

## Regional Medicinal Plants II

Traditional Chinese medicine is a treasure of the Chinese ethnics; with the present development of science and technology, and based on the effectiveness of traditional Chinese medicine and on the consciousness of the “return to nature”, the application of traditional Chinese medicine and use of medicinal plants has received much attention from all over the world. However, medicinal plant resources are generally threatened by over-collection and habitat destruction.

Macao's warm climate and abundant rainfall are beneficial to plant growth, and the medicinal plant resources in Macao are also plentiful. There are more than 1,500 species of plants growing in Macao, and there are more than 600 medicinal plants with curative effects, many of which are familiar to the public or commonly used. The Seac Pai Van Park, in Coloane, Macao, features the Garden of Medicinal Plants, the Ecological Trail Garden of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, and the South China Medicinal Plants Garden. Hundreds of medicinal plants common in Macao and in the South of China were planted in the gardens to protect and promote medicinal plant resources.

The eight kinds of medicinal plants used in these items are all either wild or commonly cultivated in Macao, so that the public is concerned about protecting medicinal plant resources and the natural environment, as well as promoting the sustainable development of medicinal plant resources.

The four stamps are made of Rose Myrtle (*Rhodomyrtus tomentosa*), Chinese Desmos (*Desmos chinensis*), Cape Jasmine (*Gardenia jasminoides*), and Ivy Tree (*Schefflera heptaphylla*), which are common medicinal plants in the Macao countryside. They have elegant colours and unique shapes, making them valuable for both medicinal use and as an ornament. Rose Myrtle can promote blood circulation, as well as converge and stop diarrhoea. It has a pink and white coloration, and its berries are sweet and aromatic. Chinese Desmos can cure rheumatism and indigestion. Its corolla has the shape of eagle claws and its fruits are like strings of beads, which is very interesting. Cape Jasmine can relieve internal heat and dampness, calm annoyance, cool the blood and detoxify. Its flowers are elegant and fragrant, and its fruits resemble ancient wine glasses with an ancient charm. Ivy Tree treats colds, rheumatism, and eczema. Its umbrella-shaped white flowers bloom in the winter and are important nectariferous plants in Macao during the winter.

The Chinese Chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum indicum*), Mexican Frangipani (*Plumeria rubra* ‘Acutifolia’), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) and Red Cotton Tree (*Bombax ceiba*) in the souvenir sheet are the raw materials of Guangdong's famous herbal tea, five flowers tea, which has a heat-dispersing effect. Chinese Chrysanthemum is common on the mountain roads of Macao, Mexican Frangipani, Honeysuckle and Red Cotton Tree are often cultivated in the parks and gardens of Macao.

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Translation: NextVector Consultants Ltd.