# Lotus Flower

Lotus flower, which grows in the water, has been planted by people since ancient times because of its ornamental and practical value. Its leaf has an enchanting appearance, pretty and charming; its flower is elegant and graceful, pure and noble; its scent is refreshing, fragrant and delightful. Lotus is not only a food ingredient, it also serves as medicine. Its characteristics can be described and put into practice through the areas including poem, fine art and performing art, and it is given various wonderful natures.

In the earliest anthology of Chinese Classic of Poetry "Shi Jing", it says "By the shore of that marsh, there are sedges and the lotus. There is a beautiful lady, who is beautiful and charming." In the "Luo Shen Fu" (Rhapsody on the Luo River Goddess) written by Cao Zhi in the Three Kingdoms Period, it says "Looking from afar, her purity is as brilliant as the rising sun. Looking up close, her radiance is like a lotus rising from water." With its distinctive characteristics, lotus is always associated with religion and philosophy, thus commonly seen as a symbol in Buddhist texts and Buddhism art as well as people's daily life. In the idiom "Flower opens and Buddha is seen", the flower is actually lotus; while "Lotus blossom" symbolises prosperity. The reflection of twins lotus flowers that share the same stalk can be seen on the crystal clear water, the fragrance of flowers together with its beauty in colours are adorable. The "Twins lotus flowers on one stalk" is used to describe a loving couple. Lotus seeds grow in seedpod, they are isolated from each other yet from the same root, which coincides with the meaning of "More sons and more blessings". Lotus is hollow inside and straight outside; the further away it is, the purer is the fragrance, and it carries the feature of "Rising from the mud but is not stained". Its "beauty" and "virtue" make it honoured with the title of "The gentleman flower". After all, the "lotus" culture is the important component of Chinese outstanding traditional culture.

Macao is often referred to as "Blessed Land of Lotus". Since the peninsula is like a lotus shape, the land connection with Mainland China is called "Lotus stem". In the Geographical Map of the "Gazetteer of Xiangshan County", this landmark has long been recorded. On the first day when Macao returned back to the Motherland, the large bronze and gilded sculpture "Lotus Flower in Full Bloom" presented by the State Council of the People's Republic of China was inaugurated at the Lotus Square. The Macao Basic Law (Article 10) states that "The regional emblem of the Macao Special Administrative Region is composed of five stars, lotus flower, bridge and sea ......". Also, in Macao which is small but pretty, there is Lin Fong Temple (Temple of Lotus), Temple Lin Fong Street (Rua do Temple de Lin Fong) and Lin Kai Temple (Stream of Mourning Temple), as well as Lin Fong Stadium (Lin Fong Sports Centre), Kun Iam Ecumenical Centre, Lotus Bridge and Lotus Port. Indeed, Macao residents have a deep affection knotted with lotus, which is favoured by the people. Lotus represents the pursuit of harmonious and brilliant life, at the same time it becomes the symbol of Macao.

The famous artist in Macao has showcased the charming posture of lotus flower by means of Chinese painting with modern design, which undoubtedly filled with his deepest affection towards Macao. Through adoption of compatible skill and artistic conception, the image of lotus being illustrated by ink and colour has become the content of the stamp, manifesting the confidence towards the Chinese culture. Since the stamp can help to "Express feelings and messages", it is believed that it can publicise Macao, as well as its lotus art and culture. It carries a far-reaching meaning on allowing people to have better understand and comprehension of Chinese traditional culture, and spreading the concept of its relevant value.

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