

## ● Toگا Shrine Taisai 砥鹿神社例大祭

The main festival of Toگا Shrine in Toyokawa City takes place on May 3 to 5 every year. From the ritual of *Yabusame* (流鏑馬) in which boys in decorative robes gallantly ride galloping horses without reins (3 and 4 May, 16:00), to the elegant ancient rite of carrying the *mikoshi* (神輿 / portable shrine, 4 May, 14:00), and the procession of adorable children in decorative traditional dress (5 May, 14:00), the various rituals and events held throughout the shrine precinct attract a large number of visitors from around the country.



Photo courtesy of Toگا Jinja

**When:** Wed. 3, Thu. 4 and Fri. 5 May

**Where:** Toگا Jinja (砥鹿神社) in Toyokawa City (豊川市)

**Access:** A 5-minute walk east from Mikawa Ichinomiya Stn. (三河一宮駅) on the JR Iida Line (JR飯田線)

**Website:** <http://www.togajinja.or.jp/index.html> (Japanese)

## ● Nomi Shinmeigū Shrine Taisai 能見神明宮大祭

One of the three great festivals of Okazaki. On Saturday, after eight *dashi* (山車) floats are blessed at Shinmeigū Shrine and depart for their respective neighborhoods in the morning, *Otome-no-mai* (乙女の舞 / Maiden's Dance) is performed in the afternoon. Evening festivities (from 17:00) include the congregation of the *dashi*, and fireworks. From 8:00 Sunday, witness a procession of parishioners in traditional dress accompanying the *mikoshi* (portable shrine) around the surrounding neighborhoods, a ritual known as *O-mikoshi-togyo* (御神輿渡御). Following the main ritual, the *dashi* floats are pulled through their districts to the accompaniment of *o-hayashi* (お囃子) music, stopping at crossroads to present dance performances on each float's stage. As night falls, the floats return to Shinmei Bridge, their lanterns lit, and fill the air with melodies as they head back to the shrine. The festivities reach a climax as dances are performed on the stages of the assembled *dashi*.



Photo courtesy of Nomi Shinmeigū

**When:** Sat. 13 and Sun. 14 May

**Where:** Nomi Shinmeigū Shrine (能見神明宮), Okazaki City (岡崎市) Motonomi-cho (元能見町) 42-1

**Access:** From Higashi Okazaki Stn. (東岡崎駅) on the Meitetsu Nagoya Line (名鉄名古屋本線), take the Meitetsu Bus (名鉄バス, North Exit [北口], Bus Station 4); or from Okazaki Stn. (岡崎駅) on the JR Tōkaidō Line (JR東海道線), take the Meitetsu Bus (East Exit [東口], Bus Station 3); alight at Shinmeisha-mae (神明社前) Bus Stop, walk for 2 minutes.

**Website:** <http://www.nomi-shinmeiguu.com/> (Japanese)

## ● Wakamiya Matsuri 若宮まつり

Known as one of the three great festivals in Nagoya, this huge festival is held annually, on 15 and 16 May, at Wakamiya Hachimansha Shrine, the shrine of the tutelary deity of Nagoya. The *Fukurokujusha* (福祿寿車) float, built in 1676, is a designated Cultural Asset of Nagoya City and carries *karakuri* marionettes, whose skillful performances are part of the ritual and one of the main attractions. On the first day, the float is pulled throughout the designated neighborhood. On the second day, the float accompanies the *mikoshi* (神輿 / portable shrine) in a procession as it travels along Hommachi Street (本町通り) to Nagoya Shrine (那古野神社).



The Fukurokujusha float. Photo courtesy of Wakamiya Shrine

**When:** Mon. 15 and Tue. 16 May

**Where:** Wakamiya Hachimansha Shrine (若宮八幡社), Naka Ward (中区)  
**Access:** Next to Shirakawa Park (白川公園). A short walk from Yaba-cho Stn. Exit 4 (矢場町駅4番出口) on the Subway Meijo Line (地下鉄名城線).

## ● The 51st National Chindon Festival

### 第51回全国選抜チンドン祭り

*Chindon'ya* (チンドン屋) are small ensembles of eccentrically-costumed musicians who perform to promote shops or events, usually with such instruments as gongs (the "chin" sound) and drums (the "don" sound). This lively and unique annual event in Ichinomiya City's Hagiwara commercial district features *Chindon'ya* troupes from around Japan competing in a contest in the morning, and participating in a parade through the streets with *Awa-odori* and Okinawa Ryūkyū *Eisa* dancers in the afternoon.



Photo courtesy of Hagiwara Commercial District

**When:** Sun. 28 May (9:00 - 16:00)

**Where:** Hagiwara commercial district (萩原商店街) in Ichinomiya City (一宮市)

**Access:** A 7-minute walk northwest from Hagiwara Stn. (萩原駅) on the Meitetsu Bisai Line (名鉄尾西線). (Take a Bisai Line train bound for Tsushima [津島] from Meitetsu Ichinomiya Stn. [名鉄一宮駅].)

## ● The 17th Japan Chainsaw Art Competition in Tōei 第17回日本チェーンソーアート競技大会in東栄

Chainsaw art is the art of carving sculptures from wood using only a chainsaw. Each artwork is dynamically created, but also finely detailed and elaborate. Marvel at American artist and world champion Brian Ruth's performance. There will also be workshops, exhibitions, shops for local products and a children's play area.



Photo courtesy of Chainsaw Art Club Tōei

**When:** Sat. 27 and Sun. 28 May

**Where:** Tōei Dome (東栄ドーム), in Kitashitara District (北設楽郡), Tōei Town (東栄町), Hongō (本郷)

**Access:** By car, a 15-minute drive from the Hōraikyō Interchange (鳳来峡IC) on the San-en Nanshin Expressway (三遠南信自動車道)

**Inquiries:** Tōei Town Office Nōrin-Gakari, phone: (0536) 76-1812 (Japanese)

**Website:** <http://toeichainsawart.com>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/chainsawartintoei/>

## ● Atsuta Jingū: Upcoming events 熱田神宮

### ● Hōnensai 豊年祭

This agricultural ritual, also known as Hana-no-tō (花のとう), divines the outcome of the year's crops and gives thanks to the divine virtue of Yamato Takeru-no-Mikoto (日本武尊), who bestowed knowledge of agricultural and sericultural practices on the people he encountered on his journey to pacify the eastern lands. During the festival, the Nishi-Gakusho is decorated with a diorama (*otameshi* / おためし) featuring miniature fields and paddies, made by the priests, which is displayed from 8 until 13 May. Worshippers involved in agriculture predict the conditions of this year's harvest from the state of the miniatures. There will also be stalls within the shrine precinct selling plants and seedlings, bamboo ware, ceramic ware and more until mid-May.

**When:** Mon. 8 May (8:00 -)

**Where:** Main Shrine (本宮) & Nishi-Gakusho (西薬所), Atsuta Shrine (熱田神宮), in Atsuta Ward (熱田区)



### ● Onzosai 御衣祭

As the annual *Reisai* (例祭 / Atsuta Matsuri of 5 Jun.) approaches, an offering of *kanmiso* (神御衣 / robes for the deity) is presented to the deity, Atsuta-no-Okami.

The robes are presented by Tsukiji Shrine in Minato Ward, which has weaving facilities, in a procession of around 300 people, led by a banner emblazoned with "Daiichi Goyō" (大一御用 / "On the service of Amaterasu Ōmikami"). Following the celebratory prayer of the chief priest, the envoys present their offering of silk and hemp before the deity.

**When:** Sat. 13 May (11:00 -)

**Where:** Procession begins at the East Gate (東門), and travels to the Main Shrine / Hongu (本宮) via the Third Torii Gate (第三鳥居), Atsuta Shrine (熱田神宮), in Atsuta Ward (熱田区)



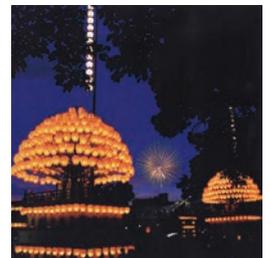
### ● Atsuta Matsuri 熱田まつり

Officially known as the *Reisai* (例祭 / annual festival), the most significant festival of all those held at Atsuta Shrine. A number of events and attractions are held in and around Atsuta Jingū in conjunction with the festival, drawing around 200,000 people each year. Among the sights are *kento-makiwara* (votive lanterns attached to straw in a tree-like arrangement, 17:30 - 20:30) at each entrance of the shrine grounds, and fireworks (which can be viewed from around the nearby Atsuta Jingū Park [熱田神宮公園] - park off-limits during fireworks - and Shirotori Park [白鳥公園], 19:40 - 20:30). For Atsuta locals, the festival is the beginning of the yukata- (summer kimono) wearing season each year, as they browse the stalls, fan in hand, enjoying the season.

**When:** Mon. 5 Jun. (10:00 - 20:30) ; In the event of rain, *kento-makiwara* and fireworks will be postponed to the following day.

**Where:** Atsuta Jingū (熱田神宮) and surrounds, Atsuta Ward (熱田区)  
**Access:** A 3-minute walk from Jingū-mae Stn. (神宮前駅) on the Meitetsu Nagoya Line (名鉄名古屋本線); or an 8-minute walk from Atsuta Stn. (熱田駅) on the JR Tōkaidō Line (JR東海道線); or a 7-minute walk from Jingū Nishi Stn. (神宮西駅) on the Meijo Subway Line (地下鉄名城線).

**Website:** <https://www.atsutajingu.or.jp/>



Photos courtesy of Atsuta Jingū