans. Brightly colored berries might be too tempting to youngsters playing in the yard, and a frantic trip to the emergency room might be at hand. Many ornamental trees have berries that not only are not poisonous but are also quite tasty in pies and jams. Interestingly, the berries of some trees are poisonous to humans but not to animals.

Form

An important consideration in selecting an ornamental tree with berries is its form. Weeping ornamental trees produce branches that droop downward dramatically, often to the ground. The soft, limp branches lead to a bent crown and a dramatic appearance. Weeping trees usually take up a lot of room in the landscape but are considered by many to be quite lovely. The more common upright trees have a firm trunk and rigid branches and retain a more erect form.

Size

A gardener might also consider height when selecting an ornamental tree with berries; there are several height classifications. Dwarf trees can range in height from 5 to 15 feet tall. These

trees are useful in smaller landscapes or where scale and space are an issue. A small ornamental tree is in the 15- to 25-foot range and suitable for many suburban gardens. Larger ornamental trees can soar to 30 feet tall.

Deciduous or Evergreen

Some gardeners might prefer to have in their garden an ornamental tree that offers a showy and colorful fall display before losing its leaves for winter. Though bare all winter, these trees reward the patient gardener with artistic, spring displays of intensely hued booms against stark, leaf-free branches. On the other hand, a gardener whose landscape benefits from winter interest might prefer to plant evergreen trees that keep their leaves year-round.