

# Growables

## Grow Florida Edibles

[Home](#)[Organizations](#)[Fruit](#)[Vegetables](#)[Information](#)[Links](#)[About Us](#)

### Jaboticaba - *Myrciaria cauliflora*



*Myrciaria cauliflora* from the University of Florida, Lee County Extension [pdf 4 pages](#)

#### Varieties

**Jaboticaba** from Julia Morton's book *Fruits of Warm Climates*

**Jaboticaba** from the University of Hawaii at Manoa CTAHR [pdf 6 pages](#)

**Jaboticaba** from the California Rare Fruit Growers

**The Jaboticaba** from W. Popenoe's book *Manual of Tropical and Subtropical Fruits*

#### Flowers

White in profusion

#### Height

15 to 30'

#### Width

12 to 18'

#### Season

Heaviest bearing in late March/April. Mature tree can produce 100 lbs over the season

#### USDA zone

9b-11

#### Damage temp. 27F

No salt tolerance

**PH:** 5.5-6.5

Fig. 1

**Common Names:** jaboticaba, Brazil grape tree, (English); sabará jaboticaba, jaboticaba sabará, jaboticaba de Campinas, guapurú, guaperu, hivapurú, and ybapurú (Brazil). The names jaboticaba, jaboticaba, and yaboticaba are often used to describe four similar species of *Myrciaria*. <sup>1</sup>



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

Two low-branching and trimmed jaboticaba trees growing on the campus of Zamorano Pan-American Agricultural School, Honduras

The word comes from the Tupi Indian term jabotim for turtle and means "like turtle fat" in reference to the white fruit pulp. <sup>1</sup>

**Growth Habit:** The jaboticaba is a slow growing large shrub or small, bushy tree. It reaches a height of 10 - 15 feet in California and 12 - 45 feet in Brazil, depending on the species. The trees are profusely branched, beginning close to the ground and slanting upward and outward so that the dense, rounded crown may attain an ultimate spread as wide as it is tall. The thin, beige to reddish bark flakes off much like that of the guava. The jaboticaba makes an attractive landscape plant. <sup>1</sup>

Without pruning, the tree branches close to the ground and forms a fairly tight network of primary and secondary branches. <sup>3</sup>

**Foliage:** The evergreen, opposite leaves are lanceolate to elliptic, 1 - 4 inches in length and 1/2 - 3/4 inch wide. In color they are a glossy dark green with a leathery texture. The size, shape and texture varies somewhat from one species to another. <sup>1</sup>

**Flowers:** The small yellow-white flowers dramatically emerge from the multiple trunks, limbs and large branches in groups of four. It has been reported from Brazil that solitary jaboticaba trees bear poorly compared with those planted in groups, which indicates that cross-pollination enhances productivity. <sup>1</sup>

**Fruits:** Jaboticaba fruit is grape-like in appearance and texture but with a thicker, tougher skin. Most California fruit is dark purple to almost black in color. Averages size is one inch in diameter but can run from 3/4 to 1-1/2 inches, depending on species and variety. The gelatinous whitish pulp contains from one to four small seeds and has a pleasant, subacid flavor markedly similar to certain muscadine grapes. The skin has a slight resinous flavor that is not objectionable. Fruit may be produced singly or in clusters from the ground up all over the trunk and main branches, and the plant may fruit up to five times per year. Fresh fruit is delicious eaten out-of-hand and can be made into jellies, jams and wine. The skin is high in tannin and should not be consumed in large quantities over a long period of time. <sup>1</sup>

Jaboticaba may take as many as eight years to bear fruit. Fruit production may occur throughout the year but the heaviest bearing is in late March and April with hundreds of fruit on a large tree. A mature tree may produce 100 pounds of fruit over the course of a season. Yield is not always reliable and may vary from year to year. The fruit should be harvested a few days after maturity. The fruit spoils at room temperature in about two days. <sup>5</sup>

"I love to cut them in half and suck the white juicy sweet flesh away from the thick skin. The flesh tends to stick to the seed and if one is patient, one can eventually clean the seed smooth with tongue and teeth. Don loves popping them into his mouth, giving the fruit a munch and swallowing the seed, flesh and juice and then removing the skin." <sup>4</sup>

**Propagation:** Jaboticabas are usually grown from **seeds** in South America. These are nearly always polyembryonic, producing 4 to 6 plants per seed. They germinate in 20 to 40 days. Selected strains can be reproduced by **inarching** (approach-grafting) or **air-layering**. Budding is not easily accomplished because of the thinness of the bark and hardness of the wood. **Side-veneer grafting** is fairly successful. Experimental work has shown that propagation by tissue culture may be feasible.

The plant is not often bothered by pests. Aphids, scales, nematodes and spider mites are minor, occasional problems. <sup>5</sup>



Fig. 14

#### Further Reading

**Subtropical Myrtaceae** from Neglected Crops: 1492 from a Different Perspective

**Jaboticaba** from the Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia

**Further Information on the Jaboticaba** from the Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia

**Jaboticabas, a New Crop to Look out For** from the Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia

**A Sweet Delight, the Jaboticaba** from the Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia

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Top

#### Bibliography

<sup>1</sup>"Jaboticaba". [cfrg.org](http://cfrg.org). Fruit Facts. 1996. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Love, Ken and Paull, Robert E. "Jaboticaba." [ctahr.hawaii.edu](http://ctahr.hawaii.edu). Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers, CTAHR Department of Tropical Plant and Soil Sciences. 2011. Web. 14 Jan. 2015.

<sup>3</sup> "Jaboticaba". [rfcarchives.org.au](http://rfcarchives.org.au). Article from EFGA Newsletter August 1986. Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia. Sept. 1986. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Gray, Christine. "A Sweet Delight the Jaboticaba". [rfcarchives.org.au](http://rfcarchives.org.au). Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia. Jan. 1992. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Brown, Stephen H. "*Myrciaria cauliflora* Family: Myrtaceae. Jaboticaba; Brazilian grapetree; jaboticaba; ybapuru." **edis.ifas.ufl.edu**. University of Florida, Lee County Extension. Apr. 2011. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

#### Photographs

Fig. <sup>1</sup> Karklis, Bruno. "*Fruta Jaboticaba* Plinia cauliflora (*syn.* Myrciaria cauliflora)." 2012. **commons.wikimedia.org**. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>2</sup> Cody, Ben. "*Leaves of the* Plinia cauliflora." 2008. **commons.wikimedia.org**. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>3,11</sup> Mauroguanandi. "*Jaboticaba* (*Myrciaria cauliflora*)." 2009. **flickr.com**. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>4,7</sup> Love, Ken. "*Jaboticaba*, Myrciaria cauliflora, Myrtaceae." N.d. **botany.hawaii.edu**. University of Hawaii, Botany Department, Manoa Campus Plants. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>5,9</sup> Soares, Mariana. "*Jaboticaba*." 2008. **flickr.com**. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>6</sup> Campolina, Alexandre, Campola. "*Jaboticaba* ripe fruit." 2007. **commons.wikimedia.org**. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>8</sup> Hoffmann, Roberto Antonio. "*Jaboticabas*." 2004. **flickr.com**. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>10</sup> Setlik, Felipe. "*Jaboticaba*." 2006. **flickr.com**. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>12</sup> Brown, S.H. "*Two low-branching and trimmed jaboticaba trees growing on the campus of Zamorano Pan-American Agricultural School, Honduras*." N.d. **edis.ifas.ufl.edu**. University of Florida, Lee County Extension. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. <sup>13</sup> Starr, Forest and Kim. "Myrciaria cauliflora (*Jaboticaba*, *Brazilian grape tree*)Trunk." 2009. **starrenvironmental.com**. Makawao, Maui. Web. 15 Jan. 2015.

Fig. 14 Myrciaria cauliflora, Plinia cauliflora, Eugenia cauliflora. N.d. **toptropicals.org**. Web. 15 Feb. 2016.

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