



JAPANESE FESTIVAL

AUG. 30–SEPT. 1



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

WELCOME

Celebrating the history, culture, and people of Japan, the Japanese Festival at the Missouri Botanical Garden is one of the largest and oldest festivals of its kind in the United States. Since 1977, the Garden has proudly hosted this unique event at one of the largest Japanese gardens in North America. A fruitful collaboration with several local Japanese-American organizations provides authentic Japanese music, art, dance, food, and entertainment for thousands of visitors each year. We hope you enjoy your experience. *Yokoso!*

Festival Hours

Saturday, August 30 | 9 a.m.–9 p.m.
Saturday, August 31 | 9 a.m.–9 p.m.
Monday, September 1 | 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Grounds open at 9 a.m. and remain open until 10 p.m. Last entry into the Garden is at 9 p.m. Candlelight walks on Saturday and Sunday.

Admission

General Admission (13+) \$18
Child (3–12) \$9
Member (13+) \$9
Member Child (3–12) Free

Regular admission rates apply for the Doris I. Schnuck Children’s Garden. All activities at the Japanese Festival are included with admission except Teahouse Island Tours. Trams will not run during the festival. Climatron and Brookings Exploration Center will close at 5 p.m. each day.

Sassafras and Bellwether Café

Cool off and enjoy a beverage as well as a selection of soups, salads, and sandwiches.

Sassafras Restaurant hours:

Saturday and Sunday | 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Monday | 10:30 a.m.–3 p.m.

The Bellwether Café hours:

Saturday and Sunday | 9 a.m.–9 p.m.
Monday | 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Information

Festival information booth located outside the Jack C. Taylor Visitor Center.

View event details online at mobot.org/japanesefestival.

We welcome all cosplayers to the festival, but please make sure that your costumes are family appropriate and leave your weapons at home—even if they are harmless props. Violators will be asked to leave the festival.



UPGRADE YOUR FESTIVAL TICKET TO A MEMBERSHIP

Join or renew your membership during Japanese Festival, and we will apply a portion of today's admission cost toward the purchase of any Garden membership. Join at the Festival level to receive free admission for up to six adults to the Garden's annual festivals, including the Best of Missouri Market and Garden Glow!

Present your ticket receipt at the Membership Tent to enjoy the savings.

Annual Garden membership begins at \$55 for an individual and \$85 for two adults and children.

First Aid

In case of an accident or medical emergency, please locate staff wearing Garden identification or call (314) 577-0212. They will contact Security immediately. First-aid personnel and ambulance service are on site during festival hours.

Garden Gate Shop

The Garden Gate Shop is your source for Japanese Festival merchandise. Visit the shop inside the Taylor Visitor Center for sodas, snacks, teas, jewelry, books, and more.

Saturday and Sunday | 9 a.m.–8 p.m.

Monday | 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Featured Performer

Bentenya

Bentenya is a vibrant all-female chindon group from Nagoya, known for promoting businesses while entertaining with music, parades, and theatrical flair. Since their formation in 2008, they've captivated audiences with nostalgic-meets-modern performances in glamorous kimonos and colorful wigs. They have appeared in theaters in addition to traditional chindon street performances. Appointed as Nagoya Tourism Ambassadors in 2020, they've performed in six countries and are praised for their eco-friendly, electricity-free street performances that charm all generations.

Cohen Amphitheater

Saturday | 3:30–4 p.m.

Sunday | 11–11:30 a.m.

Monday | 11–11:30 a.m.



Featured Performers

Sumo

Sumo is a form of full-contact wrestling and Japan's national sport. It originated as a religious performance to the Shinto gods.

The basic rules of sumo are simple: the losing wrestler (*rikishi*) is the one who either first touches the floor with something other than the sole of his foot or leaves the ring (*dohyo*) before his opponent.

This year, we have partnered with USA Sumo to bring you four of the most popular *rikishi* in the world: Hiroki, Ichi, Mendee, and Zorig.

Ichi competed in Japanese Pro Sumo, reaching the top division at a record pace. He won the Emperor's Cup, the highest award in all of Pro Sumo, and attained the esteemed *sekiwake* rank, which indicates he was among the top 1% of all Pros. Ichi also won four special prizes and received nine gold stars for defeating Grand Champions a total of nine times, almost the most in history!

Cohen Amphitheater

Saturday: 12:30–1 p.m. | 4:30–5:30 p.m.

Sunday: noon–1 p.m. | 5–6 p.m.

Monday: noon–1 p.m. | 4–5 p.m.

Autographs and photos directly after each performance.



HIROKI

ICHI

MENDEE

ZORIG



Opening Ceremony

Honored guests, including government officials and dignitaries from sponsoring organizations, will officially open the Japanese Festival. Opening ceremonies will include music, remarks by distinguished guests, the ritual of *kagamiwari* (breaking into the sake barrel), and a performance by the St. Louis Osuwa Taiko drummers.

Saturday, 10 a.m. | Japanese Garden

Sake cups are available for purchase near the Opening Ceremony stage on Saturday only. \$15 per cup.

2025 Japanese Festival Logo Kiku

Chrysanthemums (*kiku*) have been a popular symbol in Japan for centuries. Blooming at the end of summer, just before autumn, they signify the beauty of impermanence. The logo depicts the splitting of the flower in four ways, surrounding one whole flower. It is a visual idiom for fairness.





SEIWA-EN JAPANESE GARDEN

Welcome to *Seiwa-en*, the “garden of pure, clear harmony and peace.” One of the largest traditional Japanese gardens in North America, *Seiwa-en* covers 14 acres, including a four-acre lake. Modeled on the *chisen kaiyu-shiki*, or “wet strolling garden,” a style developed by wealthy landowners of the late Edo period in 19th-century Japan, *Seiwa-en* incorporates many principles of Japanese aesthetics drawn from Zen Buddhism, such as suggestion, naturalness, and asymmetry within the landscape.

Water resides in every Japanese garden actually or symbolically. In *Seiwa-en*, the lake is the main water feature, complemented by waterfalls, streams, and water-filled basins. The dry gravel gardens symbolize islands surrounded by the sea. Caretakers frequently rake the dry gardens, changing the patterns in the gravel to look as if wind has rippled the surface of the water. Four islands rise from the lake. Tortoise Island and Crane Island take the names of symbols of longevity in Japanese lore. Paradise Island (*Horai-zan*), formed by three large stones, is the symbolic center of the garden, representing everlasting happiness and immortality. Teahouse Island is a serene site, dedicated in a Shinto ceremony. It is closed to the public except for the tours offered during the Japanese Festival.

Designed by the late Koichi Kawana, a renowned professor of environmental design and landscape architecture at the University of California, Los Angeles, *Seiwa-en* was dedicated in 1977.

TOURS

Teahouse Island Tour

Sold out in advance.

Garden Docents

Garden docents will be stationed throughout *Seiwa-en* from 10 a.m.–4 p.m. to provide information and help guide your visit.

Virtual Tour of *Seiwa-en*

Scan the QR code for a Festival Event Guide with Performer Descriptions and a virtual tour of the Japanese Garden.



Candlelight Walks

Enjoy self-guided, evening-hour tours around the Japanese Garden, splendidly illuminated by *shoji* lanterns.

Saturday and Sunday only | 8–10 p.m. (Included with admission)
Last entry 9 p.m.



SATURDAY, AUGUST 30

9:30–11:00 a.m.	Festival Procession/ Opening Ceremony	Spink Pavilion to Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
10 a.m.–4 p.m.	Balloon Art Origami Display	Kemper Center for Home Gardening Jack C. Taylor Visitor Center Meeting Rooms
10 a.m.–5 p.m.	Calligraphy Display Teahouse Island Tour (SOLD OUT)	Spink Pavilion Arbor of the Plum Wind
10 a.m.–7 p.m.	Ikebana and Bonsai Display	Farr Auditorium
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Cooking Demonstration	Kemper Center Classroom
11:15 a.m.–Noon	Wagashi Demonstration	Bayer Event Center
11:30 a.m.–Noon	Cosplay Showcase	Cohen Amphitheater
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Eisa Yui	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
Noon–12:45 p.m.	Rakugo	PlantLab
12:30–1 p.m.	Summer Kimono	Bayer Event Center
12:30–1:30 p.m.	Sumo Kendo	Cohen Amphitheater East Bottlebrush Pathway
1–1:30 p.m.	Shodo	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
1–5 p.m.	Children's Activities	Spink Pavilion
1:30–2 p.m.	Summer Kimono Yasu	Bayer Event Center PlantLab
1:30–3 p.m.	Cooking Demonstration	Kemper Center Classroom
2–2:30 p.m.	Ice Sculpture	Cohen Amphitheater
2–3 p.m.	Koryu Bugei	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
2:30–3:15 p.m.	Rakugo	PlantLab
2:30–3:30 p.m.	Ikebana Demonstration Karate	Bayer Event Center East Bottlebrush Pathway
3:30–4 p.m.	Bentenya	Cohen Amphitheater
3:30–4:30 p.m.	Eisa Yui	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
4–4:30 p.m.	Intro to Zen	PlantLab
4–5 p.m.	Bonsai Demonstration	Bayer Event Center
4:30–5:30 p.m.	Sumo Judo	Cohen Amphitheater East Bottlebrush Pathway
5–6 p.m.	Bon Odori	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
5:30–6:30 p.m.	Way of Tea	Bayer Event Center
6–7 p.m.	Gaku Traditional	PlantLab
7–7:30 p.m.	Yasu	Bayer Event Center
7–8 p.m.	St. Louis Osuwa Taiko	Cohen Amphitheater
7:30–9 p.m.	Toro Nagashi	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
8– 10 p.m.	Candlelight Walk Anime Movie	Arbor of the Plum Wind Bayer Event Center

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31

9:30–10:30 a.m.	Eisa Yui	Cohen Amphitheater
10 a.m.–4 p.m.	Balloon Art Origami Display	Kemper Center for Home Gardening Jack C. Taylor Visitor Center Meeting Rooms
10 a.m.–5 p.m.	Calligraphy Display Children's Activities Teahouse Island Tour (SOLD OUT)	Spink Pavilion Spink Pavilion Arbor of the Plum Wind
10 a.m.–7 p.m.	Ikebana and Bonsai Display	Farr Auditorium
10–11 a.m.	Bonsai Demonstration	Bayer Event Center
10:30–11 a.m.	Aikido	East Bottlebrush Pathway
11–11:30 a.m.	Bentenya	Cohen Amphitheater
11 a.m.–Noon	Koryu Bugei	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Cooking Demonstation	Kemper Center Classroom
11:30 a.m.–Noon	Yasu	Bayer Event Center
11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.	Rakugo	PlantLab
Noon–1 p.m.	Sumo	Cohen Amphitheater
12:30–1 p.m.	Kimono Fashion Show	Bayer Event Center
12:30–1:30 p.m.	Eisa Yui	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
1–1:30 p.m.	Yasu	PlantLab
1:30–2 p.m.	Kimono Fashion Show Ice Sculpture	Bayer Event Center Cohen Amphitheater
1:30–2:30 p.m.	Kendo	East Bottlebrush Pathway
1:30–3 p.m.	Cooking Demonstration	Kemper Center Classroom
2–2:30 p.m.	Shodo Dashi Procession	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden Spink Pavilion
2–2:45 p.m.	Rakugo	PlantLab
2:30–3 p.m.	Kimono Fashion Show Omikoshi Procession	Bayer Event Center Spink Pavilion
2:30–3:30 p.m.	St. Louis Osuwa Taiko	Cohen Amphitheater
3–4 p.m.	Zen and Japanese Culture	PlantLab
3:30–4 p.m.	Dashi Procession	Spink Pavilion
3:30–5 p.m.	Cooking Demonstration	Kemper Center Classroom
3:30–4:30 p.m.	Way of Tea Karate	Bayer Event Center East Bottlebrush Pathway
4–5 p.m.	Eisa Yui	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
4:30–5 p.m.	Yasu	PlantLab
5–6 p.m.	Wagashi Demonstration Sumo	Bayer Event Center Cohen Amphitheater
5:30–6:30 p.m.	Bon Odori	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
6–7 p.m.	Gaku Traditional	PlantLab
6:30–7:30 p.m.	Ikebana Demonstration	Bayer Event Center
7–8 p.m.	St. Louis Osuwa Taiko	Cohen Amphitheater
7:30–9 p.m.	Toro Nagashi	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
8– 10 p.m.	Candlelight Walk Anime Movie	Arbor of the Plum Wind Bayer Event Center

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

9:30–10:30 a.m.	Eisa Yui	Cohen Amphitheater
10 a.m.–4 p.m.	Balloon Art Origami Display	Kemper Center for Home Gardening Jack C. Taylor Visitor Center Meeting Rooms
10 a.m.–5 p.m.	Calligraphy Display Children's Activities Ikebana and Bonsai Display Teahouse Island Tour (SOLD OUT)	Spink Pavilion Spink Pavilion Farr Auditorium Arbor of the Plum Wind
10–10:30 a.m.	Yasu	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
10–10:45 a.m.	Rakugo	PlantLab
10–11 a.m.	Bonsai Demonstration	Bayer Event Center
10:30–11 a.m.	Aikido	East Bottlebrush Pathway
11–11:30 a.m.	Bentenya Shodo	Cohen Amphitheater Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Cooking Demonstration	Kemper Center Classroom
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Ikebana Demonstration and Hands-on Experience Gaku Traditional	Bayer Event Center PlantLab
Noon–1 p.m.	Sumo Eisa Yui	Cohen Amphitheater Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden
1–1:30 p.m.	Yasu	PlantLab
1–2 p.m.	Wagashi Demonstration	Bayer Event Center
1:30–2 p.m.	Ice Sculpture	Cohen Amphitheater
1:30–2:30 p.m.	Koryu Bugei Judo	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden East Bottlebrush Pathway
1:30–3 p.m.	Cooking Demonstration	Kemper Center Classroom
2–2:30 p.m.	Dashi Procession	Spink Pavilion
2:30–3 p.m.	Omikoshi Procession	Spink Pavilion
2:30–3:15 p.m.	Rakugo	PlantLab
2:30–3:30 p.m.	St. Louis Osuwa Taiko	Cohen Amphitheater
3–4 p.m.	Eisa Yui Niji Choral	Yagura Stage in Japanese Garden Bayer Event Center
3:30–4 p.m.	Intro to Zen Dashi Procession	PlantLab Spink Pavilion
4–5 p.m.	Sumo	Cohen Amphitheater
4:30 p.m.–5 p.m.	Yasu	Bayer Event Center

*Event schedule is subject to change. Please see mobot.org/japanesefestival for the latest updates.



Scan here for
Virtual Event Guide and
Performer Descriptions

MERCHANDISE VENDORS

Animeggroll
Anime STL
Arise Bazaar
Bonsai Society of Greater St. Louis
Claybies
Color Koi
Copper Crane Pottery
Far East Emporium
Japanese Activities Committee
Japan America Society of St. Louis
Photo Booth
Japan America Society Women's Association
Japanese Language School
Kaori's Japanese Calligraphy
Kobe Atelier
My Squish Studio
St. Louis Eisa Okinawa Kenkinkai
Suwa/St. Louis Sister City Committee
Shodo Writing and Sales
St. Louis Go Club
Wagashi and Matcha Table

FOOD AND DRINK VENDORS

Confluence Kombucha
Confluence Zen Center
Drunken Fish
Ed's Foods
International Harvest Church
Japanese American Citizens League
Soda Booth
Japan America Society Beer and Sake Tent
Japan America Society/Seinen Kai Committee
Ozark Forest Mushrooms
PokeDoke
Red Apron
Sando Shack Food Truck
Sushi Kitchen
Taberu by Chef-de-Art
Top Sushi

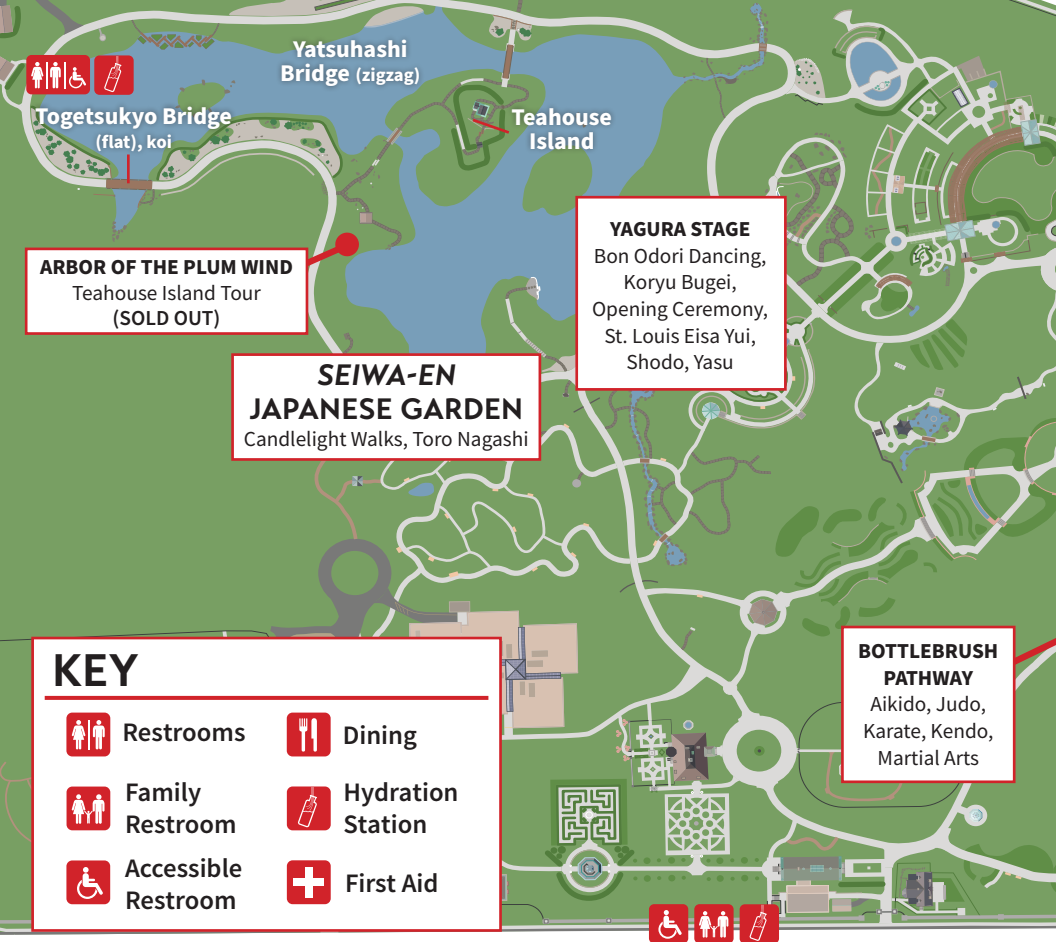
ORIGAMI

Origami, hari-e, chigiri-e (cut or torn paper pictures), paper crafts, embroidery, kimekomi dolls, kumihimo, temari, ikat, oshi-eh, and more. Participate in the creation of various Japanese crafts in an ongoing workshop offered by several crafters, including the Weavers Guild of St. Louis.

Jack C. Taylor Visitor Center Meeting Rooms

Saturday–Monday | 10 a.m.–4p.m.

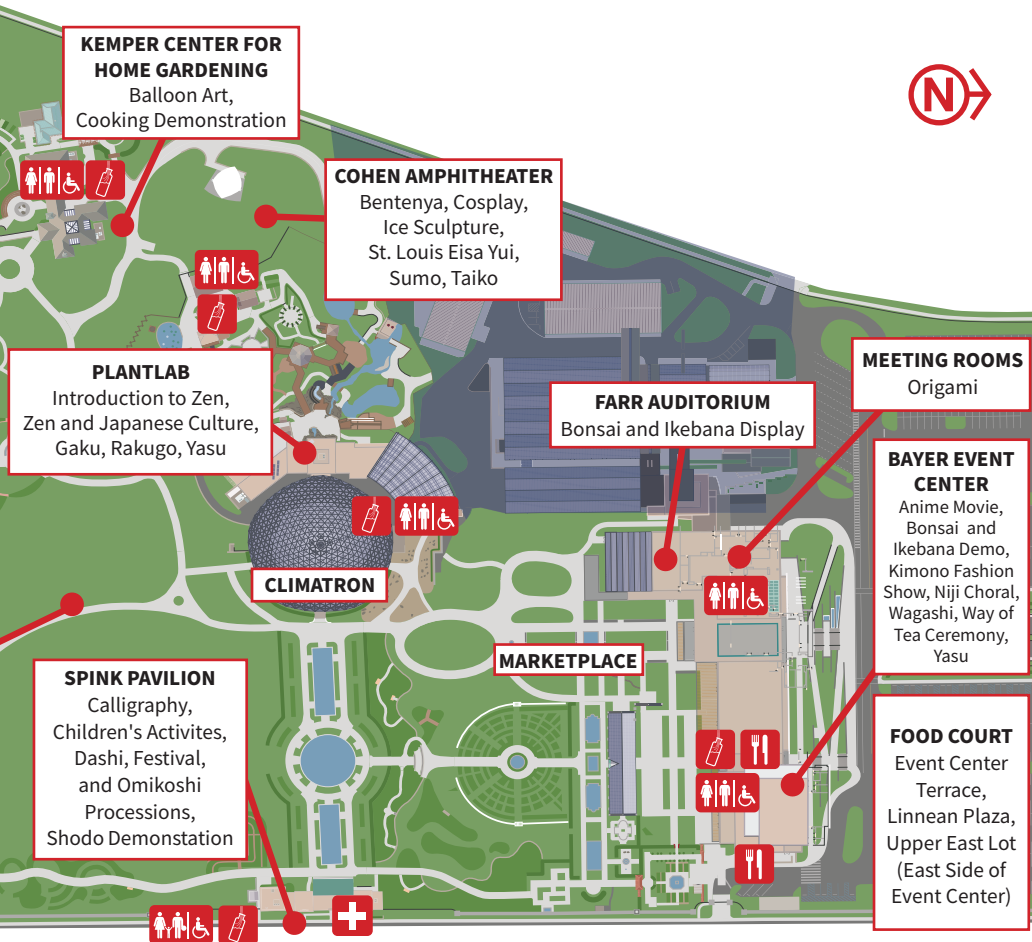




Japanese Garden

The 14-acre garden is stunning in all four seasons, showcasing distinct aspects of its beauty from different vantage points. Proposed by the Japanese American Citizens' League in 1972, *Seiwa-en*, the Japanese Garden, was designed by renowned landscape architect Koichi Kawana. Construction began in 1974, and the garden was formally dedicated on May 5, 1977.

The dedication was symbolic for St. Louis, as it promoted positive international relations. Several elected officials attended the ceremony, including the President of the St. Louis Board of Aldermen Paul Simon. He referred to the Japanese Garden as, "a garden which is building a bridge to international understanding." We continue to celebrate *Seiwa-en*, "garden of pure, clear harmony and peace," and its significance in honoring Japanese culture.



Pokémon at the Garden



One of Japan's most beloved exports, Pokémon, has taken hold at the Garden. Pokémon Go players are encouraged to visit all of our PokéStops, compete to be the very best at one of our gyms, and hatch an egg or two along the way.

Be sure to check out the Anime St. Louis booth at the South Garden marketplace to participate in the PokéStop and Smell the Roses scavenger hunt. While you're on the prowl to fill your Pokédex, please do not walk in any mulched or planted garden beds. There will be plenty of Pokémon on the paths.

SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT BY



THE GARDEN THANKS THE JAPANESE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE, A COALITION OF THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:

- Confluence Zen Center—A St. Louis-based zen community dedicated to zazen.
- Japanese American Citizens League—Devoted to the special needs and interests of the Japanese American community.
- Japan America Society of St. Louis—Devoted to promoting business and cultural ties between America and Japan.
- Japan America Society of St. Louis Women's Association—Assists Japanese and American women in cultural exchange.
- Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of St. Louis—Founded for the purpose of promoting trade, commerce, goodwill, and partnership between Japan and the US.
- The Office of the Consulate General of Japan in Chicago—Represents the Japanese government in Missouri and other Midwestern states.
- St. Louis Japanese Language School for Children—The school teaches Japanese to native speakers and to new learners and is accredited by the Japanese Ministry of Education.
- St. Louis–Suwa Sister City Committee—Seeks to further ties between St. Louis and our sister city of Suwa in Nagano Prefecture, Japan.
- St. Louis Japan Society—Primary purpose is for Japanese nationals in the area to meet and socialize.
- Seinen Committee—An organization for young Japanese/American professionals.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Missouri Botanical Garden strives to make sustainable choices for the future of people, plants, and the planet. Recyclables such as beverage containers and compostable food and service ware will be kept out of the landfill by our Zero Waste Ambassadors. Look for designated waste station tents on the food court during the event. Thanks to our vendors, volunteers, and visitors for keeping the huge event's footprint small. YOU help the Garden show the way to be Green Today—Greener Tomorrow!

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE GARDEN

Tickets on sale NOW



BEST OF MISSOURI MARKET®

Friday | October 3 | 9 a.m.–7 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday,

October 4–5 | 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Members Only Hour

Saturday, October 4 | 8–9 a.m.

Missouri's best food producers and crafters offer baked goods, fresh and dried flowers, live plants, handcrafted items, baskets, furniture, custom jewelry, children's activities, live music, and more.



SPIRITS IN THE GARDEN

Friday, October 24 | 6–8:30 p.m.

Celebrate All Hallows' Eve sampling tastings from local and regional distilleries, wineries, and breweries! Enter the costume contest, dance the night away, and learn about the spirited history of the Garden. Ages 21 and up.



GARDEN GLOW

Presented by **Edward Jones®**

Saturday, November 15–January 3

(Closed: November 17 and 27, December 24 and 25)

Celebrate the season by strolling through displays of almost 2 million lights, with a mix of fun new experiences and traditional favorites.

Visit mobot.org/glow
for more information.

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY—

You'll save more than the cost of admission!

Members of the Missouri Botanical Garden are our partners in plant protection here in St. Louis and in the areas across the planet that most need our help.

Thanks to members, Garden scientists are on the ground in more than 30 countries around the world discovering and caring for plants that provide us with food, shelter, clothing, and medicine.

JOIN THE GARDEN TODAY

to help us make our world happier, healthier, and greener for all.

MEMBERS ENJOY THESE GREAT BENEFITS

- Free daily general admission at our three locations
- Valuable savings on shopping, classes, and special events like Garden Glow
- Members-only events like Ghouls in the Garden and the Member Speaker Series
- Reciprocal benefits at 350+ gardens
- An exclusive members-only Garden gift

Upgrade your Japanese Festival ticket to a membership!

Stop at the Membership Tent or visit mobot.org/join to start your year of membership today!



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

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Sundos Schneider, and Kat Neihaus.