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### Dragons to Descend Upon Sloan's Lake

Exciting boat races, Asian marketplace are highlights of this fun celebration.

#### Event Details

Dragon Boat Festival  
Sunday, August 17  
9 a.m. - 7 p.m.



AUGUST 13, 2003 -- This Sunday marks Denver's Third Annual Dragon Boat Festival - a free, public celebration of pan-Asian sports and culture that dates back over 2000 years. Between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., 48 teams will compete for the 2003 Dragon Boat Cup by racing 200 meters across Sloan's Lake in 40-foot dragon boats.

#### Location

Sloan's Lake Park  
5200 W. 24th Ave  
(Sheridan & 24th)



This year's festivities will be held in the northeast corner of the park.

Dragon boats are slim, canoe-like racers, each with a brilliantly-colored, hand-painted and hand-carved dragon's head at the prow and a flashy tail at the stern. Each boat holds up to 20 rowers sitting two abreast, with a steersperson at the back and a drummer in the front whose beat sets the pace for the crew.

Dragon boat festivals commemorate the life and death of Qu Yuan, a poet from 342-278 B.C. Qu Yuan was exiled from his home in Chu, and he later drowned himself in the Mi Lo River after his home was invaded. The people of Chu were unable to rescue him, so in tribute, they threw zung-ze (steamed rice and reed leaf dumplings) into the river to the sound of drum beats to keep the fish away from his body.

#### Admission

FREE

Dragon boat racing today is a competitive, international sport; however, it didn't branch out internationally until 1976 when the Hong Kong Tourist Association started a worldwide marketing campaign to involve racing teams from other countries. In 1983, the first United States team competed in Hong Kong, and the first World Championship was held in 1995 in the city of Yue Yang, China, with 16 countries participating.



The Japan America Society of Colorado team.

#### More Information

Visit the [Colorado Dragon Boat Festival Web Site](#) or call 303-722-6852.

See the [festival schedule](#) for event times and details.

This year's festival features local media personalities who will be serving as stage emcees, including 9NEWS anchor Adele Arakawa; legendary local



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## Parking

Invesco Field at Mile High  
1701 Bryant Street  
Denver, CO 80204

[Web site](#)



Free parking will be available at Invesco Field at Mile High, and free RTD shuttle buses will run between the lot and Sloan's Lake Park every 15 minutes until 8 p.m.

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writer, columnist and former *Westword* music beat reporter Gil Asakawa; award-winning photojournalist Glenn Asakawa; 9NEWS morning reporter Lorie Hirose; 7NEWS technology and Web reporter Kim Nguyen; 9NEWS reporter and producer Quynh Nguyen; FOX-31 News "Whei Out West" reporter Whei Wong; and NEWS4 reporter Christina Yao.

Time trials begin at 9 a.m. on Sunday. The Asian Marketplace will open at 10 a.m. with a colorful, traditional Lion Dance, and will include a variety of vendors and organizations offering food, arts, crafts and community information. The festival's stage will feature continuous Asian performances throughout the day, starting at 10:30 a.m. Cultural demonstrations include music, Chinese ribbon dance, martial arts, Polynesian and Indian dance, costumes, musical performances by Denver Taiko and Wendy Woo, and much more.

The official celebration kicks off at 11:30 a.m. with a colorful parade led by a 75-foot traditional Chinese Dragon, followed by a special Asian eye-dotting ceremony performed by a Buddhist priest to symbolically awaken the spirit of each boat, and a Dragon Dance performance by Boulder's Shaolin Hung Mei Kung Fu Association. Racing begins at 1 p.m., and awards and closing ceremonies will begin at 7 p.m.

Only limited parking is available at Sloan's Lake Park. Attendees are encouraged to park for free at Invesco Field at Mile High and take advantage of the free RTD shuttle buses that will run throughout the day at 15-minute intervals until 8 p.m. For more information, please call 303-722-6852, or visit the <http://coloradodragonboat.org>.

Last year's festival was drew a crowd of over 30,000 spectators. The popular event is the only one of its kind in Denver to unite the area's various Asian communities, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Indian, Vietnamese, Hmong and Filipino.

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Written by Content Developer [Betsy Kimak](#), Office of Television and Internet Services. Photos courtesy of the Colorado Dragon Boat Festival.

-- Last updated on July 19, 2004



Performer demonstrating cultural Thailand dance.



Dragon Dance performed by the Shaolin Hung Mei Kung Fu Association.

