

ITALIAN NUMBERED FIGS FOUND AT BAY AREA SCION EXCHANGES

Source of figs and information

Todd Kennedy collected the Italian numbered figs in the 1980s in Rome. Patrick Shafer (PS) provided most of the comments below on each fig. Patrick's figs are growing in the Anderson Valley (near Philo, west of Ukiah) with daily highs in the 90s from June to September, but with cool nights. These figs produce best in hot areas. Other comments are from Mark Albert (MA) in Ukiah.

Where to taste

If you want to taste any of the numbered selections locally, go to Prusch Park in San Jose during fig season in the summer and fall.

Variations in culture and flavor

The first or breba crop generally ripens in late spring or early summer on wood from the previous year. The main crop is usually harvested in the fall. If a fig has a smaller eye or tougher skin, it is less likely to harbor diseases or insects, especially in a damp climate. Figs can have a different flavor and even color in various climates. Patrick likes figs that have a strong, complex (sweet-tart) flavor. What he calls bland may be someone else's favorite.

Fig descriptions

IT 88 - Yellow, very vigorous. Patrick Schafer (PS) says these are worthless, buggy & watery

IT 160 - Bourjasotte (MA)

IT 169 - Large green fig with long neck, has breba and main crop, rather bland flavor (PS).

IT 176 - no data sent

IT 215 - Yellow-green skin, medium size, round, small eye, will dry on tree, smooth texture, few seeds, mild and sweet. OK to good in flavor (PS)

IT 250 - is Panache, "tiger" fig, unusual green-striped yellow skin. (PS)

IT258 - Thick purple-blue skin, strawberry flesh, medium size, short neck, medium eye, vigorous plant. Good to excellent flavor. Also ok in coastal area. PS says this is the his best (along with #358) of IT collection for his growing conditions. It is his earliest and latest fig each year.

IT264 - Yellow skin, pale inside, has a breba crop, earliest to ripen, medium size, bland flavor. PS thinks it may need more heat early in the season to ripen properly.

IT 272 - VOGP list (MA)

IT 276 - no data sent

IT 281 - VOPG list. Like Verdone but not as acid (MA)

IT 320 - Purple-green fig with strawberry pulp, breba crop, medium size, round with a thick neck, medium size eye, thick smooth skin. Good to excellent flavor. (PS)

IT 358 - Mottled brown color (may be greenish in cooler areas), medium size, thin glossy skin. Light flavor. MA says ok in coastal area, similar to IT 258 for PS. Probably not as high quality as 258.

IT 372

IT 373 - Smooth tough skin with ribs, medium eye, short neck (PS)

IT 376 - Amber-purple skin, dark tan-pinkish flesh, breba crop, roundish, no neck, medium eye, moist with no seeds. Sweet and complex excellent flavor, one of best (PS) --but possibly is Panache.

IT 395 - Purple-green skin, large, no breba crop, ripens late, long neck, seeded, small tight eye, sweet, tree medium in vigor. One of best flavored in group (PS). MA says he rates it highly as does VOGP in Hopland. Huge, purple jammy fruit, better quality inland.

Other numbered figs that could be confused with the IT collection are: 143-28/UCD; 171-5/UCD

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