



Hospitality, Marketing & Tourism

# Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival springs to life in April

Mark your calendars for the annual celebration of the beginning of spring in the city

By Emma Crawford Hampel | March 3, 2018



Photo: The Artona Group

**Every spring, 43,000 cherry trees bloom across Vancouver, creating for a fleeting moment a spectacular burst of colour and scent that attracts visitors from miles around. For the last 13 years, the annual Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival has celebrated this display by putting on dozens of events around the city.**

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Festival founder and director Linda Poole said the idea for the celebration came to her when she was living abroad and realized she missed seeing the cherry trees blooming in Vancouver. Because many of the city's trees originated as gifts from Japan, she felt an annual festival based on the traditional Sakura Festivals in Japan would be a good way to express gratitude for the gift and observe the occasion.



*Photo: Manfred Kraus*

The best time to view the blossoms varies from year to year, as only Mother Nature really knows what is in store. Generally, in early March, Whitcomb and Accolade cultivars bloom, followed by the Akebono variety – which can be seen at the Burrard SkyTrain Station downtown – in late March. This year, snow at the end of February damaged some of the Whitcomb blossoms that had already opened, but the pink flowers can still be seen.

This year's festival runs from April 3-April 29, with events across the city.

### **The Big Picnic:**

Date to be announced, from 12 noon - 3 p.m., Queen Elizabeth Park: a picnic under the park's iconic cherry blossom canopy

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## **Cherry Jam Downtown Concert:**

April 5, 12 noon-1:30 p.m., Burrard Skytrain station: a noon-hour concert featuring music and Haiku poetry-reading under the cherry blossom canopy



*Photo: Lukasz Szczepanski*

## **Sakura Days Japan Fair:**

April 14, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., and April 15, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., VanDusen Botanical Garden: hands-on workshops that let participants take part in traditional Japanese calligraphy, origami and other arts and crafts.

## **The 2018 Sakura Night Gala:**

April 22, 6:30 p.m., Stanley Park Pavilion: a standing dinner reception that offers Asian-infused flavours. Tickets: \$160. Ticket sales end April 18.

All other events and details can be found at [vcbf.ca](http://vcbf.ca).

Check out the [interactive map](#) to find the blooms closest to you.

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*Photo: LOBO*

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