



Nanguo Pear Wine

Nicknamed *Queen of Pears*, Nanguo pears (Nanguo Li) are a rare variety fruit unique to the terroir of Northeastern China. These small fruits are one of the top varieties of pears cultivated in China and are highly favoured for their fragrance and flavour.

A local delicacy of the Liaoning Province, Nanguo pears require specific growing conditions to develop the fruit's signature flavour. Nanguo pears are sensitive to sunlight, temperature, and soil and are only cultivated in a small geographic region in China. Liaoning Cong's Fruit Industry Company orchard covers 15,000 acres of prime Nanguo Li pear trees in Haicheng.

Nanguo pears are a natural hybrid native to Liaoning Province. They have been cultivated here for over 100 years. The variety was first discovered in Anshan, a region traditionally known for its steel production. The city uses Nanguo pears to attract visitors, and growers still claim that the mother tree is still alive. The tree is believed to be over 130 years old and only bears fruits on one side of the trunk. In 1986, Nanguo pears were recognized by the China Fruit Research Institute as a valuable variety. Within the Liaoning Province, Anshan is the central city for Nanguo production.

Nanguo pears are a favoured fruit in China during the Mid-Autumn Festival. The annual Chinese holiday celebrates family reunions and the full moon, and the date for the festival changes each year according to the Chinese lunar calendar. During the festival, elaborate meals with auspicious ingredients are eaten to bring good luck, and many families choose to travel over the holiday to escape from the pressures of daily life. Pears are one of the customary foods consumed for the Mid-Autumn Festival and are believed to prevent separation or the departure of loved ones. Traditionally, the word pear in Chinese sounds like the word "to separate," leading many Chinese to superstitiously not share pears to prevent unintended separation. In Anshan, Nanguo pears are seen growing in Qin shan mountain orchards and along city streets during the Mid-Autumn Festival, filling the air with an enchantingly sweet fragrance. The pears have become a highlighted attraction of the city, and many tourists visit during the festival to handpick and sample the rare fruits. Visitors also tour the mountains where the pear trees are cultivated to learn about the distinctly flavoured variety. Nanguo pears grown in Anshan are believed to have a distinct flavour due to the region's unique cultivation traits. Anshan's soil is filled with iron, contributing to the fruit's fermented, mineral-like flavour, and the mountains the trees are grown on have a balanced climate to encourage optimum flavour. This unusual terroir has led Anshan Nanguo pears to be the most desired, and the regional fruits fetch high prices for their limited availability.

The aroma of a fruit is an important indicator that reflects the quality of its flavour. The 'Nanguo' pear (*Pyrus ussuriensis Maxim.*) is a typical fruit in Liaoning Province, China, that effuses an attractive aroma during fruit ripening. As the fruit ripens the aroma changes from 'green' to 'fruity.' Thus, it has been a favourite of consumers in China and throughout the world. The demand for high-quality fruit is increasing as living standards improve. Thus, aroma is one of the main criteria for consumer preferences.