

This is Japan

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# Festivals in Miyagi

All over Japan, countless festivals large and small known as *matsuri* are held each year, with estimates putting the number of events between 100,000 and 300,000.

Here in Miyagi Prefecture, there is a long history and tradition of holding a diverse range of festivals.



## Ishinomaki River Opening Festival Fireworks Display — August 1, 2017

Around 6,000 fireworks will light up the sky at this festival in 2017. The festival began as a way for the people to show gratitude for the blessings they receive from the river and to honor their ancestors, and even through times of disaster it has been held every year for the past 90 years.



## Sendai Tanabata Festival — August 6 – 8, 2017

This traditional summer celebration is counted as one of the “Three Great Festivals” of the Tohoku region. Sendai’s festival for Tanabata, or Star Festival, is characterized by colorful bamboo decorations that brighten up the shopping arcades of the city to delight the 2 million visitors who come from all over Japan to see the celebration.







**Shiogama Harbor Festival — July 17, 2017**

This festival began in 1948 in hopes of reviving local industry and bringing well-being to the people after the war. Ever since the March 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, it has had the additional purpose of bringing the souls of victims to rest and praying for a speedy recovery for the region. It is one of Japan's three major boat festivals, during which *mikoshi* (portable shrines) from two different Shinto shrines are loaded onto boats and paraded around the harbor with up to 100 other vessels on a spectacular marine excursion.