



# *PHORMIUM TENAX* 'SUNDOWNER'

**Fam. Hemerocallidaceae**

## DESCRIPTION

Bushy plant composed of numerous ribbon-like leaves that can grow more than 1 metre long, with downward curved tips. The cultivar is characterised by persistent foliage. It is a robust and rather fast cultivar, although quite sensitive to cold temperatures.

## LEAVES

The leaves are erect, fibrous, broad, bronze-green, with red and pink streaks; they are very decorative and mostly bright-green on the upper face, greyish on the underside.

## HABITAT

Evergreen herbaceous plant native to New Zealand where it grows spontaneously and is widespread in all regions.

## STEM

Absent.

## DISTRIBUTION

In Italy, some cultivars with red or variegated leaves are used as ornamental plants, especially in rustic, rocky and arid gardens; they are also used as decorations in roundabout landscaping.

## INTERESTING FACTS

The generic name *Phormium* derives from the Greek word *phormion*, which means basket or mat, referring to the use of its fibres for making such objects. The specific epithet *Tenax* describes the tenacity and resistance of the plant to adverse weather.

## FLOWERS

Large and showy flowers, bundled in panicle inflorescences that appear on the apexes of erect and gnarled stems more than 3 metres tall, robust and rigidly branched at right angles. *Phormium* blooms from May to September if grown in open ground and if it has not suffered during the winter.

## ROOTS

Robust and fleshy rhizomatous roots that grow quite deep.