

## 'Moy Grande' Loquat

The 'Moy Grande' Loquat is the largest fruited loquat ever sold. It was brought to the U.S. from China by Dr. Ying Doon Moy (see: <http://plantanswers.com/heroes/YingDoonMoy.html>) in 1998. In 2009, Dr. Ying Doon Moy (called "Mr. Moy"), 80, was enlisted by the Mercer Arboretum near Houston to breed vegetation that would thrive in Houston's extreme climate. It was in the spring of 2010 that the large fruit was observed by Jerry Parsons and Larry Stein. The fruit is at least twice as large as common loquat fruit. The fruit is much meatier and contains much more juice than a standard loquat. The leaves are much larger and more ornamental than the standard loquat.

The loquat is difficult to root from greenwood cuttings so most plants are produced from seed. The seedlings of the 'Moy Grande' loquat require 5-7 years of juvenile (non-fruiting) growth before harvest can begin. During these juvenile years, the plant is used as an evergreen ornamental. Tree height is variable, ranging anywhere from 10 to 20 feet high and 10 feet wide so give the tree space when planting. Generally, unless a loquat is well established, trees are in the shorter range. The fruit itself has a soft, fuzzy exterior comparable to an apricot in size and color, but not in shape. The loquat is teardrop or pear shaped and generally is not larger than 1 inch long – the 'Moy Grande' loquat is two to three times that large.

The loquat fruit is generally eaten as is in most cultures. However, it has a relatively high pectin content and can be a valuable addition to jam, jelly or chutney. Some find the taste slightly acidic, but the acidity is diminished if the fruit is eaten when completely ripe. Loquats taste exotic, a cross between a passion fruit and a guava. Their sweetness makes them a perfect substitute for more calorie-rich desserts.



1. 'Moy Grande' loquat compared to standard fruit in the center of the cluster.



2. Comparison of 'Moy Grande' loquat (left) to standard size loquat (top right)



3. Seed of 'Moy Grande' loquat (left) compared to seed of smaller, standard sized loquat (right)