

Portuguese street markets traditionally sell flowers such as carnations, roses and chrysanthemums, alongside other seasonal blooms. The selection changes with the place and time of year, and some flowers are especially associated with festivals or remembrance.

Flowers you may see at a market

Carnations are among the most recognizable flowers in Portugal. Their ruffled petals and long vase life make them useful in bouquets, while red carnations carry a particular meaning because of their association with the Carnation Revolution of 1974.

Roses are another familiar choice for bouquets and gifts. Chrysanthemums are strongly connected with visits to cemeteries around All Saints' Day, though their colors and shapes make them suitable for arrangements at other times too.

A market stall may also have flowers grown locally and picked according to the season. Rather than expecting a fixed selection, it helps to look at what is fresh that day.

- **Carnations:** Often bought as cut flowers and closely linked with Portuguese history.
- **Roses:** A familiar flower for gifts, bouquets and home arrangements.
- **Chrysanthemums:** Especially associated with remembrance and cemetery visits.

Flowers for special days

Flowers have a place in both public celebrations and private moments in Portugal. Red carnations can appear in commemorations of the Carnation Revolution on 25 April. Their meaning comes from the flowers placed in

soldiers' gun barrels during the events of 1974.

Around All Saints' Day, on 1 November, people may buy flowers to take to family graves. Chrysanthemums are a familiar choice for this purpose. A simple bunch can hold a great deal of meaning without needing an elaborate arrangement.

Local festivals can bring their own flower customs, so a market near a celebration may look different from one on an ordinary morning. Not every flower on a stall will have a symbolic purpose. Many are simply chosen because they look lovely at home or make a welcome gift.

Choosing a bunch

Look for petals that are intact and stems that feel firm. Leaves should look fresh rather than limp. If flowers are displayed in water, a clean bucket is a useful detail to notice.

Ask the seller which flowers have arrived recently and which will last well in a vase. The answer may lead you toward something seasonal that you did not expect to find.

Once home, trim the stems and place them in clean water. Remove any leaves that would sit below the waterline, and change the water regularly. Keep the bunch away from direct heat to help it stay fresh.

Questions about Portuguese market flowers

Are carnations always red?

No. Carnations come in several colors, including pink and white. Red is the color most closely associated with the Carnation Revolution.

Are chrysanthemums only for graves?

No. They are associated with remembrance, particularly around All Saints' Day, but they can also be used in other arrangements.

Will every market have the same flowers?

No. Availability varies by location, season and seller. Asking what is fresh is a good way to choose.

Worth a look: flowers at church funerals