

FESTIVALS

May 16- June 7 NANRAKU-EN 南楽園 HANA-SHOBU (Iris) FESTIVAL 花菖蒲祭り 9:00-17:00

Nanraku-en is the biggest Japanese-style garden in Shikoku. 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

Take-toro 竹灯籠 (bamboo lantern) Art Evening

The park area is lit up from 17:00 to 21:00 (May 23rd - June 7th).

Local entertainments such as *wadaiko* (Japanese drums), *shamisen*, *Ushioni*, etc.

Tobe-yaki (pottery) sales / Local product sales

SATONOE 里の家 Udon, Sooba. Coffee, etc

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).

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 side by side. 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.

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 19 OTAUE-MATSURI (Planting-rice Festival) 御田植祭 12:30

At Oyamazumi-jinja 大山祇神社 Omishima-cho, Imabari City 今治市大三島町

A ceremonial rice planting called Otaue-sai has a history of more than 600 years. It is held to pray to the god for a good grain harvest. Omishima Island is the third island on the Shimanami

Kaido Highway from Imabari city and has been famous since ancient times for being the home of the gods of the sea and generals. After the ceremony, sixteen *saotome* 早乙女, girls dressed in white robes with red sashes *tasuki* 襷, and *tekkokyahan* 手甲脚絆 move in line in the rice paddy led by a man called *taotoko* 田男 and plant rice seedlings one by one in the sacred field. The feature of this festival is a comical performance ‘*Hitori-zumo* (one man *sumo* wrestling). A man called *Ichirikizan* 一力山 fights against the invisible spirit of the rice plant in a *dohyo* ring in front of the sacred rice field to divine whether the harvest this year will be good or not. It is no wonder that the Spirit wins every year. This unique *sumo* is designated as an Ehime Prefectural Intangible Cultural Folk Asset.

<https://oomishimagu.jp/> Tel. 0897-82-0032

Transportation: Setouchi *Kosoku* (highway) Bus Fare (one way) ¥1,850

Matsuyama city station #5 → Oyamazumi-jinja Oyamazumi-jinja → Matsuyama city station

10:00

12:19

15:02

17:21

June 13–July 25 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, and 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 said to be a holy mountain and many believers from all over Japan come to climb it and pray. On June 30th three gods are taken out into portable shrines from Ishizuchi-jinja near Saijo 西条 to Jojusha-shrine 成就社 halfway up 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 *Sendatsu-san* 先達さん. 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 want to climb, you should follow the *sendatsu-san*. It takes about two hours from Tsuchigoya.

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

Transportation: (Iyotetsu Bus or Setouchi Bus) Niihama *Tokkyu* (limited express)

Fare (one way): ¥ 2,000 (JR Matsuyama) / ¥ 1,950 (Matsuyama city station)

JR Matsuyama #3 → Matsuyama city station #C2 → Ishizuchi-jinja-mae

Iyotetsu Bus 8:45 8:53 10:26

Setouchi Bus 10:15 10:23 11:56

Ishizuchi-jinja-mae → Matsuyama city station → JR Matsuyama

Setouchi Bus 14:37 16:08 16:15

Setouchi Bus 16:37 18:08 18:15

(Tel. 089- 972-2511)