PLANT FACT SHEET

Myrtus communis L.

GENUS *Myrtus* **FAMILY** Myrtaceae

COMMON NAMES Myrtle, Chilean guava myrtle

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Fruit, Leaves, Leaves - tea, Herb, Seeds, Spice

The fruit are eaten raw. They are also dried and used as a flavouring. They are used to flavour meats, poultry, sauces, liqueurs, and syrups.
The leaves are used as a flavouring and for tea.
The fruit are sometimes fermented into an acid-tasting drink.
An essential oil from the leaves and twigs is used as a condiment.
The flower buds are eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A dense bushy shrub. It grows 3 m high. It spreads 3 m wide. The leaves are small and glossy. They are 35 mm long and dark green above but paler underneath. The leaves have a spicy smell when crushed. The flowers are white and fragrant. They occur singly in the axils of the upper leaves. They have 5 petals and a central puff of stamens. The fruit is a dark purple berry. It is 12 mm across.

HABITAT

A subtropical plant. They thrive in hot dry conditions. Fruit are only produced in warm conditions. It can tolerate light frost. It is grown in some highland regions in the tropics. It can grow in arid places. It is salt tolerant. It suits hardiness zones 8-11. Kyneton Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is mostly grown from cuttings. Seeds and air layering are also possible.

NOTES

There are 2 evergreen Myrtus shrubs.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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