



For sharing experience of Japanese and Japanese American Heritage

Urasenke Tea School Hosts Halloween-Themed Chakai and Sotanki Memorial in Fall 2024

The Urasenke Tankokai Los Angeles Association hosted two significant events in the Fall 2024: a Halloween-themed *Chakai* on Sunday, October 27, and the annual Sotanki Memorial on Sunday,

November 17. Both gatherings showcased the rich traditions of Japanese tea ceremony while fostering community engagement.

Halloween *Chakai* at Shoseian Teahouse

On October 27, the Shoseian Teahouse in Glendale became the venue for a unique Halloween-themed *Chakai*, organized by the Youth/English-Speaking Members (ESS) of the association. This event aimed to introduce the Urasenke tea tradition to younger generations and English-speaking audiences.

The festivities featured participation from several notable members, including Mme. Mari Robinson, Mrs. Miho Blumkin, Mrs.



Mrs. Michelle Liu Carriger, and Mme. Keiko Nakada, who served as *shokyoku* during multiple seatings. Seasonal sweets from Fugetsudo in Little Tokyo, shaped like persimmons, were served.

A variety of *dougu* (tea utensils) were selected for the occasion. A



Members of the Urasenke Tankokai Los Angeles Association at the Halloween Chakai.

chashaku (tea scoop) named “Ghost Whisperer” added a whimsical touch to the proceedings.

Representatives of the Youth/ESS group included Mr. Wayu Kennedy, Mr. Patrick Duffey, Mr. Mark Umbriaco, Ms. Yasmin Elming, Ms. Mika Sumida, Ms. Karen Ishii, Mr. Eric Zhu, and Ms. Lou Lou. The team performed a *Nakaoki usucha demai*, further enriching the tea ceremony experience.

Sotanki Memorial Honors Sotan, Third-Generation Grand Master



Members of the Urasenke Tankokai Los Angeles Association at the Sotanki Memorial.

On November 17, the annual Sotanki Memorial was held at the Nichiren Beikoku Betsuin in Boyle Heights, Los Angeles. This solemn event paid tribute to Genpaku Sotan Koji (1578-1658), the third-generation Grand Tea Master of the Sen family. Forty-three guests and participants gathered to honor his legacy in a serene two-hour ceremony.

The *kucha* ceremonial offering was hosted by Mme. Sohjin Robinson's shachu, with Ms. Somi Uyehara serving as teishu and Ms. Mika Sumida as hanto. Tea guests included Mme. Soho Morikami, Ms. Soshin Kawamura, and Ms. Sochi Ohshima.

Additionally, a *hanayose* (flower arrangement) ceremony was conducted by Ms. Sowa Miyake, Ms. Sokei Masciandaro, Mr. Soho Duffey, Mr.

Soki Umbriaco, and Mr. Clyde Long de Lugo. Using an array of vases on a bamboo screen, the participants created beautiful, seasonal arrangements.

The *tokonoma* (alcove) featured a scroll by Fukumoto Sekio, bearing the phrase "*Kanzashite shofu wo kiku*," which translates to "Sit still listening to the sound of the pine through the wind." A tea bowl was offered, and all participants joined in silent reflection to honor Sotan Koji.

The event concluded with a *Sanyu no Shiki* demonstration, organized by Mme. Somitsu Korin. The intricate performance, narrated by Mr. Soho Duffey, combined flower arranging, incense sharing, and tea preparation, with positions determined by the random selection of cards.

A Celebration of Tradition and Community

Both the Halloween *chakai* and the Sotanki Memorial highlighted the enduring beauty and cultural significance of the Japanese tea

ceremony. The events left attendees with a sense of tranquility, respect, and a deeper appreciation for the Urasenke tradition.



Nadeshikokai to Host 13th Annual *Seijinshiki* Ceremony in Gardena

Celebrating Young Adults with a Traditional Japanese Coming-of-Age Event

Los Angeles-based Nadeshikokai (Japanese Culture and Traditions, Inc.) will host *Seijinshiki*, or Coming-of-Age Ceremony at the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute, 1964 West 162nd Street, Gardena, CA 90247, on Sunday, January 19, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

This traditional celebration honors young adults transitioning into adulthood, a milestone in Japanese culture that symbolizes new beginnings and responsibilities. The ceremony will recognize participants aged 18 to 20 as they embark on bright futures, supported by the love and encouragement of family, friends, and the local community.

The event will feature live music, VIP guests, and participants dressed in stunning kimonos, offering attendees a unique cultural experience.

“In Japan, the *Seijinshiki* Ceremony is a cherished tradition that marks an important life milestone,” said Mika Kuroda, president of Nadeshikokai. “We hope that all new adults, regardless of nationality or gender, will enjoy wearing kimono and experiencing this meaningful celebration of Japanese heritage.”

Nadeshikokai hosted its first *Seijinshiki* in 2013 to commemorate the transition of young adults into responsible members of society. This annual event

reflects a tradition dating back to the 8th century, deeply rooted in Japan’s cultural heritage.

Traditionally held in January, *Seijinshiki* is organized by municipal governments in Japan to honor young adults turning 20, the former legal age of adulthood. Following the recent change in Japan’s legal age of adulthood to 18, Nadeshikokai will celebrate participants aged 18 to 20 in its 2025 ceremony.

The event is made possible through the efforts of Nadeshikokai members and a dedicated team of volunteers.

About Nadeshikokai

Founded in 2011 by Kimono master Takako Sasaki, Nadeshikokai (Japanese Culture and Traditions, Inc.) is a nonprofit organization based in Los Angeles, dedicated to promoting Japanese culture through the elegance of kimono. Its mission is to foster cultural exchange and understanding, contributing to harmony in California’s multicultural society.

Nadeshikokai welcomes members from all backgrounds who are interested in Japanese culture and kimono. For more information about the organization and upcoming events, please visit <https://www.nadeshikokai.org/>.



Save the date for Cultural News fundraising concert on Saturday, March 29, 2025

Ken Koshio Sings Songs of Showa Era, Japan

Cultural News Association presents its benefit concert “Ken Koshio Sings Songs of Showa Era, Japan” on Saturday, March 29, 2025 at 12:00 noon at [Zenshuji Soto Mission Temple](#), 123 S. Hewitt Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, in Little Tokyo, Downtown Los Angeles.

Tickets are \$80. Sandwiches are provided

In Japan, official calendar is linked with emperor’s lifespan. The official Showa Era began on Dec. 25, 1926 on the day the Taisho Emperor passed away. And the Showa Era ended on January 7, 1989 when the Showa Emperor passed away.

The year of 2025 marks the 100th anniversary of the Showa Era that Japan experienced the worst and best time in modern history.

Popular Japanese songs mirror the Japanese society. Singer and songwriter Ken Koshio (in above photo) who grew up in the Showa Era, Japan, showcases essential popular songs of Showa Era.

This concert is planned for a fundraising to support Cultural News, invaluable media in

Japanese culture circles of Los Angeles and its vicinity.

The inaugural issue of monthly Cultural News was published in July 1998 by Shige Higashi in Los Angeles. The monthly edition continued by March 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic occurred.

Since June 2020, the Weekly Newsletter of Cultural News has been published online.

Additionally, four websites of Cultural News are available for the public to view the latest event information of Japanese culture events in Los Angeles and its vicinity.

In 2019, a nonprofit organization, the Cultural News Association, was established to support the mission of Cultural News. The association aims to raise \$30,000 in 2025 to continue vital works of Cultural News.

Your supports to Cultural News are appreciated. The program of *Ken Koshio Sings Songs of Showa Era, Japan* will be announced soon. For inquiry, mail to higashi@culturalnews.com