

Agave Greens

Agave desmettiana 'Variegata'

CARE • ZONING • LANDSCAPING

FLORIDA LIVING

WELCOME

A beautiful, low-fuss agave

A practical customer guide for Florida landscapes, patios and containers.

Why it stands out

- Architectural form: a strong symmetrical rosette creates a focal point.
- Variegated color: green leaves edged in bright yellow add contrast.
- Flexible placement: specimen, border, rock garden or container.
- Low maintenance: drought tolerant once established in a suitable site.



THE SIMPLE FORMULA

SUN + DRAINAGE + SMART WATERING = HAPPY AGAVE

PLANT PROFILE

Know the plant before you plant it

Agave desmettiana 'Variegata' is valued for its variegated foliage and graceful rosette form.



AT A GLANCE

FOLIAGE	Green with bright yellow margins
EDGES	Smooth margins; sharp reddish tips
LIGHT	Full sun; bright light to partial shade by site
SOIL	Dry to well-drained; avoid standing water
USES	Specimen, border, rock garden, container
ZONES	Commonly listed USDA Zones 9–11

SAFETY

Leaf margins are smooth, but the tips can be sharp. Keep mature plants away from busy walkways and use gloves when handling.

FLORIDA ZONING

Where it fits in Florida

Use the 2023 USDA hardiness framework as a starting point, then verify your ZIP code and microclimate.



HOW TO READ THIS MAP

- Agave desmettiana 'Variegata' is generally listed for USDA Zones 9–11.
- Florida contains multiple hardiness zones, so ZIP-code verification is more useful than a statewide assumption.
- Cold exposure, wind, drainage and container culture can change real-world performance.
- The map is a simplified visual guide; use the official USDA map for exact boundaries.

PLACEMENT

Give the rosette the right light

Good placement improves appearance and reduces maintenance.

SUN

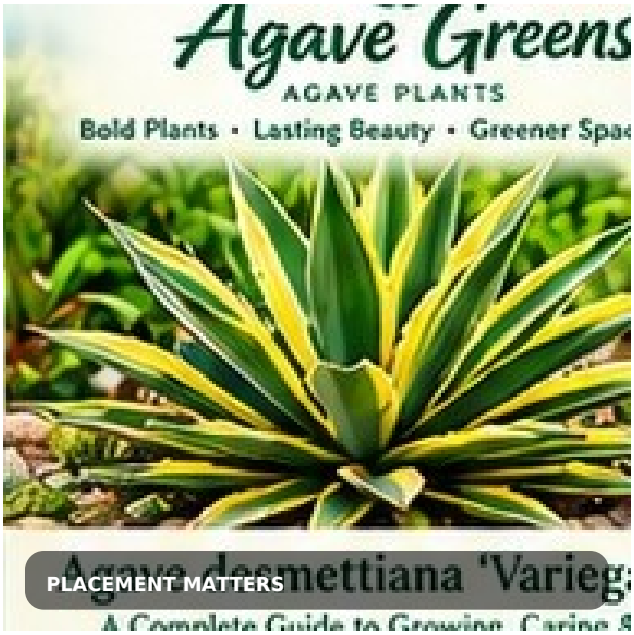
Bright light to full sun is a strong starting point. Acclimate plants to stronger exposure when needed.

AIRFLOW

Leave room around the rosette so it can develop without rubbing walls or blocking paths.

WATER

Avoid low pockets where irrigation or rainwater collects around the crown.



BEST PLACEMENT IDEAS

- Entry focal point: anchor an approach.
- Poolside: keep back from splash zones and traffic.
- Modern bed: repeat plants for rhythm.
- Rock garden: pair with gravel and stone.
- Container: choose a stable, substantial pot.

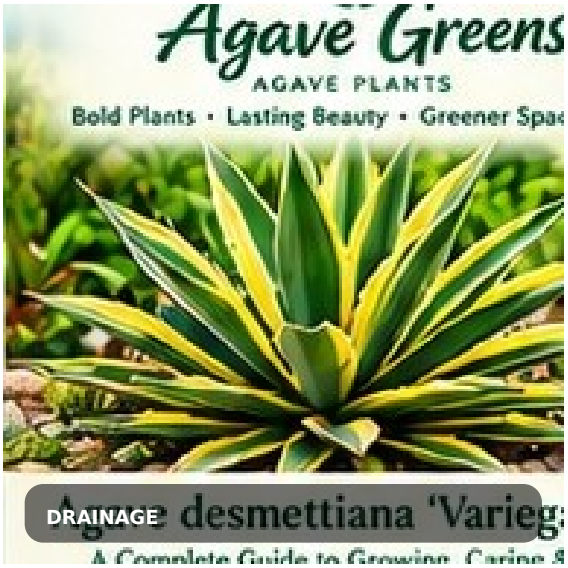
SOIL & DRAINAGE

The crown should never sit in a puddle

Fast drainage is one of the most important decisions for agave success.

BUILD FOR DRAINAGE

- Choose a naturally fast-draining site whenever possible.
- Correct compacted or poorly draining ground before planting.
- Use a drainage hole and free-draining mix in containers.
- Keep mulch and debris pulled away from the crown.



RED FLAG: SLOW DRAINAGE

Persistent wet soil can encourage root and crown problems. Correct drainage before increasing watering or fertilizer.

WATERING

Water deeply, then let the soil dry

Established agaves are drought tolerant, while newly planted plants need a transition period.

NEW PLANT

Water thoroughly after planting. Recheck moisture rather than watering by a rigid daily schedule.

ESTABLISHED

Reduce frequency once roots are established. Let rainfall and soil moisture guide irrigation.

CONTAINER

Containers dry faster than landscape beds. Check the potting mix before watering.



HEALTHY WATERING HABIT

SIMPLE MOISTURE CHECK

1. Feel the upper soil.
2. If it is still damp, wait.
3. If it is dry, water thoroughly.
4. Allow excess water to drain freely.

PLANTING

A five-step planting routine

Set the plant high enough to protect the crown, then establish a strong root zone.

1

SELECT

Choose a sunny or bright site with room for the mature rosette.

2

PREPARE

Loosen the planting area and correct drainage before planting.

3

SET

Position the root ball so the crown is not buried.

4

BACKFILL

Firm soil gently and keep mulch away from the crown.



deep

SPACING

Give the plant room to show its silhouette. UF/IFAS agave guidance commonly uses about 36–60 inches of spacing, depending on species and design.

CONTAINERS

Turn an agave into a patio statement

A substantial pot, clean gravel and the right proportions can make the plant feel like a designed feature.



CHOOSE THE POT

- Use a stable container for the plant’s eventual size.
- A drainage hole is essential.
- White, cream and terracotta finishes complement yellow-variegated foliage.
- Leave visual breathing room between the rosette and rim.
- Raise containers slightly if the surface holds water.

AGAVE GREENS STYLE

Pair the plant with a clean white or warm terracotta pot, light gravel and a simple plant tag for a polished Florida-living look.

MAINTENANCE

Feed lightly. Maintain selectively.

Observation should come before intervention.



ROUTINE CHECKLIST

- Inspect the center and lower leaves periodically.
- Remove damaged or dead leaves with clean tools.
- Keep the crown open and free of persistent wet debris.
- Avoid heavy nitrogen feeding.
- Refresh container media when drainage declines.

MAINTENANCE MINDSET

Check light, drainage, irrigation and physical damage before reaching for fertilizer or pesticides.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Spot problems early

Good site selection and careful watering prevent many common issues.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Soft or collapsing tissue: investigate excessive moisture or poor drainage.
- Leaf spotting: check watering, sun stress and physical damage.
- Insect damage: inspect the base, leaves and center.
- Agave snout weevil: a known agave pest; seek local extension guidance if suspected.



BEFORE TREATING

Confirm the problem first. Photograph symptoms, check root-zone moisture and consider county UF/IFAS Extension guidance for diagnosis.

LIFE CYCLE

Pups, flowering and renewal

The end of one rosette can become the beginning of many new plants.



WHAT TO EXPECT

- Propagation is commonly done from rooted offsets or pups.
- A mature plant may eventually flower on a tall stalk.
- This cultivar is reported to flower about every 10–15 years.
- The flowering rosette is monocarpic and dies after flowering.
- Plan the landscape so replacement plants are part of the design.

A SPECTACULAR EVENT

The flowering stalk can rise dramatically above the rosette. Reported flowers are yellow, with a stalk reaching about 8 feet.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Design with shape, repetition and contrast

Use the agave as structure, then soften the composition around it.



FOUR DESIGN MOVES

- Repeat: create rhythm with matching plants.
- Contrast: pair geometric leaves with soft foliage.
- Frame: highlight doors, gates, pools or views.
- Ground: use gravel or restrained mulch for a clean base.

COLOR STORY

Yellow-edged foliage looks especially effective against deep greens, blue-gray foliage, warm stone, terracotta and white architectural surfaces.

LANDSCAPE EXAMPLES

Four ways to use Agave ‘Variegata’

The same plant can read modern, coastal, tropical or desert-inspired depending on its companions and hardscape.









FLORIDA LANDSCAPES

Build a Florida-friendly composition

Match the agave with companions that share its light, soil and watering needs.



COMPANION STRATEGY

- Choose plants with similar light and watering needs.
- Use gravel, shell, stone or restrained mulch to define zones.
- Keep irrigation focused on plants that actually need it.
- For coastal sites, consider salt exposure and wind.
- Avoid sharp-tipped agaves beside busy pedestrian routes.

SOUTH FLORIDA ADVANTAGE

Warm climates can support agaves as year-round accents. Success still depends on matching irrigation, drainage, exposure and traffic conditions to the plant.

CARE CALENDAR

A simple Florida care rhythm

Adjust the schedule to rainfall, container size, exposure and actual plant condition.

JAN–FEB	Inspect for cold stress; protect young or container plants during unusual cold events.
MAR–APR	Resume active growth checks; refresh mulch or gravel; inspect drainage.
MAY–JUN	Watch irrigation as heat increases; avoid keeping the crown continuously wet.
JUL–AUG	Rain may reduce irrigation needs; inspect after storms and remove damaged leaves.
SEP–OCT	Maintain drainage and airflow; watch for pests and late-season growth.
NOV–DEC	Reduce irrigation as conditions cool; plan protection for exposed container plants.

QUICK REFERENCE

Frequently asked questions

Use these answers as a fast customer conversation guide.

How much sun?
Bright light to full sun is a strong starting point; adjust for site heat and plant response.

How often should I water?
Check the soil rather than watering by the calendar.

Can it grow in a pot?
Yes. Use a stable container, drainage hole and free-draining mix.

Is it safe around walkways?
Use caution. Leaf margins are smooth, but tips are sharp.

Does it flower?
Yes, eventually. The flowering rosette then dies, leaving offspring.

Biggest mistake?
Keeping the root zone too wet or planting where drainage is poor.

REMEMBER: right plant + right place + right water = easier care.

Agave Greens

CUSTOMER CARE CARD • Agave desmettiana 'Variegata'

LIGHT

Bright light to full sun. Give the rosette room and avoid high-traffic placement.

WATER

Water thoroughly, then allow the soil to dry. Established plants need less frequent irrigation.

SOIL

Use well-drained soil or a free-draining container mix. Never let water pool around the crown.

FEED

Fertilize lightly if needed. Do not compensate for poor drainage with fertilizer.

MAINTAIN

Remove damaged leaves with clean tools. Inspect periodically for pests or rot.

COLD

For unusual cold, protect young or container plants and move exposed pots to shelter when practical.

SAFETY

Leaf edges are smooth, but leaf tips can be sharp. Wear gloves when handling and keep the plant away from busy walkways.

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Prepared as an educational customer guide. Plant performance varies with microclimate, soil, irrigation, exposure and maintenance.

PRIMARY REFERENCES

- USDA Agricultural Research Service — 2023 Plant Hardiness Zone Map.
- UF/IFAS Extension — Agave spp. landscape guidance.
- Chicago Botanic Garden — Agave desmettiana ‘Variegata’ plant profile.

GROW • DESIGN • ENJOY

Bring bold, enduring Florida character to your landscape.

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