




ONBASHIRA MATSURI 御柱祭 DESCENTE TRONC D'ARBRE - FAIT AU JAPON



ONBASHIRA - FESTIVAL OF THE HONORED PILLARS IN THE LAKE SUWA

By Phuong & Pierrick on 2016-04-13 22:58:32

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Onbashira is a Shinto festival that celebrates the rebirth of Suwa Taisha, the Great Temple of the city (it consists of 4 temples). The towns around the Lake Suwa meet every 6 years to replace the Honored Pillars of the temples, the Onbashira . These Pillars are actually large tree trunk cut in the nearby mountain and arranged around the temple. These giants measures are 16 meters long, 1 meter in diameter and their weight a dozen tons.

History

Processions of Onbashira began there nearly 1,200 years ago and continued uninterrupted until today. Every 6 years (the years of the Tiger or Monkey according to the Chinese calendar) is held the festival of Onbashira. You will often hear the Japanese say that it takes place every 7 years because it is a Japanese custom to include the current year. Onbashira lasts several months and is done in 2 stages: Yamadashi in April and Satobiki in May.



Full tree log in a street

Yamadoshi

Yamadoshi consists of the stage where the different towns around the lake gather in teams to cut logs and drag it down the mountain. The trunks are attached by ropes and pulled for kilometers. It is a procession that lasts several days as they drag down 3 to 4 trunks daily. It is also when the ceremony of Kiotoshi (meaning tree fall) takes place. Thus, to demonstrate their bravery and courage, men from neighboring towns straddle the tree trunk when descending a very steep slope. This event is followed by thousands of onsite spectators Japanese and foreign. Tickets are available to see the descent from the stands. There are hundreds of participants pulling the giant trunks and some streets are blocked to traffic. When we arrived on Friday morning at the Shimo-Suwa Station, tickets were sold out. Fortunately, we got lucky. With a little persistence, we managed to squeeze just before the downhill slope in the middle of the participating teams (even if the police were leading the people to the side of the slope behind their security ropes). Preparation for the descent is very long. It takes time to pull the tree trunk until the beginning of the slope and before descending several religious songs follow each other for more than 10 minutes. The descent itself takes only a few seconds. It is very dangerous, there are every year many injuries and sometimes deaths (although this is rare). Those who manage to follow the trunk the way down, are fighting for the ride once it is stopped.



Preparation of the descent of the tree log

Tickets to sit in the stands to watch the descent of tree trunks are for sale from 1 February. The number is limited and can be in a lottery for some of these. It is imperative that you check it in advance.



Descent of the tree log

Satabiki

Satabiki is the procession that involves the replacement of old by new Pillars. The trunks of trees as a support function to the foundation of the Temple, are raised by hand by holders teams. Like any Shinto procession, it is accompanied by religious songs and cheers by all participants and spectators.

Here's how the festival Onbashira takes place . You have to see it to believe it. So go see by yourself the incredible procession and perhaps participate ... Why not? The next is in 2022 :)

Tips

As you can imagine, the hotels are all also booked well in advance. You will probably prefer book with payments later and free cancellation fee given the uncertainty of dates.



Front of the procession



Shintos priests

Full program for 2016

Shrine in the south - Kamisha

Yamadashi : The 2, 3 & 4 of April 2016

Satobiki : The 3, 4 & 5 May 2016



Plan procession Kamisha present on the official website.

Red, there are stages of Yamadashi part. Orange, these are the steps Satobiki.

The descent of the slope on the trunk is step 4.

The steps are the same each time.

Yamadashi



Planning Kamisha Yamadashi from the official site. This is the planning for 2016.

#1 Tsuna Okiba (綱置場)

#2 Anayama no Omagari (穴山の太曲)

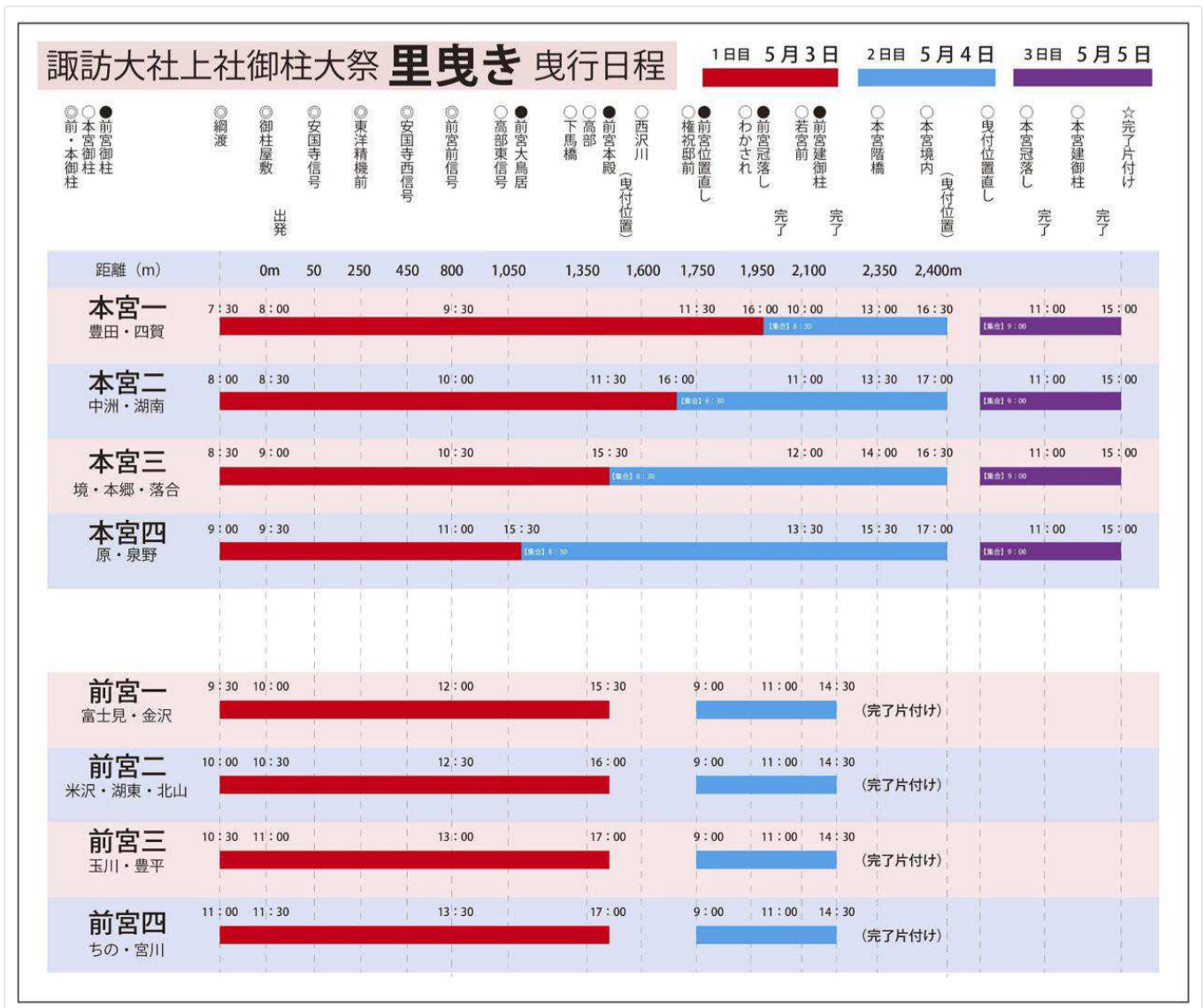
#3 Nenokami mae (子之神前)

#4 & 5 Kotoshi (木落とし): This is the descent. This is probably what most interests you.

#6 Kawagoshi (川越し)

#7 Onbashira Yashiki (御柱屋敷)

Satobiki



Planning of Kamisha Satobiki available on the official website.

This part is probably not the most interesting if you come from far. it is better to focus on the descent of the tree trunk which remains the most crazy to see.

Shrine in the north - Shimosha

Yamadashi : The 8, 9 & 10 of April 2016

Satobiki : The 14, 15 & 16 May 2016



Map of the procession of Kamisha available on the official website.

Dark blue, there are stages of Yamadashi part. Light blue, these are the steps for Satobiki.

The descent of the slope on the trunk is step 3!

The steps are the same each time.

Yamadashi

諏訪大社下社御柱大祭 山出し 曳行日程

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	☆ 棚木場綱渡り	☆ 曳行開始	◎ 斧立社	◎ 大曲り	◎ 木落し上	◎ 木落し時間	◎ 注連掛着	☆ 解散
距離 (m)		0	1,800	2,850	3,500	3,600	4,600	
春宮四 岡谷市 湊	6:30	7:00	9:20	10:10	12:30	13:00	15:30	15:40
春宮三 岡谷市 川岸	7:00	7:30	10:10	11:10	14:00	14:30	17:00	17:10
秋宮二 上諏訪	7:30	8:00	10:50	13:30	15:30	16:00	18:30	18:40
秋宮四 岡谷市 岡谷三区 <small>(岡谷・新屋敷・小尾口区)</small>	6:30	7:00	9:00	10:00	12:30	13:00	15:30	15:40
春宮一 岡谷市 岡谷七区 <small>(今井・間下・下浜・上浜・小口・小井川・西堀区)</small>	7:00	7:30	10:30	11:30	14:30	15:00	17:30	17:40
春宮二 岡谷市 長地	8:00	8:30	11:30	14:10	8:30 10:30 16:00 (木落し坂バス停上30m泊)	11:00	13:30	13:40
秋宮三 下諏訪 <small>(下諏訪四・五・六・八・十区)</small>	8:30	9:00	13:00	15:30	9:30 12:30 16:00 (消防屯所泊)	13:00	15:30	15:40
秋宮一 下諏訪 <small>(下諏訪一・二・三・七・九区)</small>	9:00	9:30	15:00	9:30 11:00 16:30 (斧立社バス停下50m、一本松泊)	14:30	15:00	17:30	17:40

1日目 4月8日
2日目 4月9日
3日目 4月10日

Planning of Shimosha Yamadashi available on the official website

#1 & 2 Starting point (棚木場綱渡り & 曳行開始)

#3 Temple Yokitatesha (佶立社)

#4 Omagari (大曲り)

#5 & 6 Kiotoshi (木落し上 & 木落し時間): It is the descent. It is probably what interests you the most

#7 & 8 Arrival (注連掛着 & 解散)

Satobiki