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Garcinia mangostana

MANGOSTEEN is an evergreen tree. Native to Malaysia it has rose-pink flowers.

It is also known as *Joz jundam* (Urdu), *Mangastin* (Marathi), *Manggis* (Javanese, Malay), *Manggu* (Sundanese), *Manggusta* (Malayalam, Portuguese), *Mang-khut* (Thai), *Mangostane* (German), *Mangostano* (Esperanto), *Mangoustan* (French), *Mangus* (Singhalese), *Mangus-kai* (Tamil), and *Mangustan* (Bengali, Hindi).

The seeds yield a concentrated oil that is used to make *kokum* butter.

Mangostana is derived from local names.

The lychee-like (*Litchi chinensis*) dark red to purplish brown fruit are considered by many to have the best taste of all tropical fruit – reminiscent for some of peaches (*Prunus persica*). It has been described by others as having ‘delicate snow-white melting juicy pulp’ with a taste ‘of the Strawberry and the Grape’ (*Potentilla* and *Vitis vinifera* respectively). The mangosteen is not only eaten raw but is also used to make preserves.

As the fruit bruises easily it is not readily transportable and thus it is difficult to export.

The inedible, bitter-tasting rind yields a brown dye which is used for tanning leather.

The hard, yellowish-red wood has been used to make furniture and agricultural implements.

Medicinally, the rind is used in Chinese and Indian medicinal practices in remedies for dysentery and diarrhoea. The root has been used in parts of Asia to treat irregular periods and the fruit are said to have been taken to allay thirst during fevers.