

**Botanic name:** *Cinchona calisaya* Wedd. -- Ann. Sci. Nat., Bot. sér. 3, 10: 6. 1848 (IK)

**Common name:** Cinchona, Peruvian bark

**Family:** Rubiaceae

**Habitat:** Terrestrial

**Distribution:** Native to Andes in South America. But its now cultivated throughout the world for its medicinal value. Basically grows in cool humid weather with well drained soils

**Description:** Small to large shrubs and trees; leaves opposite, petiolate,, on the lower surface often with pubescent; stipules quickly deciduous, interpetiolar or sometimes shortly fused around the stem, triangular to ligulate in shape, generally held erect and flatly pressed together in bud. Inflorescence terminal and in axils of the uppermost leaves, pedunculate, bracteate. Flowers sessile to pedicellate, calyx limb truncate short, 5-lobed; corolla salver-form, white to pink, purple, or red, densely pubescent internally in throat and on lobes, lobes 5, triangular, valvate in bud; stamens 5, inserted in corolla tube, with anthers narrowly ellipsoid, dorsifixed near base, included to partially exerted; ovary 2-locular, with ovules numerous in each locule, imbricated and ascending on axile placentas; stigmas 2-lobed, included or exerted. Fruit capsular, cylindrical to ellipsoid or ovoid.

**Phytochemicals:** Alkaloids-Quinine, quinidine, cinchonine and cinchonidine (bark). Up to 70 - 80% of the total alkaloids contained in the bark are quinine.

**Medicinal/Economic uses:** The bark is a bitter, astringent, tonic herb that lowers fevers, relaxes spasms, is antimalarial (the alkaloid quinine, quinidine). The bark is made into various preparations, such as tablets, liquid extracts, tinctures and powders. Long been used by the native people of South American to treat fevers and a range of other conditions. An ingredient in various proprietary cold and influenza remedies. Used internally in the treatment of malaria, neuralgia, muscle cramps and cardiac fibrillation. Also used as a gargle to treat sore throats. The powdered bark is often used in tooth-powders, owing to its astringency.