

Pomegranate

Punica granatum L.

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Steeped in history and romance and almost in a class by itself, the pomegranate, *Punica granatum* L., belongs to the family Punicaceae which includes only one genus and two species, the other one, little-known, being *P. protopunica* Balf. peculiar to the island of Socotra.

Despite its ancient background, the pomegranate has acquired only a relatively few commonly recognized vernacular names apart from its many regional epithets in India, most of which are

variations on the Sanskrit *dadima* or *dalim*, and the Persian *dulim* or *dulima*. By the French it is called *grenade*; by the Spanish, *granada* (the fruit), *granado* (the plant); by the Dutch, *granaatappel*, and Germans, *granatapfel*; by the Italians, *melogranato*, *melograno granato*, *pomo granato*, or *pomo punico*. In Indonesia, it is *gangsalan*; in Thailand, *tab tim*; and in Malaya, *delima*. Brazilians know it as *roma*, *romeira* or *romazeira*. The Quecchi Indian name in Guatemala is *granad*. The Samoan name is *limoni*. The generic term, *Punica*, was the Roman name for Carthage from whence the best pomegranates came to Italy.

