

# Star Apple

*Chrysophyllum cainito*



Common names	Cainito, caimito, star apple, golden leaf tree, abiaba, pomme du lait, estrella, milk fruit, aguay.
Origin	It is native to Central America, the Greater Antilles and the West Indies. Belongs to Sapotaceae family.
Description	The star apple is a small round fruit, closely related to the abiu. A deep purple or golden-green colour when ripe. The flesh is sweet and juicy, varying in colour from pale purple to white, and may contain up to 10 small-flattened seeds. When cut in half, the indentations in the flesh form a star pattern.
Growth Habitat	Tropical areas of the world.
Foliage	Their leaves are deep green on top and have a satiny coat of golden brown shiny hairs underneath that catches the light.
Flowers	The tiny flowers are greenish yellow or purplish white and have a sweet fragrant smell. The tree is also hermaphroditic (self-fertilizing).

Fruits	The fruits are green, purple, apricot, yellow, or copper in color. Their smooth skin encloses a white, sweet-tasting pulp arranged in segments. Cut transversely, a star-shaped arrangement of seeds is visible.
Soil	Grows well in deep, rich earth, clayey loam, sand, or limestone, but it needs good drainage.
Pruning	Prune to establish initial shape and to remove dead and diseased branches.
Fertilization	Most star apple trees in tropical America and the West Indies are never fertilized but a complete, well-balanced fertilizer will greatly improve performance in limestone and other infertile soils.
Propagation	Either by seeds, which take 5-10 years to bear, or by grafting and budding, with trees coming to bear in 2-4 years.
Harvest	Pick fully mature otherwise the fruits will be gummy, astringent and inedible. When fully ripe, the skin is dull, slightly wrinkled, and the fruit is slightly soft to the touch.
Nutritional Properties	100g of star apple edible pulp contains about 2.33g of protein, 14.6g of carbohydrate, 3.3g of fiber, 17.3mg of calcium, 22mg of phosphorus, 0.68mg of iron, 1.34mg of niacin, 15.2mg of Vit C, 4mg of tryptophan, 2mg of methionine, 22mg of lysine.
Health Benefits	<p>The following nutrients in star apples can be beneficial for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vitamin C: Keeps gums, blood vessels and bones healthy. Improves the absorption of iron. It is also an antioxidant.</li> <li>• Calcium: Helps build and maintain bones and teeth, important for muscle contractions.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phosphorus: Along with calcium (calcium phosphate) helps to build bones.</li> <li>• Iron: Needed to form hemoglobin, carries the oxygen in the red blood cells. Also helps in preventing iron deficiency anemia (fatigue).</li> <li>• Niacin (B3): Helps convert food to energy. May help to reduce cholesterol.</li> <li>• Tryptophan: It is responsible for the production of Vit B3 and of serotonin that is exclusively important for balancing nerve and brain functioning.</li> <li>• Methionine: It helps in breaking down of fatty acids, and hence it prevents in building up fatty elements on the artery walls. It also works significantly in the normal detoxification of liver.</li> <li>• Lysine: Essential to promote bone growth and development, especially in infants and toddlers. It helps in assisting calcium absorption as well as nitrogen maintenance in the body.</li> </ul>
<p>Commercial Uses</p>	<p>A combination of the chopped star apple flesh with that of mango, citrus, pineapple, other fruits and coconut water is frozen and served as Jamaica Fruit Salad Ice. In Jamaica, the flesh is often eaten with sour orange juice, a combination called "matrimony"; or it is mixed with orange juice, a little sugar, grated nutmeg and a spoonful of sherry and eaten as dessert called "strawberries and-cream". The bitter, pulverized seed is taken as a tonic, diuretic and febrifuge. The star apple's heart wood is pinkish or red-brown, violet, or dark-purple; fine-grained, compact, tough but not difficult to work is excellent for interior joinery, furniture components, handles, sporting goods, carvings, agricultural implements.</p>

Food Suggestion

### **Star Apple Whip**

- 4 Star apples
- 50g of sugar
- 3 oranges
- 250ml of whipped cream (Or just top the star apple pulp with honey-sweetened whipped cream.)

### **Methods**

Scoop the pulp out of the Star Apple and the Oranges and remove the seeds. Mix with sugar in a blender. Add the cream and lightly mix. Serve in parfait glasses.