



# Natal Plum

**Scientific Name:** *Carissa macrocarpa*

**Biology:**

A relative of the poisonous Oleander, the stems and leaves of the Natal plum are toxic and should never be consumed. The red fruit of the Natal plum shrub is the only edible part of the plant (Floridata).

**Description:**

Natal plums have a reddish-pink skin and flesh and are somewhat pointed at one end. Both the stems and fruit release flecks of milky white sap when cut. The Natal plum has a sweet and tangy flavor with a juicy consistency when ripe. Its branches and leaves are green in color with white flowers and have many thorns on the shrub. The taste of the Natal plum has been described as similar to the tart flavor of the cranberry (Floridata).

**Availability:**

Natal plum fruits first appear in the summer and can grow throughout the winter in warmer climates (Floridata).

**Nutritional Value:**

Natal plum fruit contains vitamin A and B and are extremely high in vitamin C, charting even higher in the nutrient than citrus fruits (Specialty Produce).

**Applications:**

As with figs, Natal plums have an edible latex which is released when cooked. Natal plums can be eaten freshly picked or sliced and added to salads. Can be pickled or cooked down to make jams, sauces, soup, chutney and pie filling (Specialty Produce). The Natal plum is commonly used as a hedge plant due to its fragrant white blossoms and to provide security its dense foliage and large thorns (Floridata).

**Cultural Geography:**

Natal plums are originated in Natal, South Africa but can be found in California, Hawaii and Florida. In South Africa the fruits are called “num-num” and in India they are commonly called “Karonda” (Specialty Produce).

**Citations:**

<https://floridata.com/plant/875>[https://www.specialtyproduce.com/produce/Natal\\_Plums\\_9225.php](https://www.specialtyproduce.com/produce/Natal_Plums_9225.php)