

Kumquat

History

This “little gem of the citrus family” originates from China, where they were recorded in literature in 1178 A.D. The Cantonese called them “kam kwat,” meaning “golden orange.” They were introduced to Europe in 1846, and America in the 1880s. Outside of China, Taiwan, and Japan, they are grown in Florida and California.

Kumquats have sweet, thin skin that can be eaten. The skin is rich in antioxidants and fiber, which promote good health. There are seeds in the flesh, which are generally discarded. The flesh itself has a tart taste. The fruit is commonly eaten raw but can be pickled or candied. Like all citrus fruit, the kumquat is a good source of vitamin C, which is important for healthy skin.

The fruit grows on a small tree that is often used for decoration in gardens and landscapes. The tree requires little to no pruning. The kumquat is often cut off the tree with a few leaves still attached for decoration purposes.

Varieties

Hong Kong has an orange-scarlet peel, small amounts of flesh, and grows in China.

Marumi is plump and golden, has a spicy flavor, and grows in Florida and Japan.

Meiwa is large and fleshy, has a sweet flavor, and grows in China and Japan.

Nagami is the most common in the United States.



Fun Facts

- Kumquats were originally considered a citrus fruit, but in 1915, they became their own family- *Fortunella*.
- When a kumquat is crossed with another citrus fruit it gets a funny new name like a *limequat* or *orangequat*.



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