

FESTIVALS

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 River 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 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 Ozu kanko Sogo annaisho 大洲観光総合案内所)

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 25–August 17 HIKARI-NO-OMOTENASHI (Light hospitality) in Matsuyama Castle

18:30–21:30

As the 10th anniversary of this special project, 32 kinds of colorful light sculptures are set up in many places such as *Honmaru* (main tower) square, *Chojaganaru* 長者ヶ平, *Tsutsumon* 筒井門, and *Tonashimon* 戸無門 in the castle area, which are used in the Hiroshima DREAMINATION 広島ドリミネーション. From Shinonome-guchi *tozando* 東雲口登山道 (the approach from the Rope-way street to the castle) to Matsuyama castle *Honmaru* square, the approach and stone walls are lit up. (Tel. 089-921-4873)

August 2, 9, 10, 15, 16

The chair lift and gondola services are open till 21:30

Fare: Adults (roundtrip) ¥520 Children (roundtrip) ¥240

Matsuyama castle main tower is open till 21:00.

Admission: Adults ¥520 Children ¥160

Night *yukata* day Those who wear *yukata* or *kimono* can ride the gondola for free.

August 2 18:00-20:00 Special public opening of *Nohara yagura* (turret) 野原櫓
and *Inui yagura* 乾櫓 (National important cultural properties).

August 2 18:30-19:00 Folk tales of Matsuyama castle
At *Tsutsui mon-tsuduki yagura* 筒井門続櫓

August 15, 16 18:00-20:30

Oshiro-de-kanpai ('Cheers!' at Matsuyama castle)

At *Honmaru square*

July 20 - January 12 next year The 30th NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF KAMABOKO-ITA -NO-E
9:00-17:00 Closed on Tuesdays & from Dec. 28-January 3
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 6,331 paintings were sent from all over the country and abroad. The painting which won the first prize this year is the one titled “*Banban hagukumu yoni* (the world where all living things are given loving care) 万万育む世に”. It was painted by Shimizu Hiroyuki 清水宏志 (78 years old) from Ehime prefecture, showing a mother woodpecker feeding her baby in the hole of the tree trunk.

Admission: Adults - ¥500 High school & University students - ¥300

Children younger than junior high school students - free

<https://www.city.seiyo.ehime.jp/miryoku/galleryshirokawa/> (0894-82-1001)

August 1-2 DOGO VILLAGE FESTIVAL

August 1-24 DOGO-ONSEN SUMMER FESTIVAL

Around Hojo-en opposite Dogo-onsen station, Haikara street (shopping arcade), etc.

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

1 9:30- *Yugama-yakushi* (The healing Buddha of Dogo Spa) ceremony is held in thanks for the blessing of the hot spa at Dogo park

1.2 18:00-21:00 *Dogo-voichi* (night fair) on *Haikara Street* (Shopping Arcade)

19 *yatai* 屋台 stalls are set up such as *kakikori* (shaved ice), *yakisoba*, pop-corn, *takoyaki*, super balloon, putt golf etc.

19:30-20:30 Opening event on the special stage in front of *Kanko-kaikan*

1.2.3.8.9.10 Stage event such as *Shikoku 88 taiko* (drum), *Suigun-daiko* (sea-guard drum), *Tsugaru shamisen*, music concert, dance etc. on the special stage in front of *Kanko-kaikan*

9 16:00-18:00 *Yakyukerodori* on *Haikara Street* & *Hojoen square* (in front of *Karakuri clock*)

20.21 10:30 *Aji* 味 festa in front of *Kanko-kaikan*

24 8:00-13:00 Sunday morning fair on *Nikitatsu-no-michi*

<http://www.dogo.or.jp> (Tel. 089-943-8342)

August 3 OZU RIVER FESTIVAL FIREWORK DISPLAY

On the north side of Hijikawa riverside, Ozu City

20:00 - 21:00

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. In case of rain, it will be held on August 8. (Tel. 0893-24-2664)

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

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 6th and at 11:02 a.m. on the 9th, the moments the A-bombs were dropped over the two cities.



1,260 × 840

From The Official Website of Tourism Matsuyama

August 2 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 9,000 rounds of fireworks.

In case of rain it will be held on August 3.

(Tel. 089-951-7705)

Transportation: Take the Iyotetsu train bound for Takahama and get off at Mitsu. It is a 15-minute walk from the station. <https://www.mitsuhaman-hanabi.com>

August 3 ONMAKU FIREWORK DISPLAY 20:00-20:50

At Imabari Port seawall, Imabari City

This is another of the biggest firework festivals in Ehime with about 10,000 rounds of fireworks.

Onmaku is an Imabari dialect for *omoikkiri* 思いつきり (to one's heart content). The theme this year is "Passion". In case of rough weather it will be held on August 11.

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



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

Uchiko *Sasa-matsuri* is one of the biggest bamboo festivals in Ehime Prefecture. The 500-meter-long Honmachi shopping street is lined with many colorful papered bamboo decorations (*sasa-kazar*) and lantern decorations. 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, and the Kamihaga residence/*Mokuro* (Japanese wax) Museum.

6-7 Bamboo and lantern decorations

7 *Sasa-odori* (bamboo dance) contest in the evening

In case of rain, the contest 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 8-10 The 60th MATSUYAMA YAKYUKEN-ODORI (baseball-dance) FESTIVAL
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.

The guest star this year is Pikotaro, a singer-songwriter.

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| 8 | 18:00-21:00 | On Okaido and Chifenemachi streets
<i>Yakyuken-odori</i> performance (Company teams) |
| | 18:00-21:00 | In Castle park Horinouchi
<i>Yakyuken-odori</i> performance (Company teams)
Gourmet event by kitchen cars
<i>Yakyuken-soodori</i> (総踊り) by citizens |
| 9 | 17:00-21:00 | On Okaido and Chifenemachi streets
<i>Yakyuken-odori</i> performance (Group teams) |
| | 17:00-21:00 | In Castle park Horinouchi |

Yakyuken-odori performance (Group teams)

Gourmet event by kitchen cars

10 18:00-19:00 On Okaido *Yakyuken-odori* performance (Group teams)

18:00-21:00 In Castle park Horinouchi

Yakyuken-odori performance (Group teams)

Baseball-Dance MUSIC Fes.

Gourmet event by kitchen cars

<http://baseball-dance.com> (Tel. 089-941-4111)

August 11 YAMA NO HI (Mountain Day) National Holiday

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. *Please refer to the Emergency section of this site for information about being prepared for a disaster.