



## Chakra Phool (Star anise)



Botanical name: *Illicium verum* Hook.  
Family name: Magnoliaceae.

Indian names are as follows:

Hindi: Anasphal

Marathi: Badian

Tamil: Anashuppu, Anasipu

Telugu: Anaspuvu.

The Latin name for the star Star anise plant is *Illicium verum*. Star Star anise, which is also referred to as Chinese Star anise, is a member of the magnolia family. Mature star Star anise trees can grow up to 26 feet tall. Evergreen star Star anise trees can be found growing in parts of China, India, Japan and the Philippines

The fruit of the star Star anise tree looks an eight to twelve pointed star. Star Star anise can either be used whole, and removed prior to serving the dish, or finely ground, and added with any other herbs and spices called for in a recipe. Purchase star Star anise, either finely ground, or in its whole form from the grocery store. Whole star Star anise seed pods, which are up to 1 1/4 inches across, can be ground in a coffee grinder, or by using a mortar and pestle.

starStar anise

Star 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 Star 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). Star 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 Star anise was used in Egypt as early as 1500 B.C. To aid digestion the Romans enjoyed Star 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 Star anise in the book of Matthew. In 1305, Star 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 Star anise we like what one writer warned:

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“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. Star 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. It is also claimed that Star 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 Star 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

Star Star anise is the unusual fruit of a small oriental tree. It is, as the name suggests, star shaped, radiating between five and ten pointed boat-shaped sections, about eight on average. These hard sections are seed pods. Tough skinned and rust coloured, they measure up to 3cm (1-1/4”) long. The fruit is picked before it can ripen, and dried. The stars are available whole, or ground to a red-brown powder.

Bouquet: Powerful and liquorice-like, more pungent and stronger than Star anise.

Flavour: Evocative of a bitter Star aniseed, of which flavour star Star anise is a harsher version. Nevertheless, the use of star Star anise ensures an authentic touch in the preparation of certain Chinese dishes.

### Plant Description and Cultivation

A small to medium evergreen tree of the magnolia family, reaching up to 8m (26ft). The leaves are lanceolate and the axillary flowers are yellow. The tree is propagated by seed and mainly cultivated in China and Japan for export and home markets. the fruits are harvested before they ripen, then sun dried.

### Star anise in Other Languages

Indian Star Star anise, Chakra Phool

French anis de la Chine

German Sternanis

Italian: anice stellato

Spanish anis estrllado,badian

Chinese ba chio, ba(ht) g(h)ok

Indonesian bunga lawang

Malay bunga lawang

Thai Chan tanat paetklip



### Habitat

It is native to the Mediterranean area, but nowadays also grows in wide areas of Asia, the Southwestern USA and Mexico.

### Culinary uses

Star Star anise is used in the East as Star aniseed is in the West. Apart from its use in sweetmeats and confectionery, where sweeteners must be added, it contributes to meat and poultry dishes, combining especially well with pork and duck. In Chinese red cooking, where the ingredients are simmered for a lengthy period in dark soy sauce, star Star anise is nearly always added to beef and chicken dishes. Chinese stocks and soups very often contain the spice.. It flavours marbled eggs, a decorative Chinese hors d’oeuvre or snack. Mandarins with jaded palates chew the whole dried fruit habitually as a post-prandial digestant and breath sweetener - an oriental comfit. In the West, star Star anise is added in fruit compotes and jams, and in the manufacture of Star anise-flavoured liqueurs, the best known being Star anisette. It is an ingredient of the mixture known as “Chinese Five Spices”.

### Cooking with Star anise

Star Star anise plays a key role in the slow cooked dishes that characterize Eastern Chinese cuisine. Its licorice flavor enhances red cooked dishes, as well as eggs simmered in black tea. Star Star anise is one of the spices in five-spice powder.

Outside of China, star Star anise is featured in several of Vietnam's signature dishes, such as Pho Bo soup. It is also the secret ingredient in many Indian stews and curries. Star Star anise can replace regular Star anise in western recipes.

## Benefits of Star anise

Star Star anise are not only popular for their rich flavor, but for several health benefits as well. One of the most important Star anise seed benefits is that, it can alleviate gastrointestinal problems by improving digestion. In India, Star Star anise are chewed after meal to ensure proper digestion of food, besides using in the preparation of many dishes. You can get relief from any kind of gastrointestinal or digestive problems like, indigestion, bloating and gas by using Star anise seed. It is also used as a home remedy for treating colic in infants.

Star anise are known to possess expectorant properties, for which they can facilitate the expulsion of phlegm from the respiratory tract to relieve cough and congestion. They contain phytoestrogen and can prove very effective in menstrual problems and increasing breast milk. Apart from these, Star Star anise are known to improve memory, stimulate the pancreas, provide relief in irritable bowel syndrome and headaches, and increase libido. More on Star anise seed for babies.

## Attributed Medicinal Properties

Like Star anise, star Star anise has carminative, stomachic, stimulant and diuretic properties. In the East it is used to combat colic and rheumatism. It is a common flavouring for medicinal teas, cough mixtures and pastilles.

## Preparation and Storage

The whole stars can be added directly to the cooking pot; pieces are variously referred to as segments, points and sections. Otherwise, grind the whole stars as required. Small amounts are used, as the spice is powerful. Stored whole in airtight containers, it keeps for well over a year.

## History

Star 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

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