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Edited by

The International Relations
and Peace Promotion Division
Chiyoda City Hall

1-2-1 Kudan-Minami Chiyoda-ku 102-8688

Tel : (03)-3264-2111 Ext: 2254

HP: <http://www.city.chiyoda.lg.jp>

- EDITOR'S NEWS -

With the return of the spring, we will all be able to enjoy a nicer weather, something that everyone is waiting for I suppose. Of course the main event will be the blossoming of the cherry trees, and the hanami is on its way. Please remember the advices we gave you last year and think about arriving early to pick your place, as they are still useful this year. Furthermore, this spring will see the reopening of the Chidorigafuchi Boat Arena on March 25th, after almost one year of work, right in time for the Chiyoda Sakura Matsuri. If you have some time and the will to have a nice moment on the moat, then hurry to rent one. You will not regret it !

Speaking of nice event, this year is an odd number year, which means the Great Parade of the Kanda Matsuri will take place in May. As one of the Great Matsuri of Tokyo, this is an event you should not miss. Please refer to P.2 for detailed information. Additionally, we prepared a small guide to the ward's jinja (see P.4), which are quite numerous as you will realize. We hope this little guide will give you incentive to go for walk, looking for the small jinja in your neighborhood.

We would also like to announce you the reelection of Chiyoda Mayor Masami Ishikawa. The election took place on February 1st 2009, and the citizens of Chiyoda decided to reelect the mayor for a period of 4 years.

If you are new in Chiyoda (recently moved in), please remember you are required to proceed to an Address Change Registration. This procedure is important as it allow the ward to forward you all the necessary papers from your previous address. And since the Japanese government decided to award 12,000 JPY to every Japanese citizen and registered foreign national in Japan, it would really be a shame not to be able to receive it because you have forgotten to register your address change.

Finally, here is a small note on environment policies. Chiyoda City has been designated recently as "Environmental Model City" by the Japanese government for its environmental measures. It has been chosen along with 13 other Japanese cities across the country, but it is the only one in Tokyo Metropolis. In 2007, Chiyoda City has enacted measures to cope with Global Warming, like the goal to reduce the carbon emissions of 25% from the level of 1990. In order to reach this goal, the city decided to enact policies to improve the energy efficiency of the old buildings and promote the use of solar panels. Furthermore the initiatives to raise the use of vegetation in the Imperial Palace, at the center of the city, help reducing the Heat Island phenomenon. Also, by promoting environmental education in Chiyoda, the City Hall helps everyone realize how we can help with everyday practices. It will no doubt make Chiyoda City a better place to live in the future.

Chiyoda Sakura Matsuri

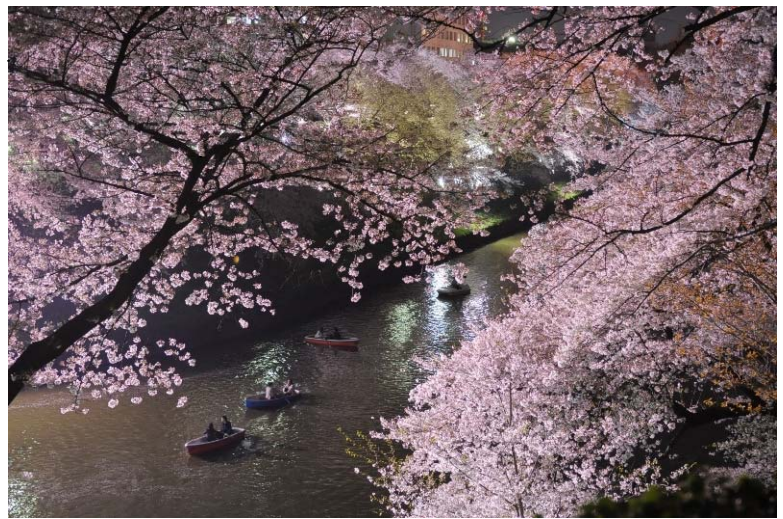
During the Sakura Matsuri, the surroundings of Kundanshita station are a much appreciated place. And at night the place is even more beautiful, especially with the renovation works that have been done recently. The City Hall of Chiyoda decided last year to have the promenade on the west side of the Chidorigafuchi Moat renovated, as well as the Chidorigafuchi Boat Arena, and both are going to be reopened in March. Given the fact that this is one of the most beautiful places in Chiyoda Ward during the blossoming of the cherry trees, we hope you will be able to enjoy it.

And of course, in order to be in the perfect timing to catch the blossoming, you can check it on the Chiyoda website : <http://chiyoda-days.jp/feature/sakura/>. On this webpage you will be able to observe the evolution of the trees, from the end of March until the blossoming period, and be prepared for the best hanami.

Chidorigafuchi Boat Arena

As stated before, the Chidorigafuchi Boat Arena will be reopened on the 25th of March 2009, and the the boats rental service will be right in time for the Hanami. **Until the 15th of April**, the boats will be available from 9h30, through 17h30. **Additionally** during the light up of the moat (see next), service hours will be extended until 20h to enjoy this unique scenery.

Fees : 500 yens / 30 minutes – 1000 yens / 60 minutes (During blossoming period : 800 yens / 30 minutes). Tickets are sold until 30 min before closing time. **Contact** : Chiyoda City hall, Commerce and Industry Promotion Department. **Tel** : 03-5211-4185 (in Japanese).



Light up Event

Make sure not to miss the light up of the sakura trees during their blossoming. 130 trees will be illuminated on a distance of 700 meters, creating a magnificent place for a walk and enjoying cherry trees at night.

Location and time : Light up will begin on Friday, 27th of March, until Sunday 5th of April, from around 18h30 to 22h. Chidorigafuchi Moat (west side of Kitanomaru Koen), from Kudan Minami 2-2 to Sanbancho.

Yasukuni Jinja Sakura Matsuri

Sakura would not be what it is in Chiyoda without the Yasukuni Jinja Sakura Matsuri, which is the biggest concentration in Chiyoda ward with approximately 400 cherry trees. Besides, the festival features a lot of traditional music shows and street performances that make it a true cultural experience. And of course, as in every Japanese festival, food vendors will be present.

Location and time : From Friday 27th, until Sunday 29th of March. Yasukuni Jinja Chiyodaku, Kudan Kita 3-1.

Events Agenda

Photo exhibition

The Showakan is holding exhibition of photos from Werner Bischof, who was one of the first members of the famous Magnum Agency. The reporter from Zurich (Switzerland) made a long trip to Asia, which brought him to Japan in July 1951. This exhibition displays some 60 pictures he has taken of the post war Japan, which have been published posthumously after his death in Peru in 1954. They show how the country was at that time, and the beginning of a new era.

Location and time : Showa kan, 3rd floor, Kudan Minami 1-6-1, Chiyoda. Opening hours 10h-17h30, closed on Mondays (Tuesday if Monday is a national holiday). Exhibition until April 19th, 2009. Entrance to the 3rd floor Special Exhibition Room is free (regular exhibition is not).

Friendship Chiyoda

The April event organized by Friendship Chiyoda, will allow you to participate in disaster prevention class, followed by a wisteria flower (藤) viewing at the Kameido Tenjin. As always, registration for the event through the association's website, from the day following the previous event. Friendship Chiyoda's website : <http://fchiyoda.org/> (in English).

Kodomo no Hi

May 5th has been widely known for a long time as a celebration for boys' health and strength, hence the reference to Kintaro the legendary boy, and the symbol of the military helmet. However the national holiday, which now takes place during the Golden Week, appeared in 1948 to celebrate all children, and express gratitude towards mothers. The main symbol for this celebration is the Koi, the carp which is representing success and perseverance in Chinese tales, for its ability to swim against the stream.

Kanda Matsuri

This matsuri originated at the beginning of the 17th century. It was protected by Tokugawa Ieyasu, and celebrated on September 15th as a symbol of its power. The Kanda matsuri is the festival of Shitamachi, which was the part of Edo where common people were living and, besides the Sanno matsuri of the Hie shrine, it was the only festival authorized to enter the castle of Edo (old Tokyo). Nowadays, the parades of the Kanda matsuri are held only on odd number years, whereas the parades of the Sanno matsuri are organized on even numbered years. This year the Kanda Matsuri will begin on May the 7th and end on the 15th. On the 9th and 10th the mikoshi, floats, dancers and musicians will go through Kanda, Nihonbashi, Otemachi, Marunouchi, and Akihabara, making it one of the biggest and most colourful parades in Tokyo, and it would be a shame to miss it. Additionally, ceremonies will be held in the Kanda Myojin.

Location : Kanda Myojin, Kudan Chiyodaku, Sotokanda 2-16-2.

Chiyoda Jinja Guide

Each jinja has its history, and all have the same purpose : pay respect to the enshrined divinity, called the *kami*. You probably heard of or visited one of the main shrines that are located in the Chiyoda ward, which are the *Hie Jinja*, the *Kanda Myojin*, the *Tokyo Daijingu*, or the *Yasukuni Jinja*. They can have more than one sanctuary, and have welcomed the kami of the emperor or the shogunate, or have been created for this purpose, which gave them their importance. But these are not the only ones and a lot of other shrines are located within Chiyoda city, some for more than 1000 years ! It is common to see multiples divinities revered in the same shrine (with the specific case of the *Yasukuni Jinja* which is dedicated to lost japanese soldiers, much more numerous). Usually they are asking for the protection of a historical character, one of the representatives of the gods, or a divinity of the nature (like the racoon dog at the *Yanagimori Jinja*). Since they are smaller, the following jinja are really interesting to see because the atmosphere is different, and you will probably enjoy your visit in another way (do not miss the stone guardian dogs at the *Tsukudo jinja* or the or the ox at the *Hirakawaten Mangu*) :

- *Yanagimori Jinja* – built 1458, Chiyoda-ku, Kanda Sudacho 2-25-1.
- *Tsukudo Jinja* – built in 940, Chiyoda-ku, Kudan Kita 1-14-21.
- *Hirakawaten Mangu* – built during the 15th century (beginning of Edo era), Chiyoda-ku, Hirakawacho 1-7-5,.

You can also find another category of shrines, which are called *Inari Jinja*. These sanctuaries trace back to the foundation of the *Fushimi Inari Jinja* in 711 AD, and are believed to bring abundance and prosperity through their worship. As sanctuaries of the "common" people, they are significantly smaller, but are also much more numerous, and between 20 000 and 30 000 jinja are believed to exist across Japan. *Inari kami* is usually associated with the fox, as the animal is considered as its messenger, and fox statues are commonly found within the shrine. Here is a list of some of the main inari jinja you can find in Chiyoda Ward :

- *Misaki Inari Jinja* – built around the 12th century, Chiyoda-ku, Misakicho 2-9-12.
- *Otahime Inari Jinja* – built in 1457, Chiyoda-ku, Kanda Surugadai 1-2.
- *Gojyu Inari Jinja* – built during the Keichou era (1596-1615), Chiyoda-ku, Kanda Ogawacho 3-9.
- *Satake Inari Jinja* – built in 1635, Chiyoda-ku, Uchikanda 3-10.
- *Oyanagi Inari Jinja* – built in 1924 after the Great Kanto Earthquake, Chiyoda-ku, Uchikanda 3-22.
- *Mishuku Inari Jinja* – built in 1590, Chiyoda-ku, Uchikanda 1-6.

