



### Aomori Nebuta festival

**Aomori city, Aomori prefecture**  
from August 2nd to the 7th

It's *Nebuta!* That's when you can see fabulous floats with big brave warrior dolls perched up high, parading down the streets. You'll see lots of dancers, called *Haneto*, frolicking alongside those floats, chanting "Rassera, Rassera."

All those colorful lights and that lively music bring truckloads of joy because the short summertime has come. *Nebuta* means sleepiness. It gets in the way of all the work farmers have to do. So in early August when the people are getting ready for harvest season, this festival fights back at all that sleepiness (*Neburi-gaesi*) and fends off the invisible harm it can do.

What are the origins of the *Nebuta* festival? Well, there's a theory out there that says that during the conquest of the indigenous *Emishi* people in the early Heian period, *Sakanoue Tamuramaro*, a commander, used big warrior dolls to lure out his enemies -- and won!



### Bon festival dance

**All over Japan**  
from August 13th to the 15th

In Japan, it was commonly believed during the *Obon* period that ancestral spirits would come back to visit the family. Back then, the origin of bon dancing was an *Odori Nenbutsu* (traditional dancing and invocations of Buddha's name) in order to welcome ancestral spirits and see them off.

It's said that a Buddhist monk called *Ippen Shonin* spread it all over Japan in the *Kamakura* period.

Japan's three biggest festivals are *Awa-odori*, *Nishi-monai*, and *Gujo-odori*, with plenty of bon dancing in all three. And that means people are cavorting all over the place -- at the temple, at the kindergarten and on school grounds, on shopping streets, etc.

People make *yagura* (a framed wooden stage) and decorate it with dozens of lamps. They dance on and around it, joyously happy, singing local songs until late at night.

Each locality has its own original song, for example, *Tokyo-ondo*, *Hanagasa-ondo*, *Tankou-bushi*, and lots of others.

## When the season changes from summer to autumn... it's festival time!

# 夏秋食祭



**Nakizumou**  
Kanuma city, Tochigi prefecture  
First Sunday after September 19th

There's a Japanese proverb saying that "a crying baby is growing healthy."

*Nakizumou* takes place at the *Ikko* shrine in which the guardian god for a safe delivery at birth and child-rearing is enshrined. Regarding its origins, one day of in 1580, when a baby died, his or her family prayed to the shrine for three days, and so he or she would be risen from the dead. After that, *Nakizumou* began in earnest in the 1860s.

Two sumo wrestlers step into a sumo ring on the grounds of a shrine. Each one holds in his arms an infant with a white *hachimaki* (headband) wrapped around his or her head.

While the people call out "Yoiso, Yoiso," the wrestlers raise the babies over their heads three times. Then they compete in a match, each drawing on the strength of the baby's crying.



### Owara-Kaze-no-Bon festival

**Toyama city, Toyama prefecture**  
From September 1st to the 3rd

People dance in order to console the spirits of the ancestors, and that's a Buddhist event called *Urabon-e*. Also, the dance is a way of praying to drive away a typhoon and guarantee a good harvest, because typhoons tend to strike Japan at the beginning of September.

There are three types of dance: *Honen-odori* (dance for good harvest), *Otoko-odori* (dance by the men), and *Onna-odori* (dance by the women). These dances continue for three days and three nights.

The melancholy melody of *kokyu* and *shamisen* echoes over the waterways and hills of the country villages. The figures of the accompanists and the male and female dancers wearing conical sedge hats are illuminated by *bonbonri* (Japanese old style lanterns) in the old town.



### Takayama Matsuri

**Takayama city, Gifu prefecture**  
April 14th and 15th (Sannou Matsuri in the spring)  
October 9th and 10th (Hachiman Matsuri in the autumn)

Takayama Matsuri is composed of two festivals: *Sannou Matsuri* (the annual festival of Hie Shrine) in the spring and *Hachiman Matsuri* (the annual festival of *Sakurayama Hachiman Shrine*) in the autumn. In both festivals, there are magnificently ornate floats, called *Yatai*, that parade through the streets of the town.

A *Dozo* is a storehouse with a floor of thick white earth and mortar walls, and very tall doors. There are lots of them in various districts of *Takayama* city. Floats are normally stored in some of them and are open to the public during the autumn festival. These gorgeously decorated floats are also called "mobile *Yomeimon*," which refers to the typical architectural structures found in Japan, with numerous sculptures being the most distinctive feature. This is replicated in the floats.

In 2016, *Yama-Hoko-Yataiyozouji*, which is composed of 33 festivals displaying floats on parade in various regions throughout Japan, was registered as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). *Takayama Matsuri* is one of these 33 festivals.



### Kishiwada Danjiri Matsuri

**Kishiwada City, Osaka Prefecture**  
September and October

Although there are various theories regarding the origin of *Kishiwada Danjiri Matsuri*, one of them is the *Inari* festival when people started to pray for a good rice harvest in the 1700s.

Shrine parishioners, called *ujiko*, pull a huge float (*danziri*) and run with madcap bravery around the town, and some of the men, called *Daiku-gate*, ride on its roof and shout out traveling directions to the *ujiko*, waving fans (*uchiwa*) at the crowd. Visitors really enjoy all their valiant poses.

## THE INTERVIEW SUCCESSFUL FRONT RUNNERS "If you want to work globally, I definitely recommend Japan"

Mr. Doan Quang Huy came to Japan in 2009. After graduating from Japanese high school and studying economics at Tokyo Fuji University, he started his career in Japan three years ago. Last year, he joined Pasona Inc., where he displays his unique talents in the field of human resources management, an area he finds particularly interesting. While he enjoys his life in Japan, he also cherishes his homeland Vietnam, so he recently hosted a big event for Vietnamese of all ages living in Japan. Take & look at what he says about his life here -- and how fulfilling it is, both professionally and privately -- will sweep away any anxieties you might have about working in Japan in the future.



Pasona Inc.  
**DOAN QUANG HUY**  
Global Search Business Department  
Global Business Management Division  
Marketing

best. I also like tempura. When I was a student, I used to eat *gyudon* every day, wondering how they can provide such a delicious and plentiful dish at such a low price. Now I enjoy having lunch at the company cafeteria. I'm amazed by the cafeteria because they provide different dishes every day. You can choose meat or fish as the main dish, and they even offer an all-you-can-eat salad bar. I can't believe I can buy such a superb lunch for only 500 yen. It's a lot of fun! They also provide supper for employees who work overtime at night.

**Q1 How did you come to join Pasona Inc.?**

**A1** I studied economics at the university. I was especially interested in human resources management, so I wanted to find a job in HR if I had a chance. Pasona Inc. is a major company in that field, and its corporate activities are so unique that I expected from the start to be engaged in a challenging job here. Now I'm so happy to be able to make full use of what I learned at the university.

places to have fun, so people, especially young people, are everywhere in the city.

**Q5 What is your impression of Japanese companies?**

**A5** There are superior-subordinate relations and company rules in Japanese companies, and the employees strictly observe them. In Vietnam, superior-subordinate relations are not very important. At first I thought it was too formal, but now I've found that Japanese companies are well organized, and those relations and rules help. My superior colleagues teach me many things, and I've learned a lot about business in Japan. When I won a contract for the first time, my superior colleague congratulated me with sushi. That experience made me happy. Now I go drinking with my colleagues once a month, interacting with employees in other departments, talking about life and asking for advice from them. These are valuable experiences you can't get in the office. I've gotten thoroughly used to this type of relationship. Actually I'm relying on it.

**Q2 What kind of work are you in charge of now?**

**A2** I'm a sales representative for recruitment, especially global personnel. Currently, Japanese companies are struggling to locate and nurture personnel who can be successful in global business environments. My job is to listen carefully to the needs of Japanese companies and try to match their needs with excellent human resources from ASEAN.

**Q3 What kind of global personnel are Japanese companies looking for recently?**

**A3** There are more and more Japanese companies seeking human resources from ASEAN. Above all, people who graduated from science courses are in great demand. Knowledge about information technology is also an important factor. As many Japanese companies are hoping to expand their businesses into ASEAN markets, most of them think the necessary languages are the local ASEAN languages and Japanese, rather than English. Though Japanese is difficult, I think speaking and listening are enough skills to hold a job in Japan, because computers will help us to write difficult kanji.

**Q6 Your image of Japan from when you were in Hanoi -- did it change after you came here?**

**A6** Before coming to Japan, I thought Japanese people are distant and unapproachable. For a while after I came here, I felt there was a wall between Japanese people and me. But if you open your mind and talk to them, everyone will be very kind to you. When you have a problem, they will help you. This is one thing I want to tell everyone who wants to come to Japan. Japanese are very shy people, and most of them do not talk to you first. Please just open your mind and be the first to start a conversation with them.

**Q4 Tell us about your homeland.**

**A4** I'm from Hanoi. I think it's very similar to Tokyo. Of course Tokyo is much bigger, but Hanoi is a growing big city with a vibrant atmosphere. You can find lots of

**Q7 What is your favorite Japanese food? Is there anything you don't like?**

**A7** My favorite food is sashimi, and especially shrimp is the

**Q8 Are there any unforgettable events in your life in Japan?**

**A8** When I was at my previous workplace after graduation from the university, I had the honor of being selected as the MVP of the year among new employees. I've heard MVP is the most excellent employee selected, according to various factors such as reputation from your boss and colleagues, and the attitude toward job training, and so on. I was so glad to be selected. Another unforgettable event was the Tet party I hosted. Tet is the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, and I invited 60 Vietnamese of all ages living in Japan to celebrate Tet together. We rented a space for the party and had a great time with homemade food, songs and music. I was so happy to see all the guests enjoying the party. Furthermore, the party was picked up by a newspaper. That was a memorable experience.

**Q9 Finally, do you have a message for foreign students who wish to come to Japan?**

**A9** I'm realizing every day that Japan in the future will need more manpower from all over the world. The Japanese government is creating policies to match this situation. It's not so difficult to get a visa. So don't hesitate to take a big chance now. There's no other country people can live in more comfortably than Japan. The food is delicious, and you can live safely. If you want to work globally, I definitely recommend Japan.



**Eat Well, Live Well. AJINOMOTO.** Ajinomoto Co., Inc.  
At Ajinomoto, we want to provide the most delicious and wholesome foods to the people around the globe.

**AEON** AEON Co., LTD.  
¥8,176 billion  
Pursuing peace, respecting humanity, and contributing to local communities, always with the customer's point of view as its core.  
The Customer  
People Community  
Aeon Group Expanding Over 13 Countries  
Aeon is comprised of more than 300 companies engaged mainly in the retail business as well as financial services, shopping center development services, and other businesses.  
Through organically linking the diverse range of businesses to create a strong synergy effect, Aeon continues to take on challenges for innovation aiming for further growth.

**NICHIREI FOODS INC.** Nichirei Foods Inc.  
Develops, manufactures and sells frozen products and other processed foods  
Nichirei Foods aims to offer customers a lifestyle of food filled with smiles. We use premium quality ingredients in our mainstay frozen foods, acerola products, and retort-pouch foods, which has earning for us the loyalty of many customers.

**日本食糧新聞社 JAPAN FOOD JOURNAL**  
百薬元氣 新製品トレンド 食品工場長  
ASEAN FOOD industries HUMAN resource development association FABEX  
The Most Authorized Trade Media on Food, Beverage, Alcoholic Drink Industries with Largest Circulation.  
The Japan Food Journal (Nihon Shokuryo Shinbun) was first issued in 1943. The paper consistently has played a role in backup, salvaging grass-roots opinions and suggesting media. For 75 year-history, the issue of the paper has become more than 11,000 and the paper has anticipated to publish electric edition Now, more than 1 mil. readers view the pages per month domestically and internationally. Business enterprises has been diversified; various study groups including Food Industry Management Forum, FABEX (Japan's biggest expo for professional-use food and beverage), etc.

**The Norinchukin Bank** The Norinchukin Bank  
The mission of The Norinchukin Bank is to fully support Japan's agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries as the national-level organization of JA Bank Group, JF Marine Bank Group and JForest Group. Through this support, the Bank contributes to the development of food production and consumption and a better quality of life for the people living in local communities.

**PASONA** Pasona Group Inc.  
Pasona Group HR Solutions  
Pasona Group's HR consultants offer support for HR strategies. They provide a variety of solutions to resolve issues of customers by offering proposals for optimal infrastructure from human resource and operational perspectives, combined with the latest ICT technologies.

**FUJI OIL**  
Bringing new values to the food world  
In the three business areas of oils and fats, confectionery and bakery ingredients, and soy protein, we provide a wide variety of food to society alongside our customers. Since our founding, we have pursued the potential of food ingredients and continued to take on a great challenge in bringing dietary joy to people and realizing healthy living for them. We intend to continue as we have done, to improve our technologies, to innovate, and provide products that are of benefit to our customers.

**YAMATO TRANSPORT CO., LTD.**  
We are challenging for ASIA!  
Yamato Transport is founded on 29th November, 1919, almost 100 years ago. We have about two hundred thousand persons in Group total over the world and 85% of them are from Yamato Transport and we are the biggest company in the 50 countries. Our main service is "TA-Q-BIN". It is the first home delivery service which allows customer to send a parcel easily to anywhere from anywhere. In our 100years history, the number of parcels are increasing and recorded 1 billion and 7 hundred million in 2015 and it is increasing thanks to expansion of EC market. We also proudly have a largest market share in Japan. Our challenge is not only Japan but also overseas. The final milestone is to expand our TA-Q-BIN service in other countries. We have been increasing overseas network since TA-Q-BIN started its operations in 2000 in Taiwan. We hope TA-Q-BIN will be known whole the ASIA and brings convenience life for ASIA people.

**雪印メグミルク MEGMILK SNOW BRAND Co., Ltd.**  
Our missions  
By pursuing these three missions and creating new values for milk, Megmilk Snow Brand Group will continually contribute to society.

**YOSHINOYA HOLDINGS** YOSHINOYA HOLDINGS CO.,LTD.  
In a hundred years the one thing that remains unchanged is the taste.  
Yoshinoya's roots date back to 1899 when a family-run shop opened in the fish market that existed in Nihonbashi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo. For 117 years since that time, Yoshinoya has worked to hone its capabilities around its motto of providing "tasty, cheap and fast" goods and services.