



THE JAPAN-AMERICA SOCIETY
OF WASHINGTON DC

Presents



さくら祭り

SAKURA MATSURI
JAPANESE STREET FESTIVAL

Participant Information Packet

Saturday and Sunday, April 12 & 13, 2025

10:30 AM – 6:00 PM Saturday

10:30 AM – 4:00 PM Sunday

Rain or Shine!

Pennsylvania & Constitution Aves

Between 3rd St & 7th St NW

Washington, DC

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General Information about the Sakura Matsuri – Japanese Street Festival

- The Sakura Matsuri – Japanese Street Festival (Matsuri) is produced by the **Japan-America Society of Washington DC (JASWDC)** and is the largest exhibition of Japanese culture in the United States.
- The Matsuri takes place on Pennsylvania and Constitution Aves NW, between 3rd and 7th St NW in the heart of downtown Washington, DC. Our location is right next to the Archives – Navy Memorial (Green & Yellow lines) Metro station and Judiciary Square (Red line) Metro station.
- The Matsuri is enclosed by a fence and ticket prices will be listed on our website. Children 12 years old and younger are always free. **It is an outdoor festival and is held rain or shine.**
- Attendance depends on the weather. In 2023, rain forecast the week approaching the Matsuri and a shower Saturday afternoon may have impacted attendance, as we welcomed ~35,000 attendees over the two days. In 2024, the weather forecast was for strong wind and we welcomed ~40,000 attendees.
- All of the pricing and information in these guidelines are for 2-day participation. If you want to inquire about participating for only one day, please email sakuramatsuri@jaswdc.org but preference will be given to participants who can be there both days.
- The Matsuri has the following categories for participation at our event:
 - **Local Community Exhibitors:** the Matsuri welcomes local community groups who wish to demonstrate their activities and inform our attendees about their activities in the community.
 - **Commercial Vendors:** sellers of commercially made Japanese and Japanese-style merchandise. These vendors are divided into two areas of the Matsuri, Ginza Marketplace and Japan Now.
 - **Artisan Vendors:** we welcome vendors of their handmade items that are either Japanese style or influenced by Japanese culture.
 - **Food Vendors:** Our attendees enjoy fresh-cooked Japanese and other types of food at the Matsuri, as well as some packaged foods. Preference is given to vendors of Japanese foods.
 - **Special Cultural Exhibitors:** we welcome the participation of non-profit organizations, academic institution and NGOs who wish to educate our attendees about their presence in US-Japan relations.
 - **Performing and Martial Arts:** the Matsuri has 4 stages and we welcome performers who represent Japanese history and culture in their performances. Anyone wishing to perform a cooking demonstration should apply as a performer.

Visitors to the Matsuri

- The typical attendee is college-educated, employed, single, under 35, has an income between \$25,000 and \$75,000, and lives in suburban Maryland or Virginia. Women outnumber men.
- Only 5% of the Matsuri visitors are Japanese or Japanese American. The Matsuri attracts a broad section of attendees.
- Approximately 70% of Matsuri attendees come from Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia, while 30% of Matsuri visitors come from **outside** the greater Washington DC region.
- In 2024 the average Matsuri attendee stayed for more than 3 hours.

Guidelines for Participants

All participants at the 2025 Sakura Matsuri **must read and agree to follow** these General Guidelines and the **Area-Specific Guidelines** for the area that they are applying for.

All applications to participate must be made **online** at sakuramatsuri.org

► General Guidelines ◀

- **All participants must showcase aspects of Japan and Japanese culture.**
- All exhibitors and vendors should provide an **attractive Japanese appearance to their space**. This should include printed signs, posters, and decorations. **NO HANDWRITTEN SIGNS ARE ALLOWED**
- Tents will be set-up for all exhibitors and vendors unless you indicate in your application that you wish to bring your own. Tables and chairs will be provided as outlined in the section-specific guidelines. JASWDC is **NOT** responsible for an exhibitor's or vendor's set up within their tent, overnight security or takedown of merchandise, displays, equipment, or supplies.
- JASWDC will decide the location for each exhibitor and vendor and the stage(s) and times at which performers and martial artists will perform.
- JASWDC will provide each vendor and exhibitor an individually numbered and color-coded nobori banner that we will attach to one corner of your tent. The color and number on this nobori will be used in the Matsuri's festival app and that you can use to let your patrons know your exact location at the Matsuri. Our volunteers will put up the nobori for you, and we will take it down at the end for use in future years.
- All participants must follow the laws and regulations of the District of Columbia Government. On the days of the Matsuri, all participants must follow the guidance and instructions given by the Matsuri Management Team and volunteers.
- All vendors who are selling at the Matsuri must file and pay sales tax to the Washington DC Government. JASWDC will submit your information to the DC Government and will instruct you how to submit your tax information and payment as best we can. You are however still responsible for submitting your sales tax money to the Washington DC Government.
- All exhibitors, vendors, and performers will receive a listing in our electronic program and our website based on the information you submit in your application.
- Our process has two steps: all potential participants fill out an application and then if accepted to be a part of the Sakura Matsuri, will be sent a contract and invoice for payment that will request additional details required to participate (such as tax ID, proof or payment for insurance, etc.)
- JASWDC requires all vendors and exhibitors to carry insurance with general liability and product & completed operations limits of at least \$1 million per occurrence. The following must be listed as an additional insured:

Japan-America Society of Washington, DC
1819 L Street NW, Suite 410
Washington, DC 20036
- Your Certificate of Insurance (COI) must be submitted with your contract and payment OR as a part of your contract, you can select and pay for a rider on JASWDC's event insurance to cover you for the whole event at a cost of \$100.
- Performers must sign a waiver as detailed in their section below.
- Vendors and Exhibitors at the Sakura Matsuri have **two tiers for pricing – Early Bird and Regular**. Early Bird pricing is for any application to participate made on or before **November 30, 2024**. Regular is for all applications made afterwards. The pricing listed in these guidelines will show these distinctions.
- **All Vendors and Exhibitors - except for Local Community Exhibitors - have a \$200 deposit included in their fee.** This deposit will be refunded after the Matsuri if the vendor or exhibitor does NOT attempt to sell any items after the Matsuri closes each day, follows the instructions of their subcommittee and disposes of any trash from your tent area appropriately.
- **Refund Policy:** (1) If you need to cancel your participation because of illness or disability, we will refund your fee, minus whatever expenses we have incurred to date. (2) The Matsuri is held outdoors on both private, leased land and public streets, and JASWDC and vendors share the risk of weather, acts of war, terrorism, JASWDC and local government decisions, and other causes legally known as Acts of God, all of which are beyond our control. If one of these circumstances forces us to amend or cancel our contract with you, neither you nor JASWDC is obligated to compensate

the other for damages. (3) If you unilaterally cancel your participation less than three weeks before the Matsuri for any reason that is not described in (1) or (2) above, JASWDC is not obligated to refund any payment you have made.

- All vendors have the option to bring their own generator. Generators smaller than 1100 watts do not require a permit. If a permit is required for your generator, you must submit the correct application with the DC Government and notify JASWDC 30 days prior to the Matsuri. Please inform JASWDC if you are bringing your own generator and what its output is. *(Only diesel generators are allowed, and there can be no refueling during the festival.)* If the DC government requests any vendor-supplied generators be stopped or removed from the event, JASWDC is not responsible for this.

Overall Timeline

Pre-Event Timeline:

- September 15, 2024 – Applications open. No payment is required to apply, pricing is determined based on date of application.
- November 30, 2024 – Early-Bird pricing ends.
- December 2024 – January 2025 – acceptances and contracts for vendors and exhibitors issued on a rolling basis.
- December 31, 2024 – deadline for performer applications.
- January 31, 2025 – contract signature and payment deadline for any contract issued in December or January. **If you do not return your contract and pay for your space by the end of January and have not contacted the Sakura Matsuri with any questions or concerns, your application will be discarded.**
- February – March, 2025 – some area applications may be kept open at the discretion of JASWDC.
- February – April, 2025 – participants will be connected with their volunteer subcommittee who will be their contact going forward, assist them with any questions or needs, and the subcommittee will be the area's onsite coordinator during the event itself.
- April 1, 2025 – participant passes and on-site vehicle access passes will be issued.

On-Site Timeline:

Saturday, April 12

6:00 a.m. Vendors and Exhibitors can enter the Matsuri grounds to begin setup

9:00 a.m. All vehicles must be removed from the Matsuri grounds

10:00 a.m. Your tent's setup should be completed

10:30 a.m. The Matsuri opens to attendees

6:00 p.m. The Matsuri closes and vendors must stop selling

(On Saturday evening, no vehicles are allowed back into the Matsuri grounds until permission is given by the DC Police Department – usually around 6:30 pm)

8:00 p.m. Deadline for Vendors and Exhibitors to close their tent and leave the Matsuri

All tents will remain in place overnight from Saturday into Sunday, and you should bring material to wrap/drape your tent when you leave on Saturday.

Sunday, April 13

- 7:00 a.m. Vendors and Exhibitors can start arriving to begin preparing for Sunday either on foot or can bring a car on-site through the same entrance as Saturday.
- 9:00 a.m. All vehicles must be removed from the festival grounds.
- 10:00 a.m. Your tent's setup should be completed.
- 10:30 a.m. The Matsuri opens to attendees
- 4:00 p.m. The Matsuri closes and vendors must stop selling.

(No vehicles are allowed onto the Matsuri grounds until permission is given by the DC Police Department – usually around 4:30 p.m.)

7:00 p.m. All vehicles must be removed from the Matsuri grounds

- JASWDC will hire professional security personnel and have members of our subcommittee on site overnight Saturday, as well as close/lock all gates and entrances to the Matsuri.
- All vending MUST stop at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Violation of this rule could result in not being able to participate in future Matsuris and a forfeit of any security deposit.

Local Community Exhibitor Guidelines & Pricing

- Local Community Exhibitor area is for the purpose of edification and education of Matsuri attendees.
- Who may apply: local cultural organizations, charities, community events.
- Local Community Exhibitors **are not allowed to sell** any items or collect donations at their booth (donations specifically prohibited by the District of Columbia government). You can direct someone to the organization's website to accept sales or donations there via a flyer or QR code. If you want to sell your artwork or crafts, please submit an Artisan or a Commercial Vendor application.
- You must be present throughout the whole event to demonstrate and/or explain your exhibit. We recommend having an activity related to your group or event to attract visitors to your tent to engage with you.
- To offset the costs of participation, Local Community Exhibitors will receive up to the value of your participation payment worth of Sakura Matsuri entry tickets for you to sell within your community at a fixed price equal to the lowest cost of any sale tickets. You will receive an individualized discount code to distribute, and after the Matsuri, your organization will be credited the income from those tickets against your participation payment.
 - Example: if you Early Bird register, you will receive an individualized discount code for 30 Matsuri tickets at the fixed price of \$10 each. If 15 tickets are purchased using your code, \$150 will be credited back to you.

Early Bird Price	Regular Price	Equipment Included
\$300	\$375	Tent, backwall, 2 – 8 ft tables, 2 chairs (per 10x10 segment)
Additional equipment available:	Cost per additional unit:	
Tent sidewalls	\$25/each (up to 3 additional)	
6' table	\$15	
8' table	\$15	
folding chair	\$5	
Electricity	\$450 for 20-amp circuit placed in rear of booth	

Commercial Vendor Guidelines & Pricing

- **Products must be Japanese or Japanese-style.** We don't require that the articles actually be "Made in Japan." Commercial Vendors will be divided into two areas at the Matsuri depending on the types of merchandise:
 - Ginza Marketplace – will focus on more traditional Japanese products and items
 - Japan Now – featuring modern and more youthful Japanese products

JASWDC will make the determination in what area your tent will be placed

- All items sold **MUST be family-friendly.** JASWDC will make the final determination if items are family-friendly or not.
- You **may not sell Japanese food, snacks or drinks** without advance permission from JASWDC. If you want to do so, please indicate on your application.
- Under DC law it is illegal to sell or display counterfeit or pirated merchandise. Any Commercial Vendor caught displaying counterfeit or pirated merchandise will be asked to remove those items from their tent. If the vendor continues to sell these items, JASWDC has the right to revoke the contract and remove the vendor from the festival. JASWDC does not generally allow the sale of 'fanart,' defined as artwork created by fans or other persons that do not hold the license for a particular character, anime, or other series.

Early Bird Price	Regular Price	Equipment Included
\$2,200	\$2,400	Tent, backwall, 2 – 8 ft tables, 2 chairs (per 10x10 segment)
Additional equipment available:	Cost per additional unit:	
Tent sidewalls	\$25/each (up to 3 additional)	
6' table	\$15	
8' table	\$15	
folding chair	\$5	
Electricity	\$450 for 20-amp circuit placed in rear of booth	

Artisan Vendor Guidelines & Pricing

- Artisan Vendors may sell the goods that they have made, but you should also be prepared to discuss and educate about your craft, the skills involved, explain the cultural background, and show the crafts that you have produced.
- If you will not be selling your art, submit a Local Community Exhibitor application.
- **You are allowed to sell only your own works**, or things that are necessary to enjoy them (for example, a doll case for a hand-made doll, or a frame for a picture you have painted).
- JASWDC does not generally allow the sale of 'fanart,' defined as artwork created by fans or other persons that do not hold the license for a particular character, anime, or other series.
- If it appears that you are selling products made by others, the Matsuri Management Team and volunteers can request you to stop those items and remove them from your tent. In addition, in future years you will be classified as a Commercial Vendor, where a higher fee is charged.

Early Bird Price	Regular Price	Equipment Included
\$1,200	\$1,350	Tent, backwall, 2 – 8 ft tables, 2 chairs (per 10x10 segment)
Additional equipment available:	Cost per additional unit:	
Tent sidewalls	\$25/each (up to 3 additional)	
6' table	\$15	
8' table	\$15	
folding chair	\$5	
Electricity	\$450 for 20-amp circuit placed in rear of booth	

Food Vendor Guidelines & Pricing

- JASWDC will decide the location for each food vendor.
- Priority is given to vendors of **Japanese food**.
- You may not sell **ANY** bottled drinks that are being sold by JASWDC except for bottled water. JASWDC will have our list of what we are selling by March 1, 2025. Ask your subcommittee for that information if you wish to know it.
- Each vendor who is cooking on either a propane grill or open-flame grill must have a permit. JASWDC is required to collect all information for the permits and apply for them on each vendor's behalf. You will receive your permit Saturday morning after you have been inspected and approved by the DC Fire Marshal.
- All vendors must comply with all District of Columbia's regulations, particularly those covering [food service ware](#), what menu items can be served and [sanitation](#).
- We are offering a special first-year participant discount for vendors of Japanese food. Please contact us at sakuramatsuri@jaswdc.org to inquire about this discount if you have not been a food vendor at the Matsuri before. You would go through the normal application process, and this discount would be applied when you receive your contract and invoice.
- There are three categories of food vendors and prices:
 - Japanese menu
 - East Asian menu - Chinese, Korean, or Southeast Asian
 - Western menu

Early Bird Price			Regular Price			Equipment Included
Japanese Food	10x10 \$1,425	10x20 \$2,500	Japanese Food	10x10 \$1,625	10x20 \$2,650	
Asian Food	10x10 \$1,625	10x20 \$2,825	Asian Food	10x10 \$1,775	10x20 \$3,000	
Western Food	10x10 \$1,750	10x20 \$3,150	Western Food	10x10 \$1,950	10x20 \$3,300	
Additional equipment available:			Cost per additional unit:			
6' table			\$15			
8' table			\$15			
folding chair			\$5			
Electricity			\$450 for 20-amp circuit placed in rear of booth			
Washington DC Permits			Cost			
Propane			\$110			
Open Flame (Grill)			\$160			

Special Cultural Exhibitor Guidelines & Pricing

- Special Cultural Exhibitors help fulfill the purpose of edification and education of festival attendees.
- Who may apply: non-profit organizations, academic institution and NGOs who wish to educate our attendees about their presence in US-Japan relations.

Special Cultural Exhibitors Should:

- Use their exhibit primarily for demonstrating and highlighting aspects of Japanese society, Japanese culture, Japanese technology, Japanese art, and/or US-Japan collaboration as pertains to any of the above.
- Inform JASWDC in advance of all proposed exhibit activities so that JASWDC can ensure that the activities are consistent with Guidelines for Participants.
- Certify that any sub-contractual or partnership arrangements adhere to these Special Cultural Exhibitor Guidelines and ensure that any such entity has signed and furnished this agreement to JASWDC prior to January 31, 2025.

Special Cultural Exhibitors Cannot:

- Collect any revenue or compensation (through sales, fundraising, sub-contractual arrangements, etc.) in the planning or execution of the exhibit unless an explicit exception is made by JASWDC.
- Display logos of for-profit entities (on any banners, handouts, table displays/tablecloths, etc.) unless an explicit exception is made by JASWDC.
- Distribute commercial products or corporate literature unless an explicit exception is made by JASWDC.
- Promote their organization anywhere but inside and on their tent, and such advertising will only be permitted as long as it is consistent with, is secondary to, and does not detract from the primary cultural exhibit.

Special Cultural Exhibitors May:

- Promote their organization, so long as doing so is consistent with, and does not detract from, the cultural exhibit.

Early Bird Price	Regular Price	Equipment Included
\$1,100	\$1,275	Tent, backwall, 2 – 8 ft tables, 2 chairs (per 10x10 segment)
Additional equipment available:	Cost per additional unit:	
Tent sidewalls	\$25/each (up to 3 additional)	
6' table	\$15	
8' table	\$15	
folding chair	\$5	
Electricity	\$450 for 20-amp circuit placed in rear of booth	

Performing and Martial Arts Guidelines

- The Matsuri schedules over 50 hours of live performances on four stages that highlight the culture and traditions of Japan. All performances must reflect this focus and be family-friendly.
- The Matsuri does not pay any performance or transportation fees.
- JASWDC will decide on what stage(s) artists will perform.
- JASWDC will do its best to accommodate performance time requests, but it will make the final decision on schedules.
- You are invited to display information related to your group and your performance. Please indicate in your application whether you wish to do so.
- With advance permission, we will allow you to sell your group's merchandise at our "Meet the Artist" tent, just after your performance. Please indicate in your application whether you wish to do so. **Performers are responsible for paying their own DC Sales Tax.**
- JASWDC volunteers will **NOT** help sell or distribute information related to your performance and JASWDC will **NOT** be responsible for any loss of your merchandise or money.
- **JASWDC requires all Performers and Martial Artists to sign a waiver of liability (sample on next page for review) to perform on any of the Matsuri's stages. Anyone brought up on stage as a part of the performance must also sign this waiver.**
- **Performers should inform the Performing Arts Subcommittee of any additional staff that will be on the stage at the time of the performance such as photographers, managers, etc. These people must also sign a waiver.**
- **For children's performing groups, we provide 1 chaperone pass per 5 children. Please purchase tickets for more chaperones/parents to attend the festival on our website.**
- Applications are due by **January 31, 2025**. Performance times may not be available for applications submitted after this date. There is no charge to apply.
- You will be notified on an ongoing basis whether you have been accepted, but no later than February 15, 2025.
- Performers will receive from their subcommittee a tech sheet to communicate how they would like their stage set up, any special equipment needs, and set list. These tech sheets will be sent out about 4 weeks before the Matsuri and will need to be returned promptly. Stage sizes will be indicated on the tech sheet.
- When you apply, you can select a preferred duration for your performance. This duration includes setup and breakdown time which is usually 5 minutes for set-up & 5 minutes for breakdown. If you have large equipment that will take longer than 5 minutes, please describe it on the application.

► SPECIAL NOTICE: First-time applicants MUST put links to prior performance in their application to help us determine whether to accept you as a performer. ◀

SAMPLE WAIVER FOR REVIEW

Letter of Consent (Waiver Form)

(1) I understand that the Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival takes place outdoors and is subject to weather and other conditions.

(2) I understand that I will be performing on a temporary stage.

(3) I understand that I have a right to inspect the stage and surrounding area before I perform, and if I think that there is a problem, I may refuse to perform.

(4) Should anything happen to me, my equipment, and/or my musical instruments, I represent that I will not sue or bring action of any other kinds against The Japan-America Society of Washington, Inc. its officers, its directors, its employees, any of its volunteers, or anyone else related to The Japan-America Society of Washington, Inc. in any manner.

(5) I hereby release, discharge, indemnify and hold harmless The Japan-America Society of Washington, Inc. its officers, directors, employees, volunteers, and any other affiliates thereof, against any and all liability, loss, cost, claim or damage whatsoever, arising as a result of my participation (in any form or manner) in the Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival.

I, the undersigned, have read and fully understand the above waiver/release and sign it below voluntarily.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____