

Blood Orange

The blood orange is a variety (*Citrus sinensis*) of orange with crimson, almost -blood-colored flesh. The flavor of the blood orange is stronger and the aroma is more intense than the oranges we are used to eating. This fruit has a distinct, sweeter flavor with a hint of raspberry.

The distinctive red-wine flesh color is due to the presence of *anthocyanins*, a family of pigments common to many flowers, but uncommon in citrus fruit. Anthocyanins are also considered to be a powerful *antioxidant*, and antioxidants are agents which are believed to be responsible for helping prevent cancers, aging symptoms, and other health conditions.

History

Oranges originated in what is now Malaysia and, over time, made their way from Asia to the Middle East, Africa, ancient Greece and Rome. In ancient Greece oranges were prized as food from the gods and were called golden apples. They were also a prized fruit of the Chinese emperors. In one Chinese dialect the word for orange means gold.

The spread of oranges was due in large part because traders and explorers carried them on their sea voyages to ward off “scurvy”—a deadly disease caused by a lack of vitamin C in the diet. Oranges were first brought to the New World by Christopher Columbus in 1493.



Fun Facts

- Blood oranges are the primary orange grown in Italy.
- The anthocyanins which give the blood orange its distinct color will only develop when temperatures are low at night and warm during the day.
- Oranges are the largest citrus crop in the world. In the United States, oranges are the fourth most popular fruit while orange juice is the most popular juice.
- Oranges are the primary source of vitamin C for most Americans.
- Brazil produces the largest amount of oranges in the world.
- Oranges are technically berries.
- After chocolate and vanilla, orange is the world's favorite flavor.
- Oranges were given as presents in England during Queen Victoria's reign.
- Oranges do not ripen after they are picked.
- Orange peel contains oils that are used for making soda and cosmetics.

