

Scientific Name:

Citrus limettioides (Tanaka classification)

Common Name:

- Sweet Lime
- Mousambi (in India)
- Sweet Lemon

Distinct Features:

- **Growth:** A small to medium-sized evergreen tree, typically growing up to 4-8 meters tall, with a rounded canopy and thorny branches.
- **Leaves:** Glossy, dark green, elliptic to ovate leaves, around 6-10 cm long. The leaves are aromatic when crushed, releasing a citrusy fragrance.
- **Flowers:** Small, white, and fragrant flowers that grow singly or in small clusters. The flowers have five petals and bloom in spring or early summer.
- **Fruits:** The fruit is round to slightly oblong, green when immature, turning yellow as it ripens. The skin is smooth and thin. The flesh is pale yellow and has a sweet, mild flavor with minimal acidity. Unlike other citrus fruits, sweet lime lacks the sourness typical of lemons and limes.
- **Bark:** Smooth and grayish-brown, becoming rougher with age.

Cultural Importance:

- *Citrus limettioides*, or sweet lime, holds significant cultural importance, particularly in India and Southeast Asia. It is widely consumed as a refreshing juice, especially during the hot summer months. In India, it is often used to break fasts during festivals and religious rituals due to its mild, refreshing taste.
- Sweet lime is considered a symbol of health and vitality, and its juice is often given to people recovering from illnesses to boost hydration and energy. It is also seen as a cooling fruit, making it popular in tropical climates.

Uses:

- **Culinary:**
 - Sweet lime is mostly consumed fresh or as a juice. Its sweet, mild flavor makes it ideal for drinking on its own or as part of fruit cocktails.
 - It is used in various desserts, salads, and marinades.
 - The juice is commonly consumed for its cooling and hydrating properties, especially in tropical regions.
 - Sweet lime juice is often mixed with other ingredients, such as salt, sugar, or black salt, to enhance its flavor.
- **Medicinal:**
 - Rich in vitamin C and antioxidants, sweet lime juice is believed to help boost immunity, improve skin health, and aid in digestion.

- In traditional medicine, it is used as a natural remedy for treating fevers, indigestion, and dehydration. It is also believed to have detoxifying effects.
- Sweet lime juice is often recommended for people recovering from illnesses, especially during convalescence, as it provides hydration and essential nutrients.
- **Cosmetic:**
 - Sweet lime juice is sometimes used in skincare routines for its antioxidant properties, helping to brighten the complexion and promote clear skin.
- **Agricultural:**
 - The tree is grown in orchards and home gardens for its fruit. It is also used in grafting experiments with other citrus varieties.

Picture Description:

- **Whole Tree:** A small to medium-sized evergreen tree with a rounded canopy and glossy green leaves. The branches are thorny, and the tree bears round yellow fruits.
- **Leaves:** Glossy, dark green, and elliptic to ovate in shape, around 6-10 cm long.
- **Flower:** Small, white, fragrant flowers with five petals, growing singly or in small clusters.
- **Fruit:** Round, green when immature, turning yellow when ripe. The fruit has smooth, thin skin, and the flesh is pale yellow, sweet, and mild.
- **Bark:** Smooth and grayish-brown when young, becoming rougher with age.

