

Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum cassia*)

Common Names: Cinnamon bark, cassia, or cinnamon twig.

Location: This herb can be found in India, Sri Lanka, West Indies and the Philippines.

Description: The red soft bark and young twigs of the herb are used medicinally.

Properties: This herb is known world-wide to help ease an upset stomach.

Uses: Use cinnamon to stop uterine bleeding, treat fibroids, menstrual problems, liver cancer, indigestion, peptic ulcers and yeast infections.

Doses: You can grate cinnamon pieces into food for consumption or mix cinnamon oil into water or tea.

Warnings: Do not ingest cinnamon if you are allergic to basalm of tolu or have prostate problems.

Cinnamon (Cassia) Bark and Powder Profile

Also known as

Cinnamomum cassia, *Cinnamomum burmannii*, Cassia, Cassia Cinnamon, Chinese Cinnamon, False Cinnamon, and Cassia Lignea

Introduction

The word cinnamon, the genus name, probably came from either the Arabic or the Hebrew language, but the species name cassia is from the Greek kassia, meaning to strip off the bark. Its use in Chinese medicine goes back to at least 2700 B.C.E. where it is referred to in several herbal formularies.

According to traditional Chinese medicine, it acts to help the body's "fire" and to help "warm" the kidneys and spleen. It is, however, primarily known for the familiar flavor it imparts to any dish that it comes in contact with.

Constituents

Cassia bark can contains up to 4% oils, as well as tannins, catechins, proanthocyanidins, resins, mucilage, gum, sugars, calcium oxalate, cinnzelanin, cinnzelanol, and coumarin.

Parts Used

Dried bark in sticks, chips or ground

Typical Preparations

Cinnamon can be used as a flavoring agent for most foods, as well as in teas, alcoholic beverages, extracts, and tinctures.

Summary

Cinnamon is one of the most recognizable of flavors in the world, and has been used at one time or another in just about every type of food product available, as well as the flavoring for a great many pharmaceutical and cosmetic products. The German Commission E recommended cinnamon for treating the loss of appetite, as well as gastronomical complaints including cramps, flatulence, and nausea. Cinnamons beneficial effects on the digestive tract are attributed to its antioxidant catechins, which may also help fight bacterial, fungal, and parasitic infections. Cassia bark has been used for over a thousand years in both Eastern and Western medicine in treating chronic diarrhea, colds, kidney trouble, abdominal and heart pains, hypertension, and even cancer , among others.

Precautions

It has been noted by the German Commission E that some people are in fact allergic to cinnamon, with side effects ranging from an allergic skin reactions to mucosa. It is not recommended for medicinal uses during pregnancy or breastfeeding.

Cinnamon (Sweet) Bark and Powder Profile

Also known as

Cinnamomum zeylanicum, True Cinnamon, Sweet Cinnamon, and Ceylon Cinnamon

Introduction

The quest for cinnamon was one of the major factors that led the Europeans to explore the world in the 15th century. Cinnamons value during this time cannot be understated. In the 1st century C.E., Pliny the Elder wrote that 350 grams of cinnamon was equal to 5 kilograms of silver, or about 15 times the value of silver per weight. Cinnamon comes from the Laurel tree, a tropical evergreen that grows in low altitudes and that needs a moist, hot climate in which to thrive. Cinnamon bark comes in sticks, or quills. When peeled from the tree, they naturally roll up, and are then threaded on a string and air dried indoors, as direct sunlight would dry them out too quickly and they would lose flavor. The difference between sweet cinnamon and cassia cinnamon is quite apparent; sweet cinnamon quills will have a layered look to them, as if several were rolled together, while cassia will appear as one thick piece of bark. Sweet cinnamon is also lighter in color, and as the name implies, of a sweeter flavor. Cinnamon quills have a long, almost indefinite shelf life, while cinnamon powder will eventually lose its flavor over time.

Constituents

Sweet cinnamon can contain up to 4% oil of cinnamaldehyde, eugenol, and trans-cinnamic acid, however it is usually lighter in oil content and sweeter tasting than Cassia Cinnamon. It also contains phenolic compounds, tannins, catechins, calcium, iron, mucilage, resin, natural sugars, and traces of

coumarin.

Parts Used

The bark, or quills, in whole, cut or powdered form.

Typical Preparations

Sweet cinnamon is a superior flavoring agent that has a multitude of uses in regards to all things culinary.

Summary

Due to its incredible value, sweet cinnamon was used for centuries as a spice of the aristocracy and the wealthy. It is obviously readily available to everyone nowadays. During the middle ages it was used as a meat preservative due to its anti-bacterial and anti-fungal qualities, but also so that it could mask the stench of "aged" meats much better than salt. When choosing cinnamon for your own use, be forewarned that the quills of cassia are next to impossible to grind, the flavor usually being extracted by boiling. Sweet cinnamon quills are much easier to use in any recipe and quite easy to grind for use. Most everyone knows the virtues of uses cinnamon in baking, but there are a great many other uses that are being rediscovered, or invented everyday. Cinnamon sticks are used in some cocktails as a stick to stir the drink, as well as being added to a traditional mulled wine recipe. Middle Eastern and Asian recipes make liberal use of cinnamon in their main dishes, curries, stews, biryanis, and as a marinade for beef and lamb. A cinnamon tea also makes a wonderful digestive aid after dinner, and cinnamon sticks can even be used in pickling as something new to spice up an old recipe.

Precautions

It has been noted by the German Commission E that some people are in fact allergic to cinnamon, with side effects ranging from an allergic skin reactions to mucosa. It is not recommended for medicinal uses during pregnancy or breastfeeding.

Botanical: *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* (NEES.)

Family: N.O. Lauraceae

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---**Synonym**---Laurus Cinnamomum.

---**Part Used**---Bark.

---**Habitat**---Ceylon, but grows plentifully in Malabar, Cochin-China, Sumatra and Eastern Islands. Has also been cultivated in the Brazils, Mauritius, India, Jamaica, etc.

---Description---Grows best in almost pure sand, requiring only 1 per cent of vegetable substance; it prefers a sheltered place, constant rain, heat and equal temperature. The Dutch owned the monopoly of the trade of the wild produce, and it was not cultivated until 1776, owing to Dutch opposition and the belief that cultivation would destroy its properties.

Cinnamon is now largely cultivated. The tree grows from 20 to 30 feet high, has thick scabrous bark, strong branches, young shoots speckled greeny orange, the leaves petiolate, entire, leathery when mature, upper side shiny green, underside lighter; flowers small white in panicles; fruit, an oval berry like an acorn in its receptacle, bluish when ripe with white spots on it, bigger than a blackberry; the root-bark smells like cinnamon and tastes like camphor, which it yields on distillation. Leaves, when bruised, smell spicy and have a hot taste; the berry tastes not unlike Juniper and has a terebine smell; when ripe, bruised and boiled it gives off an oily matter which when cool solidifies and is called cinnamon suet.

The commercial Cinnamon bark is the dried inner bark of the shoots.

Cinnamon has a fragrant perfume, taste aromatic and sweet; when distilled it only gives a very small quantity of oil, with a delicious flavour.

---Constituents---0 to 10 per cent of volatile oil, tannin, mucilage and sugar.

---Medicinal Action and Uses---Carminative, astringent, stimulant, antiseptic; more powerful as a local than as a general stimulant; is prescribed in powder and infusion but usually combined with other medicines. It stops vomiting, relieves flatulence, and given with chalk and astringents is useful for diarrhoea and haemorrhage of the womb.

---Preparations and Dosages---Cinnamon Water, B.P., 1 to 2 fluid ounces. Tincture of Cinnamon, B.P., 1/2 to 1 drachm. Oil, B.P., 1/2 to 3 drops. Comp. Powd. Arom., B.P., 10 to 40 grains. Spirit, B.P., 5 to 20 drops.

---Other Species---

Cinnamon Cassia is often substituted for it it possesses much the same qualities and constituents but is inferior. See [CASSIA](#).

C. Culiawan. Native of Amboyna- the bark has the flavour of cloves.

C. iners. Native of Malabar, seeds useful for fevers and dysentery; bark employed as a condiment.

C. nitidum. Dried leaves are said to furnish the aromatic called 'folid Malabathri.'