

Maypop

Botanical name: *Passiflora incarnata*

Family: Passifloraceae

Common names: passionflower, wild apricot, ocoee (Cherokee), apricot vine, uwaga

Parts used: fruit, leaves, flowers

Tastes: Salty cooling, bitter, sweet-tart, floral, light

Attracts butterflies, notably the Gulf Fritillary



Description: Passionflower is a fast-growing vine with medium sized, intricate purple flowers that bloom from June to September. Passionflower is known to have been used by the Houma, the Aztec, and the Cherokee nations. The plant possess many flavonoids and alkaloids, giving it its sedative and healing properties.

Preparations: The fruit, or pepper, of the plant are most commonly dried and ground to be used as a spice for cooking. The pepper is also used in tinctures and teas for internal use, and in salves, oils, and ointments for external use.



Actions/Virtues: Nervine, antispasmodic, hypnotic, anodyne. Used to treat insomnia due to circular thinking, nervousness, and pain. Aids digestion, and matters of the heart, liver, and kidneys: this herb is great for people who feel overloaded or are hypersensitive and have become guarded. Passionflower can soften them up again to be able to connect to others.

Growing conditions: Relatively easy to grow, hardy plant that prefers partial to full sun and well-drained but moist soil. Should be grown from seed but has slow germination.

Native Americans have been known to use all parts of the plant, including the roots which they used topically for inflammation, and as a tea for earaches, to wean infants, and as a blood tonic.

Folklore and History: Known to give the drinker "Christ-consciousness" or "God-consciousness" by relieving stress and repairing the ego to give a feeling of enlightenment. This plant was incorporated into European medicine as it was believed to have resembled the crucifix and the Passion of the Christ.

Precautions: Little to none, as passionflower is a relatively safe plant, but should be used with caution, like many herbs, when taken with pharmaceuticals.

