

Sakura-Inspired Torch Carries “Light of Hope”

The torch used for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Torch Relay has been designed with a *sakura*, or cherry blossom motif, a flower close to the hearts of Japanese people and symbolizing the nation.



Photo by Tokyo 2020



Photo by Tokyo 2020

■ The torches used for (left) the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and (right) Paralympic Torch Relay

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Spring brings cherry blossoms to every corner of Japan. As spring approaches, Japanese people wait in anticipation of the cherry blossoms that will bloom. When in full bloom, cherry blos-

soms warmly embrace the people and bring them hope. The torch used for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Torch Relay has been designed with a cherry blossom motif, inspired by the flower beloved by Japanese for centuries.

The 71-cm, 1.2-kg torch is

designed to resemble a five-petaled cherry blossom when viewed from above. The design evokes a traditional Japanese cherry blossom motif using cutting-edge technologies, based on the concept “blend of traditional and contemporary technologies.” Moreover, the torch has been



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designed so that it is easy for anyone to handle, regardless of age, gender, disability or nationality. For example, it features a mark on the grip indicating the front of the torch for people who are visually impaired.

The torch used for the Olympics is colored “sakura and gold” and the torch used for the Paralympics is “sakura pink.” Five separate flames emerge from the flower petals and come together at the center of the torch to give off a more brilliant light and ensure the flame burns 30 to 40 cm high.

The torch was designed by internationally renowned designer Yoshioka Tokujin. According to Yoshioka, his design of the torch was inspired by the vibrant pictures of cherry blossoms drawn by children at a workshop he held in disaster-affected areas in Fukushima Prefecture.

The torch is made from strong and lightweight aluminum, around 30% of which is recycled aluminum from the temporary housing units used in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake. The aluminum manufacturing technology used in the production of Shinkansen bul-

let trains enables the torch to be completely seamless—produced from a single sheet of metal.

According to the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the torch was designed to contain a wish for “realizing the torch relay crossing Japan like the blooming of the cherry blossoms as they announce the arrival of spring in every corner of the country and flames of hope are handed over carrying the wishes of everyone aspiring for peace.”

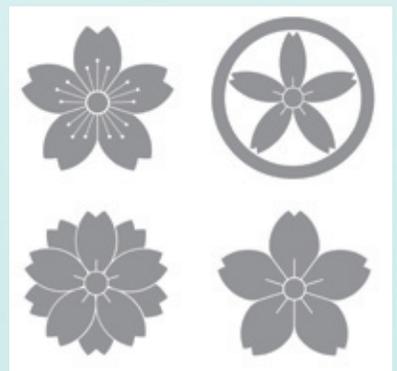
The Tokyo Olympic torch relay started on March 25, a little over ten years after the Great East Japan Earthquake, at the J-Village National Training Center in Fukushima Prefecture. The concept of the Olympic torch relay is “Hope Lights Our Way.” The torch relay passes through Japan including the disaster-affected areas over about four months, ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, which will be held from July through August of this year. COVID-19 countermeasures are being implemented along the route. It is strongly expected that the torch will connect everyone with the “light of hope.” 



■ The torch, lit (Image photo)



■ The torch, lit, viewed from above (Image photo)



■ Traditional Japanese cherry blossom motifs

Note: This article has been created with the consent of the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and on the basis of materials published by the Committee.