

This year all the events held in the precinct such as mame-maki, mochi-maki, and Onigawara hono (dedication) ritual are canceled due to the pandemic.

Transportation: Take the JR local train bound for Imabari and get off at Kikuma. From the station it takes about 7 minutes on foot.

Feb. 2 SETSUBUN YAKUYOKE-TAISAI 8:30-19:30

Izumo-taisha shrine Matsuyama branch

Honmachi 3-chome 5-5, Matsuyama City

Kagura-mai (traditional Shinto dance) is performed at the shrine. There are two kinds of dances performed several times throughout the day (10:00, 12:00, 14:00, 16:00, 18:00). One is Daikoku-mai. Daikoku is another name of Okuninushi-no-mikoto, who is the god of this shrine. The other dance comes from the Amanoiwato legend. According to the story, Susano-no-mikoto, who is the brother of Amaterasu-omikami, the Sun Goddess, fights and kills a huge eight-headed snake called Yamata-no-orochi. At the shrine you will see the fight reenacted in an abbreviated form, where two of the snake's heads are cut off, accompanied by drums, flutes and bells. The dances take about forty minutes. (Tel. 089-921-3229)

Transportation: The shrine is located near the tramcar station Honmachi 4-chome (Iyotetsu Honmachi Line), on the west side of Route 196.

Feb. 8 HARIKUYO (Memorial Service for Needles)

Harikuyo is held twice a year on Feb. 8 and Dec. 8 to honor used needles. It started in the 18th century so that women could take a rest in those days of danson-johi (predominance of men over women). Broken or old needles were placed at a small altar and people gave thanks to the needles' faithful service. Women did not do needlework on that day. This traditional event has been handed down as an annual event of sewing schools for tailors, dressmakers, and kimono makers. In Matsuyama it is observed at Matsuyama Business College at 1-bancho 1-chome 4, where students of the fashion course stick about 1,300 needles used in their classes into large konnyaku (devil's tongue) cakes at an altar, giving thanks to them and praying for better sewing skills. After that, the priest of Shoju-ji chants a sutra. Then the needles are put in harizuka (a burial mound for needles) at the temple.

Feb. 11 KENKOKUKINEN-NO-HI (National Foundation Day) National holiday

This holiday was formerly called Kigensetsu, which started in 1872 (Meiji 5) to commemorate the accession to the throne of Emperor Jimmu who is said to be the first emperor of Japan. At that time this day was recognized as the birthday of Japan, but after World War II the name Kigen-setsu was banned due to its nationalistic connotations. In 1966 this holiday was revived as Kenkokukinen-no-hi.

Feb. 18–28 **TSUBAKI-MATSURI (Camellia festival)** **Tsubaki-jinja shrine**

This is one of the most famous festivals in Matsuyama and is held at the coldest time of the year at Iyozuhiko-no-mikoto-jinja commonly known as Tsubaki-jinja shrine, in the southern part of Matsuyama city just off Route 33. In Matsuyama, it is said that spring won't come until after this festival. The patron of prosperity and good luck is enshrined here and Tsubaki-jinja is popular with merchants and businessmen who wish for better luck in business. Beside the offering box at the main building, there is a place where you can borrow 20 yen, which is called mamori-gane (protective money) in a small paper bag from the shrine during the festival. The next year you must come back to the shrine to give thanks and pay back double the money by working hard for a year. This custom is called kashi-zeni (lending money).

18th–28th Prayer for better luck in business, family's safety and good health and so on

18th–20th 8:00–17:00 21st –28th 9:00–17:00

18th –20th Many stalls line the street in front of the shrine selling food, many good luck products, such as otayan-ame (special candies for the festival), lucky bamboo grass rakes and treasure ships.

21st –28th Only good luck products are sold in several places around the shrine, not on the street.
(Tel. 089-956-0321)

Feb. 23 **TENNO TANJOBİ (Emperor's Birthday)** **National holiday**

Reiwa Emperor was born in 1960. We celebrate this day in hopes of his longevity.

Before you go out, it is recommended that you check to make sure whether the events will be held on schedule or not.

