

PAU PEREIRA

Scientific Name: *Geissospermum laeve* Baillon
Geissospermum vellosii

Family: Apocynaceae

Popular Names: Pau forquilha, Pau de dente, Pinguaciba, Pão pereira

Used part: Bark

Botanical characteristics: The bark of Pau Pereira is presented in flat or lightly arched pieces, having an average of 40 to 50 cm of length. The external surface is of a gray color or yellowish gray color, deeply excavated in the longitudinal direction; this external fraction is formed by layers easy to be dissociated and easy to break, and lack frequently, being the bark reduced to the liberian zone, which has a characteristic structure of layers. Its internal surface presents longitudinal marks, more or less curved; the bark is odourless, with flavor weakly astringent and bitter taste.

Habitat: Brazil

Chemical composition: alkaloids (Geissospermine, Pereirine, Flavopereirine, vellosimine, vellosiminol, geissolosimine, geissovelline), mineral salts, aminoacids, organic acids and saponines. The bark is very bitter and contains three alkaloids; 1. geissospermine (insoluble in water and ether, not easily soluble in cold but readily soluble in warm alcohol. 2. Pereirine an amorphous alkaloid, soluble in alcohol, ether, chloroform, nearly insoluble in water. 3. Vellosine is a well-crystallizable alkaloid, insoluble in water, soluble in chloroform, alcohol, warm benzol and petroleum benzin, partly soluble in ether. According to analysis by T. Peckolt (ibid., 1896, p.

40), the air-dried bark contains pereirine, 2,72 per cent; geissospermine, 0,125 per cent; wax, starch, resin, etc. The leaves, but not the bark contained tannic acid.³

Indications: Bitter tonic, febrifuge, stimulating. Used also in cases of gastric problems. Antimalarial agent.

Dose: 3–6 g on 1 L of water, to drink 4–5 cup a day.

References:

1. FERREIRA, A. H., **Brasil Médico**, 1949
2. ALMEIDA, E. R. **Plantas Mediciniais Brasileiras: conhecimentos populares e científicas**. São Paulo, p. 288–299, 1993.
3. KING'S AMERICAN DISPENSATORY, 1898: Oleander.
<http://www.henriettesherbal.com/eclectic/kings/nerium-olea.html>