

# Did You Know?

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## **Anise, *Pimpinella anisum***

- Anise or aniseed is an annual plant prized for aromatic fruits, commonly called seeds.
- Anise, related to dill, cumin, caraway and fennel
- Egyptians were reportedly the first to cultivate anise for use as a spice
- The use of anise to aid digestion dates back to the Romans who ate anise seed cakes at the conclusion of feasts
- Aniseed flavors a range of dishes from soups, salads, baked goods to meats, as well as curries, baked apples and cooked vegetables
- Tea can be made from the seeds and leaves
- Used to flavor commercial liqueurs such as ouzo and Pernod
- Essential oil of anise is reportedly antibacterial, antiviral, insecticidal, as well as an expectorant, antispasmodic and has estrogenic effects
- Star anise is the fruit of a tree, *Illicium verum*, is star shaped and an entirely different plant with a similar flavor and aroma to *Pimpinella anisum*
- Florence fennel or finocchio (the vegetable form of fennel), *Foeniculum vulgare*, also has a similar flavor to anise
- Easily grown in the garden with full sun, well-drained soil and about 120 frost-free days to set fruit (seeds)