

# What's Up Aichi

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

## Fireworks Festival in Okazaki



Courtesy of Okazaki City

During the Tokugawa Shogunate a Mikawa firearms master would only pass his trade secrets to local apprentices, furthermore restrictions were in place that limited production of gunpowder to the Mikawa area. The legacy left behind today is that Okazaki City in Mikawa is one of the major fireworks manufacturing regions of Japan.

Every year on the first Saturday in August a large fireworks festival is held in the area surrounding Okazaki Castle. Thousands of fireworks are launched in a two hour long show making it is an amazing event for locals and visitors alike.

This year the fireworks show will be held on August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:50 to 9:00 in the evening. This is the most popular fireworks festival in Aichi so come early to secure the best viewing location!

## A Walk on the Wild Side of Aichi



The botanical gardens and Sky Tower

The Higashiyama Park is a wildlife sanctuary and in the sprawling metropolis it's a welcome sanctuary for humans too. The expansive park has one of the largest zoos in Asia, a botanical garden, and even a small amusement park. It is located about 20 minutes from Nagoya City center and is a great place to take the family for a fun and educational day.

At the zoo there are the traditional

favorites including lions, tigers and bears as well as elephants and giraffes. There are exhibits for lesser known animals like the tiny medaka (Japanese Rice Fish). The medaka was used in a NASA / JAXA experiment aboard the International Space Station as the first vertebrate to be successfully bred in space. Overall the zoo is home to more than 125 species from Japan and the globe. The botanical garden collections include flowers and plants from around the world as well as native wild flora. There is also a large greenhouse with a section dedicated to insects, and a traditional Japanese garden.

You can end the day at one of the restaurants atop the Higashiyama Sky Tower. The Higashiyama Sky Tower at over 300 feet tall gives a commanding view of park and the neighborhoods of Nagoya City.

## Walking in the Footsteps of Samurai

Nobunaga Oda was one of the most influential samurai of ancient Japan. He was an Aichi native, and his formative years were spent in and around Nagoya. It is possible to walk in the footsteps of Nobunaga and catch a glimpse of the world that formed him. This walking tour will take you from his childhood home to the site where he prayed for victory before his greatest battle.

1. Our journey begins at the childhood home of Nobunaga Oda. Today Ninomaru Palace lies in ruins in the shadow of Nagoya Castle but for Nobunaga it was his inheritance and childhood home. Entrance to Nagoya Castle will also allow you access to the grounds of Ninomaru.

2. **Sakura Tenjin Shrine** was built by Nobunaga's father in 1537. It was a private shrine for the Oda family, and was famous for a very large cherry tree that grew there.

3. **Soken-ji Temple** was built by Nobunaga's son to honor his father's memory. This temple isn't open to the public but the front gate is impressive enough to warrant a quick stop!

4. When Nobunaga's father passed away the funeral ceremony was held at **Bansho-ji Temple**. Although small, this

beautiful temple is famous for having hundreds of paper lanterns. Also it is the heart of the Osu shopping district so you can easy mix in a little shopping.



Entrance to Bansho-ji Temple

5. The **Tennei-ji Temple** was moved from Kiyosu in 1610. This is the temple where Nobunaga went to pray for the health of his children

6. **Hoiki Shrine** was where Nobunaga went to pray for victory before the Battle of Okehazama. Nobunaga's forces were largely outnumbered but remained disciplined and fought on to victory. This victory cemented Nobunaga's position as one of the most important samurai in accident Japan.

7. Inside the Higashi Betsuin Temple lie the ruins of **Furuwatari Castle**. When Nobunaga turned 13 years old this is where his Coming-of-Age ceremony was held.

8. Atsuta Jingu Shrine is one of the most sacred shrines in all of Japan. After Nogunaga's victory at Okehazama he donated the **Nobunaga-bei Wall** to the shrine. This large earthen wall has been maintained for 400 years, and is famous throughout Japan. The Atsuta Jingu Shrine is a perfect place to end your journey, the large shrine grounds are welcoming to all visitors and is filled with peace and harmony.

The entire journey can be completed in a morning with plenty of time to enjoy the different locations.

<http://www.nagoyatabi.ncvb.or.jp/sp/kankouroute/route03/index.html>

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