



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HONOLULU FESTIVAL WELCOMES THE PUBLIC TO ENJOY PACIFIC RIM CULTURAL CELEBRATION, MARCH 8-10

Highlight Events Include Free Cultural Performances at Three Locations, Grand Parade and Nagaoka Fireworks Show in Waikiki, and New Japan Food Festival

HONOLULU – February 29, 2024 – The 28th Annual Honolulu Festival, Hawaii's premier celebration of Pacific Rim culture and arts, returns for a weekend filled with exciting activities, cultural music and dance performances, special events, and educational experiences for the public to enjoy March 8-10.

Highlighted among the Honolulu Festival's variety of events and activities are the free cultural performances and exhibits at the Hawai'i Convention Center, Ala Moana Center, and Waikiki Beach Walk on March 9 and 10, and the magnificent Grand Parade through Waikiki followed by the spectacular Nagaoka Fireworks Show over Waikiki Beach to conclude the festival on March 10.

Presented by the Honolulu Festival Foundation under the banner of **Pacific Harmony**, this year's theme is, ***Walk Together with Aloha, Pass the Baton to a Sustainable and Peaceful Future.***

Honolulu Festival Foundation President Ted Kubo noted the significance of the theme and the importance to Hawaii of celebrating culture by bringing people together from around the world. "The Honolulu Festival is founded on the belief that the exchange of global ideas through the activities of the festival can lead to a better understanding of the world and contribute to a better and sustainable future of Hawaii for generations to come," said Kubo.

The Honolulu Festival begins Friday, March 8, with two private events at the Hawai'i Convention Center focused on educational and cultural enrichment. In the morning, Educational School Tours, a free, interactive cultural experience will be provided to more than 400 Hawaii school students. That evening, the Friendship Gala, a fundraiser featuring cultural entertainment and delicious foods will take place to benefit the Honolulu Festival Foundation's educational and cultural exchange programs.

The Honolulu Festival is open to the public on Saturday, March 9, and Sunday, March 10, featuring free performances by cultural groups from Japan, the Pacific Rim, and Hawaii at three locations, the Hawai'i Convention Center, Ala Moana Center, and Waikiki Beach Walk.

Kubo added, "The festival provides groups from around the Pacific Rim with a wonderful opportunity to showcase their culture, traditions, arts, and people through free public performances. At the same time, Hawaii community groups and residents interact and connect with people from around the Pacific Rim to build a greater respect and understanding."

The Hawai'i Convention Center will also host a craft fair and exhibits, the Honolulu Art Market, a Japanese Film Festival, and the Ennichi Corner, featuring hands-on cultural activities and games for children to enjoy. For adults 21 years of age and older, the popular Sake and Food Fest exhibit returns for the second straight year, providing samplings of sake, shochu, and awamori to enjoy.

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A new sister event of the Honolulu Festival being introduced this year at the Hawai'i Convention Center is the [Japan Food Festival in Hawaii](#). Organized by JETRO, the food festival will feature tastings of high-grade sushi and sashimi, tuna dismantling demonstrations, and musubi-making workshops.

The Honolulu Festival concludes with a flourish in Waikiki on Sunday, March 10, with the Grand Parade on Kalakaua Avenue starting at 4:30 p.m., followed by the Nagaoka Fireworks Show display over Waikiki Beach, starting at 8:30 p.m.

HONOLULU FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Educational School Tours

Friday, March 8, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. *Invitation only.*

More than 400 Hawaii students from 10 elementary and middle schools will converge at the Hawai'i Convention Center for an immersive behind-the-scenes cultural experience. Students will learn about traditions from Pacific Rim countries, dances and songs with visiting cultural groups, and be able to see the Grand Parade floats up-close, including the Daijyama fire-breathing dragon.

Friendship Gala

Friday, March 8, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. *Ticket purchase required.*

Attendees will delight in sumptuous dishes crafted by renowned Hawaii restaurants, enjoy live music and celebrate cultural harmony with groups and guests from throughout the Pacific Rim. Proceeds raised will support the Honolulu Festival Foundation's educational and cultural programs.

Cultural Performances and Exhibits

Saturday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 10, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

- **Free Cultural Performances:** Cultural artisans from Japan, Pacific Rim countries, and Hawaii will share the beauty of their music, art, and dance. Performances take place at the Hawai'i Convention Center, Ala Moana Center, and Waikiki Beach Walk. ***Note: Show times vary by location.***
- **Craft Fair, Exhibitions, and Ennichi Corner:** A vibrant array of multicultural exhibits are offered for attendees to enjoy, including local craft vendors, the Ennichi Corner children's game area, and activities like the first Bon dance of 2024 (Japanese dance around a musician's tower) in the Kamehameha Exhibit Hall of the Hawai'i Convention Center.

Japanese Film Festival

Saturday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 10, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Enjoy internationally acclaimed films on the third floor of the Hawai'i Convention Center. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Check HonoluluFestival.com for the listing of films and times being shown. ***Free admission.***

Sake and Food Fest

Saturday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 10, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

This popular exhibit returns for a second year and features a learning experience and free samplings of select Japanese alcohol, such as sake, shochu, and awamori. ***Free admission. Sake sampling is for adults ages 21 and older. Attendees must show ID.***

Japan Food Festival in Hawaii

Saturday, March 9, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 10, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

NEW EVENT: Organized by JETRO, this new sister event of the Honolulu Festival is being introduced this year and will feature tastings of high-grade sushi and sashimi, tuna dismantling demonstrations, and musubi-making workshops for the public to learn about and enjoy.

Honolulu Rainbow Ekiden

Sunday, March 10, 8:00 a.m.

Hawaii's first public relay race for amateur runners returns after a five-year hiatus. A sister event of the Honolulu Festival, the 5K Honolulu Rainbow Ekiden is a relay race for teams of 3-5 runners starting at Kapiolani Park. Also offered is a 5K Fun Run & Walk for individuals and a 1.6K 'Oli 'Oli Kid's Challenge for children, ages 6-12. For more information, please visit rainbowekiden.com.

Grand Parade

Sunday, March 10, 4:30 p.m.

This magnificent showcase of culture features more than 50 performing groups, lively music, marching bands, eye-catching parade floats, and cultural demonstrations that are paraded on Kalakaua Avenue through Waikiki.

Nagaoka Fireworks Show

Sunday, March 10, 8:30 p.m.

Following the Grand Parade, the spectacular Nagaoka Fireworks Show will illuminate the skies over Waikiki Beach with a sparkling display of colorful and fascinating pyrotechnics. Spectators are encouraged to arrive at the beach early to reserve their viewing spots.

For more information about the Honolulu Festival, please visit HonoluluFestival.com. Follow updates about the Honolulu Festival on Instagram ([@HonFestival](https://www.instagram.com/HonFestival)) and Facebook ([@Honolulu Festival](https://www.facebook.com/HonoluluFestival)).

About Honolulu Festival Foundation

The Honolulu Festival is made possible by the nonprofit Honolulu Festival Foundation with the support of the State of Hawai'i, the City and County of Honolulu, generous corporate sponsors, and more than 300 volunteers. The Honolulu Festival Foundation supports educational and cultural programs for the benefit of Hawaii's schools and the community through public outreach and charitable efforts.

The Honolulu Festival image gallery is available [here](#). Please credit photos to the Honolulu Festival Foundation.

Photos and logo for the Japan Food Festival in Hawaii are available [here](#). Please credit Japan External Trade Organization.

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