



Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival launches April 4 to celebrate the arrival of spring and the city's spectacular 43,000 blossoming cherry trees

VANCOUVER, B.C. (March 7, 2019) - The 13th annual Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival presented by Coromandel Properties and Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation officially launches April 4 to celebrate the arrival of spring and the city's spectacular 43,000 blossoming cherry trees. Running until April 28, the Festival inspires hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors each year and welcomes more than 125,000 people to its 19 events, most of which are free.

Pre-Festival activities begin now with the internationally acclaimed **Haiku Invitational** presented by Leith Wheeler Investment Counsel Ltd., which invites established and budding poets to submit up to two unpublished haiku from now through to June 1. Over 10,000 entries from 40 countries have been submitted since 2006, and this year, haiku on the theme of reconciliation will be judged in five categories: Best Vancouver, Best BC, Best Canada, Best United States, Best International and Best Youth haiku.

The Festival will launch its line-up of family-friendly events at the **Cherry Jam Downtown** concert at Burrard SkyTrain Station on Thursday, April 4 from 12 - 1:30 pm. Artists such as Zimbabwean African fusion, Katari Taiko (Canada's first taiko group), and MNGWA Band will perform world music and rhythms. The concert is sponsored by long-time Festival partner the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA).

Don't miss other Festival Signature Events which include:

- **Spring Lights Illumination** at Queen Elizabeth Park on Friday, April 12 and Saturday, April 13, from dusk to 10 pm. Experience the blossoms illuminated by HFour in a breathtaking, memorable evening you'll never forget!
- **Sakura Days Japan Fair** sponsored by JTB International & Silkway Travel showcases Japanese arts and culture at VanDusen Botanical Garden, April 13 (10 am – 6 pm) and April 14 (10 am - 5 pm). Tickets are available for purchase online and in-person at VanDusen starting March 11.
- **The Big Picnic** presented by TD Bank Group brings 5,000+ people together to celebrate friendship under the blossoms at Queen Elizabeth Park on Saturday, April 13 from 12 pm to 3 pm with live entertainment and a pop-up market.
- **Tree Talks & Walks** is a multi-lingual exploration of the blossoms at more than 10 Vancouver parks and neighbourhoods throughout the Festival.

As well, if you want to capture stunning cherry blossom photos, check out the online **Neighbourhood Maps** and **What's Blooming Now** to discover which favourite cherry blossom hotspots are in bloom and where. The **BC Blossom Photo Watch** sponsored by TELUS PureFibre wants to capture your best photos! Submit your favourite cherry blossom memories on social media using both #vancherryblossomfest and #TELUSPureFibre hashtags and you could win prizes.

The Festival will also launch some exciting food-related events this year, culminating with **Sakura Night** presented by McMillan LLP on May 5 at Stanley Park Pavilion. The Festival's gourmet celebration fundraiser features some of Vancouver's top chefs like the Shangri-la Hotel Vancouver's Executive Chef, Ken Nakano, and Notch 8 Restaurant & Bar's Chef de Cuisine, Will Lew.

The Festival will wrap its celebration of millions of blossoms by harmonizing downtown at **THE BIG SING METRO VANCOUVER**, sponsored by the DV BIA. Over 500 voices from across the region will gather in the Vancouver Art Gallery South Plaza on Saturday, April 27 from 12 to 2 pm. Registration is open online to add your voice to Metro Vancouver's most exhilarating mass choir experience!

With activities for all ages, the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival looks forward to celebrating friendship and the arrival of spring's blossoms with everyone. Tickets and Festival details are available at www.vcbf.ca. Sign up to get the latest program details and you could win tickets to **Sakura Days Japan Fair**.

The Vancouver Cherry Blossom is a charitable, not-for-profit society whose mission is to sustain and renew Vancouver's cherry tree heritage while educating and actively engaging diverse communities in arts and culture to celebrate the fragile beauty of the cherry blossom. The month-long celebration's unique cultural programming includes the performing and visual arts, literary events, film screenings, design installations, exhibitions, and culinary and creative cultural arts.

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For more information on this year's Festival, contact:

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