

# FESTIVALS

## **June 1 - Sept. 20 UKAI (Cormorant Fishing) on the Hiji-kawa (river) Ozu City**

In Japan the tradition of cormorants fishing goes back at least a thousand years. In Ozu it started as a tourist attraction in 1957 and now the Hiji-kawa is one of the three most famous *ukai* spots in Japan, including the Nagara-gawa in Gifu Prefecture and the Mikuma-gawa in Oita Prefecture. The fishing is done in the evening from a boat called *u-bune*, which is lit by torches as it sails down the Hiji-kawa, the river that runs through Ozu. Cormorant fishermen called *usho* beat the sides of the boats to encourage trained cormorants to catch fish. They are drawn by long strings attached to rings around the birds' necks, which prevent them from swallowing fish. When a cormorant makes a catch, a fisherman pulls the bird in and has it cough up the fish on the boat. You can watch it from special sightseeing boats called *yakata-bune*. Ukai is done in the way called *awase-ukai* 合わせ鵜飼 that *u-bune* and sightseeing *yakata-bune* sail down the river together. You can order a bento to eat on board or just ride the boat and watch, and some hotels offer a special *ukai* package. Prices range from ¥4,000 depending on your plan. It will be canceled if the weather is bad.

Ask for the further information to Ozu-kanko-sogo-annaisho 大洲観光総合案内所 and make a reservation. (Tel. 0893-57-6655) <https://ozuukai.com>

**Transportation:** Take the Iyotetsu bus bound for Yawatahama from Shieki, gate #4, and get off at Ozu-honmachi bus stop (a 90-minute ride). Or take the JR express train from Matsuyama and get off at Ozu (a 40-minute ride). From the station take a taxi or walk for 30 minutes.

## **July 22 - Jan. (Next year) THE 29<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF KAMABOKO-ITA -NO-E 9:00 - 17:00 (closed on Tuesday) at GALLERY SHIROKAWA Shirokawa-cho, Seiyō City 西予市城川町**

The national exhibition of paintings on *kamaboko* (fish-paste) boards started about thirty years ago. This year 6,100 paintings were sent from all over the country and abroad. The painting which won the first prize this year is the one titled “*Yōake ni* よあけに (at dawn)”. It was painted by Nakamura Rutsu (33 years old) from Komatsu city, Ishikawa prefecture, who is a Wajima lacquerware craftsman. She painted the Virgin Mary surrounded with grass and flowers in bloom, and a wing of an angel as if flapping against the light shining from the sky.

(Tel. 0894-82-1001)

## **August 1-2 DOGO VILLAGE FESTIVAL**

### **August 1-3, 6, 7, 9-1 1, 20, 25 DOGO-ONSEN SUMMER FESTIVAL**

**On the special stage in front of Kankokaikan (sight-seeing center) 観光会館  
Around Hojo-en (opposite dogo-onsen station), Haikara street, etc.**

A mid-summer festival opens in *Dogo-onsen* area. Many stalls of old-fashioned fun such as *kingyo-sukui* (goldfish catching), *kaki-gori* (shaved ice), and *takoyaki* are set up.

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| <b>1</b> | 9:30-10:30  | Yugama-yakushi (The healing Buddha of Dogo Spa) ceremony is held in thanks for blessing Dogo hot spa. |
|          | 19:00-21:00 | Opening event on the special stage<br>Dance, music, and local entertainment, etc.                     |
|          | 17:00       | Dogo <i>Yoichi</i> (night fair) on Haikara Street (Shopping Arcade)                                   |

About 20 *yatai* stalls stand such as *kaki-gori* shaved ice and *yakisoba* noodles, etc.  
On Sundays during the festivals *Asaichi* (morning fair) on Nikitatsu street  
(Tel. 089-943-8342)  
<http://www.dogo.or.jp> Dogoonsenryokan-kyodokumiai 道後温泉旅館協同組合

**August 2 OZU RIVER FESTIVAL FIREWORK DISPLAY**  
**20:00 - 21:00 On the north side of Hijikawa riverside, Ozu City**

In Ozu a summer firework display has been held since the Edo era (1600-1867). About 3,000 rounds of fireworks are set off. Most exciting and beautiful is the '*Niagara Falls*', tinting the surface of the river with rainbow colors against the background of Ozu castle, stretching 200 meters long. You might want to try combining this with the cormorant fishing. There is free parking for 1,900 cars. (Tel. 0893-24-2664)

**Transportation:** See the Ukai Festival for transportation info. From JR Ozu station it takes about 20 minutes to the north riverside on foot.

**August 6 HIROSHIMA MEMORIAL DAY**  
**August 9 NAGASAKI MEMORIAL DAY**

Events to remember these tragedies are held in many places in Japan. People throughout the country observe one minute of silence for the dead at 8:15 a.m. on the 6<sup>th</sup> and at 11:02 a.m. on the 9<sup>th</sup>, the moments the A-bombs were dropped over the two cities.

**August 6-8 UCHIKO SASA MATSURI (Bamboo Festival) 8:30-21:00**  
**On Honmachi street, Uchko-cho, Kitagun**

This festival started 65 years ago and it is one of the biggest bamboo festivals in Ehime Prefecture. 500 meters long the main street of Uchiko is lined with about 50 colorful papered bamboo decorations (*sasa kazari*). There are many stalls selling food, drinks and much more. Besides *Sasa matsuri*, it is worth visiting Yokaichi and Gokoku streets, to see traditional buildings, the Uchiko-za theater and the Kamihaga residence/*Mokuro* (Japanese wax) Museum.

**7** Sasa-odori (bamboo dance) contest on the evening  
About 30 teams will join the contest.

In case of rain it will be held on August 8 (Tel. 0893-44-2118)

**Transportation:** Take the JR express train bound for Uwajima from Matsuyama and get off at Uchiko. From the station it takes about 10 minutes on foot.

**August 3 MATSUYAMA PORT FESTIVAL**  
**MITSUHAMA FIREWORK DISPLAY 20:00-21:00 At Mitsuhaman Port, Matsuyama City**

This is one of the biggest firework festivals in Ehime with about 10,000 rounds of fireworks.  
In case of rain it will be held on August 4.

**Transportation:** Take an Iyotetsu train bound for Takahama and get off at Mitsuhaman. It is a 15-minute walk from the station. (Tel. 089-951-7707)

**August 4 ONMAKU FIREWORK DISPLAY 20:00-21:00**  
**At Imabari Port seawall, Imabari City**

This is another of the biggest firework festivals in Ehime with about 10,000 rounds of fireworks. In case of rain it will be held on August 11. (Tel. 0898-23-3939)

**Transportation:** It is a 15-minute walk from JR Imabari station.

**August 11 YAMA NO HI (Mountain Day) National Holiday**

**August 9-11 The 59<sup>th</sup> MATSUYAMA YAKYUKEN ODORI (dance)**

**On Okaido, Chifunemachi Streets and in Castle Park (Horinouchi)**

*Yakyuken odori* is based on movements and gestures characteristic of baseball, and *Yakyu* samba is danced to a samba rhythm by people wearing colorful costumes.

<b>9</b>	18:00-20:30	Company teams	On Okaido and Chifunemachi streets
	18:00-21:00	Company teams	In Castle park Horinouchi
<b>10</b>	17:00-20:30	Group teams	On Okaido and Chifunemachi streets
	17:00-21:00	Group teams	In Castle park Horinouchi
<b>11</b>	18:00-21:00	Group teams & Awarding ceremony	In Castle park Horinouchi

<https://baseball-dance.com/>

**August 13-16 O-BON**

It is said that during *o-bon* ancestral spirits return to their former homes in this world. Welcome and farewell fires are burned near the entrance of the homes. People visit the family graves, burn incense, and offer water and flowers. These are also offered at the family altars.

**August 15 MEMORIAL OF THE END OF WWII**

Ceremonies are held to mourn those who died in the war.

**Sep. 1 BOSAI-NO-HI (Disaster Prevention Day) 防災の日**

Disaster Prevention Day was established in 1960 for us Japanese to recognize deeply the disaster caused by typhoons, tidal waves, earthquakes, *tsunami* etc., and prepare ourselves for how to cope with them. The week from August 30 to Sept. 5 is called Disaster Prevention Week, during which disaster fairs and drills are held in many districts. It is also a time to make sure we have emergency supplies in our homes and that we know where the closest evacuation center is.