



2024 Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Sensory Guide

Welcome! This document will provide sensory information before 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 because 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 grounds.

Please visit our website, festival.si.edu/visit, for general information about visiting the Festival.

The Festival

The Folklife Festival is an open-air, vibrant, and well-attended event. Washington, D.C., can be very hot and humid in the summer. It can be helpful to bring a water bottle (there are refill stations throughout the grounds), 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.

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 homes, art, and ideas. You can learn more about them at our Festival website, festival.si.edu. You can also find out more about these programs from our Festival schedule, festival.si.edu/schedule.

Concessions are available for purchase and feature cuisine that ties into the Festival themes. Please consult the allergen menu (located on our website) to learn more about the contents of concession items. Remember that the Smithsonian Folklife Festival cannot guarantee that all concession items will be allergen-free or will be entirely free of cross-contamination. Please read ingredient lists carefully.

Individual Sensory Considerations

SOUND:

- **Performance and presentation stages** with amplified sound may be loud at times throughout the day as they host music, dancing, and storytelling. Check the schedule to find out when events and concerts are happening on various stages.
- The **Four Directions Stage, Potomac Atrium, and Rasmuson Theater** will host featured concerts that may be louder.
- Additional **artist tents and demonstration areas** may have ambient sound or music.
- The **Basketry tent** will have an electric tool that may be loud while in use.
- **Skating and Skate Art** demonstrations and workshops will have impact noises from the skateboarders doing jumps on their skateboards or the wheels rolling on the asphalt and wooden ramp. These demonstrations will occur periodically throughout each Festival day.
- **Cafe areas and concessions** will likely be more crowded and, as a result, louder.

SMELL:

- **Concessions and dining areas** will have food smells throughout the day.
- The **Foodways** presentation space will host cooking demonstrations, so there may be food and cooking smells.
- In the **Kitchen Garden** space, there may be smells from soil, flowers, and pollen.
- The **Muralism** areas may smell of wet paint.
- The **Quechua and Zapotec Weaving tents** will be using natural materials that may have a scent.
- Artists in the **Plaster Art and Featherwork tents** will be using dyeing materials like vinegar, which has a strong smell.

SIGHT:

- The **Foodways** presentation space will host cooking demonstrations and workshops, so there will be things to watch and see there.
- Certain **dance and movement performances** may include eye-catching elements like regalia, props, and dancing.
- **Muralism** areas will allow visitors to watch artists paint in large scale.
- The **Field Sports** area will allow visitors to watch sports demonstrations and, at times, participate in them.
- The **Roanoke Museum Store** in the National Museum of the American Indian will have a lot of items and art for purchase and as a result may be highly visually stimulating.
- The **Skating and Skate Art** demonstrations and workshops will include fast skateboarders on ramps.
- At the **artist demonstration tents**, visitors can watch artists create different items of varying levels of visual stimulation.

TOUCH:

- At the **Kitchen Garden**, visitors may be able to touch the soil and some plants with permission from Festival staff.
- At the **artist demonstration tents**, there might be items that visitors can gently touch with the permission of the artists.
- At the **Family Activities tent** will be some activities visitors can participate in or take home.
- At the **Games** and **Field Sports** areas, there are opportunities for visitors to participate in games and try aspects of the sports.

Options for Quieter or Calmer Places:

- You will most likely encounter fewer crowds and less noise if you move **away from the Festival venues**, in the direction of the U.S. Capitol (east of the Festival) or the Washington Monument (west of the Festival). Outside of the Festival areas, you may find shady trees or benches on the National Mall.
- To the north, the **National Gallery of Art** buildings tend to be quieter with fewer people.
- For a calmer space on the Festival grounds: there is an area between trees in the northwest area, near the Kitchen Garden, that is a bit farther from areas of high stimulation.
- On the grounds of the National Museum of the American Indian is the **Native American Veterans Memorial** which is a quiet, calm, outdoor space with benches.
 - *Every day of the Festival from 11 to 11:20 a.m., the memorial will host a presentation of the colors which includes the lighting of a gas flame within the memorial. At any other time, this will be a quieter area without scheduled programming.*
- There are Festival venues on the ground floor of the National Museum of the American Indian that may be louder and more crowded, but as you move upstairs to various exhibit areas, you can find quieter, less crowded areas.
- On the lower level of the **National Air and Space Museum** (located just west of the Festival) is the Family Care Suite of the National Air and Space Museum. It includes companion-care spaces (with adult changing tables), nursing rooms, and a quiet room. To access this space, ask to speak to a ticketing staff supervisor upon arrival at the museum.
 - *Please note that the Air and Space Museum requires timed entry passes. To access this space, ask to speak to a ticketing staff supervisor upon arrival at the museum.*
 - *The north entrance of the Air and Space Museum, facing the National Mall, is currently closed for construction. Please access the museum via the Independence Avenue entrance.*



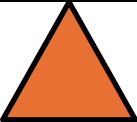

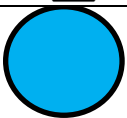
Additional Festival Information:

- **Water refill stations** will be located throughout the Festival grounds.
- Surrounding **museums** are free to enter and can provide a break from the heat, as well as indoor restrooms.
- Earplugs, assistive listening devices, and wheelchairs are available upon request at the **Accessibility tent**. *You will need to provide a photo ID to check out a wheelchair or assistive listening device.*
- The **Accessibility tent** is located near the center of the National Mall, to the east of Fourth Street (approximately 200 feet north of the northeast corner of Fourth and Jefferson Drive). This tent provides information, resources, and support services.

Additional accessibility information can be found at festival.si.edu/accessibility.

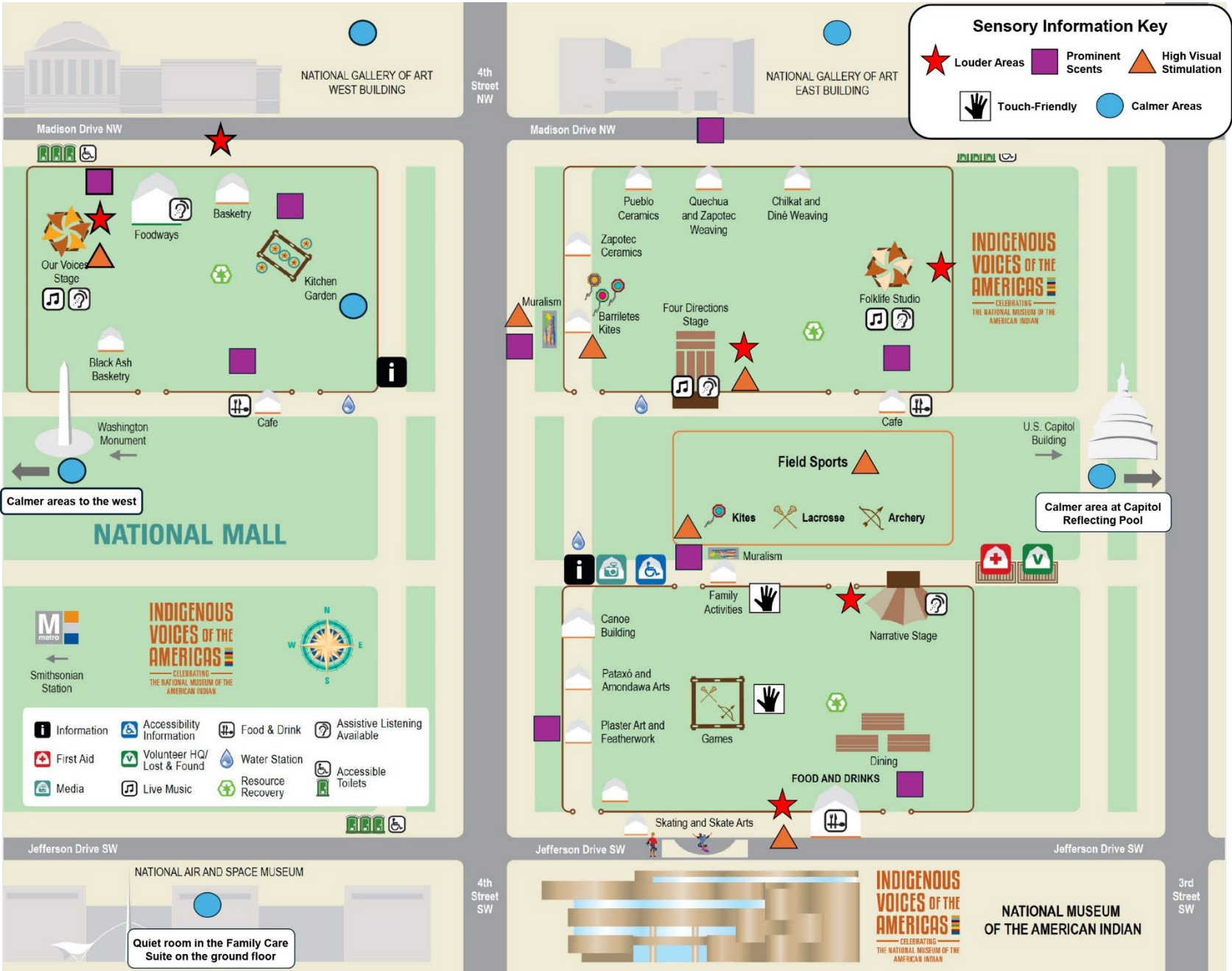
Sensory Map

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

Icon	Sensory Meaning	Visual Description of Icon
	Louder Area	A red five-pointed star
	Prominent Scents	A purple square
	High Visual Stimulation	An orange triangle
	Touch-Friendly	A silhouette of an open hand
	Calmer Area	A blue circle

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 or email folklife@si.edu.

We are excited to welcome you to the Festival!



Sensory Information Key

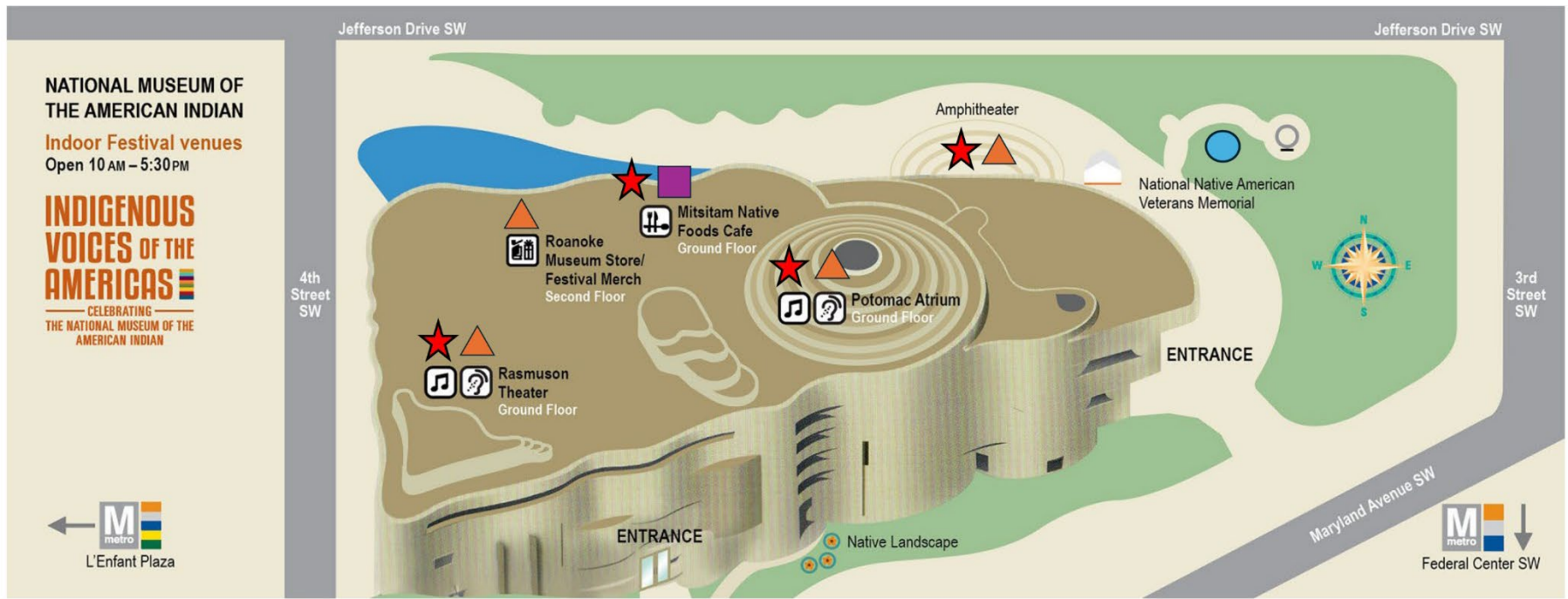
- Louder Areas
- Prominent Scents
- High Visual Stimulation
- Touch-Friendly
- Calmer Areas

Calmer areas to the west

Calmer area at Capitol Reflecting Pool

Quiet room in the Family Care Suite on the ground floor

- Information
- Accessibility Information
- Food & Drink
- Assisted Listening Available
- First Aid
- Volunteer HQ/ Lost & Found
- Water Station
- Accessible Toilets
- Media
- Live Music
- Resource Recovery



Sensory Information Key

- ★ Louder Areas
- Prominent Scents
- ▲ High Visual Stimulation
- ☞ Touch-Friendly
- Calmer Areas