

Cherry Blossom Tattoos

Cherry blossom tattoos are fitting for tattoo enthusiasts who seek body art with the inspirational message to seize each day, particularly those with fondness for Japanese culture. Most popular among females, cherry blossom tattoos come in a variety of sizes from ankle and shoulder tattoos to full, finely detailed back pieces. Most commonly inked in shades of pink, cherry blossom tattoos can be just as eye-appealing when using various shades of black ink to create greyscale works of art.

Cultural Meanings

The cherry blossom has become known as Japan's unofficial national flower. Over the years, Japan has produced many varieties of cherry trees that bloom in the spring and produce beautiful pink and/or white flowers. Ancient Japanese cultures relied on the spring blooms to forecast the upcoming crop season. It was also during this time that the Japanese would picnic under a tree with friends to enjoy the sheer beauty of the season – a custom known as “Hanami” that is still celebrated today.

The short, yet beautiful life of each blossom represents both the beauty and fragility of human life and reminds us to seize each day. Having long been admired by the Japanese people, it is no wonder that countless tattoos, poems and paintings incorporate this symbolic flower into their compositions not only for its visual appeal, but also for its strong ties to Japanese heritage and the human spirit.

In China, cherry blossoms represent female beauty, strength and fertility. They are also symbols of feminine power and dominance.

Feminine, Masculine and Unisex Cherry Blossom Tattoos

Cherry blossom tattoos can be masculine, feminine or unisex in style. Most female designs are relatively simple, featuring a delicate branch of cherry blossoms or a cluster of blossoms accompanied by a ribbon in which to incorporate the name of a loved one. More masculine designs feature Samurai warriors or fierce Japanese dragons surrounded by delicate cherry blossoms that are being swept away by angry waters. Popular unisex designs pair this delicate flower with colorful “koi” fish (Japanese for carp), another widely recognized Japanese symbol.

Popular Cherry Trees in Japan

One of the most popular varieties of cherry trees in Japan is the Somei Yoshino. Cherry blossom tattoos representing this variety would consist of pure white blossoms with a hint of pale pink near the stem. These trees usually keep their blossoms for only one week in the spring, a time during which the tree appears completely white from top to bottom.

Other popular cherry blossom tattoos feature the Yaesakura cherry blossom: a large blossom with rich pink petals.

Cherry Blossom Festivals

In the spring, cherry blossoms are admired just as much in Washington D.C as they are in Japan thanks to a friendly offering many years ago. In 1912, the Mayor of Tokyo gifted the city of Washington D.C. with 3.000 Japanese cherry trees as a symbol of the growing friendship between the United States and Japan. Today, the trees are still standing tall and their magnificent blossoms are celebrated at the National Cherry Blossom Festival held every year during the months of March and April.