

CAYENNE

Botanical Name:

Capsicum frutescens, *Capsicum annum*, *Capsicum minimum*

Common Names:

Cayenne, African pepper, American pepper, bird pepper, chilli pepper, goat's pepper, pod pepper, red pepper, chillies, garden pepper, African red pepper, American red pepper, Spanish pepper, capsicum, Zanzibar pepper

Parts used:

Ripe and dried fruit

Active Components:

Capsaicin, a red colouring matter, oleic, palmitic and stearic acids;

Capsaicin is a chemical that relieves pain and itching by temporarily affecting the sensory nerves.

Cayenne is a very rich in vitamins A and C, has the complete B complexes, as well as organic calcium and potassium.

**History:**

It is believed that Cayenne pepper has been used for its healing powers for thousands of years. It has been described in folklore from around the world as miraculously healing both simple as well as more complex health conditions. In the 16th Century it began being cultivated in Britain where it was brought from India. It was used for various conditions of the gastrointestinal tract; including stomachaches, cramping pains, and flatulence.

Looks like:

Cayenne is very closely related to bell peppers, jalapenos, paprika, and other similar peppers. Cayenne is a perennial plant and is native to a tropical habitat. However, it becomes an annual plant when cultivated elsewhere. It grows to a height of 3 feet or higher and has a woody stem, which branches out near the top. Its leaves are usually oval-shaped and the flowers range from white to yellow in colour. The fruit is a yellow or red gristly pod containing many seeds. The Cayenne plant flowers between April and September.

Where it's grown:

Originally in parts of Africa and South America however nowadays it is grown in most tropical and sub-tropical countries.

Use:

Cayenne pepper has many beneficial antioxidant, cardiovascular effects and also powerful effects on gastrointestinal function. It improves circulation and when applied topically it is a useful remedy for rheumatic and arthritic pains and psoriasis. It is known to reduce cholesterol and triglyceride levels. It has also been used as a gargle to treat throat conditions and additional research is being done on its use as an anti-inflammatory and to relieve sore muscles. The active component Capsaicin has been used with pains associated with many different conditions such as: cluster headaches, mouth sores, shingles, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis, post amputation pain, post mastectomy pain, and more. It also promotes digestion and cleanses the blood.