

■FESTIVALS

CANCELED EVENTS

DOYO YOICHI (Saturday Fair) in Matsuyama City

OZU KAWA MATSURI (River Festival) in Ozu City

ONMAKU HANABI (Firework Display) in Imabari City

MATSUYAMA MINATO MATSURI (Port Festival) in Mitsuhamma, Matsuyama City

UCHIKO SASA MATSURI (Bamboo Festival) in Uchiko-cho

YOKOGAWARA KANGETSUSAI (Moon Viewing Festival) in Toon City

MATSUYAMA NATSU MATSURI (Summer Festival) in Matsuyama City

July 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 from a boat called ubune, which is lit by torches as it sails down the Hiji-kawa, which runs through Ozu. 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 the fish. When a cormorant makes a catch, a fisherman pulls the bird in and has it spit out the fish on the boat. You can watch it from special sightseeing boats called yakata-bune. On the Hiji-kawa ukai is done in the rare way called awase-ukai that ubune and sightseeing yakata-bune sail down the river side by side. You can order a bento to eat on board or just ride the boat and watch, and some hotels offer a special ukai package. It will be canceled if the weather is bad. Prices range from ¥4,000 to ¥20,000. You need to make a reservation in advance at Ozu Machinoeki Asamoya. (Tel. 0893-57-6655)

<http://www.oozukankou.jp/02ukai.html>

Transportation: Take an Iyotetsu bus bound for Yawatahama from Shieki, gate #4, and get off at Ozu Honmachi, 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.

Early August–Late August DOGO-ONSEN NATSU MATSURI (Summer Festival)

Details of the event have not been announced yet.

August 6 HIROSHIMA MEMORIAL DAY

August 9 NAGASAKI MEMORIAL DAY

Events to remember these tragedies are held in many places in Japan. People throughout the country observe one minute of silence for the dead at 8:15 a.m. on the 6th and at 11:02 a.m. on the 9th, the moments the A-bombs were dropped over the two cities.

August 15 MEMORIAL OF THE END OF WWII

Ceremonies are held to mourn those who died in the war.

August 8 YAMA NO HI (Mountain Day) National Holiday

August 13–16 O–BON

August is the hottest month in Japan, so many people take a holiday and return to their hometowns. It is also the time of o–bon. It is said that during o–bon ancestral spirits return to their former homes in this world. Welcome and farewell fires are burned near the entrance of the homes. People visit the family graves, burn incense, and offer water and flowers. These are also offered at the family altars.

Sep. 1 BOSAI–NO–HI (Disaster Preparedness Day)

Disaster Preparedness Day was established in 1960 in order for us Japanese to understand better the disasters caused by typhoons, tidal waves, earthquakes, and tsunami etc., and to learn how to prepare ourselves for them. The week from August 30 to Sept. 5 is called Disaster Preparedness Week, during which disaster fairs and drills are held in many districts. It is also a time to make sure we have emergency supplies in our homes and that we know where the closest evacuation center is.

NOTES: Events might be canceled or postponed to prevent spread of the novel coronavirus infection. Please check the latest information.