

Lemongrass

Family	Poaceae
Botanical	Cymbopogon Citratus
Parts Used	Stalks and leaves
USDA Hardiness	Tropical
Light	Full Sun
Soil	Well Drained
Duration	Annual



Propagation From the grocer: Pick a plant that has fat, healthy-looking stalks and light-green bases with leaves wrapped tight so they do not curl or dry out. After you get the lemongrass home, peel off the outside leaves, place the stalks in a jar of water and put it on a bright windowsill. The stalks should root in a couple of weeks and be ready for planting outdoors, so long as the soil has adequately warmed. Or start with seed.

Water As needed, do not overwater

Growing Native of India, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. Lemongrass will need a lot of nitrogen, so you should fertilize at least monthly with either a standard or high-nitrogen formula. Water your plant regularly and don't let it completely dry out, especially when the weather is very hot. Once your plant gets to 3 feet or so in height, you may want to keep the tops of the leaves cut down even more than what you are taking for an actual harvest. This can help keep the size of the plant down. Lemongrass doesn't grow branches so no other pruning is necessary. Lemongrass can be grown in large pots, either indoors or out.

Medicinal Uses Anti-microbial, anti-fungal

Benefits Widely used to alleviate certain respiratory conditions including laryngitis and sore throats, lemongrass has earned a reputation for its anti-pyretic property which reduces high fevers. Has pain relieving qualities.

Preparation Make a tea and drink 1-4 cups per day to relieve congestion, coughing, bladder disorders, headaches, fever, stomach aches, digestive problems, diarrhea, gas, bowel spasms, vomiting, flu symptoms, as a mild sedative, and to promote perspiration - and as a possible cholesterol lowering agent. Use Lemongrass in the bath for a soothing aromatherapy experience by placing a mesh bag with a handful of leaves under the running bath water, then letting the bag soak in the water with you as you bathe. Very relaxing.

Fines Herbes

Culinary Uses

Prepare lemongrass by peeling off and discarding one or two layers of the woody exterior leaves. These leaf blades are tough and therefore better for teas, potpourri and flavoring, but not so good for outright eating. Instead, use the tender white inner hearts.

Authentic Thai Coconut Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 pound medium shrimp - peeled and deveined
- 2 (13.5 ounce) cans canned coconut milk
- 2 cups water
- 1 (1 inch) piece galangal, thinly sliced
- 4 stalks lemon grass, bruised and chopped
- 10 kaffir lime leaves, torn in half
- 1 pound shiitake mushrooms, sliced
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 3 tablespoons fish sauce
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 tablespoon green onion, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes

Directions:

1. Bring a pot of water to a boil. Boil the shrimp until cooked, about one minute. Drain shrimp, and set aside.
 2. Pour the coconut milk and 2 cups of water in a large saucepan; bring to a simmer. Add the galangal, lemon grass, and lime leaves; simmer for 10 minutes, or until the flavors are infused. Strain the coconut milk into a new pan and discard the spices. Simmer the shiitake mushrooms in the coconut milk for five minutes. Stir in the lime juice, fish sauce, and brown sugar. Season to taste with curry powder.
 3. To serve, reheat shrimp in the soup, and ladle into serving bowls. Garnish with green onion and red pepper flakes.
-



Historical Facts

The oldest known text about lemon grass oil had been found from the Philippines in 17th century. It had been introduced to Jamaica in 1799 and to Haiti and USA in 1917. First commercial cultivation of lemon grass was reported in Florida, USA and Haiti in 1947. It is not known when or by whom introduced lemon grass to Sri Lanka.

Additional Tips

Nutrition Facts

A good source of Folate, Magnesium, Zinc and Copper, and a very good source of Iron, Potassium and Manganese.