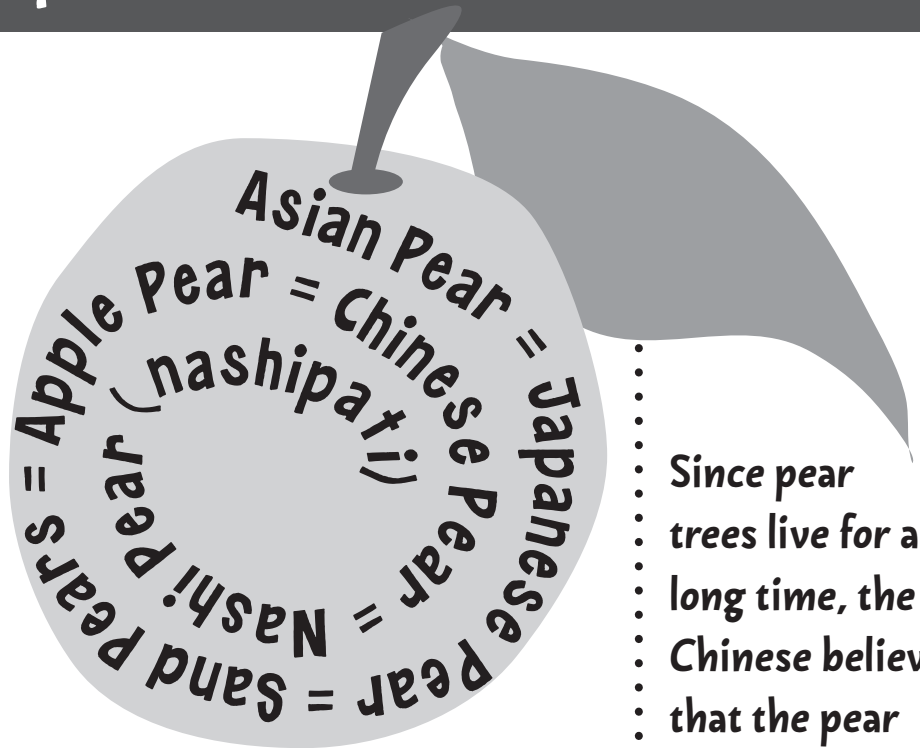


# The Scoop on this Week's Snack!

## Pear or Apple?

With so many names and similarities to apples, Asian pears are a bit of a mystery. Are they a pear, apple, or a hybrid of both? Mystery solved - Asian pears are botanically true pears! Here are a few facts to help you sort it out:

- Pears can be divided into two simple categories: European and Asian. Asian pears are uniform in colour and shaped more like apples, with a completely different texture and taste from European pears. Both are a great source of vitamin C and fibre.
- Like apples, Asian pears are left to ripen on the tree before picking. When you get them home, they're ripe and ready to eat. Their skin colour and crisp texture remain unchanged after picking and they'll keep for months in a paper bag in the refrigerator. That's the cold chain keeping them fresh and fresh tasting!



- An Asian pear may feel rock-hard but it can easily bruise in the packing, or shipping process – a stretchy, net-like 'jacket' protects its delicate skin.
- Unlike European pear varieties that soften as they ripen and yield to gentle pressure of your thumb, ripe Asian pears are extremely firm. What's the best indicator of ripeness? Use your nose – your Asian pear should have a fairly strong and sweet aroma.

Since pear trees live for a long time, the Chinese believed that the pear was a symbol of immortality. The Chinese word "li" means both "pear" and "separation". For this reason, tradition says to avoid a separation, friends should never halve and share a pear.

## How would you describe the texture and taste of your Asian pear? \_\_\_\_\_

The Chinese have cultivated these crunchy pears for more than two thousand years. The most popular types grown in BC are the **20<sup>th</sup> Century Fancy** and the **Kosui Fancy**. (The word Kosuit means 'good water' in Japanese).

