

TRAVEL

TOKYO'S
ROSES

Nature's fireworks burst into bloom for spring festivals

By CAROL LUTTY
NEW YORK TIMES SYNDICATE

Tokyo is transformed by an explosion of nature's fireworks and a sweeping succession of time-honored festivals each spring. Ohanami, or flower-viewing, which began with cherry blossoms, continues in breathless bursts of dangling wisteria, voluptuous peonies, flamboyant azaleas and fragrant roses until 100 varieties of irises come into full bloom at the Meiji Shrine Garden in mid-June.

The winding lanes and bustling shopping streets of Shitamachi, Tokyo's most traditional district, come under the spotlight too, as neighborhood shrines and temples welcome spring with boisterous celebrations.

Dating back to the early Edo Period (1603-1867), one of the city's oldest and liveliest festivals is taking place here during May.

Events

Kabuki-za Theater, at 4-112-15 Ginze, will hold daily matinees of



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAPAN NATIONAL TOURIST ORGANIZATION

Sumo wrestling: Japan's 2,000-year-old national sport involves the clashing of scantily clad behemoths on a small, earth ring.

three plays, including "Satauki-Yami Utsunoya Toge," and evening performances of two plays and two dance pieces, including "Sukeroku Yakori no Edo Zakura," counted among the "18 Grand Plays of Kabuki" through May 27.

Headsets with a running English commentary are available. Tickets cost \$13 to \$123; \$5.50 for the last play only. Reserve through Kabuki-za at 3641-3131.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra will perform Stravinsky's "Firebird," "Petruška" and "Rite of Spring" on June 4 at Suntory Hall; Haydn's "Seasons" on May 29 at Tokyo Bunka Kaikan; and a Beethoven program on June 7 at Tokyo Art Space. Tickets from \$19.50 to \$92.50 are available through the ticket agency, Pia. Call 5237-9999 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Sumo wrestling, Japan's 2,000-year-old national sport, involves a fascinating pugnant of ana-chronistic rituals — the clashing of scantily clad behemoths on a small, earth ring.

Reserved seats are already sold out, but 400 bleacher tickets for \$11.50 go on sale at 9 a.m. each day. Get there early. For more in-

Street vendors, acrobats and racetracks crowded in, turning the grounds into a non-stop carnival at Tokyo's most venerable temple, the imposing Asakusa Kannon, at 2-3-1 Asakusa.

formation call 2623-5111.

What to see

Tokyo's most venerable temple, the imposing Asakusa Kannon, at 2-3-1 Asakusa, was in its heyday what the Pompidou Center in Paris is today: Street vendors, acrobats and racetracks crowded in, turning the grounds into a non-stop carnival.

Though the main temple has been completely rebuilt, the spirited atmosphere remains intact. The Nakamise, literally "inside-shrine street," leading up to the temple includes some of Tokyo's oldest merchants. Pick up a snack at Hanjudo, a picture perfect, 200-year-old cracker shop. For more information call 3842-

DISCOUNT CRUISE HEADQUARTERS
Luxury Cruises at Affordable Prices

Also Available:

- Disney Packages
- Golf Packages
- Las Vegas Packages

YOUR TRAVEL PLANNER
Cruise Network
30106 Ford Rd., Garden City
(800)873-0722
522-7020

Mexican Riviera from \$579.

Cruise the Mexican Riviera 7 days round-trip from L.A. for a fantastic fare from just \$579*. Call at Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan and Cabo San Lucas. Just say the word and you'll be cruising to the seaside resorts of the Mexican Riviera. Princess*. It's more than a cruise, it's the Love Boat™. Book by September 1, 1992 and receive a special bonus gift.

PRINCESS CRUISES™ THE LOVE BOAT

Cruise Network
Luxury Cruises at affordable prices

Southfield
Donelson World Class Travel
333-5811
West Bloomfield
West Bloomfield Travel
855-9750
Sterling Heights
Business & Pleasure
939-7070
Livonia
Business & Pleasure
478-5525
1-800-837-9832

SECOND PERSON ONLY \$195 ALASKA

Right now Regency is presenting the biggest Alaska sale since the U.S. bought it for 2 cents an acre! You can experience 7 unforgettable days of cruising plus your choice of three great ways to save. Cruise the dramatic fjords of the magnificent Glacier Route between Anchorage and Vancouver. Visit the ports of Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway & Sitka, sail to Columbia Glacier, across Prince William Sound, and see it all from the comfort of the spacious Regent Sea or Regent Star. Both provide Regency's renowned European-style service and superb continental cuisine, weekly through September.

Extend your vacation by 4-11 days with one of our land tour packages to Denali Park, Fairbanks, Siberia, or choose one of our Exclusive Rail Express tour packages. Book today!

Super Companion Fares!

June 19, 21, 23 & 25 Only	2nd, 3rd and 4th person in cabin each pays...	\$195
Select departures July thru September	2nd, 3rd, and 4th person in cabin each pays...	\$395 or \$495

FREE 2 Category Upgrade

Other valid when 1st person in cabin pays full fare. A fare for at passengers additional at \$115 from Denali. Certain blackout dates and restrictions apply. Port charges and fees additional. Booking deadline 6-1-92. Since reg. by telephone. *Select departures only.

TRAVEL UNLIMITED
313-746-9000
800-444-8776

REGENCY CRUISES

CONDOMANIA
Fabulous resort condominiums

ORLANDO Area
From \$490.00/wk
One, Two and three BR luxury condominiums
5 miles from Disney

EUROPEAN VILLA CONDO PACKAGES
From \$599.00/wk
Worldwide

HILTON HEAD ISLAND
From \$490.00/wk
Two bedroom two bath family condos for 7 nights.
Private beach access, indoor and outdoor pools, tennis, etc.
See your travel agent or call 800-258-2701
Passport Society Travel Inc

Win a weekend getaway to the Stratford Festival in our "Where's William?" Contest

Find William Shakespeare hidden in the pages of your Observer & Eccentric Newspaper today or in any Monday edition during the next four weeks and you will be eligible to win a weekend at the Stratford Festival in Ontario, Canada.

Eight Observer & Eccentric readers will win a three day weekend for two on Friday, June 19, through Sunday, June 21, 1992 which includes Friday and Saturday night lodging at the Victorian Inn, Saturday brunch at the Church Restaurant, and two tickets to three of this season's premier performances:

William Shakespeare's "Romeo & Juliet"
Robertson Davies' "World of Wonders"
Gilbert & Sullivan's "H.M.S. Pinafore"

Your package also includes a backstage tour of the world-renowned Festival Theatre as well as a post-performance reception on Saturday evening.



To qualify for a chance to win this wonderful theatre weekend, find William! Scan the pages of your Observer & Eccentric every Monday through May 25th and find where we've hidden a tiny picture of Shakespeare. Then, by May 29, mail a postcard or letter to:

Where's William?

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers
36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150

Clearly print your name, address, daytime telephone number, along with the issue date and code number under William Shakespeare's picture.



Your best ticket to Shakespeare

All correct entries will be entered in an impartial drawing for this exciting weekend excursion. One entry per week is allowed.

RULES: YOU MUST BE 18 YEARS OR OLDER TO ENTER. DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS FRIDAY, MAY 29, 1992. CONTEST IS NOT OPEN TO EMPLOYEES OF OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC NEWSPAPERS, AFFILIATED COMPANIES, OR THEIR FAMILIES. PRIZES NON-REFUNDABLE OR TRANSFERABLE. WINNERS PROVIDE THEIR OWN TRANSPORTATION. THE OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC NEWSPAPER IS THE OFFICIAL DETROIT AREA PRINT SPONSOR FOR THE STRATFORD FESTIVAL.

Observer & Eccentric
NEWSPAPERS