

The background of the entire image is a close-up, slightly blurred photograph of cherry blossoms. The flowers are in various shades of pink, from light blush to deep magenta. Some darker, brownish branches are visible on the left side, providing a sense of depth and texture. The overall lighting is soft and natural, typical of a spring day.

Sakura Matsuri

Cherry Blossom
Festival

What is Sakura Matsuri?

- The Cherry Blossom Festival is a **spring festival** which celebrates the natural beauty of cherry trees, along with Japanese food, culture, and history.



What is Sakura Matsuri?

- The festival is held in springtime in Japan because that is when the cherry blossom trees are in season. Sakura Matsuri lasts from March to May throughout Japan. It embarks from Okinawa (island) in March and ends in Hokkaido (island) in May. The celebration is held mainly in Tokyo, Japan, the country's capital.
- There is something called Hanami, which means viewing flowers. It refers to the time when people come together to admire the beauty of many cherry blossoms.



Hanami – Viewing on Cherry Blossoms.
Picnics are frequented by most while observing their
country's natural beauty.

Sakura Matsuri (the olden days)

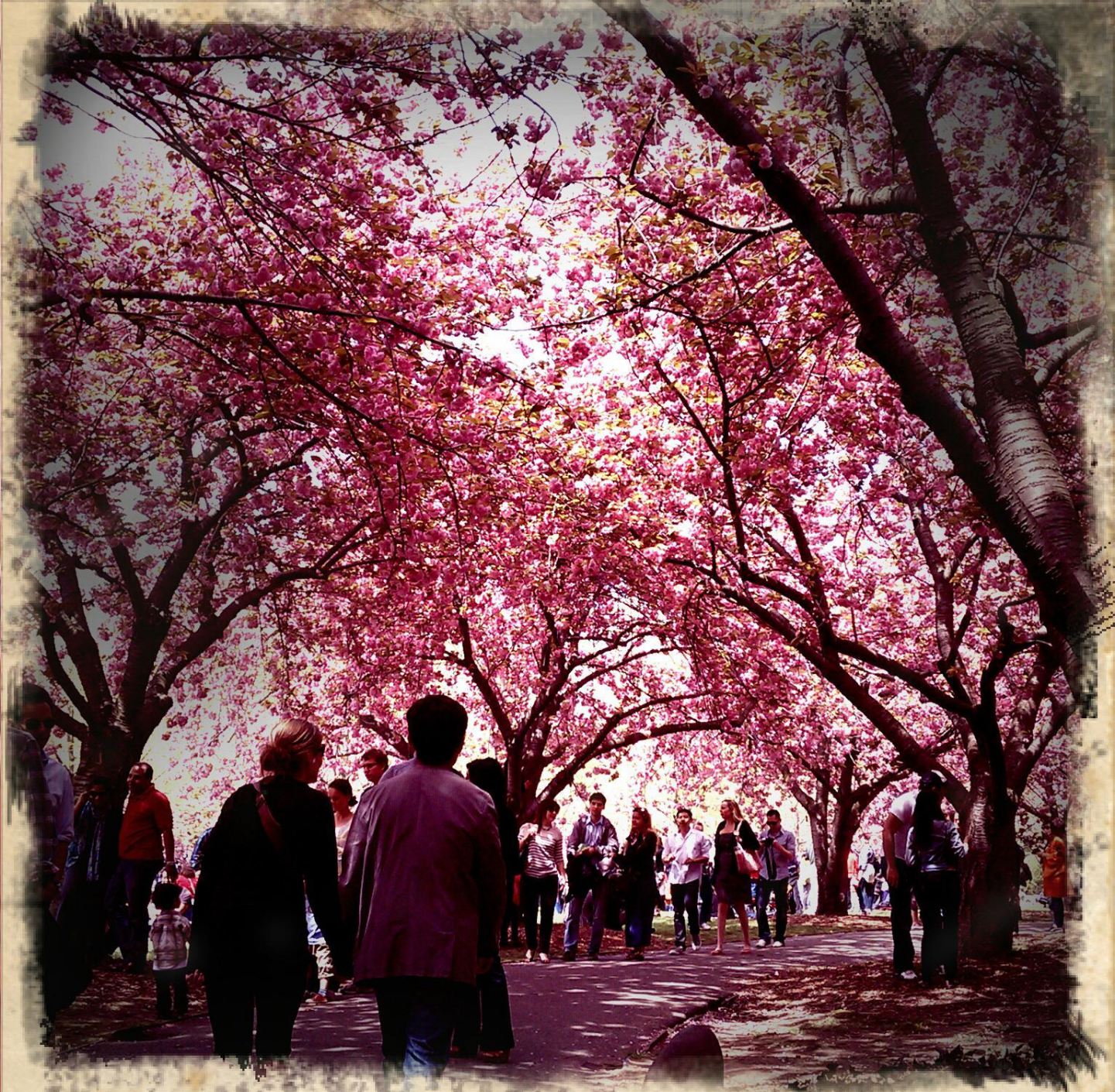
- In ancient times, the leaders of Japan would view the cherry blossoms in the spring and write poetry about them.
- They would offer up their gratitude for the fertility of Japan, and ask that it would in turn, spread throughout the earth. It was a sacred ritual.

Sakura Matsuri (recent times)

- In recent times, with the development of modern broadcasting, Sakura Matsuri has found international popularity as the events of the ceremonies can be televised worldwide.
- Visitors from all over the world come to Japan just to sit and walk beneath the cherry blossoms, basking in their beauty.

Sakura Matsuri (recent times)

- There are concerts, musical and performance arts activities, rides, beauty pageants as well as religious ceremonies and a number of other attractions held during the festival.
- The Japanese are able to blend together tradition and change by combining traditional elements with modern day tones. People wear their special kimonos while viewing the ikebana or flower arrangements.
- In food stalls they sell traditional Japanese food items, as well as treats that use cherries as an ingredient.





Somei-Yoshino

- Thousands of years of Japanese tradition celebrate the cherry, which is featured prominently in Japanese art and culture.
- The most popular species of Japanese cherry (sakura) tree is the somei-yoshino (Yedoensis).
- Sakura trees bloom at different times throughout Japan, and the blooming period of somei-yoshino is us





How Is Sakura Matsuri Celebrated??

- Hanami
- Time of feasting and drinking (for the Japanese it is one large picnic among the beautiful cherry blossoms.
- Traditional Japanese Song and Dance
- Religious Rituals done under cherry blossom trees.
- Special concerts and performances are another essential part of Sakura Matsuri. (tribute to vibrant Japanese culture and showcase the best musicians and performers from all over Japan in Tokyo)



• Best Places To View Cherry Blossoms:



- The best places in Tokyo to see the beauty of the flowers are Shinjuku Gyoen, a park with more than 1000 diverse species of Sakura (Cherry Trees) that bloom at different points in the season, allowing for greater viewing opportunity.
- Sumida Park, alongside the crystalline Sumida River, where trees are often illuminated after dusk and visitors can take boat tours to see the trees on shore.
- Chidorigafuchi, the destination of the old Edo castle, where Cherry Blossoms coexist alongside contemporary, and historic, Japanese architecture.

Chidorigafuchi



Sumida Park

Shinjuku Gyoen



Sakura Matsuri in the US

- This annual festival is now celebrated not only in Japan, but it has also reached the shores of the United States.
- In Washington, DC, there is an annual Cherry Blossom Festival that coincides with the celebration held in Japan. After all, these cherry trees found along Potomac Washington are cuttings from Japan, which the people of Japan gave as a gift to the US back in 1912.
- Throughout its history, the cherry blossoms in Washington have served as a very strong link of friendship between Americans and the Japanese. Various propagates of the cherry trees have been sent back and forth between the two countries to preserve the genetic lineage of the trees.

Sakura Matsuri in the US

- The National Cherry Blossom Festival is now a two-week annual celebration in the US.
- The annual event is organized by the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Inc. and over 700,000 people come to witness the celebrations.
- These range from concerts to fireworks displays. It is celebrated by a number of activities, such as the Blossom Kite Festival, a sushi and sake celebration, art exhibits, a kimono fashion show, martial arts and a number of cultural performances.
- During the last day of the festival, there is a parade, which ends with the Sakura Matsuri-Japanese Street Festival. This is the largest Cultural Festival in the country.

