

FESTIVALS

May 17– June 8 NANRAKU-EN 南楽園 HANA-SHOBU (Iris) FESTIVAL 9:00–17:00

Nanraku-en is the biggest Japanese-style garden in Shikoku. There are many kinds of trees and flowers in the garden. More than 30,000 iris plants are in full bloom around this time. In addition, we can enjoy seeing about 36,000 azalea plants and about 2,000 hydrangea plants.

Main events

May 24th - June 1st *Take-toro* 竹灯籠 (bamboo lantern) Art evening

The park area is lit up from 17:00 to 21:00

June 1st 11:00 / 13:30 *Wadaiko* (Japanese drums) & Guitar performance & *Mochimaki*

June 8th 11:00 / 13:00 *Yosakoi odori* & *Mochimaki*

May 25th, June 1st 10:00-15:00 Tea ceremony At *Yama-no-ie*

Tobe-yaki (pottery) Sales / Local product sales Every day during the festival

Admission: Adults ¥320 Seniors more than 65 years old ¥160

High, Jr. high & Elementary school students ¥160

<https://www.nanreku.jp/> (Tel. 0895-32-3344)

Transportation: Take a JR express train bound for Uwajima and get off at Uwajima (an 80-minute ride). Then take an Uwajima bus bound for Nanrakuen, Fukuura or Kakeajiro and get off at Nanrakuen-mae (a 40-minute ride).

Early June – Mid June SHOBU FESTIVAL at Niiya Shobu park Niiya, Ozu City 大洲市新谷

Niiya Shobu-en has about 8,000 iris plants. There are many stalls during the festival.

Transportation: Take an express bus bound for Yawatahama from Shieki, gate #4, and get off at Niiya (a one-hour ride). From the bus stop it is a 3-minute walk to the park. Or take a JR local train bound for Yawatahama from Matsuyama and get off at Niiya. (Tel. 0893-24-2111)

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

In Japan the tradition of fishing with cormorants 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. 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 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 *yakata-bune* sail down the river together. You can order a *bento* (box lunch) to eat on board or just ride the boat and watch. Some hotels offer a special *ukai* package. Prices vary depending on the plan. It will be canceled if the weather is bad.

You need to make a reservation at Ozu Machinoeki Asamoya

Further information: <https://ozuukai.com>

0893-57-6655 *Ozukanko Sogoannaisho* 大洲観光総合案内所

Transportation: Take an Iyotetsu bus bound for Yawatahama from Shieki, gate #4, and get off at

Ozu-honmachi bus stop (a 90-minute ride). Or take a 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.

June 21–August 2 DOYO YOICHI (Saturday Fair) 土曜夜市 13:00– 21:00

On Saturdays Okaido and Gintengai Arcades and Matsuchika Town are filled with booths. There are games such as *kingyo-sukui* (goldfish catching), food, many sorts of things to buy and crowds of people enjoy the fun.

July 1–10 OYAMA–BIRAKI (Opening of Mt. Ishizuchi)

July 1st is the official opening of Mt. Ishizuchi 石鎚山 (1,982 m), the highest mountain in western Japan. It is considered a holy mountain and many believers from all over Japan come to climb it and pray. On June 30th three gods are taken in portable shrines from Ishizuchi-jinja near Saijo 西条 to Jojusha, the shrine at the top of the mountain. The three gods represent wisdom, compassion and courage, which are said to be the three masculine virtues. On the morning of July 1st, from about 7:00 small statues of the gods are carried to the top of the mountain one by one to the accompaniment of drums and conch shells followed by men dressed in white, called *Sendatsur-san* 先達さん. At the top they pray for health and safety while tapping the statues on each others' backs. The gods are enshrined there until July 10th. In the past no women were allowed to climb Mt. Ishizuchi. Now they can, but they are still not allowed on July 1st. If you are male and want to join, you should follow the *sendatsu-san*. It takes about two hours from Tsuchigoya to climb the top.

<https://www.ishizuchi.com>event>event4> Tel. 0897-55-4044 Ishiduchi-jinja

Transportation: Iyotetsu Bus Niihama *Tokkyu* (limited express) Fare (one way) ¥2,030

JR Matsuyama	→	Matsuyama city station #8	→	Ishizuchi-jinja-mae 石鎚神社前
8:45		8:53		10:26
10:15		10:23		11:56
Ishizuchi-jinja-mae	→	Matsuyama city station	→	JR Matsuyama
14:37		16:08		16:15
15:37		17:08		17:15
17:07		18:38		18:45

(Tel. 089- 972-2511)