

Did You Know?



Pink Peppercorn, *Schinus molle*

- The pink peppercorn, is also known as the California peppertree, Peruvian peppertree or false peppertree.
- *Schinus molle* is an evergreen tree with fragrant yellow or white flowers and is in the Anacardiaceae or cashew family.
- It has been naturalized in California and is native to South America, and has an invasive nature in some growing regions.
- Commercially, many of the pink peppercorns on the market today are grown on the French island in the Indian ocean, Reunion, and in the Brazilian state of Espirito Santo.
- The dried pink berries (botanically, a drupe) are not related to *Piper nigrum*, black pepper, although they do have a peppery flavor and are often blended with black peppercorns.
- An extract from the berries is used to flavor beverages and syrups. The peppercorns are used in both savory and sweet dishes.
- It has been described as having a peppery, with a mild, sweet, citrus, fruity and resinous flavor.
- In Peru, the pink peppercorns were used to make an alcoholic beverage from pink peppercorns that resembled beer and was called chicha de mole.
- In Central America, all parts of the plant have been used in traditional medicine to address a wide variety of ailments, including treating wounds and infections. It has been used as an antidepressant, as an analgesic, antifungal, antispasmodic, diuretic, topical antiseptic, anti-inflammatory.
- Pink peppercorn leaves have been used as a textile dye in the Andean region.
- The oil from the leaves of the pink peppercorn was used in the embalming and early mummification practices in the Inca civilization.

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