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Passion Flower

Passiflora caerulea

Climbing plant with significant blossoms

Worth Knowing: The Passion Flower grows and twines very fast from an early age on, it is easy to cultivate and eye-catching with its exotic blossoms. Its name stems from christian interpretation of the leaves and blossoms. In the middle of the flower there are five stamens and three grains arranged that tower over the deeply carved petals by some margin. In Christianity, the stamens were seen as wounds, the grains were seen as nails, and the petals were interpreted as halo, which lead to the name Passion Flower. The *Passiflora caerulea* is perfectly suited as a pot or tub plant and can even be cultivated outdoors in areas with minor frost in the winter.

Natural Location: The natural habitat of the Passion Flower is Middle America and western South America.

Cultivation: Seed propagation indoors is possible throughout the year. To increase its germinability, you can place the seed in warm water for about a day for priming. Then, plant the seeds about 1 cm deep in moist potting compost, put some compost earth on top and cover the seed container with clear film to keep the earth moist. Don't forget to make some holes in the clear film and take it every second or third day completely off for about 2 hours. That way you avoid mold formation on your potting compost. Place the seed container somewhere bright and warm between 25°C and 30°C (for instance near a heater) and keep the earth moist, but not wet. It usually takes two to three weeks until germination.

Place: The *Passiflora caerulea* prefers a bright place and can cope, after some time, even with full sun the whole day, which supports the growth of the flowers. It can be kept in a bright room throughout the year, however, the plant appreciates a place outside in the garden or on the balcony starting from May.

Care: The Passion Flower needs to be watered more frequently and piercingly with not so cold water. Avoid waterlogging, especially in the saucer. From April until September you should give fluid fertilizer for tub plants on a weekly basis, at least every two weeks, to support a rich flowering.

During the winter: You can keep your *Passiflora* outside during autumn, until the first night frosts. Plants that are older than three years might even be kept outdoors through a mild winter with not less than -10° Celsius, but they need to be protected with thick foliage. Otherwise your Passion Flower has to be moved inside to either a warm and very bright spot or to a less bright and cool place with around 10° Celsius. For indoor cultivation you best fertilize your plant every six weeks with only a quarter of the recommended amount. For a cool hibernation don't give any fertilizer at all and water your *Passiflora* only sparingly. In case your plant grows wildly sprouts during winter, it can be pruned in spring to ensure a proper growth.