

Blue roses to debut in Japan

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Photo by Koichi Kamoshida

Which colour would you like your roses? Red, white, yellow... or perhaps blue?

Japan's Suntory Ltd. said Tuesday it would start selling the [world's first genetically-modified blue roses](#) next month, 20 years after it began research to create the novelty flowers.

The major whisky distiller said it succeeded in developing blue roses in 2004 with the Australian [biotech](#) company Florigene Pty Ltd.

The blue roses are created by implanting the gene that leads to the synthesis of the blue [pigment](#) Delphinidin in pansies, the firm said.

The product was approved by the Japanese government in 2008 on the basis of an international agreement on biosafety. It took one year for the

company to establish its production and marketing systems, Suntory said.

Named Applause, the new variety is "recommended as a luxurious gift for special occasions such as wedding anniversaries and birthdays", the company said.

They are expected to be priced between 2,000 and 3,000 yen (22 and 33 dollars) per stem, about 10 times more expensive than normal roses in [Japan](#).

There are no current plans to sell the new variety overseas.

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