

# What's Up Aichi

— Timely Tourist Information On Aichi Prefecture And The Surrounding Central Japan Region —

## Okazaki Summer Fireworks Festival



The Okazaki Summer Fireworks Festival began in the early 1800s, but the history of gunpowder in Okazaki City is much older. Ieyasu Tokugawa, the shogun who united Japan, was born in Okazaki City in Mikawa. After Japan's unification, Ieyasu designated his hometown as one of the few places in Japan allowed to produce gunpowder. Also to further protect their technology a firearms master would only pass his trade secrets to a locally born apprentice. Today Mikawa comprises the eastern part of Aichi Prefecture, but the legacy continues and Mikawa is still one of the largest firework producers in Japan.

The Okazaki Summer Fireworks Festival will be held on August 4th this year, and the best place to watch it is from the area surrounding Okazaki Castle (actual birthplace of Ieyasu Tokugawa). The show starts at 7:50 and finishes at 9:00, but get there early to find a good viewing spot. Okazaki Castle is about a 15 minute walk from Meitetsu Higashi-Okazaki Station.

## Yanagibashi Central Fish Market



Yanagibashi Central Market (Yanagibashi Chuo Shijo), located just a short walk

from Nagoya station and near many of the city's major hotels. The market provides a mostly unseen side of a quintessential element of Japanese cuisine: fresh fish. An early morning walk through the market dazzles all of the senses. Workers effortlessly carve up the morning's catch of tuna, blowfish, shrimp and other seafood delights. There is plenty to see at Yanagibashi Central Market besides the fish mongers, there are nearly 400 specialty shops selling vegetables, seaweed, local teas and produce. You can even pick up Aichi-made cutlery that is up to sushi chef standards.

Luckily some of Nagoya's best sushi is also available at Yanagibashi Central Market. **Maruhachi Sushi** is a unique 24-hour sushi shop located near the southeast entrance. You might be taken aback when the friendly sushi chefs place your orders directly onto the countertop, but rest assured they are not forgetting anything. The gesture demonstrates their confidence in the fish's freshness and the restaurant's cleanliness.

**Tokiwazushi** is another popular sushi restaurant located on the first floor of the Marunaka Food Center. The menu is reasonably priced so Tokiwazushi is a great place to try a wide variety of the freshest fish without breaking the bank. The restaurant is open until 1 am on weeknights, and is perfect for jet-lagged travelers craving a midnight snack.

Yanagibashi Central Market is a short walk from Nagoya Station. Exit the station to Sakura Street (Sakura dori) and walk four blocks before making a right at the Nagoya Daini-Saitama Building and continuing for two blocks.

<http://www.marunaka-center.co.jp/index.php> (Japanese)

Closed: Sun, Holidays (check website)  
Open hours: 4:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. (Until around noon during the year end season)  
Address: 4-15-2 Meieki Nakamura-ku Nagoya-city

## Marriage Proposals on the Beach



Koijigahama Beach on the Irago Cape is a great place to relax and escape the summer heat. Traditionally it has also been considered a 'sacred spot for marriage proposals.' Along the half mile of beautiful sand many couples follow the same path that has been used for hundreds of years to pop the question. Couples can also buy small locks to decorate with love messages and attach to a chain-link fence, and ring out their love on a large brass bell right on the water. The large number of couple activities is why this has long been a "couple's sanctuary."

Of course you don't have to be a young couple to enjoy Irago Cape. Shops along the beach sell knickknack and refreshing drinks, and every restaurant has a signature dish using the local delicacy, giant short-necked clams (O-Asari). Along the beach you can enjoy a casual stroll while taking in the smells and sounds of the water. And complete your tour at the Irago Lighthouse at the end of the beach which offers expansive views of Mikawa Bay and the Pacific Ocean.

Access Koijigahama Beach by starting at Nagoya Station and riding the Meitetsu Kowa Line to Kowa Station. From Kowa Station you can take the free shuttle to Koijigahama Beach or walk to the beach in about 5 minutes.

### Aichi Prefectural Government

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