

# Asia's largest Irish Festival – One Week to Go!

*Tokyo's iconic St. Patrick's Day Parade – Irish Sports & Rugby with live performances of Irish music & dancing, plus Irish Foods & Drinks!*

TOKYO, MINATO-KU, JAPAN, March 9, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Star guests Miss World Japan, Miss World Ireland, "Iron Man" Hitoshi Ono, Junpei Ogura, Mundy and more!

The "I Love Ireland Festival 2018" (ILIF) will celebrate its fifth year on the weekend of the 17th and 18th of March 2018 in Yoyogi Park, Tokyo. The event is organized by the Ireland Japan Chamber of Commerce (IJCC) with the support of the Embassy of Ireland in Japan. Visitors will celebrate Ireland's national holiday, St. Patrick's Day, while enjoying a fantastic weekend full of entertainment, food, drinks, sport, education, culture and more. It is anticipated that some 130,000 people will attend the two-day festival.

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*The Ambassador of Ireland to Japan, Anne Barrington*

supported in 2018 by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Harajuku Omotesando Keyaki-Kai, Shibuya Ward, Yoyogi Park, Irish Network Japan, CCE Japan, Japan GAA, Miss World Japan, Calderwood Images, Book of Bands, imageMILL, and [La Ditta Limited](#).

Following on from the success of [2017](#), the hugely popular Street Rugby is back again, allowing hundreds of people to safely enjoy the sport in a city setting. This year for the first time, we will also introduce a "Rugby Tackle Machine" where you can challenge yourself and see how many kilograms of rugby tackle power you have!

It is well known that rugby plays a strong part in Ireland's sporting and cultural identity. Ireland and Japan will meet each other at the Japan Rugby World Cup in 2019. Star Japan National Rugby Union team players Hitoshi Ono (nicknamed "Iron Man") and Junpei Ogura will be present at this year's I



I Love Ireland Festival Live Dance Performance 2017

Love Ireland Festival. They will be speaking about their experience in Rugby and impressions of Ireland's Rugby team, meeting fans and participating in the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

On Sunday 18th March, the iconic St. Patrick's Day parade will travel the up and down Omotesando Avenue, with thousands of spectators joining in on the celebrations. The parade will start at 1 pm, Miss World Japan 2017 Haruka Yamashita and Miss World Ireland 2016 Niamh Kennedy will join the parade this year.



Attendees at the 2017 I Love Ireland Festival

This year we welcome Mundy, an Irish singer-songwriter, as our Special Guest Performer from Ireland. Details of the various stage performances that highlight Ireland's rich heritage can be found on [www.iloveireland.net](http://www.iloveireland.net)

The Festival is just one of the growing number of St. Patrick's Day events around Japan. In 2017, a record 14 parades were held in towns and cities across the country. Team Ireland in Japan, in partnership with the I Love Ireland Festival management company La Ditta Limited, are aiming to make the 2018 celebrations in Tokyo the biggest and best ever.

The Ambassador of Ireland to Japan, Anne Barrington said, "The I Love Ireland Festival is the largest celebration of Irish culture in Asia and, entering its 5th year, is now a firm fixture on the St. Patrick's Day calendar. With over 100,000 attendees in 2017, the festival is now a runaway cultural and commercial success. I am delighted that the Irish Government will once again financially support the project in 2018. From small beginnings, the I Love Ireland Festival has grown to become the biggest forum for Irish and Japanese people to mingle and celebrate everything that is best about Irish music, food, and dance. I am certain that 2018 will be the best I Love Ireland Festival yet!"

The President of the Ireland Japan Chamber of Commerce, Eamonn Murphy, said, "We're delighted that the I Love Ireland Festival continues to grow and reach new audiences. The Irish community enjoys sharing our culture and heritage with the people of Japan. And don't forget, on St Patrick's Day, everyone's Irish for the day!"

We're looking forward to seeing you at the festival!

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