

Citrus margarita

[Synonyms : *Citrus aurantium* subsp. *japonica*, *Citrus japonica* subsp. *fructu elliptico*, *Citrus japonica Kumquat*, *Fortunella japonica* var. *margarita*, *Fortunella margarita*, *Fortunella margarita* var. *margarita*]

KUMQUAT (Chinese, English, German, Italian) is an evergreen shrub. Native to south-eastern China it has small white flowers.

It is also known as Bullet kumquat, *Chinesische Kumquat* (German), Cumquat, *Cunquato-nagami* (Portuguese), *Geum gam* (Korean), *Jin ju* (Chinese), *Kleinfrüchtige Goldorange* (German), *Koumquat* (French), *Kumkvat* (Hungarian), *Kumquat à chair acide* (French), *Kumquat a fruitto ovale* (Italian), *Kumquat à fruits oblong* (French), *Kumquat ovale* (French), *Naga kinkan* (Japanese), *Nagami kinkan* (Japanese), Nagami kumquat, *Nai kan* (Chinese), *Naranja japonesa* (Spanish), *Naranjita china* (Spanish), Oval kumquat, *Ovalkumquat* (German), *Ovale Kumquat* (German), *Ovaler Kumquat* (German), Pearl lemon, Spicy peeled kumquat, and *Zwergpomeranze* (German).

Margarita is derived from Latin *margarita* (pearl) meaning ‘pearl-like or pearly’.

Apparently in Middle Chinese the name *kumquat* means ‘golden orange’.

This small pale orange fruit, which is the kumquat most familiar in the Western World, is an ingredient in jams, puddings, preserves and pickles – and it can also be eaten whole and raw.

Authorities note that the kumquat plays a traditional ornamental role during the Chinese New Year.

Kumquat is believed to have been introduced to Europe in 1846 by Robert Fortune (1813-1880), when he was collecting plants for the London Botanical Society – and then to the United States in 1850.

Today it is grown commercially in Florida and its fruit are usually destined for preserves such as marmalade or brandied fruit.