

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 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 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 1 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 30 three gods are taken out in portable shrines from Ishizuchi Shrine 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 1, 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 10. In the past no women were allowed to climb Mt. Ishizuchi. Now they can, but they are still not allowed on July 1. 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)



July 7 TANABATA (star festival)

According to a Chinese legend it is only once a year that two lovers, the Shepherd (Altair) and the Weaving Princess (Vega), are able to cross the Milky Way and meet. Bamboo branches are decorated with *tanzaku*, strips of colored paper on which wishes are written, and brightly colored balls with long paper streamers. In Ehime this is usually celebrated on August 7 according to the lunar calendar.

Late July SHIMANAMI-KAIDO TAKIGINO (noh play by firelight) at Oyamazumi-jinja (shrine) in Miyaaura, Omishima-cho, Imabari City

Details of the event have not been announced yet.

July 19 - January 11 next year

The 31st NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF KAMABOKO-ITA -NO-E

At GALLERY SHIROKAWA Shirokawa-cho, Seiyō City 西予市城川町 9:00-17:00

Closed on Tuesdays & from Dec. 28-January 3

The national exhibition of paintings on *kamaboko* (fish-paste) boards started about thirty years ago. This year 6,552 paintings were sent from all over the country and abroad. The painting which won the first prize this year is titled “*Natsu Satoyama ni Ikiru* (In Summer Live in the countryside,

Satoyama 夏里山に生きる”. It was painted by Nishi Koji 西浩二 (69 years old) from Okayama prefecture. It shows a *kamikirimushi* (longhorn beetle) カミキリムシ, which is not good at flying, trying to spread his wings.

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

Children younger than junior high school students - free

<https://www.city.seiyo.ehime.jp/miryoku/galleryshirokawa/> (Tel. 0894-82-1756)

July 20 UMI NO HI (Sea Day) 海の日 National Holiday



July 22-24 UWAJIMA USHIONI (ox devil) FESTIVAL Uwajima City 宇和島市

This is one of the biggest festivals in Shikoku. The main feature is *Ushioni*. *Ushioni*, having the body of an ox and the head of a devil, are made of red, blue or brown cloth or hemp palm bark. They parade downtown on the main streets. Legend says *ushioni* were used to frighten the enemy. It will be canceled in case of rough weather. (Tel. 0895-22-5555)

- 22** 16:00-21:00 All-comer Festa (food event) at *Michinoeki Kisaiya*
- 20:00-20:30 Firework display over Uwajima Bay (about 10,000 rounds)
- 23** 10:00-12:00 Brass band and trumpet corps concert
- Prefectural police music band concert at *Michinoeki Kisaiya*
- 12:00-14:00 *Togyu* 闘牛 (bullfighting) City Bullring
- There is a shuttle bus service to the site.
- 14:00-16:30 *Uwajima Gaiya* Carnival (Children) / 17:30-21:50 (Adults)
- On *Kisaiya* road and *Ushioni* street

"Gaiya" means "terrific" in the local dialect.

15:00-21:00 All-comer Festa at *Fureai* square

24 10:00-12:00 *Ushioni* parade (Children) On *Kisaiya* road

12:00-15:30 (Adults) On *Ushioni* street & *Kisaiya* street

11:10 *Utsbukidoji-bayashi Drum performance* 打吹童子ばやし太鼓演奏
(From Kurayoshi city, Tottori prefecture 鳥取県倉吉市)

11:30 *Sendai Suzume odori* (sparrow dance) 仙台すずめ踊り
(From Sendai city, Miyagi prefecture 宮城県仙台市)

On *Ushioni* street and in front of the stage

16:30- 19:20 *Uwajima odori* (dance) on *Kisaiya* street

15:00-19:00 All-comer Festa at *Fureai* square

Transportation: Take the JR express train bound for Uwajima. It takes about one hour and fifteen minutes.

July 25 KAZAHAYA (國早) SEA FESTIVAL

HOJO FIREWORK DISPLAY 20:20-20:50

At Hojo gaiko-nozumiba 北条外港野積場 (open storage area of outer harbor)

Tsuji, Hojo, Matsuyama City 松山市北条辻

About 4,000 rounds of fireworks are displayed. Many stalls are set up. In case of rain it will be held on July 26. (Tel. 089-933-0567)

Transportation: It takes about ten minutes on foot from JR Hojo station to the port.

August 1 MATSUYAMA PORT FESTIVAL

MITSUHAMA (三津浜) 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 2.

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> (Tel. 089-951-7705)

August 3 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. (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 1-Late August DOGO-ONSEN SUMMER FESTIVAL & MURA (village) FESTIVAL

Details of the event have not been announced yet.