

# ASEAN

# National Flowers

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## Brunei Darussalam

The **Simpor** (*Dillenia Suffruticosa*) tree has large bright yellow petals and large leaves. When fully in bloom, the petals spreading out like an umbrella. The image of the Simpor flower is found on the Brunei one-dollar bank note. It is also widely used in Brunei in art design for traditional handicrafts. The Simpor is commonly found along the rivers in Brunei, especially the Temburong River, and also at swamp or white sand areas. Most parts of the tree have multiple uses, for instance, the treatment of wounds.



## Cambodia

The **Rumdul** (*Mitrella Mesnyi*) bears a small yellowish-white flower with a single alternate leaf. The flower produces a distinctive fragrance which is prominent in the evening. Due to its attractive scent, the Khmer women had often been compared to the Rumdul flower during the ancient times. The Rumdul tree, which grows to a height of 8 -12 meters, can be seen almost everywhere in Cambodia, and is often planted as a decorative tree in public parks.



## Indonesia

The **Moon Orchid** or **Angrek bulan** (*Phalaenopsis Amabilis*) is one of Indonesia's three national flowers. The other two are *Jasminum sambac* and the *Rafflesia arnoldii*. The Moon Orchid is one of the longest blooming orchids. The inflorescence are branched and can last from two to six months before dropping. The Moon Orchid usually blooms two to three times a year once it has reached maturity. It thrives in moist temperature so it is widely found in the lowlands of Indonesia.



## Laos

The **Dok Champa** (*Plumeria*) is the national flower and official symbol of Lao PDR. The waxy flower with a sweet scent can be found in many colors: red, yellow, pink and multiple pastels. For the Lao people, Dok Champa represents sincerity and joy in life. The flower is often used as a decoration in ceremonies or made into a garland to welcoming guests. The Dok Champa blooms everyday and lasts a long time. The trees are planted throughout the country and in particular, can be seen near the monastic areas.



# Malaysia

The five-petaled **Bunga raya** (*Hibiscus Rosa-Sinensis*) has been Malaysia's national flower since 1960. Symbolically, the five petals of the bunga raya represent the "Five Principles of Nationhood" – Malaysia's national philosophy in strengthening national unity and tolerance -- while the red colour represents courage. The flower can be found throughout the country and parts of the Bunga raya's shrub have medicinal and cosmetic uses.





## Myanmar

The **Paduak** (*Pterocarpus Indicus*) blossoms in tiny fragrant yellow-gold flowers after the first showers in April, coinciding with the Myanmar New Year festival. Once in bloom, the entire tree turns gold overnight. The Myanmar people regard the Paduak tree as the symbol of strength and durability. The beautiful flower also signifies youth, love and romance. The flower plays an indispensable part in traditional and religious ceremonies. The Paduak can be found throughout the country. The wood of the tree is also used for making furniture.



## The Philippines

The **Sampaguita Jasmine** (*Arabian Jasmine*) was adopted as the national flower of the Philippines since 1934. The Sampaguita bears a white, star-shaped flower which blooms for the full year. The flower opens at night and lasts for about one day, producing a unique sweet scent. For the Filipino people, the flower is the symbol of purity, simplicity, humility and strength. Its blossom is celebrated in Philippine legends, stories and songs. It is believed that the flower was brought from the Himalayan areas to the Philippines in the 17th century.





# Singapore

The best known orchid in Singapore is the national flower, **Vanda Miss Joaquim**. The orchid is a hybrid and was named after its breeder. The orchid bears an exquisitely beautiful (purple) color and shape. It blooms throughout the year. Its unique features won it the status of the official national flower of Singapore, over forty contenders, in 1981. Vanda Miss Joaquim is commonly planted in Singapore.



# Thailand

The **Ratchaphruek** (*Cassia Fistula Linn*) tree bears beautiful yellow cluster-shaped flowers. The Thai people regard its yellow hue as the colour of Buddhism and the colour of glory. Ratchaphruek blooms annually from February to May and symbolises the unity and harmony of the Thai people. While the flowers are blossoming, the tree sheds its leaves, leaving only bright yellow flowers hanging on its branches. The Ratchaphruek is widely known in Thailand and is grown in abundance along the roadsides.



## Viet Nam

The people of Viet Nam regard the **Lotus** as one of the four graceful flowers and plants, along with the pine, bamboo, and chrysanthemum. Known as the ‘flower of the dawn’, the Lotus is found throughout the country at lakes and ponds. To the Vietnamese, the lotus is the symbol of purity, commitment and optimism for the future. The elegance of the lotus is often cited in the Vietnamese folk songs and poems.