



PERSIMMON (DIOSPYROS)

PERSIMMON TREE FACTS

Asian Persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*) is native to China, where it has been cultivated for centuries, and was introduced to California in the mid 1800's. At our community orchards, POP usually favors non-astringent cultivars such as **Fuyu!** Asian Persimmons usually grow between 13-20 ft tall and wide and are self-fertile. The native **American Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*)** is a much larger tree, growing 30-50 ft tall, but with smaller fruit. Except for a few self-fertile varieties, American Persimmons require a male and female tree for pollination. Persimmons belong to the *Ebenaceae* botanical family, valued for its wood and fruits. Persimmons are usually propagated by grafting scionwood or buds to selected rootstock; seed stratification is also possible. Pollinators of this tree include wild bees, bumblebees, and honeybees.

SEASONAL CARE

Persimmons are easy to grow with few ongoing care requirements. Asian Persimmons grow in **hardiness zones 7-10** and do best in areas that have moderate winters and relatively mild summers. American Persimmons are hardy in zones 5-9.

WINTER/SPRING: Late-winter pruning is helpful for shape and rejuvenation. In the spring, non-blooming persimmons may require an application of bonemeal to boost phosphorous.

SUMMER: Water young trees thoroughly once a week during their first year. Persimmons have few pest or disease problems in our region, thus requiring little other attention.

FALL: Persimmons are one of the latest ripening fruits in our orchard spaces. Harvest and process the fruit from Oct-Dec. depending on the variety. Harvest non-astringent Asian varieties when they are hard, but fully colored (ranging from light yellow-orange to dark orange-red). American and astringent Asian varieties should not be harvested until soft, as fruit picked too early will cause your mouth to feel dry and pucker from the astringency! Sweetness is often improved after the first frost.

NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

Persimmon fruit is a very good source of dietary fiber with 100 g containing about 9.5% of recommended daily intake of soluble and insoluble fiber. Fresh and dried Persimmon fruit also contain healthy amounts of minerals like potassium, manganese (15% of DRI), copper (12% of DRI), and phosphorus. It is moderately high in calories (provides 70 calories/100 g) but very low in fats. Persimmons can be eaten fresh, dried, and cooked. Dried persimmon fruits are popular in Japan and often used in cookies, cakes, muffins, puddings, salads and as a topping in breakfast cereal.

PERSIMMON BREAD

2 eggs
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup white sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 cup persimmon pulp
1 teaspoon baking soda
Optional: 1/2 cup walnuts, 1/2 cup raisins

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F (165 degrees C). Oil a 9 x 4 in. pan.
2. In a small bowl, combine flour, cinnamon, salt, nuts, and raisins.
3. In a large bowl, blend eggs, sugar, and oil. Mix baking soda into pulp, and add to sugar mixture. Fold in flour mixture. Pour batter into prepared pan.
4. Bake for 75 minutes, or until tester inserted in the center comes out clean.

