

The green connection: Love affair of humans with their plants and flowers

Exploring the cultural significance and emotional bonds between humans and their verdant companions



By Ali Amiri
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It's not difficult to imagine that somewhere in the bustling streets of Tokyo, a young woman, let's call her Yuki, cradles a delicate cherry blossom in her hands, marveling at its ephemeral beauty. It's even easier to imagine that half-way across the globe, in the heart of London, an elderly

gentleman, by the name of Charles for example, tends to his prized roses, their vibrant hues a testament to decades of devotion. These two individuals, separated by thousands of miles, share a common bond: a deep love and appreciation for the plants and flowers that grace their personal space and ultimately our planet. The relationship between humans and their green companions has blossomed throughout the centuries, transcending geographical boundaries and cultural divides. From the ancient Hanging Gardens of Babylon to the meticulously manicured gardens of Versailles, to the magically green gardens scattered across Iran's deserts, trees, plants, and flowers have long held a special place in the hearts of people all over the world. In Japan, the cherry blossom, or sakura, is revered

for its fleeting beauty, symbolizing the transient nature of life. Each spring, millions of people gather to celebrate hanami, or cherry blossom viewing, picnicking beneath the trees and marveling at the delicate pink petals that blanket the ground. Our very own Yuki, with eyes full of wonder, muses, "The sakura reminds us to cherish each moment, for life is as fleeting as the blossoms themselves." In a very different climate, in Mexico, the vibrant marigold takes center stage during Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, a celebration honoring deceased loved ones. The bright orange petals are believed to guide the spirits of the departed back to the world of the living, creating a bridge between the two realms. "The marigold is a symbol of love that transcends death," says Maria, 28, a Mexican artist who creates intricate marigold arrangements for the annual festivities. "It's a remind-

er that our connection to those we've lost is never truly severed." In the Netherlands, the tulip has become somewhat synonymous with the country's identity, its colorful fields drawing tourists from around the world. The Dutch's love for the tulip dates back to the 17th century, when the flower's popularity led to a speculative frenzy known as Tulip Mania. "The tulip is a symbol of our national pride," says Pieter, a third-generation tulip farmer, who was kind enough to explain to this pen everything about the cultural significance of the tulip. "It represents our resilience and our ability to find beauty in even the harshest of conditions."

"Damask rose has been the only constant in my life," says Nasser, a 68-year-old gardener in Kashan, central Iran. "As far as I can remember, I've been planting and caring for these lovely, auspicious flowers." The cultural significance of the damask rose in Iran

extends beyond its mere beauty, as its fragrance elicits salavat from Iranian Muslims who smell it. It's concentrate, known as go-laab, is used in an array of Persian dishes.

For many, the love of plants and flowers extends beyond their cultural significance, fostering a deep emotional bond between humans and their green friends. In the quiet solitude of a New York City apartment, a young woman might find solace in her collection of houseplants, each one a living testament to her resilience in the face of adversity.

"My plants have been with me through the darkest times," writes Emma, a 37-year-old resident of the metropolis, in her email. "They've taught me the importance of patience, of nurturing, and of growth." Emilio, a millennial residing in the verdant hills of Tuscany, Italy, tends to her

olive grove, the gnarled trees a living legacy passed down through generations. "These trees are a part of my family," he explains, adding, "They've witnessed our joys and our sorrows, and they've stood strong through it all."

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, the love of plants and flowers continues to unite us, transcending borders and bridging cultural divides. One might succumb to say that plants and flowers are the universal language of the earth, a testament to the enduring power of nature and the indomitable human spirit.

So, whether it's the fleeting beauty of the cherry blossom, the vibrant hues of the marigold, the sacred fragrance of the damask, or the steadfast resilience of the olive tree, the love affair between humans and their green companions shows no signs of wilting.



FARS

On the occasion of Iran's National Flower & Plant Day: A short introduction to the most popular apartment plants

Social Desk
EXCLUSIVE

Apartment plants have gained immense popularity in recent years, as more people seek to bring nature into their very own living spaces. These plants not only en-

hance the aesthetics of an apartment but also provide numerous health benefits, such as improving air quality and promoting mental well-being. This report intro-

duces some of the most popular apartment plants in Iran and elsewhere, based on their ease of care, adaptability to various light conditions, and overall appeal.



Known for its elegant white flowers and lush green foliage, the Peace Lily (*Spathiphyllum*) is a popular choice for apartment dwellers. It is an excellent air purifier, removing toxins such as formaldehyde and benzene from the air. In addition, the Peace Lily thrives in low to medium light conditions and requires minimal watering.



A hardy, low-maintenance plant with tall, sword-like leaves, Snake Plant (*Sansevieria*) is an effective air purifier, removing toxins like formaldehyde, xylene, and toluene. This plant can tolerate low light conditions and requires infrequent watering, making it ideal for busy apartment dwellers.

A beautiful plant characterized by its arching, variegated leaves, Spider Plant (*Chlorophytum comosum*) has small, spider-like plantlets that dangle from the mother plant. It is an effective air purifier, removing pollutants such as formaldehyde, xylene, and toluene. Spider Plants are adaptable to various light conditions and require moderate watering.



A wildly popular tropical plant with large, glossy leaves, Monstera Deliciosa (*Swiss Cheese Plant*) features unique splits and holes. It thrives in bright, indirect light and requires moderate watering. While not as effective as some other plants in air purification, it still contributes to improved air quality.



A succulent plant known for its medicinal properties, Aloe Vera (*Aloe barbadensis*) is particularly famous for its gel, which is used to soothe burns and skin irritations. It helps improve air quality by removing formaldehyde and benzene. Aloe Vera thrives in bright, indirect light and requires minimal watering.



Known for its glossy, dark green leaves and its ability to tolerate low light conditions, ZZ Plant (*Zamioculcas zamiifolia*) helps improve air quality by removing toxins like xylene, toluene, and benzene. This low-maintenance plant requires infrequent watering, making it ideal for apartment living.



The popular trailing plant with heart-shaped leaves, Pothos (*Epipremnum aureum*), is often seen in hanging baskets or cascading from shelves. It is an efficient air purifier, removing pollutants such as formaldehyde, benzene, and xylene. Pothos is adaptable to various light conditions and requires moderate watering.

