



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**79TH ANNUAL LA NISEI WEEK JAPANESE FESTIVAL AUGUST 10-18**

**(Los Angeles – May 23, 2019)** – Enjoyed by thousands every summer, come join the downtown Los Angeles community at the 79<sup>th</sup> Nisei Week Japanese Festival in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo. One of the nation's longest running ethnic festivals of its kind, the events will take place August 10-18. The theme for this year's Festival is "Fire Up for Nisei Week," to generate passion and excitement for the festivities this year and for many years to come. The Festival showcases free Japanese cultural events, activities and exhibits, including music and entertainment, food, and fun spanning two weekends.

**First Weekend – August 10-11**

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual free Tanabata Festival (August 10-11) will color Little Tokyo's Central Avenue and Museum of Contemporary Art (Geffen) between Temple and First streets with large, assorted streamers (kazari). Individuals, families, community groups, businesses, churches, temples, and others have contributed their one of a kind displays. Plenty of entertainment such as Taiko, martial arts exhibitions, and activities will be available for the entire family at the Plaza Festival held at the Japanese American Community and Cultural Center (JACCC), Saturday and Sunday. Additionally, free cultural exhibits such as bonsai, calligraphy, Ikebana, and more will be on display. Don't forget to stay for Nisei Week Sunset on the Plaza night event for pop-up food vendors, entertainment, and more.

On Sunday, August 11, come join Aki the Akita and friends at Aki's Pup Up Party, where there will be shopping, food, and fun for pups of all ages and sizes. Routed through the streets of Little Tokyo, the Grand Parade will begin at 4 p.m. The parade will include Japanese traditional dancers, led by the Sanjo School, in honor of the 2019 Nisei Week Choreographer, the late Madame Kangiku Sanjo who passed away on April 28, 2019. In addition, Japanese taiko drums, Haneto dancers preceded by a Nebuta float, and special guests and honorees including Grand Marshal retired Los Angeles County Alternate Public Defender Janice Fukai.

**Second Weekend – August 17-18**

The second weekend continues with more free exhibits and cultural events at the JACCC. On August 17, come watch the 13th Annual Day-Lee Foods World Gyoza Eating Championship, where competitive eating greats such as hot dog-eating champion Joey Chestnut and YouTube sensation Matt Stonie have competed. Will Chestnut be back to try to break his record of 384 Gyoza eaten in 10 minutes? The Gyoza championship will be taking place on stage at the JACCC.

To close another year of Nisei Week, Ondo street dancing will be held on August 18 at 4 p.m. on Little Tokyo's First Street. The public is encouraged to join in this Japanese street dancing ritual. Nisei Week activities will be held in various locations throughout Little Tokyo, including the JACCC at 244 S. San Pedro Street.

For parking, please visit the Nisei Week website. Both weekends feature live entertainment, food and fun for the entire family. Take part and experience one of LA's premier summer

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cultural events. For further information, visit [www.NiseiWeek.org](http://www.NiseiWeek.org), call the Nisei Week office at [213-687-7183](tel:213-687-7183) or email [info@niseiweek.org](mailto:info@niseiweek.org)

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