



PLANT FACT SHEET

Cinnamomum camphora (L.) J. Presl.

GENUS *Cinnamomum* **FAMILY** Lauraceae

COMMON NAMES Camphor laurel

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Bark, Root

Young shoots and leaves are boiled and eaten.

Edible crystalline camphor is used in small quantities as flavouring in milk.

It yields an essential oil used to flavour baked goods and drinks.

The bark, root and leaves are used for tea.

Caution: It is poisonous in excess.

DESCRIPTION

A tree. It grows to 36 m high. It keeps its leaves throughout the year. It has a rounded crown 15 m wide. The trunk is short with scaly, grey bark. The trunk can be 3 m across. The whole plant has a strong camphor smell. The bark is yellow brown with cracks along it. The leaves are alternate. The leaves are pink when young. They turn green with age. The leaf stalk is slender. The leaf blade is 6-12 cm long by 2.5-5.5 cm wide. The flower cluster is in the axils of leaves. Flowers are green-white or yellow. The fruit are round. They are greyish-black.

HABITAT

It grows in tropical and subtropical locations. It needs a well drained, fertile, sandy loam. It does best in collar locations but needs a temperature above 9°C. In tropical Queensland it grows from 650-1000 m altitude. It is grown in China in areas without a severe winter. In Melbourne Botanical Gardens. It suits hardiness zones 9-11. In Yunnan. In Portland Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can be grown from seed. The plant spreads by suckers. It can be grown by softwood cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees can live for several hundred years.

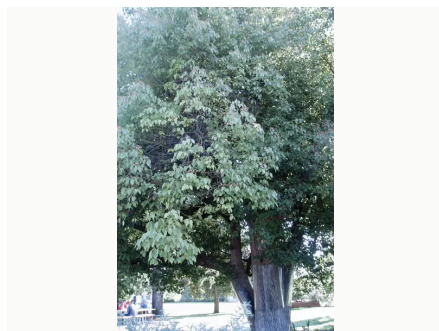
NOTES

The bark and wood is used to make camphor crystals. There are about 250 *Cinnamomum* species. The leaves are used in medicine. It has anticancer properties. It can become invasive.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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