



Achieve inner peace by practicing the ancient Japanese art of flower arrangement

Floral Meditation

Ikebana, also referred to as kadō which translates to 'the way of flowers', is the traditional Japanese art of flower arrangement. It is a form of creative expression akin to painting, sculpting, dance, and music in other cultures. Originating in the sixth century by Buddhist monks, Ikebana reflects Japan's longstanding respect for nature and the desire to find harmony and balance in the environment by bringing nature indoors. Ikebana is also a meditative activity that fosters discipline, concentration, mindfulness, and spiritual awareness.

"The Buddhist Zen philosophy with which the art of Ikebana was formed, percolates into the arrangements and into the one who is learning and teaching it," shares Rekha Reddy, who has been an Ikebana practitioner for over four decades. She has also had a three-decade long career teaching, holding workshops and demonstrations (for both adults and children).

PASSING ON FLORAL WISDOM

Rekha's connection to Ikebana can be traced back to her early childhood. She followed in the footsteps of her mother, Shamala Y.R Reddy who practiced the art form herself. Rekha further honed her skills with help from her teacher, Meena Anantnarayan.

Having derived contentment and a sense of purpose by practicing Ikebana, Rekha (also referred to as Ohryu Rekha Reddy – a flower name given to her by the Ohara School of Ikebana) began holding classes with the simple intent to share her knowledge with others.

IKEBANA CLASSES

The classes are held inside a cozy studio at her residence. The intimate space comes alive with a colorful variety of containers (from vases to bowls with materials like ceramics to bamboos) used to arrange flowers.

Following the principles of the Ohara School of Ikebana (known for its naturalistic and innovative approaches), Rekha encourages her students to work with natural elements (flowers, freshly cut branches, leaves, ferns, vegetables, etc.) sourced anywhere from their backyards to florists. Working with balance, rhythm, depth, harmony and proportions, the students mindfully select a container that holds water and a pin-holder to keep these elements in place at different heights and angles.

The basic course includes 10 classes with flexible timings decided according to Rekha's and the students' availability. Each class lasts for 60 to 90 minutes and includes two to four students at a time. Students can further opt for advanced multi-level courses, delving deeper into the spiritual art form.

■ IPSHITA

Price: On Request

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BENEFITS OF PRACTICING IKEBANA:

1. Promotes spiritual growth and mental well-being
2. Teaches patience
3. Offers peace
4. Cultivates a deeper connection with nature
5. Helps deal with life's challenges with a calm and balanced mind