



Suwa or Shopa (Aniseed)



Botanical Name: Pimpinella anisum Linn
Family: Umbellifereae
Syn: nisum vulgare Gaertner.

The Indian names are as follows:

Hindi: Valaiti Saunf or Aawonf

Bengali: Muhuri

Aniseed, also called Anise (pronounced "ann-is") is the fruit or seed from the flowering plant, Pimpinella anisum. This herbaceous, flowering annual plant is a member of the parsley family, and related to caraway, dill, cumin, and fennel.

Aniseed is native to the eastern Mediterranean region and has been highly valued since ancient times. Aniseeds have a distinctive licorice-like flavor and have been used for medicinal purposes throughout history, especially as a digestive aid. The seeds are also used whole or crushed as a flavoring in various foods, from baked goods and sweets to liquors such as the infamous absinthe or the Greek liqueur ouzo.

Anise bears a strong family resemblance to the members of the carrot family, that includes dill, fennel, coriander, cumin and caraway. Many of these relatives have been described as having a licorice flavour, to some extent, but anise is the true taste of licorice— its oils are distilled into the flavouring for licorice candy (not from the herb licorice, which has a different taste). Anise is native to the eastern Mediterranean region, the Levant, and Egypt. The early Arabic name was anysum from which was derived the Greek anison and the Latin anisun. It is one of the oldest known spice plants used both for culinary and medicinal purposes since ancient times. There is evidence that anise was used in Egypt as early as 1500 B.C. To aid digestion the Romans enjoyed anise-spiced cakes after heavy meals and it was spread throughout Europe by Roman legions. In the Bible there is mention of paying tithe with anise in the book of Matthew. In 1305, anise was listed by King Edward I as a taxable drug and merchants bringing it into London paid a toll to help raise moneys to maintain and repair London bridge. Of the any of the qualities attributed to anise we like what one writer warned: "it stirreth up bodily lust". This accredited to the same spice that could ward off the Evil Eye or keep away nightmares if placed under one's pillow. Anise is used in the manufacture of many commercial cough syrups and sore throat medications, used to flavour other medicines and to scent soaps and perfumes.

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It is also claimed that anise is an effective bait for rats and mice and the distilled oil dabbed onto a fishing lure will improve a fisherman's chances. Dogs are also attracted by anise — it is often an ingredient in dog food and the seeds may be used to lay drag hunt trails and also by anti-blood sport movements to put hounds off the scent.

Spice Description

Though the roots and leaves are also edible, it is the seeds that we will concern ourselves her. The seeds are grey-green to brownish, ribbed and ovate, measuring 2 -4 mm (.08 -.16 in) long. Some seeds retain the fine stalk that passes through the centre of the fruit.

Bouquet: sweet and fragrant

Flavour: similar to fennel with a mild licorice taste

Hotness Scale: 1

Plant Description and Cultivation

An erect, tender annual on thin roots, growing up to 60 cm (2 ft) tall. The lower leaves are broad, toothed and triangular with upper leaves that are smaller, divided and narrow. The flowers are small and whitish, numerous in open thin, compound umbrels, followed by the fruit, the anise seed. It is propagated by seed in early spring in a sunny, sheltered area in light , dry loam. It should does not like pot growing or to be transplanted. It will not produce ripe seeds in northern climates without a long, hot summer. Anise is harvested as the seeds change colour to grey-green. Flower stems are cut and hung upside down in a dry place and seeds are collected as they fall onto paper below.

Aniseed in Other Languages

Indian saunf, sompf, souf

French anis

German Anis

Italian: anice

Spanish anis

Syn nisum vulgare Gaertner

Bengali Muhuri

Hindi Valaiti Saunf or Aawonf

Greek anis



Habitat

It consists of dried fruit of *Pimpinella anisum* Linn. (Fam. Apiaceae); an annual erect plant introduced and cultivated in India at Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Punjab.

Historical Herbal Uses of Anise Anise

is recorded as early as the sixth century as an herbal remedy. Hippocrates prescribed anise for coughs. Pliny recommended it as an herbal remedy for bad breath. Anise was such a popular herb King Edward levied an import tax on anise in the 1300's.

Anise is to dogs what cat nip is to cats. It is used to scent the "rabbit" in gray hound races and the lay a scent down for fox hound training. Anethole is the active ingredient that gives anise its distinct smell and flavor. Anise has a long history as a medicinal herb used in herbal remedies and as a spice and aromatic

Culinary uses

Anise has a licorice taste and is used as a spice in many dishes. The seeds can be used whole or crushed. The whole seed has a more intense flavor and is preferred. It can be added to cheeses and fish dishes. The leaves can be used in salads or as a garnish. Anise is also used to make several liqueurs.

Cooking with Anise

For the freshest taste, buy whole anise seed and grind with mortar as needed or use in a spice ball. You may also use young anise leaves. Anise works well in green salads, cooked vegetable dishes, tomato-based sauces, egg dishes, curries, breads, cakes, and candy, as well as stewed or fresh fruit, especially figs or prunes. Steep in hot water for tea or make your own anise liqueur (see Anise Recipes). Combined with cinnamon and bay leaves, anise flavors pork, fish or game.

Benefits of Aniseed

Aniseed is esteemed in medicine for its properties to relieve flatulence and to remove catarrhal matter and phlegm from the bronchial tube. The presence of essential oils in it lends it these properties. The seed also induces perspiration and increases the volume and discharge of urine thus helping the body detoxify.

Digestive Disorders

Aniseed is an ideal medicine for treating wind in the stomach. It can also be taken, in combination with other digestives like ginger, cummin and pepper, in the form of an infusion. Gripe water for infants contains aniseed extract. An easy way to prepare the infusion is to mix a teaspoon of aniseed in a cup of boiling water and leave it covered overnight. The clear fluid is then strained and taken with honey. This is an ideal treatment for indigestion, especially when there is gurgling in the abdomen. It is also useful in preventing gas and fermentation in the stomach and the bowels.

Cataract

Cataract can also be treated with this herb. In such case, in the morning and evening 6 grams of aniseed should be taken daily. The other way of taking this herb is to powder an equal weight of aniseed and coriander seeds and to mix it with an equal weight of unrefined sugar. About 12 gram doses of this mixture is to be taken in the morning and evening.

Asthma

Asthma can be cured with this herb because of its expectorant properties.

Insomnia

Sleeplessness can also be treated with tea made from aniseed. It is prepared by boiling 375 ml of water and adding a teaspoon of aniseed. The water should be covered with a lid and allowed to simmer for 15 minutes. It should then be strained and taken hot or warm. Add honey and hot milk to improve the taste. It should be sipped either after meals or before going to bed.

Precautions

If boiled too long aniseed loses its digestive properties and essential oil during the process.

Medicinal Benefits of Anise

Because anise freshens the breath and improves digestion, it is often chewed after a meal. Anise is said to benefit the liver, improve circulation, increase lactation, and relieve flatulence. It's also known to have mild expectorant and antimicrobial qualities. It's used externally to treat lice and scabies, or as a chest rub for bronchial complaints. Anise oil can be used in insect repellents or as mouse bait.

Preparation and Storage

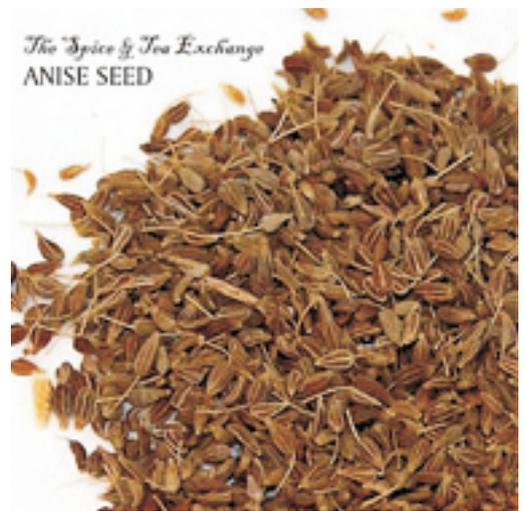
The seeds quickly lose flavour, so buy seeds whole and grind as required, and keep out of light in an airtight container. If to be used as a breath sweetener, roast lightly before chewing the seeds.

History

Anise may have first come from Asia, but it has since spread to Europe, Northern Africa, the Middle East, and North America. Ancient Egyptians and Romans used it as a spice, and it has also been used throughout history for medicinal purposes and for its fragrance.

Quality Assurance

As we believe in providing quality products that are close to nature, we conduct various stringent quality tests under the supervision of the experts. These tests are performed with due care from the very initial stage of procurement of the products to the final stage of delivery to the end users.



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