



GO BEYOND THE BASIN DURING THE NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL®

Fairfax County, VA Blooms with Cherry Blossom Trees, March 20 - April 17, 2016

Fairfax County, VA – March 2, 2016 – Throughout this year's National Cherry Blossom Festival®, Visit Fairfax and its partners are celebrating the splendor and majesty of our parks and gardens, as well as Japanese culture, with exhibits and self-guided garden tours that showcase the natural beauty of Fairfax County in bloom (<http://www.fxva.com/events/cherry-blossom/>). Peak bloom dates are March 31 – April 3, 2016.

Glorious Gardens Tour

Each year, visitors flock to the capital city to enjoy the National Cherry Blossom Festival®, but many may not be aware of the beautiful gardens that sit just across the Potomac in Northern Virginia. Visitors who would like to explore beyond the basin are invited to plan a self-guided tour of some of the area's most splendid gardens. In addition to the District's iconic Tidal Basin and the U.S. National Arboretum, plan stops at the following not-to-miss sites:

River Farm www.ahs.org/river_farm (703-768-5700)

A historic 25-acre site on the banks of the Potomac River, River Farm was once part of George Washington's original five farms, and currently the headquarters of the American Horticultural Society. The grounds offer spectacular river views, a wildlife garden and delightful children's areas.

Meadowlark Botanical Gardens www.nvrpa.org/parks/meadowlark (703-255-3631)

More than 100 cherry trees surrounding a lovely lake, an extensive shade garden, native wildflowers, gazebos, birds, butterflies, seasonal blooms and foliage make up Meadowlark Gardens. Also be sure to visit the only Korean Bell Garden open to the public in the western hemisphere during your visit. Small entrance fee at door.

Green Spring Gardens www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gsgp (703-642-5173)

There's something here for everyone: a wooded stream, valley with ponds, a native plant garden, over 20 thematic demonstration gardens, and a greenhouse filled with tropical plants. It's an outdoor classroom, a museum and a national historic site.

During the Festival, visitors are encouraged to check in at the main desk at each garden to receive a special complimentary memento. Log onto the individual websites or call for hours and directions.

Cultural Events

April 2 - Children's Cherry Blossom Celebration at Green Spring Gardens

Come to Green Spring Gardens to celebrate spring and the Japanese gift of the cherry trees. Test your chop stick abilities, try Japanese black ink painting, decorate paper fans, fold origami and more. Enjoy free activities or have even more fun by purchasing a craft ticket that gives you access to a variety of Japanese-inspired crafts. This program is intended for ages 5 to adult. No reservations required, but advance registration for craft tickets are recommended. Craft tickets are \$10 and can be ordered at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring using code 290 289 9201. Call 703-642-5173 with questions. Event runs from 1pm – 3pm.

April 9 - Fleeting Grace: Teachings of Cherry Blossoms at Workhouse Arts Center

Studio galleries will exhibit artwork related to the Teachings of Cherry Blossoms. Glass artists will give demonstrations on how to create cherry blossoms with multiple techniques. Hula dance performances. 11am – 9pm. Free, www.workhousearts.org

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April 10 - A Touch Of Japan at Cherry Blossom Time: Teas, Fans and Fun at Sully Historic Site

Sample some green teas of Japan and some sweets; see Japanese fans and colorful Japanese objects, then paint your own fan. Optional house tour of the 1794 house included in cost. Pre-Paid reservations by April 6, through Parktakes on-line. Fee is \$28 per person, seatings available at 11am and 3pm. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site (code: 381 201 6301 for the 11am seating and code: 381 201 6304 for the 3pm seating). For questions, call 703-437-1794.

April 10 – Madame Butterfly Tea at Green Spring Gardens

Japan meets America in the tale of Cho-Cho-San and her lover Pinkerton. Hear excerpts from the short story that inspired Puccini's beloved opera. Discover the prevailing attitudes that brought them together, and the "temporary wives" who became real-life "Butterflies." Afterwards, enjoy a special Japanese-themed afternoon tea and favor bag. This is an official program of the National Cherry Blossom Festival. Reservations required. \$42 for the program and tea or \$12 for the program only. Event runs from 1pm – 3pm, for adults only. To make reservations, call Historic Green Spring at 703-941-7987.

March 20 to April 17 - Fairfax County's Festival Center at the Fairfax County Capital Region Visitor Center

The official Fairfax County Capital Region Visitor Center in Tysons Corner Center (on 2nd level outside Nordstrom) is "Festival Central" in Fairfax County. The public is invited to stop in for free gifts, Festival schedules and information on activities throughout the region. On April 2, the Center will host a Culture Fair featuring craft activities including origami, calligraphy and henna cherry blossom design applications. Visitors will take home free souvenirs!

Visit Fairfax (www.fxva.com) is the official tourism organization for Fairfax County, Virginia. Charged with destination marketing and tourism promotion, it is directed by many of the County's top tourism and hospitality leaders. For more information on deals, events and more, download the free Visit Fairfax app at www.fxva.com/plan-your-trip/mobile-app/. Be sure to follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/visitfairfaxva), Twitter ([@VisitFairfax](https://twitter.com/VisitFairfax)), and Instagram ([@VisitFairfax](https://www.instagram.com/VisitFairfax)) for all Fairfax County events and activities this Spring! Hashtag: #FXVA

The National Cherry Blossom Festival® is the nation's greatest springtime celebration. The 2016 Festival, March 20 - April 17, includes three spectacular weeks and four weekends of events featuring diverse and creative programming promoting traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty, and community spirit. The 2016 Festival commemorates the 104th anniversary of the gift of the cherry blossom trees and the enduring friendship between the United States and Japan. 877.44.BLOOM // nationalcherryblossomfestival.org // [@CherryBlossFest](https://twitter.com/CherryBlossFest) // facebook.com/CherryBlossomFestival

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