

*Terminalia catappa*

**Scientific classification** ✍️

Kingdom : Plantae  
Clade : Angiosperms  
Order : Myrtales  
Family : Combretaceae  
Genus : *Terminalia*  
Species : *T. catappa*



*Terminalia catappa*

**Description:**

The tree grows to 35 m (115 ft) tall, with an upright, symmetrical crown and horizontal branches. *Terminalia catappa* has corky, light fruit that are dispersed by water. The seed within the fruit is edible when fully ripe, tasting almost like almond. As the tree gets older, its crown becomes more flattened to form a spreading, vase shape. Its branches are distinctively arranged in tiers. The leaves are large, 15–25 cm (5.9–9.8 in) long and 10–14 cm (3.9–5.5 in) broad, ovoid, glossy dark green, and leathery. They are dry-season deciduous; before falling, they turn pinkish-reddish or yellow-brown, due to pigments such as violaxanthin, lutein, and zeaxanthin.

The trees are monoecious, with distinct male and female flowers on the same tree. Both are 1 cm (0.39 in) in diameter, white to greenish, inconspicuous with no petals; they are produced on axillary or terminal spikes. The fruit is a drupe 5–7 cm (2.0–2.8 in) long and 3–5.5 cm (1.2–2.2 in) broad, green at first, then yellow and finally red when ripe, containing a single seed.

### **Medicinal uses:**

The tropical almond tree has also **MEDICINAL USES**.

The **BARK** in decoction gives a very astringent and antiseptic liquid (like some parts of the coconut tree or guava tree) : ex, a piece of bark, whose external part has been cleaned, of 1 dm<sup>2</sup> (10 cm by 10 cm) in 1 to 2 liters of water, boil until a red-orange color is obtained.

It can be used **TOPICALLY** :

- to dry out oozing wounds (burns, tropical ulcers, mycosis of folds,
- to clean soiled wounds (in the absence of other antiseptics),
- in mouthwash (mouth ulcer, mouth sore),
- by diluting a little this decoction, vaginal injection (leucorrhea),
- in a siege bath (hemorrhoids, genital leaning, vulvovaginitis).

**ORALLY**, to calm diarrhea and vomiting without fever, for example in case of ciguatera (intoxication by the flesh of the coral fish): 1/2 glass to 1 glass 1 to 3 times a day according to the intensity of the symptoms.

Some observations mention the risk for women of an increase in the volume of menstruation.

The **LEAVES** are:

- emollients: the juice of slightly heated leaves can be applied to boils or abscesses to ripen them,
- and astringent: yellowened leaf juice diluted in gargle water in case of angina, tonsillitis.