

## Description

Lemon Grass for teas  
*Cymbopogon flexuosus*  
Family: Poaceae

Also called East Indian Lemon Grass, this is a perennial grass that can reach up to 90cm high with a brownish-green leaf that grows from a bulbous base or in a sheath from the stem. The leaf is narrow and up to 2m long, bent, sharp-edged and tough, with a strong lemon scent when crushed. This species varies only slightly from the Lemon Grass for cooking (*citrata*), mainly in its use. Flowers rarely form and consist of pods of green pistils similar to those of ryegrass but branched in right angles many times along the lengths of the stem, with pink-beige stamens loosely dangling from each flower.

## Growing Tips

It likes heat, plenty of sun or semi-shade and can sustain drought but grows better when soil is kept moist. It dislikes the wet and cold and is frost tender. Bulbous growth around the original bulb allows the plant to expand. For best results plant 15cm apart.

## Parts Used

Leaves and stems

## Uses

Due to a different composition of constituents, the essential oil of this Lemon Grass has a longer shelf life. It is used in perfume and has calming, anti-microbial and anti-fungal properties.

The leaves are used in tea to help with digestive problems and fevers, it is also anti-inflammatory.

In Ayurveda it is used to relieve nasal congestion.

## Origin & History

Native to the Malabar Coast of India it also grows in Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand.

It was introduced to New Zealand by Dutch settlers who brought it with them after World War II after they had encountered it in their colony Indonesia.

