



## **2022 Smithsonian Folklife Festival** **Sensory Guide**

Welcome! This document will provide sensory information in advance of your visit to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival.

The Folklife Festival is an outdoor event. As is the case with most outdoor spaces and events, it can sometimes be difficult to predict the sensory environment as a result of weather, natural smells, and the volume of visitors on any given day. This guide will provide an overview of sensory information for program areas/built structures located on the Festival site.

Please visit our webpage, <https://festival.si.edu/visit>, for general information about visiting the Festival. Detailed Accessibility information can be found at <https://festival.si.edu/accessibility>.

### **The Festival**

The Folklife Festival is an open-air, vibrant, and well-attended event. DC can be very hot and humid in the summer. It can be helpful to bring a water bottle (there are refill stations throughout the site) as well as comfortable shoes for walking, and clothes appropriate for the weather conditions. The Festival tends to be more crowded in the mid-late afternoon and on the weekends. As our Festival site is on the National Mall, July 4 will also bring large crowds to the area and the sights and sounds of the fireworks display in the evening.

The Festival is divided into program areas, which each take up a different space at the Festival and on the Mall. This year, the Festival contains two main program areas: **United Arab Emirates: Living Landscape | Living Memory** and **Earth Optimism x Folklife: Inspiring Conservation Communities**. Many of our Festival Participants—people who come to share their cultures and experiences with us—will be excited to meet and talk to you about their culture, countries, art, and ideas. ! You can learn more about them at our Festival website, <https://festival.si.edu>.

You can find out more about these programs from our Festival schedule, <https://festival.si.edu/schedule>

The **Festival Marketplace** showcases works of art by our Festival participants. Items are available for purchase, and the Marketplace also features artisan demonstrations. **Concessions** are also available for purchase and feature cuisine that ties into the Festival themes and

culture, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Additionally, there are beverage and gelato stands.

### United Arab Emirates Program Area Sensory Information (separated by sense):

#### **SOUND:**

- All the **Stages** with amplified sound may be loud throughout the day. Check the schedule to find out when events and concerts are happening on various stages.
  - The **Crossroad Stage** will have amplified sound and may be louder during presentations and performances.
- The **Soundscape** will be playing environmental sounds and recorded voices. Speakers will be located near the trees. Additional artist tents and demonstration areas may have ambient sound or music.

#### **SMELL:**

- **Concessions and Dining Areas** will have food smells throughout the day
  - **Festival Foodways** (right across from UAE will have barbeque and during the second week, active grilling, so there may be food and charcoal smells.
- The **Coffee Tent** will be toasting coffee beans throughout the day, and there will be a selection of spices on display for visitors to view and smell.
- In the **House of Creativity** is a **perfumery** with heavy floral scents that is located in the middle section. This area can be avoided by accessing sections on either side. Additionally, one time per day, there will be a workshop involving perfume in the **Workshop Tent**.
- The **Falconry Tent** may have live birds on site, which may have animal scents.

#### **SIGHT:**

- The Recording Booth inside the **House of Belonging** has a bright digital screen.
- There may also be a bright screen located in the **Workshop Tent**.
- Smoke may be in the area around the BBQ smoker in the **Festival Foodways**.

#### **TOUCH:**

- At the **Falaj**, there is an activity where you can move different panels to change the water flow.
- At the **Species Conservation Tent**, there is an interactive obstacle course where visitors can experience the exciting life of a sea turtle.
- At the **Palm Studio**, visitors can touch and make palm tree-themed crafts.
- Some of the **Craft Tents** may have more things you can touch.

### Earth Optimism Sensory Information (separated by sense):

## **SOUND:**

- All the **Stages** with amplified sound may be loud throughout the day. Check the schedule to find out when events and concerts are happening on various stages.
  - **Earth Optimism Stories** will have amplified sound and may be louder during presentations and performances.
- **People-Powered Science** will have amplified sound for workshop presentations.
- The **Fields and Forests** tent will continually play a soundscape of spoken, musical, and nature sounds. The **Animals, Plants, and Us** tent will also continually play videos of different tribal elders speaking.

## **SMELL:**

- **Concessions and Dining Areas** will have food smells throughout the day.
  - The **Folklife Kitchen** and the **Folklife Garden Tavern**, located directly to the left of Earth Optimism, will have food smells throughout the day.
- **People-Powered Science** has some plants that may be smelly, especially mint. There is also a worm compost garden, **Wonderful Worms**, in this tent which may have an earthy smell.
- The **Fields and Forests** tent will also have flowers and plants, including a “sniff display” with different strong-smelling mushrooms.
- The **Coastal Connections** tent will have live oysters in a touch tank.
- There will also be live mussels in the **Community Solutions** tent during the second week and wetland plants and seaweed in an aquarium, which may have a strong smell.

## **SIGHT:**

- **People-Powered Science** is coordinating an event with NASA. NASA is bringing a bright protector for an activity on July 2.
- The **Community Solutions** tent has light-blockers in the tent, producing dimmer areas.

## **TOUCH:**

- **People-Powered Science** will hold a bean dissection activity and other hands-on events that feature beadwork, seed matching, origami and stamping (all with high tactile elements).
  - In the **Garden**, visitors can touch a variety of plants and seeds.
- The **Fields and Forests** tent will have a variety of tactile activities, including mural making, sandboxes, coloring, and touching natural litter, mushroom leather and a woven mycelium installation.

## **Additional Festival Information:**

- The **Festival Mainstage** will feature nightly evening concerts beginning at 6:30 PM. These events can be quite loud and crowded. To self-regulate and reduce sensory input, we recommend sitting further away from the stage (towards the US Capitol). Even if

seated a few blocks back on the National Mall, you will still be able to hear the concert clearly.

- The **Festival Marketplace** is located on the south side of the Festival site directly in front of the National Museum of Asian Art. The Marketplace features a wide range of artisan crafts and is highly visual. There will be pop-up artist demonstrations in the space throughout each day. Generally the Marketplace area is quieter during the morning and on weekdays.
- Should you need to take a short break, there are several areas in close distance to the Festival site.
  - Moving east of the Festival site (towards the US Capitol), particularly on the south side, you will most likely encounter less crowds and noise.
  - The Smithsonian Castle tends to be a quieter museum space. It is air-conditioned, and has restrooms, and a café.
  - Behind the Smithsonian Castle is the Smithsonian Gardens which has many seating areas where you can rest among a more natural setting.
  - The National Museum of Asian Art and National Museum of African Art also tend to be quieter museum spaces. Both buildings are air-conditioned and have restrooms.

**Sensory Map:**

This sensory information is noted on the attached Festival Map using the following icons:

Loud-sound area	High smell area	Bright/dim area	Tactile activity
			

**We hope that this information is useful to you as you prepare to visit the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Should you need any further information, please call us at 202-633-7488.**

**We look forward to your visit to the Festival!**



Washington Monument



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

- Information
- Volunteers/ Lost & Found/ Accessibility
- Food & Drink
- Accessible
- First Aid
- Water Station
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- WC Toilets
- Beverages



Capitol

