

Butia capitata

[Synonyms : *Arecastrum romanzoffiana*, *Arecastrum romanzoffiana* var. *australe*, *Arecastrum romanzoffiana* var. *micropindo*, *Butia bonnetii*, *Butia bonnettii*, *Butia capitata* var. *deliciosa*, *Butia capitata* var. *elegantissima*, *Butia capitata* var. *erythrospatha*, *Butia capitata* var. *lilaceiflora*, *Butia capitata* var. *liliaceifolia*, *Butia capitata* var. *nehrlingiana*, *Butia capitata* var. *odorata*, *Butia capitata* var. *pulposa*, *Butia capitata* var. *pygmaea*, *Butia capitata* var. *rubra*, *Butia capitata* var. *subglobosa*, *Butia capitata* var. *virescens*, *Butia leiospatha*, *Butia nehrlingiana*, *Calappa capitata*, *Calappa leiospatha*, *Cocos australis*, *Cocos blumenavia*, *Cocos bonnettii*, *Cocos capitata*, *Cocos capitata* var. *leiospatha*, *Cocos coronata*, *Cocos datil*, *Cocos leiospatha*, *Cocos leiospatha* var. *angustifolia*, *Cocos liliaceifolia*, *Cocos odorata*, *Cocos pulposa*, *Cocos romanzoffiana*, *Syagrus capitata*, *Syagrus romanzoffiana*]

JELLY PALM is an evergreen palm. Native to central and southern South America (particularly Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay), it has tiny creamy-yellow to reddish flowers.

It is also known as *Bu di ye zi* (Chinese), *Butia* (Brazilian), *Butiapalm* (Swedish), *Butiapalmu* (Finnish), Chilean wine palm, *Geleepalme* (German), *Guo dong zong* (Chinese), Nicuri palm, Ouricuri palm, Pindo date, Pindo palm, Queen palm, South American jelly palm, Uricury palm, Urucury wax, and Wine palm.

The flowers are pollinated by insects and the wind.

Capitata is derived from Latin *capito* (man with a large head) meaning ‘having a dense head’ with reference to the fronds.

The small fibrous date-like, yellow to orange ripe fruit (they are claimed to have a sweet apricot-like (*Prunus armeniaca*) taste) are eaten raw and can also be puréed. They are used to make jams, various preserves, pies, cakes and wine too.

A substitute coffee has been made locally from the ground seed – and the seed, which have an oil content of up 45%, are also used commercially to make margarine.

Medicinally, some of the American Indian tribes in Brazil have eaten the fruit flesh to cure worms.