

Life Lessons from Flowers

In Japan, hydrangeas, or *ajisai*, are intimately associated with the June rainy season. Because they change color according to the acidity of the soil, they have another name: *shichihenge*, or “flowers that change color seven times.” This has made them into a symbol of mutability: they teach us that everything in life is uncertain and that we should value each and every day given to us.

Amidaji Temple has been holding an annual hydrangea festival every June since 1991. The temple grounds are now planted with around 4,000 hydrangea plants from eighty different varieties. It takes between thirty minutes to an hour to walk the designated route through the grounds. If you cannot make it in June, the grounds are also beautiful in November when the leaves turn.