In 2023, the National Cherry Blossom Festival welcomed over 1M+ residents and visitors to Spring It On March 18 – April 16, going all out celebrating the iconic blossoms.

The Festival reimagined traditional favorites and collaborated with partners, sponsors, supporters, and participating organizations to offer new experiences. To fully embrace an early blooming period, the Festival started on March 18, launching five weekends for attendees to create memorable moments throughout the season with food, fun, culture, and world-class entertainment. Community pride blossomed throughout the region, igniting springtime spirit throughout all eight wards of Washington, DC and neighboring areas in Maryland and Virginia.

“This is the real business of our city: welcoming people and having them experience our city, telling their friends, and coming back next year.”

- Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, 2023 Kick-Off Press Conference
Engagement Blossoms

THROUGHOUT THE REGION AND AROUND THE WORLD

Earned Media Blooms

6B+ Impressions
$120M+ Value

Digital Reach and Engagement Grows

7.9M Organic Social Media Impressions
In 100+ countries

1.7M Website Visits

Marketing with Advertising Partners Flourishes

79M+ Ad Impressions
Tidal Basin Welcome Area & ANA Stage

Hosted with the National Park Service, the Welcome Area kicked off from March 18 through April 2, with peak bloom officially arriving on March 23.

THE BLOSSOMS COULDN’T WAIT TO SPRING IT ON

Tidal Basin Welcome Area & ANA Stage

Featuring more than 100 free intercultural performances among the blossoms on the ANA Stage, guests also created cherry blossom crafts at the Festival information tent and purchased their favorite Festival merchandise!

With delightful bites from food trucks, guests relaxed with a refreshing quaff at a beverage tent run by Old Ox Brewery, makers of the National Cherry Blossom Festival.

The National Park Service cares for the treasured cherry trees and plays an essential role in making the Welcome Area possible each spring.

In partnership with the Trust for the National Mall, EarthCam, and the National Park Service

1.8M+

#BLOOMCAM STREAMS

Hosted with the National Park Service, the Welcome Area kicked off from March 18 through April 2, with peak bloom officially arriving on March 23.
Pink Tie Party

Hosted by TCMA (A Drew Company) for the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, guests sampled culinary delights from TCMA Chef Houman Gohary and incredible Cherry Picks restaurants, sipped cocktails and mocktails, and enjoyed dazzling entertainment at the fashionable fundraiser fête on March 16.

Fashion models in haute pink attire strutted the catwalk to the beats of DeeJay Shelly, aerialists wowed the crowd, and live music kept guests on the dance floor to close the event.

Emcee Guy Lambert (right) congratulates Attila Czutor of SHÔTÔ, winner of the 2023 House of Suntory Cherry Blossom Cocktail Competition.

Fashion took center stage from the moment guests arrived, entering the event through a runway to the sparkling flashbulbs of faux paparazzi. Best dressed guests were invited to the main catwalk for a moment in the spotlight.
Co-presented with the Japan Foundation, this one-time only presentation of performances took place at the historic Warner Theatre on March 25 to a capacity crowd with thousands more watching the Livestream, in celebration of the 1912 gift of trees from Tokyo to Washington, DC.

J-pop group Travis Japan closed out the show full of energy with their captivating choreography and contagious enthusiasm.
The ceremony commemorated the official beginning of the Festival with a Moment of Friendship between Japanese Ambassador Tomita and Washington, DC Mayor Bowser. Since the live show, the online recording has garnered more than 115K views on YouTube, bringing this unique celebration of the Festival’s history to new audiences across the globe.
Blossom Kite Festival

Presented by Hilton, the 56th annual kite flying tradition on the Washington Monument Grounds drew record crowds on the rain date of March 26. With an estimated 48K attendees, kites flew beyond the event grounds to span the entire National Mall, from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial.

Demonstrations by Japanese Kite Master Mikio Toki and Windjammers international stunt kite group made a breathtaking sight above the blossoms in peak bloom. Attendees decorated free kite kits, engaged in crafts and activities, and enjoyed live music for a fantastic springtime event.

Sakura Taiko Fest

Sakura Taiko Fest, presented by Chase and produced by Miyako Taiko, took place at the Sylvan Theater to a rapt crowd enjoying the Japanese drumming performances by taiko groups from across North America.

SPRINGING ON THE JOY

On the date of Blossom Kite Festival, DC METRO RECORDED THE HIGHEST RIDERSHIP on a single date since 2015.
Oxon Run Pinknic & Kite Fly

Presented by Chase, the annual community event took place on April 2. Hundreds of attendees came out on the beautiful sunny Sunday to enjoy free food, kite making, live music, face painting, and local wares at the Ward 8 vendor market.

Kite Workshops

Japanese Kite Master Mikio Toki took his kite demonstrations not just to Blossom Kite Festival, but also to the community at a local KIPP Academy and Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington.

Supported by Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc. and Hitachi, Ltd., youth kite makers learned how to build, decorate, and fly kites through an experience rooted in intercultural connection.

In addition to Oxon Run, local communities were encouraged to fly kites at featured parks April 1-2, including Ward 5’s Alethia Tanner Park and Prince George’s County parks Bladensburg Waterfront Park and Southern Regional Technical and Recreational Complex. Parks in other DC Wards and Northern Virginia were unfortunately cancelled due to extreme weather on April 1.
Cherry Picks

In conjunction with the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington, dozens of restaurants celebrated the flavors of spring! Venues offered springtime dishes and drinks, spotlight restaurants offered full custom menus, and select venues brightened the DC nightlife with Cherry Night.

Cherry Hunt

This interactive experience through the Goosechase app engaged hundreds of participants who dined at Cherry Picks venues and engaged in Festival activities to earn points for a chance to win prizes.

City in Bloom

The spirit of springtime spread throughout the city, featuring the debut of a cherry blossom-wrapped DC streetcar. For the first time, Metro riders enjoyed blossom-wrapped buses and trains, and the DC Circulator Blossom bus returned in grand style, transporting riders to local businesses throughout the region decorated with more than 35,000 signature blossom decals, custom decor, and pink lighting.

Adding a Splash of Pink

Spring on the Flavor
The Festival continued to strengthen its position as a global icon via creative coordination with prominent brands, including sweepstakes offering chances to win experiences from All Nippon Airways and Walt Disney World® Resort, the debut of a cherry blossom LEGO® display at Blossom Kite Festival, and for the first time, Premier Hotel Provider and Host Sponsor Hilton, Host Sponsor Mars, Inc., and the Festival hosted a Paws & Petals Yappy Hour at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Washington DC Convention Center.

BLOOMING MOMENTS WITH AMAZING

Brands & Celebrities

Celebrities shone among the blossoms, including a special emcee appearance at the Festival Launch & Official Artwork Reveal by TV Personality and longtime Parade Street Reporter Carson Kressley.

Emmy-nominated actress, producer, singer, and Dean of the College of Fine Arts at Howard University Phylicia Rashad came out to support the Howard University SHOWTIME Marching Band as they accompanied Grand Marshals Mickey Mouse & Minnie Mouse on the Parade route.

The Y2K Pink Party concert was packed with avid fans at Westfield Montgomery Mall featuring Chris Kirkpatrick of *NSYNC, LFO, O’TOWN, and Jeff Timmons of 98 Degrees.

DC-area native and "Abbott Elementary" Star Lisa Ann Walter served as Honorary Marshal at the 2023 National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® presented by Events DC.

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10-Mile Run featured running royalty at its 50th Anniversary, with internationally renowned athletes competing for glory in the Runner’s Rite of Spring.

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The 2023 Festival continued to honor its roots, showcasing Japanese culture and celebrating Japan-US friendship with an array of performances, demonstrations, and more.

HONORING JAPAN-US FRIENDSHIP
Showcasing Japanese Culture
Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival, a Festival premier event produced by the Japan-America Society of Washington DC, is the largest celebration of Japanese culture in the United States. Below, First Lady of Japan Yuko Kishida visits the two-day event.

The National Japanese American Memorial Foundation marked the 25th Anniversary of the Freedom Walk.

Co-presented with the Ryuji Ueno Foundation, The 6821 Quintet, cleverly named for the distance in miles between Tokyo and Washington, DC, dazzled audiences at the Kennedy Center.

National Harbor brought Japanese culture to Maryland with its official participating event, Sakura Sunday, featuring an artisanal Japanese marketplace, musical and dance performances, demonstrations, and more.

Internationally acclaimed pianist/composer Yoko Miwa performed at the Ambassador’s Dinner.

Tamagawa University, a world-renowned dance and drumming group from Japan’s top performing arts university, performed at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage and at the Parade.

Japanese Stone Lantern Lighting Ceremony, produced by the National Conference of State Societies and the National Park Service.

The Festival selects students from local universities to serve as Goodwill Ambassadors, representing the Festival as cultural delegates to increase awareness of the Festival’s history.

Pictured Above: Lana Mae Vanta, Nodoka Katsura, Isabel Asker, Sasha Jovanovski, Chitrali Parashar

Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
Petalpalooza®
AT CAPITOL RIVERFRONT
PRESENTED BY CHASE

The free day-long, all ages extravaganza attracted more than 26K attendees to enjoy a variety of performances across three stages, family-friendly activities, roaming entertainment, local cuisine, and more along the banks of the Anacostia River.

Attendees pampered their furry friends at the Paws & Petals Pet Comfort Station presented by Mars Petcare, put some spring in their swing with a golf simulator, snapped a pic with the immersive photo frame of the 2023 Official Artwork by Park West Gallery Artist Orlando Quevedo (on display at select events), danced to Go-Go Gadjet and others at the Chase Main Stage at the Yards, and more.

The event culminated in the Official National Cherry Blossom Festival fireworks display against the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge.
The Mars Arts DC Performance Stage supported by Washington Performing Arts was hopping with various performances, including Go-Go band Blacc Print Experience. Select local K-12 student art pieces from the Student Art Showcase, part of Art in Bloom presented by Amazon, were printed on Corner Water bottles for giveaway. All artwork was displayed on the Festival website and at Petalpalooza in a walkable gallery.

The energy was popping all day on the BetMGM Blossom Pop Stage in Diamond Teague Park, featuring White Ford Bronco, Absolutely Dragulous, and more. Mars Petcare’s “Paws for Pets” featured giveaways for furry friends and pet parents, a “very cherry” selfie spot, and space to raise a paw for how DC could be even more pet-friendly.
The Festival continued to cultivate community with volunteer engagement, tree plantings, and highlighting Festival’s pet-friendly vibe at local Yappy Hours. Premier and regional events, such as Pedal with Petals at Tysons and Art Blooms at Mosaic, extended the joy of the blossoms to new and returning audiences.

PLANTING SEEDS OF CONNECTION

Throughout DC & the Region

Tysons Community Alliance plants cherry trees at Scott’s Run (above). ANA and Chase also sponsored plantings so that dozens of trees and the intercultural connections they represent could take root in more communities.

Nearly 1,200 volunteers made the 2023 Festival possible, filling hundreds of shifts all season.

Pups pose for Paws & Petals Yappy Hour at the Embassy Suites Convention Center by Hilton, one of four Yappy Hours celebrating the pet-friendly Festival.

The Festival celebrated the first day of Spring in Ward 8 with Ballou High School Marching Band, local business Corner Water, and the Blossom Bus at community garden The Well at Oxon Run.

Pink in the Park, produced by National Landing, embraced pink not just as a color, but as a whole vibe.

Jazz & Blossoms, produced by DowntownDC BID, blended DC’s music history with the culture of the Festival.

Pink in the Park
Art in Bloom
PRESENTED BY AMAZON

Art installations inspired by the blossoms offered engaging experiences throughout the region including the immersive photo frame of the Official Artwork.

2023 Official Artwork Reveal by Park West Gallery Artist Orlando Quevedo

New additions joined the Giant Cherry Blossom Sculptures on display year-round in public spaces!

Refresh, Renew, Rebloom, donated by the Embassy of Japan, was put on permanent display at Nationals Park.

Kids and kids at heart built their own cherry blossom forests at select events with custom-made Follies.

Part of PIXELBLOOM: Timeless Butterflies, ARTECHOUSE DC created an XR experience with the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge as an extension of their 6th annual cherry blossom-themed exhibition.

Petal Porches presented by Amazon

Hundreds of residents in the Washington, DC region decked out their homes in all things spring. Festival fans outside the region got in on the fun, with one registrant joining the home decorating as far away as Tokyo. With 26K+ views of the Official Map, Festivalgoers had fun finding and admiring the homes.

Patrick Phillippi of Amazon (above) presents the People’s Petal Porch honors to the 2023 winners, House of 1,000 Cranes: Over the Crainbow, chosen via an Instagram poll bracket against other DC wards.

The Best Blossom Block award went to 10th Street NE, who even created a scavenger hunt to go with their decorations! They received a pop-up porch party with live music provided by PorchFest DC.

Community Blooms by Lea Craigie-Marshall is now on display at Westfield Montgomery Mall.

American Way, a new design by Josue Martinez, artist, and owner of Corinto Gallery, is on display at National Harbor.

Custom Sakura sculpture provided by ARTECHOUSE DC welcomed travelers at Reagan National Airport.

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The Nation’s Springtime Parade stepped off at Constitution Avenue to wow a crowd of an estimated 90K, starting with Grand Marshals Mickey Mouse & Minnie Mouse, all the way from Walt Disney World® Resort.

The Grand Finale

National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade

Presented by Events DC
DC-Area native and “Abbott Elementary” star Lisa Ann Walter served as Honorary Marshal. Artists, including Grammy Winner and Motown Legend Thelma Houston, Broadways star Michael James Scott, and Freedom Williams, formerly of C+C Music Factory with the multiplatinum hit “Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now)” had everyone bopping. Marching bands from across the country, dancers, performers, stunning helium balloons, and more put an exclamation point on the Festival finale weekend.
Recognition

2023 SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE
Amazon
Events DC

HOST SPONSORS
ANA
Chase
DowntownDC BID
Hilton
Mars, Inc.
Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center / TCMA
(A Drew Company)

SPECIAL THANKS
Embassy of Japan
Government of the District of Columbia
National Park Service
The Japan Foundation

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SoftBank Group
Springfield Town Center
The University Club of Washington, DC
Toshiba
Tysons Community Alliance
University of the District of Columbia
Warner Theatre
Westfield Montgomery

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Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington
SpotHero
Sumitomo Corporation of Americas Foundation
Trust for the National Mall
Visit Fairfax
Walt Disney World® Resort
Washington Performing Arts
Washington Wizards
Recognition

2023 NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Opening Ceremony co-presented with the Japan Foundation
Blossom Kite Festival presented by Hilton
  • Sakura Taiko Fest presented by Chase, produced by Miyako Taiko
  • Oxon Run Pinknic & Kite Fly presented by Chase
  • Featured Parks
National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade® presented by Events DC
Tidal Basin Welcome Area & ANA Stage hosted with National Park Service
Petalpalooza® presented by Chase
Pink Tie Party hosted by TCMA (A Drew Company) for Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center
Petal Porches presented by Amazon
Art in Bloom presented by Amazon
  • 2023 Official Artwork by Official Artist Orlando Quevedo, presented by Park West Gallery
  • Giant Cherry Blossom Sculptures
  • Student Art Showcase in partnership with DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative with support from Corner Water
  • Build Your Own Cherry Blossom Forest: Interactive Art by Follies Playroom Toys & Building Sets
  • Sakura Sculpture Installation at Reagan National Airport, provided by ARTECHOUSE DC
  • Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge + PIXELBLOOM Timeless Butterflies: An XR Experience sponsored by ARTECHOUSE DC

Cherry Picks, presented in conjunction with Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington with support from DoorDash, including Cherry Night
City in Bloom
Goodwill Ambassadors

Paws & Petals presented by Mars Petcare
  Including Yappy Hour hosts: Embassy Suites by Hilton Washington DC Convention Center, Dacha Beer Garden, The Brig, and metrobar

PREMIER EVENTS
Anacostia River Festival
  produced by 11th Street Bridge Park and the National Park Service
Jazz & Blossoms
  produced by the DowntownDC BID
Pink in the Park
  produced by National Landing
Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival
  produced by the Japan-America Society of Washington DC

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS
11th Street Bridge Park
ALX Office of the Arts
ARTECHOUSE DC
Cherry Blossom, Inc.
DC Sake cō
D.C. United
DowntownDC BID
Eastern Market
Frying Pan Farm Park
Japan-America Society of Washington DC
Japan Information & Culture Center - Embassy of Japan
Japan International Transport and Tourism Institute, USA
The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Millennium Stage
Library of Congress
Miyako Taiko
Mosaic District
Museum of Illusions Washington DC
National Conference of State Societies
National Gallery of Art
National Harbor
National Japanese American Memorial Foundation
National Landing Business Improvement District
National Park Service
Northern Virginia Science Center Foundation
Planet Word Museum
Ryuji Ueno Foundation / The 6821 Quintet
Smithsonian American Art Museum
Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art
Springfield Town Center
Tamagawa University Dance and Taiko Group
Torpedo Factory Art Center
Tysons Community Alliance
Union Station
The University Club of Washington, D.C.
Washington Nationals
Washington Wizards
Westfield Montgomery

#SpringItOn

Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser steps off the Blossom Bus at the kick-off Press Conference, concluding an East Coast tour promoting the Festival in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.
Recognition

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Grace Mondillo

A Message from Festival President & CEO Diana Mayhew

Our deepest gratitude goes to our partners, sponsors, donors, and stakeholders who helped make the Festival possible. The 2023 Festival engaged residents, visitors, and online audiences, expanding awareness and continuing to spread the joy of spring to new communities throughout the region and beyond.

We appreciate this critical support as we continue reimagining traditional favorites and crafting new experiences that engage Festivalgoers in creating memorable moments. As we look ahead to 2024, we look forward to planting the seeds of collaboration essential to the continuation of the Festival’s mission and sustainability.

Diana Mayhew
President and CEO

Adopt a Cherry Tree

The Festival continued its partnership with the Trust for the National Mall and the National Park Service in 2023, promoting and raising funds for the Cherry Tree Endowment, which includes a portion of proceeds from sales of the Festival’s 2023 Official Lapel Pin.

Through these efforts and funds raised through NationalMall.org, these treasured trees are cared for year-round for future generations to enjoy.