

Mangosteen : The Queen of Tropical Fruits

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SUMMARY

Mangosteen, also known as the purple mangosteen is a tropical evergreen tree bearing edible fruits. It is highly valued for its juicy, delicate texture and slightly sweet and sour flavour. Mangosteen has been cultivated in Malaysia, Borneo, Sumatra, Southeast Asia and Philippines since ancient times. The fruit contains bioactive compounds, such as xanthones. It has been utilized for various purposes, ranging from usage in industrially important products to applications in advanced technologies and biomedical innovation.

INTRODUCTION

Mangosteen is one the most praised fruits regarded as 'Queen of tropical fruits'. Many people consider it as the 'finest fruit of the world' as it has an exquisite, uncomparable, appealing taste and flavor. Its botanical name is *Garcinia mangostana* and the fruit belongs to family Guttiferae. The fruit was originated in Sunda Islands in Indonesia. Mangosteen is known by different names in different parts of the world. Among Spanish it is called as 'mangostan', to the French, it is 'mangouste' and in Philippines, it is 'mamgis' and so on. In the vernacular languages, it is called 'Mangustaan' in Hindi, 'Ivarumamidi' in Telugu and 'Kaattampi' in Malayalam. It is so praised by the inhabitants of South East Asia and they call it as 'Fruit of Gods' because of its health benefits and delicious taste of the fruits (Radha and Mathew, 2007).



Mangosteen Flower



Mangosteen Fruit

Plant Description

Tree: Trees are slow growing, erect with pyramidal crown can reach a height of 9.5 mtr.

Leaves : Evergreen, short stalked, glossy, leathery and ovate-oblong in shape.

Flowers : Produced at the terminal portion branches and are usually solitary, tetramerous and bisexual with non functional stamens.

Fruits : Fruits are produced without pollination and fertilization through parthenogenesis. Green fruits turn dark purple or red on ripening and are capped by prominent calyx at distal end. The hard outer shell of this exotic fruit is deep purple in colour and can be opened easily, showcasing the inner white edible flesh with small almond-shaped seeds.

Uses: Mangosteen fruits are consumed fresh as desert when they are completely ripe and can also be used for preparation of jam, jelly and marmalade. Mature fruits has astringency, are used for preparing medicines and pickles. Immature fruits also have high tannin (13 %) and are frequently used for colouring boats, nets, tanning leather and extraction of colour for various purpose.

Mangosteen health benefits:

Mangosteen has been a part of the traditional medicine of various Asian countries for a very long time. The health benefits of mangosteen are known since 18th century and it has been proven that these benefits are not just mythical. It is a storehouse of essential nutrients which are required for normal growth, development and overall nutritional wellbeing. Different parts of the fruit and plant are used in the treatment of various diseases and disorders.

Here are some of the mangosteen fruit health benefits.

- **Anti-inflammatory:** Mangosteen contains a class of naturally occurring polyphenol antioxidant compounds known as xanthenes. Xanthenes have anti-inflammatory property which is highly beneficial for people who suffer from sciatica pains which cannot be controlled by drug treatment.
 - **Prevents flu:** Mangosteens are rich in vitamin C and contains about 12 per cent RDA per 100g. Being a powerful water soluble anti oxidant, vitamin C provides resistance against flu like infectious agents and scavenge harmful pro-inflammatory free radicals.
 - **Prevents anaemia:** Mangosteen aids in promoting red blood cells and prevents against anaemia. It improves the blood flow by causing dilation of blood vessels which helps to protect us against certain diseases like atherosclerosis, high cholesterol, heart congestion and severe chest pains.
 - **Tuberculosis:** Mangosteen fruit contains strong antibacterial and antifungal properties besides being highly effective in boosting weak immune systems. Its inhibitory action against harmful bacteria is effective for patients suffering from tuberculosis.
 - **Gum disease:** Mangosteen acts as a weapon to fight against the gum disease known as periodontitis. The gel of mangosteen helps to cure gum problems.
 - **Infections :** Xanthenes present in mangosteen have the natural ability to attack fungal and viral infections. They even help to get rid of certain carcinogens from attacking our skin.
- Not just mangosteen fruit, Mangosteen rinds and other plant parts also contain many health benefits.
- ✓ Dried powder of mangosteen rind is used in the treatment of diarrhoea, its paste can be used to treat eczema and some other skin disorders.
 - ✓ A decoction made of mangosteen roots is used for regulating menstruation.
 - ✓ A decoction made of mangosteen leaves and bark is beneficial in bringing down body temperature and also to treat thrush and urinary disorders.

CONCLUSION

A healthy body is one of the greatest blessings, but due to the frequent consumption of processed foods and unhealthy life choices, debilitating diseases have become rampant affecting both the old age and young people. We can control the adverse effects of processed foods by incorporating healthier foods into our diet. Fruits and vegetables are of course essential in this regard. And consuming mangosteen can do wonders for our health. The miraculous fruit contains phenolic compounds such as xanthenes and procyanidins prevents various diseases and helps in maintaining a healthy body.

REFERANCES

Radha, T. and Mathew, L., 2007, Fruit Crops, pp. 73-79.