

Compact Strawberry Bush



Cut stems and boughs make appealing centerpieces for fall and holiday tables, when the flowers and fruit are in prime season. The strawberry-like fruits are palatable to both wild and human foragers. Having a sweet, woody flavor somewhat reminiscent of apricot and guava, the ripe fruit is high in vitamin



Arbutus unedo 'Compacta'

- **Use:** A gracefully branched evergreen shrub with glossy dark green foliage and handsome cinnamon-colored bark. Masses of white flowers yield bright, edible strawberry-like fruits. A fuss-free plant for year-round interest in western gardens. Use as a small specimen tree to anchor a border, or create an informal hedge.
- **Exposure/Soil:** Full sun-part shade. Well drained soil is a must and red clay is not acceptable. Use slow release fertilizer two times a year. Water regularly, when top 3 in. of soil is dry.
- **Growth:** Grows 6 to 8 ft. tall, 5 to 6 ft. wide in 10 years; slightly larger with age.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 7-9; Shrub
- **Foliage:** Evergreen; Glossy, leathery, obovate, dark green leaves (to 4" long) have red stems and serrate margins.
- **Flower:** Urn-shaped, aromatic, pinkish-white flowers in drooping panicles (to 2" long) bloom in October, with bloom often continuing until January. Long-stemmed, spherical, green fruits (to 1" diameter) appear in winter after the flowers, but take almost a full year to ripen. As new white flowers begin to bloom in October, the fruits from the preceding winter ripen to strawberry red, leaving the plant with the unusual situation of having both attractive flowers and ripe fruit at the same time. Although the ripe fruits (each to 3/4" in diameter) have the same color as strawberries, they unfortunately do not have the same flavor as strawberries (exceedingly bland).