



True Cardamom *Elettaria cardamomum*

True Cardamom is harvested from the dried fruit of the *Elettaria cardamomum* plant. The cardamom plant begins flowering at 2-3 years of age from the base of the plant. The white flowers appear in spring and summer. Flowering to harvest period is approximately 120 days. The spice has a very pleasant aroma and flavor, and is commonly referred to as the Queen of Spices. Cardamom spice is used to flavor many foods and drinks.

NOTE: Many plants being sold as cardamom are not true cardamom. Be sure you are buying *Elettaria cardamomum*, which is True Cardamom. *Alpinia nutans* among others are sold as cardamom, and they are a false cardamom. True Cardamom will have flowers that form at the base of the plant.

- Highly valued spice
- AKA Queen of Spices
- Flowers form at base of plant
- Very pleasant aroma & taste

Cardamom is one of the world's most expensive spices after saffron and vanilla. It has a sweet, burning taste and a very distinctive spicy odor. Cardamom because of its variety of uses gained a reputation as the queen of spices (king, however, is black pepper).

It is a perennial plant and has rigid and erect aromatic leaves, which forms the aerial part of the plant's stems. These stems are between 7 to 9 feet high and forms a canopy of leaves around the plant.

Tiny cardamom flowers are beautiful and are usually white in color with a yellow or red strips over them.

Cardamom fruits are called capsules. Inside the fruits there are seeds of the plant, which are actually used as spice..

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| Bloom Color | White |
| Foliage | Dark Green |
| Height | 7—9 ft |
| Shade/Sun | Partial Sun to Partial Shade |
| Soil Composition | Loamy |
| Soil Moisture | Average Moistness |
| Soil pH Level | 6.0 — 6.6 |
| Years to Bear | 2—3 |
| Zone Range | 9-11 |

