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Japan

Festivals in Fukushima

All over Japan, countless festivals big and small known as *matsuri* are held each year, with estimates putting the number of events between 100,000 and 300,000. Fukushima, too, has *matsuri* with a long history, fulfilling the important role of connecting people.



Nihonmatsu Lantern Festival — October 4-6, 2017

A festival with a tradition dating back about 370 years. On the first night of the festival, seven parade floats adorned with about 300 *chochin* paper lanterns each are marched through the town, accompanied by music and cheers. The festival was held even in 2011, the year of the Great East Japan Earthquake, uniting the hearts of people praying for recovery from the catastrophe.



Fukushima Prefecture Overview

- Population: Approximately 1.88 million
- Total Area: 13,780 km² (5,320 mi²)
- Prefectural Capital: Fukushima City
- Access: Approximately 300 km (186 mi) from Tokyo to Fukushima; 90 minutes by Shinkansen.



Aizu Festival — September 22-24, 2017

Centered around Aizuwakamatsu's landmark Tsuruga Castle, the festival consists of various events such as traditional dances, processions of lanterns, and a parade with local elementary school marching bands. For the main event, a total of around 500 people dressed up as warriors and nobles march through town in the Aizu Feudal Lords' Procession.



Soma Nomaoui Festival — scheduled for July 2018

The festival's origins are thought to date back a millennium, beginning as a military exercise of catching a wild horse and a ceremony dedicating the horse to Shinto gods. More than 500 armored warriors on galloping horses ride during the festival, creating an impressive spectacle. The festival is scheduled to be held next year at the end of July.

