

Spiral Ginger

Costus arabicus 'Variegatus'

Costus species contain no aromatic oils and do not have the culinary value of true gingers. 'Variegatus' is best known for its outstanding variegated foliage. It rarely flowers. The brightly contrasting foliage is excellent for mixed containers and can be used as cut foliage in flower arrangements. *Costus* are easily distinguished from other commonly cultivated gingers because the leaves spiral around the main stem. Cold winters in north Florida will cause them to go dormant in the winter but they return with warm spring weather.

Type: perennial

USDA hardiness zones: 9b through 11

Uses: border; mass planting; container; specimen

Origin: not native to Florida

Height: 3 to 6 feet **Spread:** 3 to 5 feet

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Light requirement: full shade to part sun

Soil tolerances: slightly acid to slightly alkaline; fertile; loam; sand

Drought tolerance: low

Soil salt tolerances: low

Invasive potential: low

Pest resistance: no serious pests or diseases

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Photo: National Gardening Association