

11th ANNUAL VANCOUVER CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL LAUNCHES MARCH 30 WITH FREE CHERRY JAM CONCERT IN DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER

VANCOUVER, BC (March 28, 2017) - The 11th Annual Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival will officially get underway on Thursday, March 30 with a free a free noon hour Cherry Jam Downtown Concert at the indoor concourse of Vancouver's Burrard SkyTrain station.

The multicultural concert will feature performances by talented local artists such as Uzume Taiko, South Asian Arts, Lions Gate Sinfonia Brass Sextet with West End Chamber Choir, and Son de Maple, next to the city's most famous canopy of Akebono cherry trees.

Supported by the presenting sponsor, The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, the Festival features dozens of free small and large events to engage Lower Mainland residents in celebrating the cherry blossom throughout the month of April. Festivities include:

- The Big Picnic at Queen Elizabeth Park
- Sakura Nights Gala, featuring Vancouver's top Japanese chefs
- Sakura Days Japan Fair at VanDusen Botanical Garden
- Tree Talks & Walks
- Haiku Invitational poetry contest and How-to-Haiku Workshop's
- Bike the Blossoms city bike tour along cherry tree streets
- Plein Air Painting Workshops and Artists Exhibition
- Spring Lights Illumination, projected on cherry trees (a Canada 150 Celebration Event)
- Spring Lights Lantern Making Workshops
- Haiku Koinobori Scale Painting Workshops
- BC Blossom Photo Watch Contest
- Cherry Scouting

For most events, VCBF has partnered with caterers Cocktails & Canapés, which have created two cherry blossom lunch boxes: "Blossom Bliss" (vegetarian) and "Sakura V" (gluten free) that can be pre-ordered and delivered to events. How to order details along with full information about every event, and an interactive map of all the cherry trees blossoming in Vancouver, are available on the Festival's website at www.vcbf.ca.

"Like everyone who lives in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver's 40,000 pink and white cherry trees are ready to finally celebrate the arrival of Spring with dazzling displays of colour in gardens, parks and on hundreds of city streets," said VCBF founder and executive director Linda Poole. "Once again we have an amazing variety of small and large events to engage Lower Mainland residents in celebrating the cherry blossom throughout the month of April. We look forward to having all cherry tree lovers join us on March 30 for Cherry Jam Downtown as we kick-off the Festival's 11th year in bloom with a free noon-hour concert at the Burrard SkyTrain station."

About the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival

The Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival is a charitable not-for-profit organization with the objective to sustain and renew Vancouver's cherry tree heritage while educating and actively engaging diverse communities in local arts and culture to celebrate the fragile beauty of the iconic cherry blossom. For more information on Cherry Jam Downtown Concert and to see the full Festival schedule, visit www.vcbf.ca

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