

Festivals & Events

Festivals and annual events are the lifeblood of every Japanese city, town and village. Many festivals have histories dating back several hundred years, and some have roots that are over 1,000 years old. While many have common themes, such as praying for a good harvest, giving thanks for a good harvest, or welcoming back the spirits of departed ancestors, each festival and event is unique in personality and flavour.

C - 5 see map C-5

Gujo Odori Dance Festival

One of the three most important dance festivals in Japan, this summer festival is held annually from July 'till September. Join dancers from all over the country as they dance through the night in the narrow streets of this historic town.

Where : Hachiman Cho various locations
URL : www.gujohachiman.com/kanko



B - 3 see map B-3

Shirotori Odori Dance Festival

Summer bon dances are extremely popular throughout the region, and Shirotori is no exception. Fast-paced and rhythmic music makes Shirotori Odori part dance festival, part workout, and very popular with younger participants.

Where : Shirotori Cho various locations
When : End of July to late August



B - 3 see map B-3

Shirotori Haiden Odori

On 17th August at the Shirotori Shrine and on 20th August at the Kibune Shrine dancers gather to welcome back the departed spirits of ancestors accompanied only by singing and the sounds of wooden geta on the floor of the shrine.

Where : Shirotori Cho
When : 17th August, 20th August

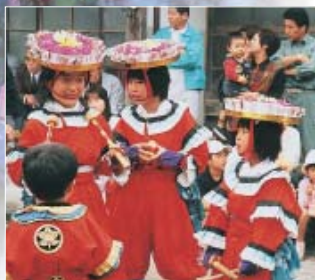


C - 3 see map C-3

Kanomizu Kake Odori

Four dancers in traditional costumes, which have long bamboo poles decorated with flowers attached, perform this dance for the simple pleasure of onlookers. 126 musicians and singers also take part in this colourful event.

Where : Meiho
When : 8 -9th September



D - 5 see map D-5

Togakushi Jinja Kuzonomiya Matsuri

This autumn harvest festival has been celebrated for over 400 years in Wara village. Locals hold a parade of festival floats through golden coloured rice fields in thanksgiving for a good rice crop.

Where : Wara
When : Early October



B - 3 see map B-3

Nagataki Hakusan Jinja Muika Matsuri

This Shinto ceremony dance has been performed for over 1,000 years. Watch participants form human pyramids and compete for paper flowers attached to the temple ceiling, all for good luck!

Where : Shirotori Cho
When : 6th January



C - 2 see map C-2

Takasu Snow Festival

Ice carving and snow sculpture contests are the highlights of this winter festival held annually at the end of February. Be sure to visit at night when the snow sculptures and ice carvings are lit to dramatic effect.

Where : Takasu Cho
When : Mid-February



B - 3 see map Rout e156

Sakuramichi International Nature Run

A celebration of the life of Ryoji Sato, a man whose life goal was to plant cherry trees beside the road from Nagoya to Kanazawa. This challenging run follows the same road; a distance of 266 km.

Where : start Nagoya - end Kanazawa
When : Late April



A - 2 see map A-2

Hakusan Chukyo Jinja Spring Festival

Held on the third Sunday in May since the arrival of Spring through the performance of godan kagura, a form of gagaku royal court music, and traditional dancing.

When : Third Sunday in May
Where : Hakusan Chukyo Shrine



D - 3 see map C-5

Summer Music Live in Meiho

Performed annually on the last Saturday in July, this summer open-air music festival attracts many famous artists and musicians. The evening "Summer Night Dream" event is a highlight for many.

Where : Meiho
When : Last Saturday of July



C - 5 see map C-5

Seriyu Yoshidagawa Kappa Matsuri

Watch local kids and adults, and kids and adults from all over Japan, compete in a bravery and diving competition from the 12 metre high Shinbashi bridge in downtown Gujo Hachiman.

Where : Hachiman Cho
URL : www.gujohachiman.com



C - 4 see map C-4

Nanukabi Matsuri

This colourful festival is to pray for a good rice harvest in the coming Fall. Villagers perform traditional dances that have not changed in over 700 years. As well, there is a parade and lion dance through the village.

Where : Yamato Cho
When : 7th August