

FESTIVALS

Feb. 15–March 28 The 9th NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF KAMABOKO-ITA-NO-E (Paintings on Kamaboko boards) Collaborating with Shiki's Haiku Shiki-Kinen Museum 3F

Closed on Tuesdays 9:00-17:00 Admission: Free

About 100 paintings selected from the national exhibition of kamaboko-ita-no-e at Gallery Shirokawa are on exhibit, collaborating with Shiki's haiku.

Themes of the exhibition this year are scenery and living things in addition to the five senses (hearing, sight, touch, smell and taste).

Haiku by elementary, junior high, and high school student contest winners in Matsuyama City are also exhibited.

March 3 HINA-MATSURI (The Doll's Festival)

Hina-matsuri is held to celebrate girls' growth, health, and happiness. The origin is thought to be *joshi-no-sekku* 上巳の節句 or *Kegare-barai* 穢れ払い held in the Heian era more than 1,000 years ago, when people floated dolls made of paper down the river to drive away ill fortune. This custom is known as *Nagashi-bina* (floating dolls) 流し雛, and can still be observed in some parts of the country. At most homes ceremonial dolls *hina-ningyo* are displayed on tiers of shelves called *hinadan* 雛壇 covered with a scarlet carpet *himosen*. These dolls are dressed in the costume of the ancient Heian court. A full set of dolls usually consists of 15 dolls: the Emperor and Empress (*dairi-bina* 内裏雛), two ministers (*zuijin* 隨身), three court ladies-in-waiting (*kanjo* 官女), five musicians (*hayashi* 囃子) and three guards (*aji* 衛士). It was believed that the dolls protected people from sickness or ill fortune. It is a traditional hina-matsuri custom to offer to the dolls sweet rice wine *shiro-zake*, and three-layered (white, green, and pink colored), diamond-shaped rice cakes *hishi-mochi*. The white layer symbolizes snow, the green is for new growth and the pink is for peach flowers. In Matsuyama it is celebrated a month later on April 3rd.

Feb. 3 – March 24 TOBE-YAKI (Porcelain) HINADOLL FESTIVAL

At Tobe-yaki Dento-sangyo-kaikan (Traditional and Industrial Center) 1F Lobby

9:00 - 17:00 Closed on Mondays

Tobe-cho, Iyo-gun 伊予郡砥部町

Tobe-yaki *hina*-dolls, some of which are in the shape of the Dragon, the zodiac sign for this year, *e-zara* (painted plates), and *toban* (painted pottery boards) made by Tobe-yaki potters are on exhibit and for sale.

Admission: Adults ¥300 Seniors over 65, High sch. & College students ¥200

Elementary & Jr. High sch. students ¥100 Only Lobby exhibition Free

Feb. 23 – April 3 TOBE-YAKI (Porcelain) HINA- DOLL ESTIVAL

In Dogo-onsen Bekkan (Bath Annex) Asuka-no-yu 飛鳥乃温泉

6:00 – 23:00 1F Entrance & 2F Big Room

About 30 Tobe-yaki hina-dolls and miniature furnishings (animals, plants, flowers, kitchen tools, etc.) are on exhibit. They are made by Yamada Hiromi, who is regarded as the only woman who is a traditional Tobe-yaki porcelain artisan. She is well-known as the creator of the big Tobe-yaki paintings on the wall of the Asuka bath, representing the ancient *waka* poem

world (nature, people, living things).

(Tel. 089-932-1126) Fare: Adults ¥610

Feb. 16 - April 22 EXHIBITION OF HINA-DOLLS AND HINA FURNISHINGS

9:00-17:00 Closed on Tuesdays At Uwajima Date Museum 伊達博物館 Uwajima city

On tiers of shelves about 7.5 meters long *yusoku-bina* 有職雛 which contains 17 hina-dolls and about 210 hina *chodo* 調度 (furnishings) made in Taisho 13th, are on exhibit.

Another hina dolls and furnishings were brought by *Miyo-hime* 觀姫 (the wife of the 7th lord of the Uwajima Date clan) as part of her trousseau about 200 years ago.

Ko-bina (miniature furnishings) made of silver were later brought by Takako 孝子 (the wife of the 10th lord) as marriage property, which had been handed down from the 14th Tokugawa Shogun Iemochi 家茂, are also on exhibit. Other hina dolls and paintings of plum and cherry blossoms complete the exhibit.

(Tel. 0895-22-7776)

Admission: Adults ¥500 High sch. & College students ¥400 Seniors (older than 65) ¥400

Children (younger than Junior high sch. students) & Disabled persons Free

Transportation: Take the JR express train bound for Uwajima and get off at Uwajima Station. From the station it takes 25 minutes on foot to get to the museum.

Feb. 24 - April 7 The 5th KUMA-MACHI HINA-DOLL FESTIVAL

On Kuma-machi Shopping Street and at Akebono-za

Kumakogen-cho, Kamiukena-gun 上浮穴郡久万高原町

About 15,000 colorful hina-dolls are on exhibit at each shop. At the main house of this event *Akebono-za*, about 2,000 dolls are displayed. A splendid pyramid of dolls is a highlight. (Tel.0892-21-1111)

March 19-21 DOGO-ONSEN (Hot Spring) FESTIVAL

(Tel. 089-943-8343)

19 9:00 *Yu-kito* (a prayer to the God of Dogo Hot Spring)

Yu-hono (dedication of hot water to Yu-jinja shrine) At Yu-jinja

14:00 A brass band parade of local elementary and junior high school students

From Yu-jinja, through the Honkan, Asuka-no-yu, down the shopping arcade, Hojo-en, on to the Shiki Museum.

20 10:00-16:00 Dogo-onsen *Rakuichi-rakuza* market-B-kyu gourmet stands and local products

On Nikitatsu street, the lane that goes west from the middle of the shopping arcade.

11:00 *Onna-mikoshi* (portable shrines carried by women) *kakikurabe* parade

From Dogo-onsen Station, Asuka-no-yu, down the shopping arcade, to the Honkan

21 10:00 *Wa-daiko* (Japanese drum) show In front of Kanko-kaikan

13:30 Local entertainment In front of Kanko-kaikan

Suigur daiko (sea guard drums) and *Iyo-manzai*

19-21 12:45 / 14:45 / 16:45 Mochi-maki On the north side of the Honkan

19:00 Dogo-onsen odori (dance)

From Hojo-en, down the shopping arcade to Asuka-no-yu

8:30 -20:00 Panel exhibition ‘Onsen Koryu (exchange) with Taipei city, Taiwan’
At Dogo-onsen Kanko-kaikan

You can also enjoy *ashi-yu* (foot baths) and *te-yu* (hand baths) in the Dogo-onsen area.

HANA-MI (flower viewing)

Sakura, the cherry blossom, is a symbol of Japan and in spring a lot of people go out to view *sakura* in full bloom. From late March to early April, *hanami* parties are held viewing the blossoms. Not only in the daytime but we also recommend brightly lit-up *yozaakura* (night cherry blossoms).

Matsuyama Castle Late March - Early April

Matsuyama Castle is one of the 100 national sakura spots, where about 200 cherry trees attract us in addition to the fantastic view of the castle against the clear blue sky.

Ishite-gawa Green Belt Late March - Early April

There are about 900 cherry trees along the riverside. The area near Izumi-machi and Muro-machi is especially recommended. Between Ichitsubo 市坪 bridge and Tachibana 立花 bridge there are large grassy areas where many people enjoy *hanami*.

Dogo Park Late March - Mid April

There are about 320 cherry trees of *someiyoshino* and *tsubakikanzakura* in bloom. The park is lit up from 18:00 till 22:00 during the *hanami* season. The hilltop area has a good command of the whole park in full bloom. And if you have some time, stop by the south side of the park to see some reconstructed samurai houses at the Yuzuki-jo castle site 湯築城址 (Closed on Mondays).

Saiho-ji 西法寺 Late March - Early April Shimoidai-cho, Matsuyama city 松山市下伊台町

According to legend, about 1,300 years ago Emperor Tenmu 天武天皇 presented a cherry tree together with a pale gray-colored 薄墨色 letter of thanks to the temple for praying for his wife's recovery from an illness. It is said that is why the cherry trees here came to be known as *Usuzumi-zakura* 薄墨桜 (faintly tinted cherry). There are about 200 cherry trees in the precinct.

Hanami downtown

Along Sanban-cho street 三番町 about 320 trees of bright pink *yaesakura* (double cherry blossoms) start to bloom a little later than other varieties.

March 21 SHUNBUN-NO-HI (The Vernal Equinox Day) 春分の日 National Holiday

On *Shunbun-no-hi*, day and night are the same length and the sun sets directly in the west. According to Buddhist cosmology, paradise, or the land of happiness, is located in the west. During the week of the equinox (March 18th -24th) called *higan*, people visit their family graves and offer incense sticks, *o-senko*, to pay respect to their ancestors. The *higan* rites are based on Buddhist ideas, but they have been followed by Japanese people regardless of their religious faith. This custom is said to have been started in the 7th century by Prince Shotoku. After World War II, in 1948 the Vernal Equinox day was designated as a national holiday to admire nature and love living things. A favorite food on this occasion is *ohagi*, soft rice-balls covered with sweet *azuki* bean-paste. *Higan* is also referred to as a change of hot or cold season and there is an old saying, "Hot or cold weather ends with the equinox." (*Atsusa samusa mo higan made* 暑さ寒さも彼岸まで).