



WORLD RENOWNED LANTERN FESTIVAL MAKES CANADIAN DEBUT

Chinese Lantern Festival will be lighting up the PNE Grounds December 15, 2017 – January 21, 2018

**For Immediate Release
September 26, 2017**

Vancouver, BC – Known as one of the most beautiful and culturally significant festivals on the planet, the **Vancouver Chinese Lantern Festival** will light up the skies of Vancouver with dozens of spectacular gossamer lanterns, some reaching nearly 200 feet in length.

Bin Zhu, Director of Sichuan Tianyu Culture Communication Co. Ltd says, *“We believe our lantern festivals can improve cultural communication between China and the world. It is our wish for communities globally to explore how the Chinese lantern festivals are celebrated and to discover why this festival is significant to people of Chinese decent. The artists will be creating many culturally significant lanterns as part of this display, and we look forward to bringing out all the communities within British Columbia to enjoy the event.”*

Beginning on December 15th, the largest festival of its kind in Canada will feature 35 illuminated displays transforming over 14 acres of Hastings Park into an explosion of light and colors. The event runs daily from December 15 (closed Christmas Day) until January 21, 2018.

“It is a tremendous honour to have been selected by this leading cultural organization as the inaugural host in Canada for this important festival,” says Mike McDaniel, President and CEO of the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE). *“We anticipate people from all ethnicities and cultures from across our region will be excited about the opportunity to see this important and impressive display.”*

Lantern festivals started during the Han Dynasty, about 2,000 years ago. For centuries, lanterns festivals have been lit on the fifteenth day of the first month in the Chinese calendar to pray for a good harvest, and to gain favor of Taiyi, god of heaven. Today, the lantern festivals are still held each year around the country, with each major Chinese city having its own light festival. In ancient times, the lanterns were fairly simple, and only the emperor and noblemen had large ornate ones. In modern times, lanterns have been embellished with many complex designs such as the ones that will be on display at the PNE.

Zigong, hometown of the Lantern Festival, has some of the best lantern artisans in China where skills and a tradition of craftsmanship are passed down through the generations.

The Festival will be featuring Dragon, White Pagoda, Kylin, and Huabiao Column lanterns, each lantern symbolizing a Chinese sage or legend. Dragons have been a symbol of worship for over 4 thousand years, and are considered the noblest creature in the world. Pagodas are a traditional part of architecture, and since ancient times have been praised for the spectacular views. Kylin is a traditional beast with a calm temperament in ancient Chinese tales. Ancient people believed that where there are Kylin, there is a favorable omen. Huabiao are famous structures in the Forbidden City in Beijing, made of jade, with one column at the front gate, and one at the back of the city facing inwards. The columns are said to be protectors of the residents and a reminder for the emperor to pay attention to his duties.

In addition to the lantern displays, the festival will also include two nightly performances in the PNE Amphitheatre: Sunday to Thursday at 6:30pm and 8:30pm, and Friday and Saturdays at 7pm and 9pm. Featuring Face Changing, Acrobatics, Plate Spinners, Folk Dance, Jar Balancing and Erhu. These exciting performances are family friendly, and are sure to wow. The lantern festival will also feature a food and beverage program and additional children's activities.

Tickets go on sale September 26th at TicketLeader.ca. The **Chinese Lantern Festival** opens on December 15, 2017 and runs Friday to Saturday from 5pm-11pm and Sunday to Thursday from 5pm-10pm.

Ticket Prices (includes all fees)

Adult (13-64) **\$19**

Senior (65+) **\$14.50**

Child (4-11) **\$13.50**

Family Pass 2 Adult & 2 Children \$55.00

Children under 3 years old are free

Group Rates available for groups of 10 and more

Call PNE Group Sales at 604-252-3663 for more info

For more information about The Vancouver Chinese Lantern Festival visit:
www.vancouverlanternfestival.com

About the PNE:

Owned by the City of Vancouver, the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) is a healthy and vibrant non-profit organization dedicated to providing over 3 million visitors a year with first-class cultural, sporting and family entertainment events. Founded in 1910, the PNE operates from a 114-acre site at Hastings Park, a multi-facility venue in Vancouver where the organization operates four activity streams: an annual 15-day Fair, Playland Amusement Park, maintenance and care of the Hastings Park site and management of the site's year-round facilities. These facilities are utilized to celebrate a variety of hockey, amateur sporting, music, community, social, cultural and commercial events throughout the year.

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