



Central Texas Gardener

Mick Vann's List of Thai Herbs, Vegetables, and Fruits:

A note regarding transliteration of Thai names: there is an official transliteration system for Thai-English that is approved by the Thai government, however very few Thai's use it, and it can often seem to make it more difficult to figure out what is being discussed. Few Thai cookbook authors even agree on the English transliteration of the most basic Thai words for ingredients. Here I have used a phonetic transliteration approved by friends that are native Thai speakers.

The best local (Austin) source for living Thai herbs is a plant nursery called It's About Thyme, owned by Chris and Diane Winslow, and located about 2 miles south of Slaughter Lane, on Manchaca Road. They have been written-up in the *New York Times*, among other publications, as a source for Thai herbs and vegetables. My Thai friends and I purchase a large variety of different Thai seeds for them when we are in Thailand, and Chris and Diane grow them out for public sale. Their supply of plants at any given moment varies, depending on the season, and the supply of seeds. Call and see if they have what you are after....

It's About Thyme Nursery
11726 Manchaca Rd.
Austin, TX 78748
512-280-1192
itsaboutthymegc@evl.net

Thai Herbs:

bai = "leaves"

Sweet Basil
Lemon Basil
Thai Basil

ho-ra-phaa
man-glug
maeng-lak (also mint basil) smaller, smoother, and more delicate than sweet basil

Holy Basil

ka-prao (purplish, hairy)...there is also a variety of Holy basil that is light green, without the purplish pigment...note: Holy basil is always added during the cooking process, and is never eaten raw

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| Cilantro | phak chii | (roots=raak phak chii; seeds=met phak chii) |
| Rau Ram | ? | aka Viet. Cilantro; <i>Polygonum odoratum</i> |
| Sawtooth coriander | phak chii farang | |

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|-----------------|---------------------------|---|
| Spearmint | sa-ra-nay | the true Thai mint is called “water mint” |
| Asian pennywort | bai bua bok | |
| Vietnamese Mint | phak phai (Polygonum sp.) | |

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| Chilies: | Prik | |
| “mouse dropping” | prik khii nuu | 60-80K scovilles |
| “farm” mouse dropping | prik khii nuu suan | shorter, fatter, smaller seeds |
| “dragon’s Eye “ m.d. | prik khii nuu sun yaew | 4cm |
| “sky pointing” | prik chi faa | 6-10cm; red, grn, yellow; 35-45K scovilles |
| banana stalk chile | prik yuak | 10-15cm; ylw-grn>red |
| orange chile | prik haeng | 3cm, thin-fleshed, very hot, slightly sour |
| Sweet bell pepper | prik waan | |

...there are ten main types that are commonly used...originally brought to Thailand in 1629 by the Portuguese (it took only 30 years for chiles to cover all parts of the country (which included parts of Cambodia and Laos at the time, and was much larger than Thailand’s current size) and be completely adapted into the cuisine)...previously the heat came from peppercorns (called “Prik Thai”): green (prik thai onn), black, and white (slightly different and spicier than our white peppercorns)

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|--------------|------------|
| Garlic | kra-tiem |
| Shallots | hawm-lek, |
| Red shallots | hawm-daeng |
| Green Onions | ton-hawm |
| Onion | hua-hawm |

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| Lemongrass | ta-krai |
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| Bay Leaf | gra-wan |
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|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Galangal | khaa | |
| Ginger | khing | |
| Cardamom | luuk gra-waan | |
| Turmeric | kha-min | |
| White Turmeric | khamin khao | |
| Red turmeric | khamin leuang | |
| Sugarcane turmeric | khamin ooy, khamin chan | |
| “Chinese keys” | kra-chai | aka: “finger root”, “rhizome”, “wild ginger” |
| Torch ginger | ka-laa | |

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|-------------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Pepper Leaf | chaplu | aka “wild tea leaf”, “betel leaf” |
| Cumin Leaf | yee-rah | |

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| Thai Lime Leaf | mak-root, ma-groot |
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Note: the common English name, Kaffir leaf, has been changed because the word “kaffir”, which is from South Africa and means “colored” (referring to that portion of the population from India) is derogatory.

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| Taro/elephant ear | puak |
|-------------------|------|

Easily-Grown Annual Vegetables Used in Thai Cooking:

Vegetables:

Pakk-Sod

Eggplants:
small grape-sized
green & white striped, small, round
green, small, round
Ichiban type, purple
long green

Makheua
makheua phuang
makheua phraw
mauek
makheua yao
makheua yao

Tomato

makheua-theht

Potato

man farang

Long beans, yard-long beans

tua fak-yao

dips, curries, stir fries

Winged bean

tua pooh

salads, dips

Snow pea

tua lan-tao

Hyacinth bean

tua paeb

Pods used in dips and curries

Peanut

tua lisong

Soybean

tua leuang

Stink bean

sadtor, sadao aka Petai bean

Cucumbers:

Regular

tang gwah

Long Asian-style

?

Short pickling

?

Ash melon

fak gwio

Bitter melon

mara

Winter melon

fak nguu, mara

Gourd

buap

Squash

fak

Luffa

buap liam

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Snake gourd | buap nguu | |
| Wax gourd | fak khiaw | |
| Bottle gourd | naam tao | |
| Cantaloupe | taeng thai | |
| Watermelon | taeng-mo | red or yellow-meated, small |
| Jicama | man kaew | |
| Napa cabbage | phak kat khao plii | |
| Mustard cabbage | phak khat khiaw | |
| Watercress | phak khat naam, | |
| Siamese watercress | phak boong | |
| Lettuce | phak khat hawm | |
| Chinese kale, Chinese broccoli | phak kha-naa | |
| Morning glory greens | phak ka-chet | |
| Carrots | kea-rod | |
| Daikon | hua chai thao, hua chai poh | |
| Giant radish | hua phak khat | |
| Chinese celery | kheun chai | |
| Corn | khao phoht | |
| Okra | krajiap mawn | |
| Cauliflower | pak ka-lum dak | |
| Broccoli | bok-ka-li | |
| Chinese broccoli | gai lin | |
| Bamboo shoots | naw mai, nor mai | |
| Lotus leaves | bai bua | |
| Lotus stems | sai bua | |
| Lotus roots | raag bua | |
| Water chestnut | hoy khew | |

Fruits:

Phon la mai (fruit of the tree)

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| Langsat | langsai | |
| Longan | lamyai | |
| Lychée | lynchii | best = Hong huai & Chakrapat |

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|------------------------|------------------|---|
| Mangosteen | mang-khut | |
| Rambutan | ngaw | |
| Santol | gra-torn | |
| Thai green orange | som-cheng | |
| Mandarin/Kalachoes | som-khiaw-wan | |
| Thai lime | mak-root | |
| Lime | manao | |
| Citron | som-saa | |
| Pomelo | som-oh | best: s.o. thong dee (Brilliant gold) & s.o. khao hom (Fragrant white) |
| Gandaria (plum mango) | ma-prang | |
| Hog plum | makrok | |
| Rambelh | ma-fai | |
| Gooseberry | ma-yom | |
| ? | mak-jeong | |
| ? | gradum maew | |
| ? | lamai | |
| ? | ma kham thao | |
| ? | look-jar | |
| Strawberry | strah-buree | |
| Grapes | angoon | |
| Starfruit/Carambola | ma-feung | |
| Sapodilla | la-moot | |
| Rose apple | chompu | green & red |
| Jujube | poodza | |
| Mango | ma-muang | |
| green mango | ma-muang dip | |
| Papaya | malakaw | |
| green papaya | malakaw dip | |
| Guava | fa-rang | |
| Passionfruit | saowarot | |
| Custard apple/sweetsop | nawy-naa/noi nah | aka Sugar apple |

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| Durian | thurian | mildest = mawn thawng (“golden pillow”); best = kahn yeow (Longstem D.), chanee (Gibbon D.) |
| Jackfruit | ka-noon | (jackfruit permanently stains clothes) |
| Cantaloupe | taeng thai | |
| Watermelon | tang-mo | red or yellow-meated...small and round |
| Pineapple | sapparot | many different varieties used |
| Coconut: | ma-prao | |
| fire-sweetened | ma-prao pao | |
| roasted coconut meat | maprao khrua | |
| young (for “water”) | maprao onn | |
| young (for unripe flesh) | maprao teun teuk | |
| coconut palm fruit | luk chid, luk tarn, luk jark | |
| coconut cream | hua gati | |
| coconut milk | hang gati | |
| coconut sugar (from sap) | nahm dtam maprao | |
| Banana : | kluay: there are some 28 different varieties of banana used in Thai cuisine.... | |
| fragrant | kluay hawm | |
| medium, thick | nam wah (source of leaves for cooking = bai twang); sticky& sweet | |
| medium, thick | kluay naam | |
| egg | kluay khai | |
| princess finger | kluay mep meu naang | |
| cooking | kluay hak mook | |
| banana flower bud | hua plii | |
| banana tree heart | ton kluay (curries in the North=gaeng yuak) | |
| banana leaves | bai dtong, bai twang | |
| Tamarind | ma-khaam | sour & very sweet |
| Tamarind leaves | bai ma-khaam | |
| Ambarella | ma-kawk | aka: Otaheite apple, or Thai olive |
| | ma-kawk farang | larger |
| | ma-kawk num | smaller...grows near water |
| Roselle | kra-jiap | |
| Cashew apple (fruit) | ma-moung-him-ma-pan | |
| Zalaccas | la kharn | |
| Pomegranate | tap thim | |

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| Snakefruit | ? | aka “strawberry plum |
| Sour snakeskin pear | rakam | |
| Sugarcane | ooy | |
| snacks | aahaan waang | literally “empty food”...how poetic to call a snack worthless food |

Bibliography of Recommended Thai Cookbooks:

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