

Citrus reticulata

[Synonyms : *Citrus chrysocarpa*, *Citrus deliciosa*, *Citrus nobilis*, *Citrus nobilis* var. *deliciosa*, *Citrus reticulata* var. *austera*, *Sinocitrus reticulata*]

MANDARIN ORANGE is an evergreen shrub or tree. Native to south-eastern Asia, particularly China and the Philippines, it has small white flowers.

It is also known as *Cam ngot* (Vietnamese), *Citruso reta* (Esperanto), Common mandarin, Culate mandarin, *Gum* (Chinese), Italian tangerine, Japanese orange, *Jeruk jepun* (Javanese), *Jeruk paseh* (Sundanese), *Jie* (Chinese), *Ju* (Chinese), *Kamala* (Nepalese), *Khoan bì cam* (Vietnamese), *Khoan bì quít* (Vietnamese), King orange, *Kuan pi gan* (Chinese), *Kuan pi jie* (Chinese), *Limau kupas* (Malay), Loose-skinned orange, Mandarin (Danish, English, Swedish), *Mandariini* (Finnish), *Mandarijn* (Dutch), *Mandarina* (Italian, Spanish), *Mandarine* (French, German), *Mandarinenbaum* (German), *Mandarinier* (French), *Mandarinier commun* (French), *Mandarinka obecná* (Czech), *Mandarino* (Italian, Spanish), *Mandulina* (Maltese), *Mantapinia i koini* (Greek), *Mi gan* (Chinese), *Mikan* (Japanese), *Mantariniá* (Greek), *Mikan* (Japanese), *Muthandara* (Kikuyu), *Narangi* (Gujarati), *Naranjita* (Filipino/Tagalog), *Naran-kai* (Tamil), *Nāringi* (Arabic), *Ponkan* (Japanese), *Quít ngot* (Vietnamese), *Quýt* (Vietnamese), *Santara* (Hindi), *Som cheen* (Thai), *Som ma-nge* (Thai), *Suntala* (Nepalese), Suntara orange, Tangerine orange, *Thandara* (Kikuyu), True mandarin, and Willow-leaf mandarin.

An oil is extracted from the fragrant, orange-red or yellow rind of the small orange-like fruit.

Reticulata is Latin (net-like) meaning ‘net-veined, netted or marked with a net-like pattern’.

Some authorities suggest that the Mandarin orange may have acquired its common name from the colour of mandarins’ (or Chinese civil servants’) robes, others are more specific and propose that the fruit are reminiscent in shape as well as colour of the button on the mandarins’ hats.

In China although mandarin oranges are used in cakes and pastries and as condiments in savoury dishes, they are primarily eaten as raw dessert fruit. These are one of the fruits especially popular at the time of the Chinese New Year.

TANGERINE (English, German) is a variety of mandarin orange.

It is also known as Kidglove orange, *Naartje* (Afrikaans), *Tangeriini* (Finnish), *Tangerin* (Swedish), *Tangerineira* (Portuguese).

The tangerine first reached Europe in the 19th Century.

At some point it must have crossed the Atlantic as authorities note that it provided food for the North American Seminole Indian tribe in Florida.

With sugar cane (*Saccharum officinarum*), peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*) and yam bean (*Pachyrhizus erosus*) the tangerine plays a significant role in the Mexican Festival of the Dead which takes place annually on 1st November.