The Japanese archipelago consists of 6,852 islands that have a coastline of more than one hundred meters. Japan stretches over 3,000 km in a north-east to south-west arc at the eastern edge of the enormous Eurasian continent. As sea levels rose and fell throughout the glacial periods, the islands have been repeatedly connected and separated from the continent, resulting in flora similar to those found on the mainland existing side-by-side with plants found only on these islands.

Japan has a highly diverse topography, including mountain ranges, volcanoes, rivers, lakes, marshes, tidal flats, and a complex coastline. The climate is equally varied, ranging from subtropical to subarctic, with ocean currents and seasonal winds giving rise to four distinct seasons. This wide range of climates and habitats adds to the extreme diversity of Japan’s flora.

There are over 7,000 species of plant life distributed around Japan, over one-third of which are endemic (found only here) to these islands. In that sense, Japan is truly one of the most botanically blessed countries on Earth.