



The fragrant magnolia flower has inspired films and poems, it is elegant and delicate but also adapts to every environment and is a symbol of prosperity, strength and perseverance.

The Magnolia tree landed in Europe around 1740, first thought to be an interior plant, it then showed great capacity of adjustment also outdoors. It was believed to be a good omen for the inhabitants of a house and so it became common to plant at least one in the garden for good luck.

In the period when they were imported from Europe, Magnolias were considered very delicate plants with complex adaptability. But then a botanist tried to plant it in his garden where it lived for over 100 years.

Magnolias are a symbol of dignity and perseverance. The legend goes that originally Magnolias were double: one external and one internal plant, in the shape of a star, symbolizing its heart and soul.

YOU CAN'T FLY WITHOUT ROOTS by Lucia Berrettari

Magnolias are part of a feminine aspect representing sensuality and passion, but also confidentiality and fear. Uniting these three elements: flowers, leaves and bark, means to recognize beauty and to live it fully. Leaves embody healing and loving energy, the bark-the capacity to withstand pain and tiredness typical of women, while the flowers represent sensuality and passion. Very often, women live these three aspects separately just like magnolias, either growing leaves or flowers. This makes them confused and vulnerable, easy targets for aggressors or judges. Freedom and strength derive from living, recognizing and integrating these three features contemporaneously. This rite of passage makes women free, lively and beautiful.

MAGNOLIA by Maria Teresa Protto

Magnolias are surely one of the most ancient plants in the world, first appeared on earth some 95 million years ago, having survived the glacial era. In 1688 sir Bannister brought an unknown plant back from America to England (*Magnolia virginiana*) with deliciously fragrant flowers. It is in 1703 that Charles Plumier named it *Magnolia* in honor of Pierre Magnol, an illustrious doctor and botanist, director of the Montpellier Botanical garden. In England still, sir Banks introduced the first Oriental *Magnolia*, the *Magnolia Denudata* or Yulan *Magnolia*. Finally, in the 19th century, the amateur botanist Ernest Wilson introduced in Europe eight new species coming from China.

From then on, Europeans have started to love these strange plants with large colored flowers that appear on bare trunks in the middle of winter. Their flowering is always beautiful and extravagant. The flowers have various shapes: the white and fragrant star-shaped *magnolia*, ideal for small gardens (its height stays below 150 cm); pinkish flowers, tulip or cup shaped, such as the Saucer *Magnolia*, with its many branches that can reach 8 metres high; and finally the *Magnolia liliflora*, with deciduous leaves and scented, open flowers white-pinkish inside and red-purplish outside, reaching 3 metres. *Magnolias* are outdoor flowers, evergreen, which bloom in Summer or beginning of Autumn; or deciduous, blooming in Spring on bare branches before leaves return. It can be found as a bush or a tree reaching 15, 20 meters high sometimes with shiny, oval, dark green leaves. There are many different species of *Magnolia*, mainly distributed in three areas: North America, Central America and South-East Asia.

THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS

In the US in the beginning of the 20th century, *Magnolias* were considered an auspicious flower, as important for the solidity of a house as its foundations. It was therefore easy to find a *Magnolia* tree in every garden. Though for years in Europe it was cultivated in glasshouses because considered very delicate. By chance, a botanist decided to plant it outside one year: his plant not only grew strong and majestic, it also lived 100 years. The light and easy-to-work *Magnolia* wood is much appreciated. *Magnolias* are a symbol of dignity and perseverance, of nobility and superb beauty. Buddhist monks in central China grow *Magnolias* from the time of the T'ang dynasty (618-907A.D.) to plant it around their temples

as a symbol of purity and openness. Many legends exist about this flower.

The one about the 'two magnolias' tells about a time when only one Magnolia existed, high and strong, with few flowers externally but which internally sealed a star-shaped magnolia heart. One was the body, the other the soul, and they bloomed together bringing joy to the garden. On a rainy day, the tree was touched by a pastel yellow Azalea next to it. Not noticing the touch had been by chance, the Magnolia fell in love with the Azalea, pushing always more, thanks to its star-shaped heart, and its flowers bloomed towards that plant. With the passing of time, the Magnolia felt its heart break and push to get out until it became two trees, one of Magnolia and one of Star Magnolia.

TO HEAL OURSELVES

In Chinese traditional medicine the Magnolia bark (known as houpu or hou po) is vastly used to treat pain, diarrhea, cough and urinary problems. The bark contains two phenolic components, responsible not only for the unique smell of the plant, but also for numerous pharmacological attributes, for example tranquilizing, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, and anti-oxidant capacities. The beneficial effects on stress are connected to the control of our organism of cortisol, the hormone apparently linked to stress diseases. Among the Vibrational Flower Essences we find Pink Magnolias which bring love, purify, help to let go of guilt, of old systems and to find love for oneself and take one's life in one's hands.

Insert Magnolia petals perfectly healthy, clean and dry in a bowl to marinate in some Port (or Rum or Grappa). Then prepare in another bowl some batter beating three egg yolks with 100 gr of sugar, a grated and not treated lemon peel (or orange) and, after having left it to rest for half an hour, add 250 deciliters of milk, 200 gr of flour and finally 3 whipped egg whites. Dip the petals one at a time in the batter and fry them in butter and oil in a non-sticking frying pan.