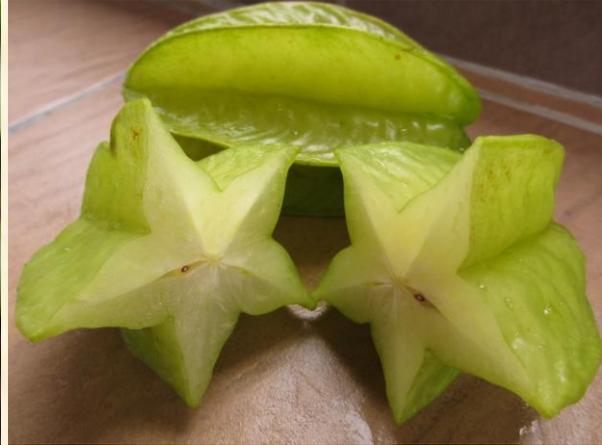


Carambola

Averrhoa carambola



Common names	Starfruit, balimbing, saranate, kamrakh, thambarathan, belimbing, kamaranga, belimbing batu, belimbing besi, belimbing pessegi, belimbing sayur, belimbing saji, kambola, caramba.
Origin	Native to the Philippines , Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. It belongs to Averrhoaceae family.
Description	Carambolas are a five-cornered fruit with a thin glossy skin that looks like a star when cut lengthwise. They can be green to golden yellow in colour with a sweet and sour taste.
Growth Habitat	The carambola is a tropical and subtropical fruit. It can be grown at up to 1,200 m in elevation. It prefers full sun exposure, but requires enough humidity and a total of 70 inches or more of rainfall a year.
Foliage	Its deciduous leaves, spirally arranged with 5 to 11 nearly opposite leaflets, ovate or ovate-oblong, 4-9cm long; soft, medium-green, and smooth on the upper surface, finely hairy and whitish on the underside. The leaflets are sensitive to light and tend to fold together at night or when the tree is

	shaken or abruptly shocked.
Flowers	Small clusters of red-stalked, lilac, purple-streaked, downy flowers, about 6mm wide, are borne on the twigs in the axils of the leaves or on branches without leaves.
Fruits	Carambola fruits are ovate to ellipsoid in shape. They are 6 to 13 cm long and the fruits have 5 longitudinal ribs. The fruit has a green to golden-yellow color. When cut across the fruit has a 5-pointed star shape. The crunchy fruit has a slightly tart, acidic, sweet taste.
Soil	Carambola prefers rich loam, but also grows well on sand, heavy clay or limestone. It cannot stand flooding and needs good drainage.
Pruning	During the first 1 to 2 years after planting, young trees should be pruned by tipping shoots in excess of 60 to 90cm to increase branching. Pruning can induce off-season fruit once the tree is mature.
Fertilization	Young trees should receive 113 to 226 g of a mixed fertilizer containing nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), potassium (K), and magnesium (Mg) every 30 to 60 days. As trees mature, the fertilizer rate should increase 0.45 to 2.3kg with an application frequency of 4 to 6 times per year. Fertilizer mixtures containing 6-8% nitrogen, 2-4% available phosphoric acid, 6-8% potash and 3-4% magnesium are satisfactory.
Propagation	The carambola is widely grown from seed though viability lasts only a few days. Only plump, fully developed seed should be planted. Veneer grafting during the time of most active growth gives the best results.
Harvest	Hand pick the fruits when almost mature (pale green with a touch of yellow). The fruits naturally fall to the ground when fully ripe. Fruit is best when ripened on the tree, but

	will ripen slowly if picked before fully ripe. Green or ripe fruits are easily damaged and must be handled with great care.
Nutritional Properties	Carambolas are a good source of potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, iron, calcium, vitamin C and A. It's also a good source of fiber, amino acids and anti-oxidants.
Health Benefits	Carambolas are good for skin health, nerve functions, healthy bones, digestion, blood oxygenation, cancer prevention. The fruits are also known to effective in hormone regulation, specifically in the thyroid gland as well as helping to regulate appetite and sleeping. It is also a popular home remedy in treating fevers, headaches, and even curing hangovers. The fruit's skin is rich in tannin, which regulates the intestine, and can be used to treat diarrhea and dysentery. Warning: People with kidney disease should avoid eating carambolas due the presence of oxalic acid that might affect renal function.
Commercial Uses	Carambolas are primarily consumed as a fresh fruit. They may be used in fruit salads, as a garnish for meat, salad, and casserole dishes or they may be processed into pickles, sauces, wines, and jellies. The fruit may also be canned, preserved and dried. It can also be used to remove iron and paint stains, and also acts as an effective solution for cleaning metals. The leaves and roots, if ground up in a mortar and pestle, boiled, and then extracted, can be used help alleviate symptoms of childhood diseases such as measles and chickenpox.
Food Suggestion	<p>Tomato and Carambola Salsa</p> <p><u>Ingredients :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 ripe but firm tomatoes (250 g) • 1 small carambola • 1 small onion (70 g), finely chopped

- 1 handful fresh basil, oregano or mint, shredded
- 1 tbsp freshly-squeezed lime juice
- 1-2 tbsp olive oil
- level tsp salt
- Generous grind of black pepper

Method :

1. Cut tomatoes and carambola into small, neat dice (0.5 cm is perfect!).
2. Place in a bowl and stir in the rest of the ingredients.
3. Transfer into a small serving bowl surrounded with corn chips or potato crisps and serve immediately. (Salsa can also be made up to an hour ahead and kept chilled until ready to serve.)