

Physalis peruviana

[Synonyms : *Alkekengi pubescens*, *Boberella peruviana*, *Physalis chenopodifolia*, *Physalis edulis*, *Physalis esculenta*, *Physalis tomentosa*]

CAPE GOOSEBERRY is an annual or perennial. Native to tropical South America it has dark purple blotched inside, light yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Amor en bolsa* (Spanish), *Ananaskörsbär* (Swedish), *Andenbeere* (German), Golden berry, Gooseberry, Ground-cherry, Husk cherry, *Inkapflaume* (German), *Kapkrusbär* (Swedish), *Kapstachelbeere* (German), *Karviaiskoiso* (Finnish), *Kinathi* (Kikuyu), *Mochyně peruánská* (Czech), *Pambudda* (Telugu), *Peruanische Blasenkirsche* (German), *Peruanische Judenkirsche* (German), Peruvian cape gooseberry, Peruvian cherry, Peruvian ground cherry, *Phopti* (Marathi), *Physalis*, *Poha* (Hawaiian), *Poha berry*, Purple ground cherry, Strawberry tomato, *Tankasi* (Sanskrit), *Tepuria* (Bengali), *Tipari* (Hindi), and *Tuffieh tal-fanali* (Maltese).

Warning – all parts (except the ripe fruit) are poisonous and can cause gastro-entiritis.

Peruviana means ‘of or from Peru’.

Apparently it attracted the name Cape gooseberry (Cape of Good Hope) when it was introduced to Australia from the South African Cape in the 19th Century although the plant originated in South America.

Cape gooseberry is said to have been introduced outside its natural habitat initially by Portuguese traders over 200 years ago and it is said to have been growing in England by 1774. By the early 19th Century it is understood to have been one of the important cultivated crops in the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa.

The ripe small tomato-like (*Solanum lycopersicum*), shiny purple or yellow berries can be coated in chocolate as a sweetmeat or added to cooked dishes. In Hawaii (where cape gooseberry seeds were introduced before 1825) the berries are made into *poha* jam.

Medicinally, the roots are used in local treatments in Kenya to ease tummy ache. In India the leaf juice has been used to treat bowel disorders and worms.