PLANT FACT SHEET

Illicium verum Hook. f.

GENUS *Illicium* **FAMILY** Schisandraceae

COMMON NAMES Star anise

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Fruit, Herb, Spice, Leaves

The fruit is used as a condiment. It is used whole or in segments in long simmered meats. It is also used in soups. It is added to curries. It has a licorice-like flavour.
The leaves and seeds are dried and used as a spice.
The oil from the seeds is used for flavouring. It is used in candy, ice cream, soft drinks and liqueurs.

DESCRIPTION

A shrub 2-6 m high. It can be 10 m tall. It keeps its leaves throughout the year. The leaves are shiny and have an aroma. The leaves are 7.5 cm long. The flowers are star shaped and yellow. They occur singly and are like magnolia flowers. The seed pod is eight pointed and star shaped. There is one seed in each follicle. They are pale brown and shiny.

HABITAT

A tropical and subtropical plant. It occurs in dense forests. It suits hardiness zones 8-11. In Yunnan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown by cuttings. They can also be grown by seeds.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees bear fruit when about 6 years old. They can keep producing for about 100 years. The fruit are harvested when green and dried in the sun. They turn deep reddish-brown when dried. The whole fruit including seeds can be ground.

NOTES

There are 34 Illicium species. There are 3 species in tropical America.
Also put in the family Illiciaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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