

TILLEULS À DANSER®

DANCE LIME TREES, TREES FOR DANCING LOVE AND LIFE

BOTANICAL HISTORY



A dance lime tree in Macon (Belgium)

The origins of the lime tree stretch back over fifty million years. A lime tree has been reconstituted from a fossil specimen dating from the second period of the Cenozoic era and discovered in Aix-en-Provence, France. The tree's scientific name, *Tilia*, is derived from the Greek word for phloem, *tilos*. Phloem, one of the three elements that make up tree bark, is the tissue that conducts synthesised foodstuffs throughout the plant.

People have used the fibres of lime tree bark since earliest times to make string, rope, clothing, sandals, baskets, and so on. Linnaeus defined the *Tilia* genus in 1735 in *Systema Naturae*.

Lime trees (known as *linden* in parts of Europe and North America, where they are also called *basswood*) belong to the family of *Malvaceae*, and the genus *Tilia* includes thirty-five species of trees.

Five of these species grow in Europe, including *Tilia Cordata*, or small-leaved lime; *Tilia Platyphyllos*, or large-leaved lime; the common lime; and *Tilia Tomentosa*, or silver lime.

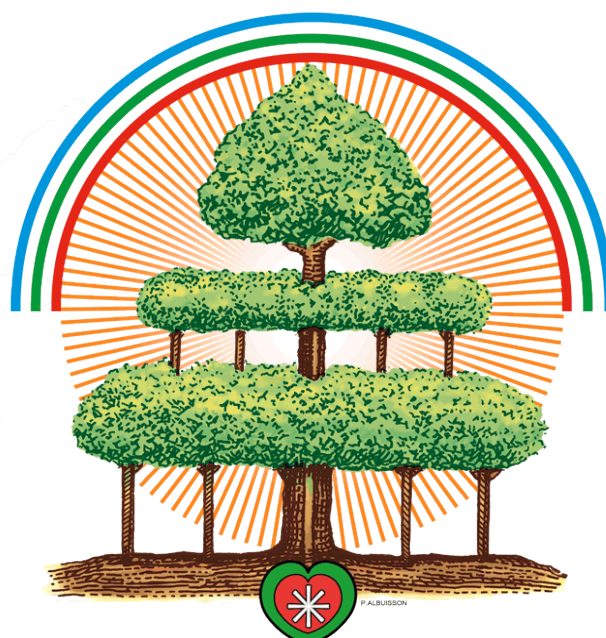
The lime tree is one of the largest European trees, with height and trunk diameters which exceed those of other trees. In the past it was often found in forests, where its fallen leaves decayed into a rich humus.

The lime tree grows straight and tall due to the fact that its topmost branches remain alive. It has a straight, smooth trunk that cracks slightly when the tree reaches maturity at twenty years of age. The crown, depending upon the species, is conical, oval or pyramidal. A wide pyramidal shape is best for a dance lime tree. The lower branches grow horizontally, with more and more ramification in the higher branches. Twigs which grow on either sides of the branches carry heart-shaped leaves. Lime trees are easily pruned. Depending upon the climate, the trees flower in June or July when they are around seven years old. The flowers have four or five sepals and pale yellow, extremely fragrant petals, and make a marvellously flavourful honey. The medicinal virtues of limeflower tea are well-documented.

The fruit of the tree is a small ball containing several seeds, which does not burst open.

Immediately after harvesting the seeds are stratified for a period of up to 20 months. They are then planted in rows in the open air, facing north and in friable soil. They are transplanted in the spring. Lime trees that grow in the forest and in Holland reproduce naturally. Silver limes are most often reproduced through grafting; layering is also used.

Lime wood is light-coloured. The colour of the younger part of the trunk and the branches does not differ from that of the heart. The wood, which does not crack or split and is not subject to woodworm, is used by sculptors, woodworkers, shipbuilders, and cabinet makers, among many others, to make a large number of objects.



TILLEULS À DANSER
l'amour et la vie

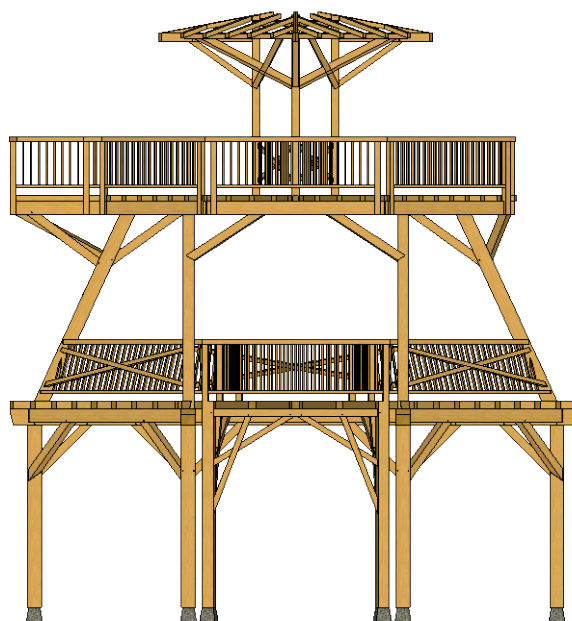
The most commonly used species for dance lime trees are *Tilia Platyphyllos* (large-leaved lime) and *Tilia Intermedia* or *Europea*, also known as Dutch lime.

THE SUPPORTING STRUCTURE

Growing a full-size dance lime tree takes approximately as long as raising a child from birth to adulthood. A lime tree replanted when it is between five and seven years old (or older) will rapidly become a magnificent tree which will defy time, living for several centuries and perpetuating the memories of your neighbourhood, community, village or town.

It is also a marvellous symbol of the links forged between twinned communities.

A wooden structure supported by wooden, stone or metal pillars allows one or two dance floors, which are placed in dance lime trees with three tiers of horizontal branches. A single floor is most commonly installed.



conception & 3D images © Arnaud CHANTELOUP

The first crown of branches is ideally situated at a height of approximately 3.5 metres, the second at 7 metres, and the third at 9.7 metres.

There are two ways of growing a tree to these heights :

1. Planting a young lime tree and pruning it in situ while progressively adapting the supporting structure.



Dance Lime Tree in Limmersdorf (Germany)

2. Planting a lime tree that has been pruned as a dance lime in a nursery and building the supporting structure around it.

The choice of material and the design of the supporting structure is up to those who initiate the individual projects.

Many types of structure exist, from the simplest to the most complex.

The young French journeyman carpenter Arnaud Chanteloup has researched the ideal supporting structure for dance lime trees. Here to see photos and 3D images of his model.



conception & 3D images : © Arnaud CHANTELOUP

To have the pleasure of the dance upon the departure of the plantation, a parquet dance floor can be built on the ground. The structure of the floor will also be used for the formation of the future stages.



Photographic simulation of a dance floor on the ground inspired by the dance lime tree of Rauenstein.

Pierre ALBUISSON
Translation : Marcia HADJIMARKOS