Japanese Camillia

(*Camellia japonica*)

Alex X. Niemiera, Professor, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech

**Summary:**

- **Foliage:** Evergreen broadleaf
- **Height:** 15 feet
- **Spread:** 10 feet
- **Shape:** Upright, dense

Japanese camellia is a dense and formal-appearing large shrub/small tree suitable for USDA plant hardiness zones 7 to 9. Foliage is a glossy, dark-green. Large flowers, ranging from white to pink to red, bloom from winter to spring.

**Plant Needs:**

- **Zone:** 7 to 9
- **Light:** Partial shade is ideal
- **Moisture:** Moist to average
- **Soil Type:** Sandy or loam pH
- **Range:** 3.7 to 6.5

**Functions:**

Suggested uses for this plant include screen, border, massing, and specimen plant.

**Planting Notes:**

Plant in an organic, moist, well-drained, acid soil.

Plant in a partially shady location, protected from winter wind to prevent leaf scorch. Cold temperatures (i.e., 0 degrees F) in Zones 7 and 8 may kill or delay flower buds.

**Care:**

- Mulch to protect shallow roots.
- Water thoroughly once a week in hot, dry weather.
- Prune in spring after flowering; however, dead wood can be pruned anytime during the year.
- Maintenance required to control scale insects.
Problems:

Various insects and diseases are problems including scale insects and twig die back. Not salt tolerant. Plant may be injured by exposure to salt.

Alternatives:

Consult local garden centers, historic or public gardens and arboreta regarding cultivars and related species that grow well in your area.

Related species:

Sasanqua camellia (*Camellia sasanqua*) is somewhat less hardy but has larger, showier flowers (September to December) than Japanese camellia.

A significant amount of breeding work has been done to develop “cold hardy” camellias. An article in the International Camellia Society web site (http://camellia-ics.org/_ics/ackerm1.htm), “Camellias for Cold Climates” by William L Ackerman, lists cold hardy camellia cultivars. Some of the listed cultivars are claimed to be hardy to minus 15 degrees F.

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