

## **TUFA ROCK**

Tufa is naturally forming limestone rock which can be used as a medium for growing certain plants. Tufa is formed when calcium enriched deposits build up over years covering debris such as twigs and leaves. Fossil remains of this debris is often visible in the rock. While the exterior of the rock hardens with age, the inside remains soft enough for plant roots to penetrate and extract all the nutrients necessary to sustain plant growth. Any lime-loving plant can be successfully grown in tufa; the most successful being alpine plants which require minimal nutrients and water. These plants will happily live for years with only the occasional watering during the heat of summer.

### **PLANTING MADE EASY:**

Pot grown nursery stock should have most of the soil shaken or washed from the roots. The hole should be the diameter and depth of the final plant root-ball once most of the nursery soil is removed. Use a masonry drill-bit or a chisel to make the hole; soaking the tufa will make the job much easier. The tufa debris removed from the holes should be mixed 2 to 1 with the potting soil for working around the roots after inserting the plant. Bury one third of the tufa in earth as the rock will act as a sponge drawing moisture from the surrounding soil. For the first few weeks pamper the plants with a regular watering.

### **PLANT SELECTION:**

Androsace sp.  
Arenaria  
Campanula (some selections)  
Drabas  
Dianthus dwarfs  
Saxifraga  
Helichrysum (some selections)  
Sempervivum