

Muntingia calabura



Muntingia calabura, commonly known as Jamaican cherry, strawberry tree, or Panama berry, is a fast-growing tree native to the neotropics and widely cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions around the world.

Name of Muntingia Calabura in Indian languages:

1. Hindi: Japanese Cherry, Singapore Cherry
2. Tamil: Pachchai Pazham, Seemai Nattu Cherry
3. Telugu: Pachchayi Pandu
4. Malayalam: Pazhampazham
5. Kannada: Gasagase Hannu
6. Marathi: Japanese Cherry
7. Bengali: Tuti-fruti

TAXONOMY:

Kingdom: Plantae
Clade: Tracheophytes
Order: Malvales
Family: Muntingiaceae
Genus: *Muntingia*
Species: *M. calabura*



USES

1. Culinary Uses:

- **Fresh Consumption:** The ripe fruits are eaten fresh, either whole or added to salads, desserts, and beverages.
- **Jams and Preserves:** Muntingia calabura fruits can be used to make jams, jellies, and syrups.

2. Medicinal Uses:

- **In traditional medicine,** various parts of the Muntingia calabura tree, including the leaves and bark, are used for their supposed medicinal properties. They are believed to have antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant effects.

3. Other Uses:

- **Ornamental:** Muntingia calabura is sometimes planted as an ornamental tree in gardens and parks due to its attractive flowers and fruits.
- **Agroforestry:** The tree is useful in agroforestry systems for providing shade and supplemental fruit production alongside other crops.

Cultivation:

- Muntingia calabura is adaptable to a wide range of soil types but prefers well drained, fertile soil.
- It is propagated from seeds, which germinate readily, or from cuttings.
- The tree is fast-growing and can begin fruiting within 23 years of planting under favourable conditions.
- Muntingia calabura is valued for its fast growth, ornamental value, and edible fruits. It is a popular tree in tropical and subtropical regions, providing both aesthetic beauty and nutritional benefits to local communities.

Characteristics Feature

- **Size:** Muntingia calabura is a small to medium sized tree that can reach heights of 712 meters (2339 feet).
 - **Leaves:** The leaves are simple, alternate, elliptical to ovate in shape, and bright green in color. They have serrated margins and prominent veins.
 - **Flowers:** The flowers are small, white with five petals, and borne in clusters. They are followed by round, red to purple fruits.
 - **Fruits:** The fruit of Muntingia calabura is a small berry, about 1 cm in diameter, resembling a cherry or small plum. It is edible and sweet, with a mild flavour reminiscent of strawberries.
 - **Bark:** The bark is smooth and greyish brown.
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