

Organic Foods / Health-oriented Foods

July 7, 2018

~ Edible Flowers ~

[Around 30 varieties of flowers are grown annually as edible flowers](#)

In Japan, the “New Words and Buzz Words Prize” is announced at the end of every year and gets a lot of attention. The Grand Prize in 2017 went to “Instagrammable”. In America, home of Instagram, the word “Instagrammable” is highly influential on fashion-sensitive women in big cities like LA and NY. For food and drink, in particular, flavor is important of course, but it is also important to be photogenic in terms of visual glitter and novelty.

Backed by the rise of social media and the growth of vegetarian and vegan lifestyles, edible flowers are becoming a food trend that increasingly numbers of women are playfully introducing. They can be used to decorate the meal table, they can be as vegetables for eating, like broccoli and cauliflower, or they can be enjoyed for their fragrance, like borage and thyme.

Japan has a long history of flowers taking a place as food in everyday life. Field mustard, chrysanthemums, butterbur sprouts, perilla flowers, salted sakura blossoms, and more have been prized seasonal ingredients. Edible flowers do not mean special varieties. Roses, marigolds, pansies, and other flowers familiar to many people are cultivated for food as well as for gardens.

Toyohashi City in Aichi Prefecture was quick to catch on to edible flower production. Famed for Japan’s greatest production volume of flowers and ornamental plants, it started handling edible flowers in 1988. Statistics on production volumes etc. are not available, but according to Toyohashi Greenhouse Horticulture and Agriculture Cooperative, around 90% of the edible flowers distributed in Japan are grown in Toyohashi. Numbers of individual producers have been growing in recent years, with more handling their produce online or entering individual contracts with restaurants.

According to WGSN, a company specializing in trend forecasting services, the impact of edible flower posts on Instagram over the past few years is being picked up by blogs and the media, further expanding the use of edible flowers by individual chefs and by restaurants.-

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Edible flowers are attracting increasing attention as a healthy food rich in vitamins and minerals.

Around 30 varieties of flowers are grown as edible flowers through the year. Bavarois shoppe Havaro has three stores, one of them in Tokyo. The flower shop Hibiya-Kadan (Minato ward, Tokyo) sells sweets made with edible flowers, and says that many customers post their pictures to SNS. C'est Chouette uses edible flowers and herbs grown on its own fields, and its French Cafe, on the theme of “beautiful from the inside” is gaining popularity.



Havaro



Hibiya-Kadan



C'est Chouette

Let's take a look at some of the edible flowers on sale at the Takashimaya and Mitsukoshi department stores in Tokyo's Nihombashi district. The store staff in charge had this analysis: "The background to the recent growth in customers looking for edible flowers includes aspects like their visual prettiness, their soothing effect at the meal table, and the fact that, like vegetables, they really are nutrient-rich and delicious". Edible flowers are going to be closely-watched items in future.



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