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Panax ginseng

[Synonyms : *Aralia ginseng*, *Aralia quinquefolia* var. *ginseng*, *Panax chin-seng*, *Panax pseudoginseng*, *Panax quinquefolium* var. *coreensis*, *Panax quinquefolium* var. *ginseng*, *Panax schin-seng*]

GINSENG (Chinese, English, French, German, Italian) is a perennial. Native to China (particularly Dongbei ie. Manchuria or north-eastern China) and Korea it has tiny greenish-yellow flowers.

It is also known as Asian ginseng, Asiatic ginseng, Chinese ginseng, Five fingers, Korean ginseng, *Koreanischer Ginseng* (German), Manchurian ginseng, Oriental ginseng, Red berry, Sang, and Wonder-of-the-world.

Warning – large doses may cause depression, insomnia, nervous disorders, high blood pressure and hyperactivity. The plant must not be taken with any remedies containing iron or with Indian or China teas. It should be avoided when suffering from any acute inflammatory disease, or from high blood pressure or bronchitis.

Ginseng is a corruption of Chinese *Jin-chen* or *Schin-seng* (man root, like a man) with, for some authorities, reference to the unusual shape of the root that can sometimes resemble a human figure. For others it means ‘wonder of the world’.

Traditionally ginseng harvested from the wild has always been viewed as superior to cultivated plants. After centuries of over-harvesting however ginseng is extremely rare in the wild.