



NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL® EXPANDS INTO NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Fairfax County, VA Blooms with Cherry Blossom Trees, March 15 - April 16, 2017

Fairfax County, VA – March 2, 2017 – Washington, DC isn't the only beautiful place to see those famous cherry blossoms this spring. Throughout this year's National Cherry Blossom Festival® – which due to early bloom dates is kicking off on March 15 – Fairfax County, Virginia will be reveling in the splendor of spring with official events, cherry blossom-themed exhibits, self-guided garden tours and activities celebrating Japanese culture and heritage. Go beyond the Tidal Basin this year! Peak bloom dates are March 14 – March 17. (<http://www.fxva.com/cherryblossom>)

Glorious Gardens Tour

Explore some of Northern Virginia's finest gardens during the National Cherry Blossom Festival®. Visitors who would like to go beyond the famous Tidal Basin are invited to plan a self-guided tour of some of the region's most splendid gardens. In addition to the District's iconic cherry trees, 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 is currently the headquarters of the American Horticultural Society. The grounds offer spectacular river views, a wildlife garden and delightful children's areas. Free entrance.

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 Botanical 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)

Embrace nature at Green Spring Gardens, where you'll find a wooded stream, a 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. Free entrance.

During the Festival, visitors are encouraged to check in at the main desk at each garden to receive a special complimentary memento and information on other National Cherry Blossom Festival® events. Check garden website for hours and directions.

Cultural Events

March 20 to April 16 - Fairfax County's Festival Central at the Fairfax County Visitor Center

The official Fairfax County 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 1, the Center will host a special event from 1pm – 3pm with craft demonstrations and more! (<http://www.fxva.com/plan-your-trip/visitor-center>; 703-752-

9500)

April 1 – Japanese Plum Wine Tasting at Green Spring Gardens

Explore the fusion of liqueur and fruit that is umeshu or Japanese plum wine. Sample a range of these versatile liqueurs and learn about their place in Japanese culture, their health benefits and how to make your own. Drinks served with delicious accompaniments. This program is from 4:30 – 6pm and is for participants aged 21 and older. \$38/person.

April 2 - A Touch Of Japan for Cherry Blossom at Sully Historic Site

Taste the difference between three types of green tea: Sencha, Hojicha, and Genmaicha. Contrast the flavors with Japanese sweet treats such as mochi. Explore the processes used to create the different flavors of these teas, hear how they're cultivated, and learn a little tea history. While at Sully, learn about Japanese 19th century influences on the U.S. and what was happening in Fairfax County in 1912, when the gift of the cherry trees arrived in Washington. Visit a special exhibit of items such as a netsuke collection, a yukata, and colorful Japanese fans. Netsuke are miniature Japanese sculptures that once were used for utilitarian purposes but today are created as beautiful works of art and craftsmanship. A yukata is a casual, light summer kimono worn by both men and women to outside events such as fireworks or festivals. At the craft table, decorate your own paper fan to keep as a remembrance of Japanese culture. This event is designed for participants ages 6 to adult, and occurs from 11am – 12:30pm and 1pm – 2:30pm on April 2. \$27/person. An optional house tour of Sully, the 1794 home of Northern Virginia's first congressman, Richard Bland Lee, is included in the cost.

April 8 – Ikebana Flower Design Workshop at Green Spring Gardens

Ikebana is a Japanese art of flower arrangement. Learn its rich symbolism and fundamentals, and take home your own arrangement. This workshop is designed for participants aged 16 and older and occurs from 10am – 12pm on April 8. \$38/person plus a \$25 supply fee.

*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 2017 Festival, March 15 - April 16, includes a variety of events featuring diverse and creative programming promoting traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty, and community spirit. The 2017 Festival commemorates the 105th 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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MEDIA CONTACT:

Ali Morris

Visit Fairfax

Ph: 703.752.9505

amorris@fxva.com