

Fijian Longan

Pometia pinnata



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| Common names | Island lychee, Brazilian longan, kasai, oceanic lychee, tava, kava, matoa. |
| Origin | Native to the Asia-Pacific region, found mainly in lowland subtropical and tropical areas from Sri Lanka and the Andaman Islands throughout Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. Belongs to Sapindaceae family which is the same as rambutan's family. |
| Description | The species is highly polymorphic (occurs more than once form or morph) with eight distinctive recognized forms and many unclassified forms. Can range from a small tree to a very tall tree of 50m in height with older trees growing buttresses. Fruit is round with a smooth skin and it tastes like lychee or rambutan. |
| Growth Habitat | Grows in warm to hot, humid subtropical and tropical zones. |

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| Foliage | Young leaves, which are initially pink turning to red, are covered with hairs. Older leaves are green about 12-30cm long and 4-10cm wide. |
| Flowers | Small, bisexual, whitish flowers in terminal panicles 15-70 cm long. The floral inflorescences are highly variable in appearance. |
| Fruits | Fruits mature 3-4 months after flowering. Fruits are round about 1-4.5cm in diameter. The skin or pericarp is smooth and colored greenish-yellow, yellow, red, purple, blackish or brown with a translucent, yellowish pulp encasing a single seed. Taste similar to lychee. Roasted or baked seeds taste and smell like sour cheese. In Fiji, "dawa moli" and "dawa seren" have large red fruits, "dawa lowa" has black fruits, and "dawa sisici" has small green fruits. |
| Soil | Grows well in well drained, fertile loams, medium to heavy, and clays. |
| Pruning | Older trees have a moderately good self-pruning ability while young trees grow low branches. Regular cutting back seems to encourage subsequent fruiting. Trees for fruit production can be topped to keep them shorter and more spreading. Trees grow rapidly, 1-2m/year. |
| Fertilization | Periodic application of a complete fertilizer or interplanting with nitrogen-fixing trees and shrubs can enhance growth. |
| Propagation | Propagation through seeds, grafting or shoot cutting with application of a rooting hormone gel. |
| Harvest | Fruits can be eaten fresh. The skin is fairly hard and thick so it can keep up to a week and with refrigeration (5-10C) up to 20 days. |
| Health Benefits | In Papua New Guinea the masticated bark is applied to burns. In Fiji both leaf and bark extracts are used, either |

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| | <p>individually or in combination with other plants, to treat a wide range of ailments, including stomach complaints, diarrhea, dysentery, pain relief (bones, muscles, joints, chest, headache), colds, flu, diabetes, and mouth ulcers.</p> |
| Commercial Uses | <p>The wood is a very good general purpose hardwood suitable for a wide range of uses. Its timber is particularly well suited to light construction, moldings, interior joinery and framing, non-impact tool handles, furniture, and veneers.</p> |
| Food Suggestion | <p>LONGAN JELLY_</p> <p>Ingredients (4 servings): 1/2 tsp agar-agar powder (I used Swallow Globe brand) 1/2 tsp gelatine powder 50g sugar 350ml water 100ml evaporated milk or soya milk 50ml sugar water or longan syrup from canned longan 1.5 tsp lemon juice 4 or more fresh Fijian longan (or canned), for each serving</p> <p><u>Method:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Place sugar and water in a pot, then sprinkle both agar-agar powder and gelatine powder on the surface and cook this concoction over low medium heat until bubbles form around the edges of the pot. 2. Mix milk and longan syrup in a measuring jug. Then stir this into the pot of agar-agar solution. Add lemon juice and turn off the heat, no need to boil. 3. Pour mixture into prepared vessels and let it cool and firm up in the refrigerator. 4. Spoon fresh Fijian longan and/or canned longans with 2 tablespoon of longan syrup onto Longan Jelly, before serving. |