

FESTIVALS

Feb. 11 - March 31 The 11th NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF KAMABOKO-ITA-NO-E (Paintings on Kamaboko boards) Collaborating with Shiki's Haiku Shiki Museum 3F in Matsuyama city

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

Paintings selected from the national exhibition of *kamaboko-ita-no-e* at Gallery Shirokawa are on exhibit collaborating with Shiki's haiku. This time the exhibition focuses on "Inochi-hagukumu (All living things are given loving care) 命育む" collaborating words described by Shiki.

Haiku of elementary, junior high & high school student contest winners in Matsuyama city are also exhibited. (Tel. 089-931-5566)

March 3 HINA-MATSURI (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* (exorcism) 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* 緋毛氈. 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* 白酒 and three-layered (white, green, and pink colored), diamond-shaped rice cakes *hishi-mochi* 菱餅. 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. 7 - March 29 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, *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 Lobby exhibition Free

Feb. 20-April 3 TOBE-YAKI HINA- DOLL FESTIVAL

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

1F Entrance & 2F Big Room

6:00 - 23:00

Tobe-yaki hina-dolls and miniature furnishings (animals, plants, flowers, kitchen tools, etc.) are on exhibit. They are made by Yamada Hiromi, who is a traditional Tobe-yaki porcelain artisan. She is well-known as the creator of the big Tobe-yaki paintings on the walls of the Asuka bath rooms, representing the ancient *waka* poem world (nature, people, and living things). (Tel. 089-932-1126) Fare: Adults ¥610 (1F) ¥1,280 (2F)

Feb. 20- April 20 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 are displayed. 17 hina-dolls wear the same costumes as those of *kuge* 公家, court nobles including 210 hina *chodo* 調度 (furnishings). They were made in the Taisho era (1912-1926).

Kyoho-bina 享保雛 and furnishings were brought by *Miyo-hime* 観姫 (the wife of Munetada 宗紀, 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 brought by Takako 孝子 (the wife of Munenobu 宗陣, the 10th lord) as marriage property, which had been handed down from the 14th Tokugawa Shogun Iemochi 家茂, are also on exhibit. They are very rare and delicate.

Jirozaemonn-bina 次郎左衛門雛 and furnishings made by present-day artisans are also on exhibit. (Tel. 0895-22-7776)

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

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

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

Feb. 22- April 5 KUMA-MACHI HINA-DOLL FESTIVAL

On Kuma-machi Shopping street and at Akebono-za 9:00-17:00

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

About 15,000 hina-dolls are on exhibit in front of the houses on the street.

In the main house of this event *Akebono-za*, about 2,000 dolls are displayed. A splendid pyramid of dolls is a highlight. (Closed on Tuesday) (Tel.0892-21-2015)

Feb. 20- April 3 HINA-DOLL 'OHINASAMA' FESTIVAL

At Historical and Cultural Museum of Ehime Prefecture 9:00-17:30

Uwa-machi, Seiyu city 西予市宇和町

Various kinds of hina-dolls are on exhibit, such as hina-dolls having been owned by Matsudaira family of Saijo clan in Edo era, *Jirozaemon-bina*, (male and female hina-dolls having round and cute faces popular in Edo era), *kawaribina* (contemporary dolls) 変わりびな representing Meiji Emperor, and *Goten-kazari* 御殿飾り. *Goten-kazari* shows an annual court event called *Kyokusui-no-en* 曲水の宴 in Nara era (710-794) and Heian era (794-1185). In front of the *goten* (palace) *sakazuki* (sake cup) are floated on the flowing water, where court ladies and gentlemen gather and compose *waka* poems before *sakazuki* pass through in front of them. They compete the speed and the quality of work. These dolls and decorations were made in the middle of Meiji era.

Admission: Adult (older than high school students) ¥700 Senior (older than 65) ¥400

Children Free (Tel. 0894-62-6222)

Transportation: Take the JR express train bound for Uwajima and get off at Unomachi. From the station it takes about 10 minutes on foot to get to the museum.

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

Dogo-onsen Honkan, Asakanoyu and the shopping arcade

19 9:00 11:00 *Yu-kito* (a prayer to the God of Dogo Hot Spring)

Tamanoishi 玉の石 on the northside of Honkan

Yu-hono (dedication of hot water)

- 14:00-14:40 A brass band performance Hojoen 放生園 in front of Dogo tram station
 14:00 / 16:00 *Shishimai* (lion dance) Hojoen
- 20 10:00-13:00 *Wa-daiko* (Japanese drum) performance
 In front of *Kanko-kaikan* (information center)
- 13:30-16:30 Local entertainment
 16:40-17:40 *Happyakuhachi tanuki* (eight-hundred-eight raccoon dog monster) 八百八狸
 Dogo samba On the shopping arcade
- 21 10:00-16:00 *Rakuichi-rakuza* –B-kyu gourmet stands and local products
 Nikitatsu street, the lane that goes west from the middle of the arcade
 (Haikara street).
- 12:30-19:00 Onna-mikoshi (portable shrines carried by women) *kakikurabe* parade
 From Dogo-onsen tram station, down the shopping arcade, the front of
 the Honkan to the Dogo-onsen hotel area
- 16:00- Karakoro haiku からころ俳句 (haiku gathering) In front of *Kanko-kaikan*
- 19-20 10:00-16:00 Tea ceremony Hotel Dogokan
- 19-21 Dogo-onsen *odori* (dance) 19th 16:00- / 20th, 21st 18:00-
 On the shopping arcade to the Honkan
- 8:30-17:00 Panel exhibition : *Onsen Koryu* (exchange) with Taipei city, Taiwan
 At the Dogo-onsen *Kanko-kaikan*
- 9:00-20:00 *Dogo Roten-ichi*, street stalls Hojo-en
Mochi-maki 19th 16:45 / 20th, 21st 14:45, 16:45 From Asuka-no-yu 2F
Sairei 祭礼 lantern Hojo-en

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

HANA-MI (cherry blossom viewing)

Sakura, the cherry blossom, is a symbol of Japan and in spring a lot of people go out to see *sakura* in full bloom. From late March to early April, *hanami* parties are held. 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)

***Hanami* downtown**

Along Sanban-cho street 三番町 about 2 kilometers long about 300 *yaesakura* (double cherry blossoms) - light pink *ichiyo* 一葉 and deep pink *sekiyama* 関山 - start to bloom a little later

than other varieties.

March 20 SHUNBUN-NO-HI (The Vernal Equinox Day) 春分の日 National Holiday

On *Shunbun-no-hi*, day and night are of 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 17th -23rd) 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 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).