

## Life

LIFE »

## Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival 2018 to host a big picnic under the blooming trees

by Tammy Kwan on April 3rd, 2018 at 5:09 PM



Enjoy the cherry blossoms at the Big Picnic on April 14.

VANCOUVER CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

Japan's cherry blossom season is currently in full bloom, but luckily Vancouverites won't have to fly across the Pacific Ocean for a glimpse of these beauties.



Our city's *sakuras* (the Japanese word for cherry blossoms) are now covered with beautiful pink petals, creating the perfect photo backdrop along residential streets and public parks. There's even a [helpful map](#) to guide you to the best cherry blossom spots around town.

The Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival (VCBF) officially kicks off today through April 29, hosting a handful of events to celebrate the blooming season such as [pop-up concerts](#), the [Sakura Days Japan Fair](#), and the annual [Sakura Night Gala](#).

There's also [the Big Picnic](#)—inspired by the Japanese cultural traditional of *hanami* (flower-viewing)—which takes place on April 14 (noon to 3 p.m.) at Queen Elizabeth Park (West 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Cambie Street).

“In Japan, they literally sit on tarps with their friends, and the mother makes a special *bento* [lunch box], and they realize the fleeting beauty is like their own lives, so they celebrate,” Linda Poole, executive director of VCBF, told the *Straight* in a phone interview.



Event-goers are encouraged to bring their own mats to sit on.

VANCOUVER CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

The second annual family-friendly gathering invites cherry-blossom enthusiasts to come down to the park for an afternoon of fun, including face-painting, a free yoga class, life-sized Jenga and Connect Four games, and performances by local artists.

Attendees are encouraged to bring their own picnic mats to lay under the cherry blossom canopies, and to prepare some snacks or a picnic basket to enjoy with friends and family.

Food trucks (Tacofino and Disco Cheetah) will be available on-site if you feel like purchasing some bites, and a few participating vendors will be handing out free hot chocolate, coffee, and assorted snacks and candies.

“All winter, I don't see my neighbour and everybody is hibernating,” said Poole. “But now, with the weather warming up, people are starting to come out of their cocoons and it's such a great opportunity to chill out.

“We are so fortunate here in Vancouver that our blossoms are accessible. Where else can you do this in Canada? We are so lucky.”

Follow Tammy Kwan on Twitter [@chocotam](#) and Instagram [@chocotam](#).