

Interesting Facts about Pineapple Plants Ananas Comosus

Pineapple Ananas Comosus Botanical name of Edible Bromeliaceae Plant

By: R. Renée Bembry

Deciphering the term “Ananas Comosus” one may decide the first word “ananas” sounds akin to “bananas” and the second word “Comosus” sounds astrological or something of that nature, however, Ananas Comosus is the botanical name for the most popular edible Bromeliaceae plant family member otherwise known as the pineapple. Therefore, simply put, Ananas Comosus are merely pineapples. Terms synonymous with Ananas Comosus include Bromelia Ananas, Sativus Schult, and Ananassa Sativa.

Moving on from what we call the plant as a whole to its edible flesh, the pineapple fruit itself has numerous names as well. Travelling across the planet we find that pineapple vernaculars include the South Asian/East Indies “nanas” reference (although Chinese refer to them as “Po-lo-mah”); the Dutch/French “ananas” reference; the Portuguese term “abacaxi”; “Pina” amongst Hispanics; “sweet pine” amongst Jamaicans, and the Guatemalan simple reference – “pine”.

Most of the approximate 2,000 known species of pineapple are epiphytic. This means the plants may attach themselves to other plants (or even rocks) in a parasitic style of behavior. Despite their attachment, however, Ananas Comosus are not

parasitic, and in fact, when attached to other plants, pineapple plants continue to produce their own food through photosynthesis just as their “host” plants do.

Since many *Ananas Comosus* species are stunningly ornamental, green thumbers often grow these rosette eye catchers in their homes. When successfully grown indoors, *Ananas Comosus* make awe-striking houseplants and may even bear fruit.

Descriptively speaking, *Ananas Comosus* are herbaceous perennials – edible plants. *Ananas Comosus* may become spiny (spinescent) and tend to be succulent – meaning their thick makeup allow them to store water. These short stocky stemmed plants may grow as much as five feet tall and four feet wide. Thin, spreading leaves, branch out from their stems, grow to lengths of three feet, and become slightly curvaceous. Leaf coloring presents in plain green or with red, white, or yellow streaks. Pineapple crowns surface from stem axes following the eruption of flowers and bracts (modified leaves). Sometimes two or more crowns develop. When more crowns appear, they tend to fuse together.

When *Ananas Comosus* flowers bear fruit, the individual fruits adjoin one another to form lengthy cylindrical shaped pineapples and the *Ananas Comosus* stems become the pineapples’ cores.

Pineapple pollination usually occurs with the aid of hummingbirds. When pollination occurs, pineapples, once cut open, contain hardened seeds. Pineapple eaters will rarely come upon hardened pineapple seeds, however, but instead they may notice their pineapples contain soft undeveloped seeds. In efforts to provide consumers with seedless pineapples, the state of Hawaii has outlawed hummingbirds.

A single serving (165 grams) of fresh pineapple provides a little more sugar (16 grams) than some may care to eat all at once, however, that same serving contains a very high

percentage of Vitamin C (131%).

There are many forms in which to eat pineapple including freshly sliced slithers, canned juicy ringlets, and as tangy ingredients in salads and pineapple upside down cakes.