

# Pomegranate

*Punica granatum L.*

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| Common names   | Punic apple, granatapfel, granada, grenade, melograno, melagrana, pomo punico, gangsalan, tab tim, delima, roma, granad, limoni, granaatappel.   |
| Origin         | The pomegranate, belongs to Lythraceae family, is native from Iran to the Himalayas in northern India and has been cultivated since ancient times throughout the Mediterranean region of Asia, Africa and Europe. It has been widely cultivated throughout India and drier parts of southeast Asia, Malaya, the East Indies and tropical Africa.   |
| Description    | It is a small tree, not more than 15 feet high, with pale, brownish bark. The buds and young shoots are red. The fruit is the size of an orange, having a thick, reddish-yellow rind, an acid pulp, and large quantities of seeds.   |
| Growth Habitat | Pomegranates can be grown in dry areas with either a Mediterranean winter rainfall climate or in summer rainfall climates. They are tolerant of moderate frost, down to about -10 degree Celcius (14 degree F). Generally, 20-foot spacing is used in large orchards to facilitate weeding and field maintenance. Wide spacing and planting in full sun allows enough light to reach the fruit to ensure coloration. |
| Foliage        | The pomegranate has narrow, glossy, leathery leaves. In most places they are deciduous, but in the warmer climates may be evergreen.   |
| Flowers        | The flowers are tube shaped and over 1" long. They are a brilliant scarlet red, and are very attractive to hummingbirds. The flowers are self-pollinating, though fertility is improved through cross pollination.   |

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| Fruits        | The fruit has a red, leathery rind and the rind is in curved, brittle fragments, rough and yellowish-brown outside, paler and pitted within. The interior is separated by membranous walls and white, spongy, bitter tissue into compartments packed with sacs filled with juicy, red, pink or whitish pulp or aril. In each sac there is one angular, soft or hard seed.   |
| Soil          | Pomegranate tree does best in well-drained ordinary soil, but also thrives on calcareous, alkaline soil and on deep, acidic loam and a wide range of soils in between these extremes. The trees are also very tolerant of drought. Irrigation is used to guarantee fruit production, as trees will not flower in extended periods of drought.   |
| Pruning       | Plants should be cut back when they are about 2 ft high. From this point allow 4 or 5 shoots to develop, which should be evenly distributed around the stem to keep the plant well balanced. These should start about 1 ft from the ground, giving a short but well-defined trunk. Any shoots which appear above or below should be removed as should any suckers.  |
| Fertilization | Pomegranates require relatively little fertilizer as long as soil conditions are good. Young trees should be allowed to establish themselves before adding fertilizer. Young trees between the ages of 3 to 5 should only get about 2 to 3 pounds of a general fertilizer which an 8-8-8 NPK ratio applied in November and again in March. The same formulation can be applied older trees at during the same time frames but they require up to 4.5 to 6.5 pounds of fertilizer. |
| Propagation   | Pomegranate seeds germinate readily even when merely thrown onto the surface of loose soil and the seedlings spring up with vigor. Cuttings root easily and plants from them bear fruit after about 3 years. Plants can also be air-layered but grafting has never been successful.   |

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| Harvest                | The fruits are ripe when they have developed a distinctive colour and make a metallic sound when tapped. The fruits must be picked before over maturity when they tend to crack open if left too long on the tree. The fruit does not continue to ripen once harvested, and timing can be critical in commercial orchards.  |
| Nutritional Properties | Pomegranates have the power to combat free radicals and reduce signs of aging. Pomegranate contains potassium, Vitamin A, B Vitamins, folic acid, Vitamin C, Vitamin E and iron. Pomegranate aril juice provides about 16% of an adult's daily Vitamin C requirement per 100 ml serving. Pomegranates are listed as high-fiber in some charts of nutritional value. That fiber, however, is entirely contained in the edible seeds which also supply unsaturated oils. People who choose to discard the seeds forfeit nutritional benefits conveyed by the seed fiber, oils and micronutrients.   |
| Health Benefits        | <p>All of the nutrients in the pomegranate improve your body from the inside out. They may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the risk of heart attack</li> <li>• Help to prevent plaque build-up in your arteries by reducing the oxidation LDL (bad cholesterol)</li> <li>• Reduce inflammation</li> <li>• Be effective against osteoarthritis</li> <li>• Helps to prevent prostate cancer and other cancers.</li> <li>• Enhance immune function</li> <li>• Fights the effects of aging, including wrinkles.</li> <li>• Promote production of red blood cells.</li> <li>• Expel tapeworms.</li> <li>• Strengthen the bladder.</li> <li>• Strengthen the gums</li> <li>• Soothe mouth and throat ulcers.</li> <li>• Reduce dental plaque.</li> <li>• Reduce diarrhea.</li> </ul> |

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| <p>Commercial Uses</p> | <p>Pomegranate juice has long been a popular drink in Persian and Indian cuisine. Pomegranate can also be used to obtain a variety of products such as jams, preserves, jellies etc. The juice can also be made into a wine. The bark is used in tanning and dyeing giving the yellow hue to Morocco leather. Both the rind and the flowers yields dyes for textiles. Ink can be made by steeping the leaves in vinegar. The pale-yellow wood is very hard and while available only in small dimensions, is used for walking sticks and in woodcrafts.</p>  |
| <p>Food Suggestion</p> | <p><b>Seeding a Pomegranate</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cut the crown (protruding blossom end) off the pomegranate, removing with it some of the pale-yellow pith. Take care not to pierce the seeds within.</li> <li>2. Lightly score the skin in quarters from stem to crown end.</li> <li>3. Immerse the scored fruit in a large bowl of cool water and soak for 5 minutes. Holding the fruit under water, break sections apart with your fingers, separating the seeds from the membrane.</li> <li>4. Discard skin and membranes. Drain the seeds and dry on paper towels.</li> </ol> <p><b>Antioxidant Rich Smoothie</b></p> <p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 cups of organic baby spinach</li> <li>• 1 cup pomegranate juice</li> <li>• 1 cup blueberries, frozen</li> <li>• 1 cup strawberries, frozen</li> <li>• 8 dates, cut in half</li> <li>• 2 tablespoons flaxseeds, ground</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> avocado, optional</li> </ul> <p>Blend all ingredients together. This is very delicious and healthy too!</p> |