

Ikebana, is to learn to appreciate aspects of nature that people generally ignore

Hideko Lewis
May 9, 2022



Hideko Lewis has a Master's Degree in Ikebana from Ochanomizu Gakuin, Department of Arts in Tokyo. She and her husband Richard are now living in Nutley, NJ where Hideko offers classes in this Japanese discipline of Ikebana. Ikebana is the art of Japanese flower arranging - blossoms, branches, leaves and stems find new life as materials for artmaking. Ikebana aims to bring out the inner qualities of flowers and other live materials and express emotion.

"It is not so much about creating floral arrangements or making decorations," she explains. "Rather, its purpose is to learn to appreciate certain aspects of nature that people generally ignore." In Japan, this is a University level subject that is studied by both women and men.

Hideko Lewis points out that Ikebana teaches how to arrange flowers beautifully but also, through Ikebana those who arrange the flowers can be assisted in living harmoniously. When making a flower arrangement, one first looks at the flowers

and gets inspiration from them, feeling their ideal beauty.



The way of Ikebana is to express that ideal beauty through the arrangement. Grass, trees and flowers grow and exhibit their unique beauty in nature as they exist in harmony. It is also important to consider other aspects of nature - the four seasons, weather, flowing water, etc.

"Through flower arrangement one can learn many things. In encountering the natural environment with a pure and honest heart, the practitioner will experience great and sometimes unexpected beauty from the colors and forms in the designs of nature. Flower arrangement evokes a sense of fullness. While concentrating on flower arranging, a sense of freedom from the complexity of daily lives, and joy through experiencing a world of refined beauty

is aroused," explains Hideko. She believes that the graceful thoughts expressed through flower arrangement cannot be equated with any material richness.

