Spring Blossoms Here

2019 Annual Review
In 2019, the National Cherry Blossom Festival launched a new campaign tailored around one central theme: “Spring Blossoms Here.” This sentiment is not only a delightful welcome to the spring season in DC, but a nod to the unlimited possibilities offered by the Festival’s outstanding programming. Through exceptional partnerships and a creative roster of events and activities, the Festival continued to reinforce its reputation as one of the world’s greatest celebrations of spring. However, this campaign goes beyond spring, and is used interchangeably with all that the Festival represents - including: creativity, inclusivity, culture, family, community, friendship, opportunity, art, music, food, and fun - all of which are blossoming here, at the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

International Festivals and Events Association Pinnacle Awards

SILVER
Grand Pinnacle

GOLD
Best Event Within an Existing Festival – Blossom Kite Festival
Best Media Relations Campaign
Best Sponsor Partner – All Nippon Airways
Best Sponsorship Program for an Individual Sponsor – Paws & Petals, Mars Petcare
Best New Promotion Activity – FestivALE

SILVER
Best Full Length Local TV Program – National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® presented by Events DC
Best Single New Sponsorship Opportunity – Opening Ceremony Audience Engagement, Japan National Tourism Organization
Best Volunteer Program
Best Overall Merchandising Program
Best Pin
Best Commemorative Poster

BRONZE
Best Parade
Best On-Site Décor – Pink Tie Party

*Presented in 2018
Extraordinary Reach

Record-Breaking Attendance

1.6M VISITORS

$1.5M advertising partner value

50 participating organizations presented programming throughout the Festival’s four weeks

Strong Social Sharing

23.6K SUBSCRIBERS 13% YOY increase

14.6K FOLLOWERS 75% YOY increase

116K FOLLOWERS 8% YOY increase

14.3K FOLLOWERS 12% YOY increase

Impactful Media Presence

2B+ impressions

$57M media value

90% of U.S. television markets syndicated the Parade

Redesigned Website

~1M website visits

705K unique website visitors
Meghan Trainor gets into the blossom spirit with Festival President Diana Mayhew backstage at The Anthem during Blossom Bash presented by iHeartRadio.

Japanese Ambassador Shinsuke Sugiyama threw out the first pitch at the Blossoms & Baseball game at Nationals Park.

The National Park Service announced their peak bloom prediction during the Festival’s press conference at the Newseum. The trees reached the start of peak bloom on April 1, 2019.

Ideal spring weather conditions allowed the blossoms to remain in bloom for nearly three weeks, including two full weekends of programming.

Rob Marciano previewed the National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® on Good Morning America with Grand Marshal Anthony Anderson of ABC’s black-ish.

Going off the rails w/ @anthonyanderson @GMA @CherryBlossFest #DC 😳🤣
My partner in crime for the National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade — CARSON KRESSLEY, the OG!! @CarsonKressley

Petalpalooza® transformed The Wharf into a spectacle of spring as pink tents, banners, and blossom backdrops lined the piers.

Simon Bull was the 2019 Official Artist, and unveiled his original piece at the Festival’s Launch Event in the fall.

“Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon” The Super Live made its North American debut at the Festival’s Opening Ceremony. The full show was performed in its entirety the next day at the Warner Theatre.

Cee-Lo Green headlined Cherry Blast at MGM National Harbor.

Carson Kressley and WJLA’s Nancy Chen were on-the-street reporters for the National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® TV broadcast.
DC trendsetters and tastemakers celebrated the start of blossom season in style at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center (Trade Center Management Associates) in an evening filled with live entertainment, delicious cuisine from the hottest area restaurants, and plenty of unique experiences.
Throughout the affair, guests were treated to high-energy performances including a soulful set by DC-based band Oh He Dead, and an entrancing juggling spectacle by internationally renowned entertainer Yusaku Mochizuki (Mochi).

As attendees enjoyed fanciful culinary creations, a rosé bike pedaled around the ballroom offering sips of The Palm by Whispering Angel, and ARTECHOUSE served its signature augmented reality cocktails. Guests clad in pink and floral fashions had photo opportunities aplenty in the forms of blooming backdrops, a blush-toned swing set, and an ANA virtual reality videobooth. In between dance breaks, partygoers participated in the friendly competition of the silent auction.
World-renowned performers heralded the start of the 2019 National Cherry Blossom Festival in spring-tacular fashion at the Opening Ceremony, co-presented with the Japan Foundation. In honor of the 107th anniversary of the gift of trees and the lasting friendship between the US and Japan, traditional and contemporary performances wowed a full house at the Warner Theatre and an expansive online streaming audience.
Performances included the highly anticipated North American debut of “Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon”, a live adaptation of one of the most popular Japanese manga (graphic novels) of all time. Audiences were dazzled by Yusaku Mochizuki of America’s Got Talent fame as he incorporated an impressive mix of tap dance, video art, and juggling. Internationally acclaimed violinist and composer, Ikuko Kawai, presented an original interpretation of Japan’s famous Tale of Genji, accompanied by traditional Japanese instruments. And, The 6821 Quintet, presented by the Ryuji Ueno Foundation, returned to the Opening Ceremony stage to debut a piece created specifically for the National Cherry Blossom Festival by composer Clancy Newman.
The National Mall served as the backdrop as thousands of kites took flight during the annual Blossom Kite Festival for more than 50,000 attendees. Professionals and novices alike showcased their skills through a variety of competitions and demonstrations, including synchronized kite ballets, kite-making competitions, and popular showdowns displaying incredible flight patterns and complex stunts.
For the first time, an all-star team of expert kite flyers from around the country joined forces to wow the crowd with their showmanship. More than 100 Otsuka employees volunteered at the kite-making tent, where they assisted 2,500 families to create kites. On the family field, children spent the day at activity stations offering arts and crafts, an expanded bubble play zone, and music. As colorful kites soared as far as the eye could see, clusters of pink cherry blossom trees along The Mall and at the Tidal Basin neared peak bloom.

"10 things kids should do in D.C. before they turn 10"

THE WASHINGTON POST
The waterfront extravaganza transformed The Wharf in a pink and blossom takeover with three stages of live music, a roller skating rink, games and activities for all ages, art, a beer garden, fireworks, and much more!
Nine hours of free performances included an impressive set by alt rock duo Broke Royals on the CHASE Main Stage and music from the 70s, 80s, and 90s on the Hilton Centennial Stage. Activities along the piers included a blossom mural made of selfie stickers, bike spin art, flower planting, and more. As the sun set over the fully bloomed cherry blossoms across the Washington Channel, a spectacular choreographed fireworks show capped the evening.

“Attendees were able to channel their inner artist by bringing a blank canvas to life with color. Those wanting to feel the wind on their hair could skate along a backdrop of pink cherry blossoms.”

MIKE MURILLO, REPORTER/ANCHOR, WTOP
One of DC’s largest spectator events, the National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® presented by Events DC was a springtime spectacle of pink pageantry and floral fanfare along ten blocks of iconic Constitution Avenue. The high-energy, vibrant DC tradition marked the finale weekend of the Festival with star-studded performances, gigantic helium balloons, incredible floats, dance units, and more.
The 2019 Parade featured Grand Marshal Anthony Anderson, Executive Producer and star of *black-ish*; performances from dance club diva CeCe Peniston; vocalist Michael Woodard from *American Idol*; and top marching bands traveling from as far as the Bahamas. The Parade was hosted by WJLA news anchors Bill Kelly and Michelle Marsh, and included performance zone hosts Toby Knapp and Jenni Chase from WASH-FM. The broadcast aired locally on ABC7 & WJLA 24/7 News and was nationally syndicated.

130K spectators attended the parade.

“It’s not every day that I’m asked to be part of something that’s as historic as this.”

ANTHONY ANDERSON, GRAND MARSHAL
Located in the heart of the more than 3,800 blossoming cherry trees, the Tidal Basin Welcome Area offered with the National Park Service was buzzing with excitement as crowds took in the sights and sounds of spring for nearly three weeks.
More than 100 free performances on the ANA Stage showcased local acts and cultures from around the world with a dynamic array of vocalists, dancers, exhibitions, and more. Performances ranged from Japanese taiko drumming, to the Washington Ballet, to a contemporary gospel choir, and more.

The Welcome Area provided educational resources and hands-on activities in addition to visitor services and concessions. Park rangers were on-hand to answer questions and share interesting facts about the trees.

“I know from all your own cherry trees posted on social media, you, too, are awed and grateful that these trees are ours, so close to our homes, heralding the start of spring, a season of transition and hope.”

IRIS KRASNOW, CORRESPONDENT, CAPITAL GAZETTE
Through collaborative partnerships, the National Cherry Blossom Festival presented world-class experiences to diverse audiences.
Meghan Trainor headlined Blossom Bash presented by iHeartRadio at The Anthem.

Cherry Blast at MGM National Harbor

Blossoms and Baseball with the Washington Nationals

Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Cherry Blossom Celebration
A car was custom painted by artist Matt Long at the Washington Auto Show and Petalpalooza® before making its way down the Parade route.

100,000 custom National Cherry Blossom Festival branded SmarTrip Metro cards were sold within two weeks of being released.

Mars Petcare and its Better Cities for Pets™ campaign provided expanded pet programming including a Yappy Hour, a Paws and Petals Cruise, and Pet Comfort Stations throughout the Festival’s signature events.
The Cherry Blossom Pop-Up Bar hosted a “Festival Night” where attendees received exclusive access to the popular bar by making a donation to the Festival.

National Cherry Blossom Festival co-branded Dove Raspberry Rosé Chocolate Bar.

Hilton was the Official Hotel Partner of the 2019 Festival. Hilton guests received a Petal Pass that unlocked exclusive experiences throughout the region.
The National Cherry Blossom Festival is committed to making a difference in our community through unique partnerships and local engagement. Involving residents and leaving a positive impact on the DC community is part of our core values.
5TH ANNUAL ANACOSTIA RIVER FESTIVAL
Presented by 11th Street Bridge Park, the National Park Service, and the National Cherry Blossom Festival, the Anacostia River Festival celebrated communities east of the river with canoeing, lawn games, bicycling, and more. (top left)

SING INTO SPRING COMPETITION
The Sing into Spring vocal competition puts a spotlight on local talent as DC-area residents compete to perform in the nationally syndicated National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® presented by Events DC. This year’s judges selected Randae, a teacher for special needs students at DC Preparatory Academy, and Sons of Pitch, George Washington University’s only all-male a cappella group, out of 22 finalists who competed at Arena Stage. (top right)

STUDENT ART CONTEST AND COMMUNITY ART SHOW
Students in grades K through 12 from 18 DC schools created artwork inspired by the theme “Home is Where the Blossoms Are,” as part of the Student Art Contest, presented with DC Arts & Humanities Education Collaborative. Submissions shown in a Community Art Show at the Pepco Edison Place Gallery depicted interpretations of the students’ favorite neighborhood spots. (center right)

OXON RUN PINK-NIC
The Festival collaborated with community organizers to host a free event in Oxon Run Park, where neighbors and friends gathered for complimentary hot dogs, face-painting, balloon art, and entertainment courtesy of the Boys & Girls Club Cast of All Stars. (bottom right)
VOLUNTEERS
More than 1,500 volunteers contributed 6,895 hours of service, playing a crucial role in supporting the Festival’s many events and programs. The Barbara Ehrlich Volunteer of the Year Award (BEVY), which recognizes a volunteer for their outstanding service and dedication, was presented to Kycia Spriggins.

TREE PLANTINGS
Through the support of ANA, the Festival planted 27 cherry trees at five schools in Fairfax, Alexandria, and Howard University. The Festival also planted trees at four additional locations, including Chevy Chase Elementary School and Palisades Library.

GOODWILL AMBASSADORS
Six young adults were selected as the Festival’s Goodwill Ambassadors, serving as cultural liaisons at DC-area schools and teaching students about the history of the gift of trees and Japanese language. The GWA program is highly selective and provides professional growth and mentoring opportunities.

DANCE TEAMS
The Festival surprised the Benning Court Dream Team, a youth dance group for children at the Benning Courts Housing Complex on Benning Road NE, with newly purchased uniforms live on NBC4.
CITY IN BLOOM
The Festival “owned spring” throughout DC when the award-winning City in Bloom campaign unified the region as businesses and organizations showcased the shape and hues of blossoms via lighting, decaling, and their own special twists.

CHERRY PICKS
Offered in conjunction with the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington, 75 restaurants created spring and blossom-inspired fare as part of the Cherry Picks program, which offered three themed weeks featuring creative cocktails, entrées, and desserts.

RETAIL WINDOW COMPETITION
The Retail Window Competition encouraged local retailers throughout the region to get into the springtime spirit by “blossoming up” their window displays and showcasing their creativity. This year’s winners included:

Kramerbooks and Afterwords Café
Lilly Pulitzer of Georgetown

Small Independent Retailer
Medium/Large Retailer
The Festival honors the gift of 3,000 cherry trees through events that showcase Japanese culture and celebrate the enduring friendship between our two nations.
Reception at the Japanese Ambassador’s residence included a concert with acclaimed pianist Ichiro Nodaira, who also performed at the Kennedy Center.

Akie Abe, spouse of the Prime Minister of Japan, greeted Festival Board Chair Rich Bradley and President Diana Mayhew during their visit to Tokyo in October 2018.

The largest one-day celebration of Japanese culture in the US, the Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival followed the Parade and included four stages of performances and demonstrations, cultural exhibitors, food vendors, cooking demos, a children’s corner, and more along Pennsylvania Ave. The celebration, produced by the Japan-America Society of Washington DC, welcomed more than 80 cultural groups, arts vendors, and food booths.

Additional Japanese cultural programming included Japanese Culture Day at the Library of Congress, a Jazz performance at Blues Alley, a Japanese Kimono Show at the Freer Gallery of Art, and more.

Reception at the Japanese Ambassador’s residence included a concert with acclaimed pianist Ichiro Nodaira, who also performed at the Kennedy Center.
Recognition

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The Jorgensen Law Firm PLLC
LINDER Global Events
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The Japan Foundation
JICC: Japan Information & Culture Center, Embassy of Japan
National Park Service
Ryuji Ueno Foundation

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Cherry Blossom Festival Helps DC Dance Team Get New Costumes
The Festival surprised the Benning Court Dream Team with newly purchased uniforms live on NBC4.
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Blossom Kite Festival presented by Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc.
Cherry Picks Restaurant Program in partnership with Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington
City in Bloom
Goodwill Ambassadors Program
National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® presented by Events DC
Opening Ceremony co-presented with The Japan Foundation
Petalpalooza® presented by Chase
Pink Tie Party presented by ANA and hosted by Trade Center Management Associates (A Drew Company)
Sing into Spring Competition
Student Art Contest and Community Art Show presented with the DC Arts & Humanities Education Collaborative
Tidal Basin Welcome Area and ANA Stage presented with the National Park Service
**Premier Events**
- Anacostia River Festival produced by the 11th Street Bridge Park and the National Park Service
- Blossom Bash presented by iHeartRadio
- Cherry Blast presented by MGM National Harbor
- SAAM Cherry Blossom Celebration produced by the Smithsonian American Art Museum
- Sakura Matsuri-Japanese Street Festival produced by the Japan-America Society of Washington DC

**FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS**
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- Bike and Roll DC
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- Carpe DC Food Tours
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- Children’s Science Center Lab
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- District Winery
- DowntownDC BID
- Drink Company
- Entertainment Cruises
- Events DC
- Fairfax County Park Authority/ Green Spring Gardens
- Friends of Oxon Run Park
- Frying Pan Park
- Guest Services
- Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden
- iHeartRadio
- Japan Information & Culture Center, Embassy of Japan
- Japan-America Society of Washington DC
- JITI USA
- Library of Congress, Asian Division
- Meadowlark Botanical Gardens
- MGM National Harbor
- Milk Bar
- Miyako Taiko
- Mosaic District
- National Building Museum
- National Conference of State Societies
- National Geographic
- National Harbor
- National Japanese American Memorial Foundation
- National Japanese Kimono Association
- National Park Service
- National Turfgrass Federation
- Newseum
- Potomac Riverboat Company
- Ryuji Ueno Foundation
- Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA
- Smithsonian American Art Museum
- Take Five Meditation
- USA Guided Tours
- Visit Fairfax
- Washington Nationals
- The Watergate Hotel
- Workhouse Arts Center

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- Hilton Hotels

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- Days Inn by Wyndham Washington DC/Connecticut Avenue
- Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott - Washington, DC/Downtown
- Georgetown Suites
- Georgetown University Hotel and Conference Center
- Hilton Garden Inn Georgetown
- Hilton Garden Inn Tysons Corner
- Hilton Washington DC National Mall
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- Kellogg Conference Hotel
- Sheraton Suites Old Town Alexandria
- The Watergate Hotel

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