

1 Padron pepper

Nightshades

(*Capsicum anuum*, 'Padron')

Description:

Small bushy plant about 50cm high. About 7 cm in length, ranging from bright green and maturing to a vibrant red. Most padrón peppers are very mild with no heat, but about 1 in 10 will give you a kick of heat, giving them the nickname "Russian Roulette chilli".

Use and how to harvest:

They can be used green but are not as sweet. Can be used raw in salads (sliced and seeded) or roasted in olive oil until the skin is lightly charred sprinkle with sea salt and a splash of good olive oil and eat as a tapa dish.

Planting:

Plant undercover in seed trays, July/August. Sow seed at a depth approximately three times the diameter of the seed. Transplant in single pots when 15 high and 3 sets of real leaves are grown. Plant out late September/October, when soil has warmed. Space plants: 40 cm apart. Sheltered sunny position or under cover.

Soil & Fertiliser:

Rich soil with plenty of compost added. Fournightly liquid feed once the plant is a reasonable size. Adding dolomite to supply with both calcium and magnesium.

Growth:

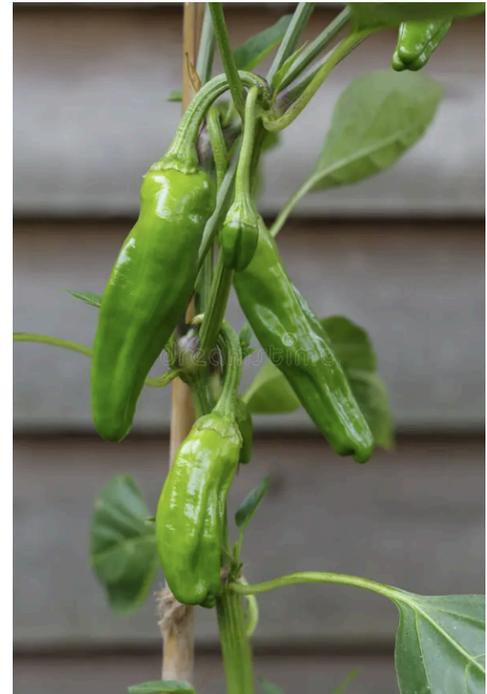
Sometimes require supports. Harvest when green if they have grown to a good size or wait for them to ripen to yellow, orange or red if preferred. They need warmth to ripen to the brilliant reds and yellows of commercial ones. Harvest in 10-12 weeks. Regular harvesting improves the productivity and vigour of the plant. Cut fruit off with sharp knife.

Companion planting:

Compatible with (can grow beside): Egg plant (Aubergine), Nasturtiums, Basil, Parsley, Amaranth

Problems and what to do:

Aphids: treat with white oil early morning or late afternoon to prevent leaf burn in the sun. Keep on top of it early, as aphids secrete a sticky substance which can cause mould and attract ants. Watch for slugs and snails, which can be treated with pellets.



2