

From Tokyo/Asakusa to Little Edo Tochigi in around 70 min!

Listen to *Ohayashi* (Festival Music) Passed Down from the Meiji Period!

### Things to do in Tochigi City, Vol. 2

**--Experience an autumn festival that has been held biannually since 1874--**

Tobu Railway Co., Ltd.

Get on the Tobu Railway at Asakusa in the Shitamachi area of Tokyo and you are around 70 minutes away from Tochigi City, Tochigi Prefecture. Also known as Little Edo, the city has preserved its old Japanese townscape and culture shaped by maritime transport. This year is for the biannual Tochigi Autumn Festival. Take this opportunity to see the gorgeously decorated and moving *dashi* floats. We present to you Tochigi City, where you can experience Japanese history and culture.

#### A Series of Spectacular *Dashi* Floats that Magically Appear in the Dark --Tochigi Autumn Festival--

Tochigi Autumn Festival began in 1874, when people paraded with *dashi* floats to honor Emperor Jinmu during a ceremony held on the premises of the prefectural office (located in former Tochigi Town, currently Tochigi City). The *dashi* floats used during festivals are called *edogata ningyo dashi*, because they were originally produced in the Edo period. Soon the entire town started to compete by showcasing *dashi* floats of Shizuka Gozen during Tenka Matsuri (Edo Sanno Festival) and other *dashi* floats featuring dolls produced by skillful doll makers, such as Shugetsu Hara III.

The dolls used for *Edogata ningyo dashi* vary, but mainly feature gods and heroes that appeared in *Kojiki* and *Nihon-shoki* (Japan's old historical records) or great figures and heroes from China. They also symbolize folk beliefs and legends. One of the festival's highlights is *butuke*, where multiple *dashi* floats face off by playing *ohayashi*, festival music, which is initiated by the call of each leader. All carriers brandish lanterns above their heads and shout to enliven the music. It is customary for *dashi* floats with out-of-tune *ohayashi* to concede. The invigorating calls are also unique, representing each town. Join in and shout to your heart's content.

The evening parade offers a chance to view a magical world thanks to the lanterns that illuminate each *dashi* float. In the dark, they are simply breathtaking and will look great in pictures!

- Tochigi City Tourist Association: <http://www.kuranomachi.jp/english/>
- Tochigi City introduction video: <http://www.kuranomachi.jp/english/movie>



Above: *Butuke* during the daytime parade



Right: Gorgeously decorated *dashi* floats during the daytime parade

## Autumn Festival on November 9 to 11, 2018



Above: *Butuke* during the evening parade



Right: Row of *dashi* floats during the evening parade

## Immerse Yourself in the Festival's Spectacle: Dashi Kaikan

Dashi Kaikan reconstructs scenes from the biannual Tochigi Autumn Festival through installations produced with digital technologies and actual *dashi* floats, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the festival's spectacle and appreciate the beauty of *dashi* floats. Dashi Kaikan was founded in 1995 and also stores *dashi* floats, which are tangible folk cultural properties designated by Tochigi Prefecture. Three *dashi* floats actually used in the Tochigi Autumn Festival are on permanent display for visitors to feel the excitement of the festival at any time. The *dashi* floats are rotated on a regular basis to allow visitors to encounter different gorgeously decorated and moving *dashi* floats every time they visit.

The video produced with digital technologies was updated during the two-month closure, which started in January 2018. It is now available in many languages, allowing visitors from overseas to enjoy.

Immerse yourself in old Japanese culture in the recently updated Dashi Kaikan, where friendly staff members await.

- Tochigi City Tourist Association: <http://www.kuranomachi.jp/english/>



Front of Dashi Kaikan



Numerous exhibits



Doll on exhibition,  
moving Hideyoshi Toyotomi



The video is now available in many languages! Watch it and see actual *dashi* floats up close! Experience the biannual Tochigi Autumn Festival.

## Traditional Japanese Style Accommodation Featuring Storehouses, Tatami Mats and Fusuma Screens, Where You Can Also Enjoy Japanese Cuisine: Kanahan Ryokan

Kanahan Ryokan is located on Kuranomachi Promenade and is a historic inn established in the Anei era (1764-1780), during the Edo period. The members of the Kaninnomiya family stayed here in the past. There is also an anecdote about Isabella Bird, a traveler from England, who stayed in this historic inn. Storehouses and buildings with an old-fashioned atmosphere can be found on the premises. The hallway where the original storehouses still remain will make you feel like you have time traveled to 200 years ago! Relax while immersing yourself in the nostalgic atmosphere characteristic of a venerable Japanese location. The meals, including Edo Gozen, are prepared with local Tochigi produce and ingredients once used in the Edo period and presented in a modern style. They are inexpensive, yet allow you to fully appreciate Japanese cuisine. If you have any dietary restrictions, mention them when making your reservation. They can serve you meals according to your preferences due to allergy or religious faith. You can also stay overnight without meals. This is a historic and classy inn, but it is also a place where you can visit casually and feel peace of mind while being healed thanks to its landlady with a friendly smile. Take a picture with her to remember your trip!

Kanahan Ryokan's website is available in English, Chinese and Korean. Click below for more details!

- Kanahan Ryokan's website: <http://www.kanahan-ryokan.jp/>



Front of Kanahan Ryokan, which also serves meals



The premises where storehouses still remain take you back 200 years!



Edo Gozen prepared with local Tochigi produce  
If you have any dietary restrictions, mention them when making your reservation.



Reserve this historic room, built in 1918, if it is available!



Landlady with kind smiles

Exceptional accommodation and meals. Kanahan Ryokan ensures your stay is comfortable, while the smile of the landlady also offers comfort after traveling.

## Fully Enjoy Colorful Japanese Paper: Kezuka Kamiten

Kezuka Kamiten (paper shop) is located on Kuranomachi Promenade near Dashi Kaikan. It operates from one of the five *misegura* (storehouse consisting of a shop and residence) built in a row, which is even rare in Tochigi, where a number of storehouses remain. Appreciate how paper evolved in Japanese culture just by holding it in your hands and observing. In addition to customary engagement gifts and gift money envelopes used on celebratory occasions, other traditional items including *origami*, small articles made of paper and paper balloons can be easily purchased.



Kezuka Kamiten can be found in the center of the rare five *misegura* built in a row



Play with origami



Uchiwa (traditional fan)



Tochigi's *dashi* floats made of paper! Assemble this craft at home to reflect on your journey!



A Japanese tradition, gift money envelopes are ideal souvenirs

## <Recommended Sightseeing Spots along the Tobu Railway Lines>

The Tobu Railway Group is a major corporate group in Japan, consisting of about 90 companies. Along our lines in Kanto, where Tobu Railway boasts the longest service distance, you can find numerous sightseeing spots, such as Asakusa and Tokyo Skytree in Tokyo, Kinugawa Onsen in Nikko famous for its World Heritage Sites and hot springs, the Tatebayashi and Ashikaga area with beautiful flowers in full bloom, and Kawagoe with its lingering Edo atmosphere.

Tobu Railway Group nearby sightseeing website, Tobu Japan Trip: <http://www.tobujapantrip.com/en/>

\*Check the following site to find other materials and images for media use. Mynewsdesk: <https://www.mynewsdesk.com/tobu-railway>