



Nepal has lots of beautiful flower species but the most renowned of all is the national flower Rhododendron or locally known as the *Gurans*. Rhododendron forests are found above the altitude of 1,400 meters. Vibrant red rhododendrons are found at the lower levels, however, as altitude increases the color begins shifting to pink, gradually becoming pure white as elevations increase.

For Nepalese the most beloved is the *Lali Gurans*, or the red one, and it has a special place in the people's hearts, culture and economic life. During March and April, it covers the hills with great beauty, indicating the



approach of spring with warmer days and the assurance of ample harvests to come. Red is also the most auspicious color commonly used in rituals, weddings and major festivals. In addition, Nepal in 2006 adopted a new national emblem incorporating Red Rhododendron.

Nepalese poets have dedicated numerous poems to the beauty of this flower and are synonymous to magnificence and often women love to enhance their beauty by putting them in their hair. These are also used for decorations and people of all ages delight in walking through the forests and picking bouquets of rhododendron. This is especially true of those engaged in courtships who swap them as a gesture of affection.

However this flower is not just loved for its beauty. Rhododendrons are attached to Nepalese lives in many

