

SNAKE GOURD

(Trichosanthes cucumerina)



A few facts

- Also known as serpent gourd,
- The plant originates in Asia and is grown and eaten in many tropical countries including the Pacific islands
- It is a climbing vine with long snake like fruits
- Its flowers are small and white with fringed edges
- The snake-like fruit is eaten when firm
- It grows all year and is easy to grow and particularly likes the humid wet season.

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(Trichosanthes cucumerina)

How to grow

- Snake gourd is easily grown all year round, in the full sun, in a free draining place, but is prolific with good water (wet season specialty)
- It needs a trellis to climb up and can climb far, a fence is good, it can go wild following the light and grows into trees and other plants.
- It likes full sun and is fairly fertile soil

How to grow more

- Grown from seed, collected from dried older snake gourds which will become soggy on the plant and reveal orange flesh covered matured seeds- clean these and dry them out for later planting
- Snake gourd seed can be planted straight into position or in pots and transplanted afterwards. One vines goes very far!

When to plant them/ grow them

- These can be planted all year round, but enjoy plentiful water

How to eat them

- The snake gourd is harvested when over 10cm long and firm, but not too old and needs to be cooked to taste good.
- Snake gourd is usually cut cross ways to reveal its hollow or fluffy inside and then stir fried or added to curries, frittatas, or pretty much anything, it can be treated a little like a zucchini
- Alternatively snake gourd can be stuffed with various fillings and roasted in the oven. European or Asian flavours work well.