

A very good evening. Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. It's my greatest pleasure to warmly welcome you all to the today's Sakura, cherry blossom, event.

I have a question now. Does anyone know the Sakura's language of flower? There are two languages of flower. The first one is "spiritual beauty," like this elegant Sakura flower arrangement. And the second is a "graceful lady," as many of our guests represent this language of flower. Thank you very much for your presence to bring up the mood of Sakura, beauty and gracefulness.

I have been long long waiting for this day to come. It's not only for inviting graceful ladies. It's because whenever I have a talk with anyone in this season, I'm stuck for an answer to one question; "When is the best timing to visit Japan to relish the Sakura blossom in full bloom?" Since the Japanese always love to be accurate, I'm in trouble with this simple question.

The Sakura has only 1 or 2 weeks between the first blooming day and the day all blossoms are fallen down. A full bloom comes less than 4 to 7 days after the first blooming. This means the best of best timing to relish the Sakura would be only 2 or 3 days around the full blooming. It's impossible to predict in advance. That's why, now, commercial companies update everyday their forecasts of Sakura blooming at 47 different spots all around Japan.

I checked it today that the date of the full blooming is on 29th March at the earliest, and on 18th May at the latest, having 50 days difference in the blooming timing from South to North. In the meantime, the further north you visit, the shorter the blooming period is getting. There is also a some tendency of the blooming date to be getting earlier and earlier every season. In addition, if we have rain, blossoms are easily gone. How complicated the forecast is! But, all forecasts say the best timing of this season in Tokyo must be in the next week. I remember, Mr. Jacky Panjabi, the owner of Jacky's Electronics, and his family will visit Japan next week. Congratulation on your superb prediction. But, today's most important thing for me is to say you can now check the blooming date even in English home page on internet. Please, google the "cherry blossom forecast". And, please don't ask me forever.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is the Japanese character, 桜, and the original form was this one 櫻. The left hand side means a "tree". The bottom right means "lady". Every Japanese people know the top right. Top right neither means moneys nor gentleman above the lady. Top right characters indicate two seashells. The right hand says a lady wears a beautiful seashell necklace. So, the entire characters means a beautiful tree like an elegantly dressed-up graceful lady, like a today's scenery of many graceful ladies taking seats here. However, you should not say that "here are many Sakura people". Nor, you should never say "she is Sakura lady". It's also totally wrong usage.

Sakura in Japanese has another meaning. Sakura people means a person who has been asked to do exaggeratedly bring up additional excitement to the atmosphere, like a guy who exaggeratedly boost up the party mood by huge big hands with bravo, or a lady who exaggeratedly pump up the event with her too much cheerful shout. In short, Sakura people is a kind of fake supporters who overact upon the request. Are there any Sakura people here today?

No, I don't think so. I do never need it, because we have many warm supporters to Japan in Dubai and the UAE. You always kindly help us, and you always love Japanese culture. You all have sympathy with Japanese beauty. This Sakura event offers my heartfelt gratitude for your warm support to Japan, presenting many Sakura items.

First one, you can see this amazingly beautiful Sakura flower arrangement, created by Ikebana Prof. Harue Oki, and her team. Definitely, she is not Sakura lady. Later, under her instruction, a short workshop will be offered to you who wish to create your original Sakura flower arrangement. This is a first of its kind in the UAE, as I brought Sakura blossoms directly from Tokyo for this event.

Today's Japanese cuisine I offer you at the next room are also full of special Sakura menu: Sakura sushi, Sakura sashimi, Sakura fish cake, Sakura shrimp, Sakura tempura, Sakura fried, Sakura cake, Sakura jerry, Sakura mochi, Sakura ice, and so on.

So, please enjoy everything Sakura tonight.