Chilean Rose Tarantula

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Also known as the Rose Hair Tarantula or the Chilean Common Tarantula, the Chilean Rose Tarantula is the tarantula most commonly found in pet stores. Calm, docile, and relatively easy to care for, it is a great starter species for those interested in arachnids.

Species Profile: Chilean Rose Tarantula	
Scientific Name:	*Grammostola rosea*
Natural Environment:	Deserts and scrublands in Bolivia, Northern Chile, and Argentina.
Average Size:	4-1/2" to 5-1/2"
Average Life Span:	Females 15 years; males 2-4 years.
Appearance:	The Chilean Rose Tarantula has a large, hairy, heavy, two-part body. It has eight hairy legs with two small claws at the ends. There are two accepted color morphs. The first is characterized by a tan to brown overall color with pink hairs and carapace. The second has red hairs all over the body.
Habitat	
Size:	5 to 10 gallon tank with a screen top; the width should be 2 to 3 times the leg span.
Lighting:	If your house temperature doesn't drop below 65º F, no special lighting is necessary. If your house is cool, use an incandescent black light to maintain temperature.
Temperature:	70ºF to 85ºF; monitor with a thermometer.
Humidity:	75% to 80%; humidity should never drop below 55%. Monitor with a hygrometer.

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Housing:	Chilean Rose Tarantulas are a terrestrial species, so floor space is much more important than height. Glass terrariums with screen lids or faunariums work well. Plants and decorations are not necessary, but you should provide your tarantula with at least one hiding spot. Artificial plants, driftwood, ceramic flowerpots, or cork bark will work well for this purpose. Be sure to avoid anything with rough edges or surfaces.
Substrate:	2" to 3" of peat moss or potting soil. Avoid ornamental sand.
Diet/Feeding:	Juvenile Chilean Rose Tarantulas should be fed gut-loaded pinhead crickets and other small insects such as mealworms, moths, and superworms. Adults require crickets and the occasional pinky mouse. Prey should be approximately half the size of the tarantula. Tarantulas will keep eating until full, and all uneaten food should be removed within 24 hours. They can be fed daily. If your tarantula stops eating, it may be approaching a molt. Once your tarantula's leg span measures 3", you can provide water in a wide, shallow dish. When it is smaller than that, provide water by misting the sides of the enclosure and the substrate.
Behavior/Interaction:	Chilean Rose Tarantulas are known for their calm and docile nature. They will generally warn you if they are going to bite by raising their front legs and showing their fangs. However, we do not recommend handling them. This is for their safety as well as yours. If you were to drop the tarantula, its abdomen could split, which is almost always fatal. Their venom is fairly weak, but if you were allergic to it, a bite could cause a serious reaction.
Interesting Facts:	In order to grow larger, the Chilean Rose Tarantula must molt its exoskeleton. Like other tarantulas, this species can flick or "throw" urticating hairs from its stomach with its hind legs, which can be irritating to human skin and possibly cause a reaction.

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