



Sakura Blooming Forecast For 2008

Once again, it's the season for cherry trees to bloom, creating a sea of sakura (cherry blossoms). The cherry blossom season is relatively short: mankai, the full bloom, is reached within one week after the first blossom appears. By the next week, when the 'peak' of the season is over, the flowers are already beginning to fall from the trees. Strong wind and rain can cut the season even shorter – this unpredictability makes the sight of the blossoms even more precious. In order to experience the blossoms at their best, the Sakura blooming forecast has been updated.

Check the link to find the best time to see the cherry blossoms for yourself:
<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/seasonal/sakura2008/forecast.php>



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/festivals/pdf/calendar_events_200803.pdf

March

3rd

Hina-Matsuri (Doll Festival)

A festive event that celebrates healthy growth and happy future of the daughters.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a70b_fes_hina.html



Weekend in mid-March

Sagicho Matsuri (Sagicho Festival)

Big floats are ignited with fire one after the other and men wearing make-up dance wildly.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a14_fes_sagicho.html

Early-Late-March

Dai Himonjiyaki at Aso Fire Festival

The mountain is set ablaze to form the largest Chinese character in Japan. A fire festival held on volcanic Mt. Aso.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a15_fes_aso.html

April

8th

Hana-Matsuri (Floral Festival)

Hana-Matsuri is a memorial service performed at temples throughout Japan to celebrate the birth of Buddha.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a70c_fes_hana.html

2nd & 3rd Sunday

Kamakura Festival

At the shrine which serves as a symbol of Kamakura, the samurai society of the Medieval Period is revived.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a16_fes_kamakura.html

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14th & 15th

Takayama Festival

Splendid parades and artisanship of the 15th Century are revived today.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a17_fes_takayama.html

Takoage-Gassen



May

3rd - 4th

Takoage-Gassen

A spectacular festival of some 100 large kites flying over sand dunes.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a20_fes_tako.html

Saturday and Sunday closest to the 15th Kanda Matsuri

100 portable shrines gather for this festival and a procession of 300 people parades through the streets of Tokyo.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a23_fes_kanda.html

18th

Mifune Matsuri

The scene of an ancient boat party on a river is reproduced by some 20 boats in the town of Kyoto.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a27_fes_mifune.html

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For more events:

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/index.html>

Highlighting JAPAN – the Online Magazine & Video



Through publications, photographs, illustrations and videos, the online publication 'Highlighting JAPAN' provides people all over the world with a better understanding of today's Japan from a variety of aspects, including politics and foreign policy, international contributions and communications, arts and culture, science and technology, lifestyles and environment.

Please choose to view the topics that you are interested in:
<http://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/index.html>

TOKYO METRO - The Tokyo Travel Guide - New Website is Launched

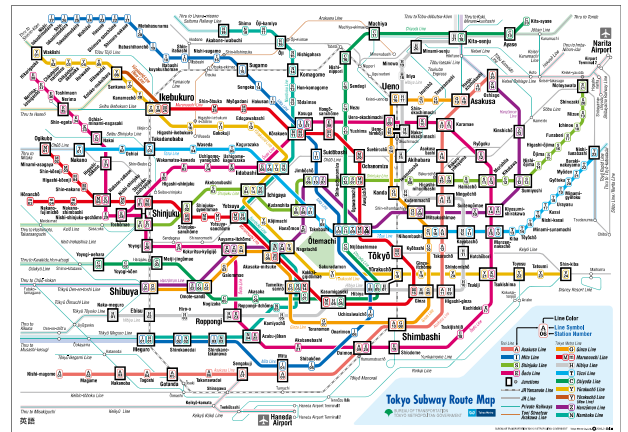


The Tokyo area is served by one of the best subway networks in the world. The Tokyo Metro system, with 168 stations serves almost 6 million passengers every day. The Tokyo Metro system has introduced the Tokyo Travel Guide to make getting around Tokyo easier, helping tourists find their way quickly and easily.

The Tokyo Travel Guide provides practical information on:

- Convenient, value Tickets
- Sightseeing Plans
- Access from the Airport
- Using the Subway
- Guide to Sightseeing Spots
- Useful links

Please check out their English site:
<http://www.tokyometro.jp/global/en/>



Tokyo Great Cycling Tour



Imperial Palace

If you do not prefer to see Tokyo in a sit-in coach, the guided cycling tour is an option. The one day guided cycling tour is available on every Saturday for only 10,000 yen (less than \$100 Canadian Dollars) including rental bike, helmet, lunch, insurance, tax and a tour guide. The tour is 6 hours long and it covers the major tourist spots, such as Tokyo Station, Nihonbashi, Tsukuda-jima, Tsukiji Fish Market, Odaiba, Hinode, Tokyo Tower and Imperial Palace.

For more information, please visit <http://www.tokyocycling.jp/>

The Tokyo International Anime Fair 2008

Press Release - February 19, 2008

Tokyo International Anime Fair Executive Committee

The Tokyo International Anime Fair Executive Committee (Chairman: Shintaro Ishihara, Governor of Tokyo) will host the “Tokyo International Anime Fair 2008,” – one of the largest animation related events in the world, at Tokyo Big Sight from Thursday March 27 to Sunday March 30, 2008. This is the 7th time this fair, designed to promote the animation industry, has been held. The event is aimed at animation related companies and organizations, such as production companies, TV and film companies, toy and game software companies, from both Japan and overseas. The 2008 fair consists of 3 main features: “Trade Fair” where visitors can obtain the very latest information from the exhibiting companies, “Events” which offers features such as symposiums, stage events and special exhibitions, and “Competition” which will see the past year’s best works of animation related art being selected and presented with awards. Last March, the 4 day Tokyo International Anime Fair 2007 featured exhibitions from 270 companies and organizations (including 55 overseas based companies) and was attended by 107,713 visitors (an increase of 8.8 % from the previous year), including business persons, families and anime lovers.

Highlights of Tokyo Anime Fair 2008

[Trade Fair]

Exhibitions by over 200 companies and organizations from Japan and overseas!

This year the Tokyo International Anime Fair sees 242 companies and organizations from Japan and overseas exhibit at a total of 708 booths (as of February 15, 2008). Various events are scheduled to take place, including PR events for businesses in the anime industry on Business Days, and performances of songs from anime works and appearances by voice actors and actors in costume on Public Days. In the past such events have attracted large numbers of visitors. In addition, new anime TV series scheduled to start from this April and new big screen works will be promoted in booths and on the stage.

For inquiries from the media concerning this press release

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[Event]

“Manga/Animation Museums in Japan”
Special Exhibition!

Every year a “Special Exhibition” on a different theme is held. This year’s exhibition, entitled “Manga/Animation Museums in Japan,” features information regarding approximately 50 museums related to manga and animation in Japan. The exhibition showcases familiar characters and works of pre-eminent artists and animators representative of the world of Japanese anime, as well as the unique charm of the museums and features of their displays.

- Map of Manga/Animation museums in Japan
- Booths showcasing museums
- Information regarding places of interest related to manga and anime, and transportation
- Displays (Including Special Displays featuring the 80th anniversary of the birth of Osamu Tezuka and the 70th anniversary of the birth of Shotaro Ishinomori (TBC))
- “Anime City Tokyo” (Tokyo Anime sightseeing map featuring Suginami and Nerima (wards), and Mitaka and Musashino (cities))