

In Japan, where the four seasons are more distinct than in other countries, autumn, with its pleasant climate, is known as a time when people can easily devote themselves to various activities, described as "autumn of appetite," "autumn of art," "autumn of reading," "autumn of sports," and so on. In Ehime Prefecture, people enjoy events and sightseeing as they wish, such as those who enjoy the autumn leaves at Ishizuchi Mountain and Matsuyama Castle, and those who participate in Cycling Shimanami, an international cycling competition using the Shimanami Kaido. Therefore, the theme of "Ehime people look forward to during the autumn season" is very difficult to explain, but those who live in the Toyo region of Ehime Prefecture will certainly say with one voice that they look forward to the "Autumn Festival."

諸外国に比べ四季の違いがはっきりと出る日本において、気候の過ごしやすい秋は「食欲の秋」「芸術の秋」「読書の秋」「スポーツの秋」などと形容され、様々なことに打ち込みやすい時期としても知られています。愛媛県では、石鎚山や松山城の紅葉を楽しむ人や、しまなみ海道を使った国際サイクリング大会「サイクリングしまなみ」に参加される方など、思い思いに行事や観光を楽しみます。それゆえ、『Ehime people look forward to during the autumn season』というテーマはとても説明が難しいのですが、愛媛県の東予地方に住む方は、まず間違いなく声を揃えて「秋祭り」が楽しみだというでしょう。

In Japan, various events are held in autumn to pray for a bountiful harvest. At the autumn festivals in Saijo, Niihama, and Shikokuchuo cities in the Toyo region, each district prepares a huge yatai (a floater), 5 meters high, 12 meters long, and weighing 2 to 3 tons (called danjiri or taiko-dai depending on the city), and tens or hundreds of people parade it through the town to give thanks for a good harvest for that year. The beauty of the gorgeous yatai decorated with gold and silver threads is overwhelming, but what is especially spectacular is the "kakikurabe," in which the yatai from each district gather together and compete to carry the best yatai on their shoulders. The sight of the huge floats being lifted up all at once to the beat of drums is a sight to behold. The Taiko Matsuri in Niihama City is one of the three major autumn festivals in Shikoku, and attracts more than 100,000 people who come to see the magnificent and heroic stirring contest.

日本では、秋に五穀豊穰を祈って様々な行事が行われますが、東予地方の西条市、新居浜市、四国中央市の秋祭りでは、高さ5メートル、長さ12メートル、重さ2～3トンにもものぼる巨大な屋台（市によってだんじり、太鼓台などと言います）を各地区が用意し、数十人から数百人のかき手で町内を練り歩くことで、その年の豊作に感謝します。金糸銀糸で飾られた豪華絢爛な屋台の美しさに圧倒されますが、特に見ごたえがあるのは、各地区の屋台が一斉に集まり、屋台を競い合って肩に担ぐ「かき比べ」です。太鼓の音とともに巨大な屋台が一斉に持ち上げられる様は圧巻です。特に新居浜市で行われる太鼓祭りは四国三大秋祭りにも数えられ、その勇壮華麗なかき比べは見ようと10数万人の方が訪れます。

Niihama Taiko Festival

《新居浜太鼓祭りの様子》



Saijo Festival

《西条まつりの様子》



Shikokuchuo City Iyo Mishima Autumn Festival

《四国中央市 伊予三島秋祭りの様子》



The festival is so deeply rooted in the Toyo region that local businesses and schools are closed during the festival period, and even locals who live far away take time off work and go all the way back home to participate.

When you come to Japan, if your schedule permits, please join us at the Ehime Autumn Festival.

このような熱狂的な祭りの開催に向けて、祭りの期間中は地元企業や学校が休みになるほか、遠方に暮らす地元出身者も仕事を休んでわざわざ帰省して参加するほど、東予地方には深く根差しています。

日本にお越しの際は、スケジュールが合えば是非愛媛の秋祭りにもご参加ください。

Reference

Saijo Festival website

https://www.visitehimejapan.com/en/see-and-do/2552?_ga=2.12544368.550458349.1647062322-1041150997.1647062322

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https://www.visitehimejapan.com/en/see-and-do/2553?_ga=2.12544368.550458349.1647062322-1041150997.1647062322

Photo courtesy of Ehime Local Promotion Association

《参考》

西条まつり：https://www.visitehimejapan.com/en/see-and-do/2552?_ga=2.12544368.550458349.1647062322-1041150997.1647062322

新居浜まつり：https://www.visitehimejapan.com/en/see-and-do/2553?_ga=2.12544368.550458349.1647062322-1041150997.1647062322

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