

VANCOUVER CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN FULL BLOOM



(Emily Carr Design Contest for Tenth Anniversary VCBF Burrard Bridge Banners)

Vancouver, B.C. (March 22, 2016)

For 10 years, the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival has been the city's premier reason to shake off the shiver of winter and celebrate the warmth of spring with the opening of 40,000 pink and white cherry blossoms.

Thanks to the generosity of our Presenting Sponsor, The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, our 10th anniversary Festival promises to be better than ever.

It all kicks off with the **Cherry Jam Downtown Concert**.

WHEN: Thursday, March 24th from 11:55 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

WHERE: Indoor concourse of Burrard SkyTrain Station, Downtown

Here are 10 reasons why you should come out to see the blossoms and enjoy the entertainment.

1. The Vancouver Metropolitan Orchestra: see and hear the talents of a fine Piano Quintet playing Michael Conway's "Prelude to Spring" with young blossoming artists from Pro Arte Centre and BC Children's Choir.
2. Yayoi Hirano Theatre Movement Society: Marvel in Haiku Mime created by this Japanese-born artist who has set down 'roots' in Vancouver
3. Holly Burke: Vancouver composer/lyricist/flutist/vocalist/pianist who's latest work is inspired by nature. Seems fitting, doesn't it?
4. Vancouver Chinese Music Ensemble: Famous for breaking the rules and 'grafting' diverse cultural traditions into something new.
5. Vancouver Okinawa Taiko: Multi-generational performers who drum and dance to contemporary and traditional Okinawan music
6. The Carnival Band: Nothing says spring energy like this Commercial Drive brass band. Cherry salsa anyone?
7. Revel in "petals falling" from Burrard Station's famous "akebono" cherry trees
8. Start photographing cherry blossoms for a chance to win two round-trip tickets to Japan on All Nippon Airways.
9. Tell your friends you were part of the official "Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Day", as proclaimed by Mayor Gregor Robertson.
10. It's free!

The Cherry Jam Downtown Concert officially kicks a month of festivities which include Tree Talks & Walks, Bike the Blossoms, Plein Air Painting Workshops and Plein Air Challenge, Cherry Scouting, and the ever popular evening immersive display of Sakura Illumination (scheduled for Queen Elizabeth Park, March 26th 7-10pm. Venue could change. Watch <http://www.vcbf.ca/community-event/sakura-illumination> for latest information on time and location).

Immerse the entire family in Japanese culture at the Sakura Days Japan Fair in VanDusen Botanical Garden, April 9-10.

New this year are 2-hour guided neighbourhood Blossom Bus TRAMS tours and a spectacular festival wrap-up with the floating Blossom Barge sailing from Crab Park to Granville Island on April 16. The vessel will have 36 flowering cherry trees on board and its arrival will kick off two days of free performances including Tetsu Taiku & Tzo'kam, Vancouver Metropolitan Orchestra, Langley Ukulele Ensemble, Kutapira, Chibi Taiko, and the international yoyo superstar - Harrison Lee.

If you're a Festival fan with a vessel, join the Blossom Barge Flotilla on April 17th. Put on your pink, blossom up your crew and follow the Blossom Barge out of False Creek.

While the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival is in full bloom you can bring the beauty of the cherry tree into your own garden by going to www.vcbf.ca and reserving one of eight, early to late-blooming varieties of flowering cherries called Birthday Blossoms. These four year old, exceptional quality trees will be available for pick up at VanDusen Botanical Garden on the weekend of April 30th, 2016.

For more information on Cherry Jam Downtown Concert and to see the full Festival schedule, visit www.vcbf.ca

About the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival

The Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival is a charitable not-for-profit organization with the objective to sustain and renew Vancouver's cherry tree heritage, while educating and actively engaging diverse communities in local arts and culture to celebrate the fragile beauty of the iconic cherry blossom.

- 30 -

Contact:

Linda Poole, Executive Director, VCBF

604-767-9044

linda.poole@telus.net

Website: vcbf.ca

Twitter: @OfficialVCBF

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VancouverCherryBlossomFestival>