



A Festival of Light From Long Ago

Every year, the Yamaga Toro (Lantern) Festival fills the town of Yamaga with a fantastic glow. Hundreds of women dressed in traditional *yukata* and wearing ornate golden lanterns balanced on their heads dance elegantly in the summer night to the airy melody of the Yoheho song.

The most famous event of the Lantern Festival is the Sennin Toro (Thousand Lantern) Dance, where the flickering lights of innumerable dancers shine in the moonlight as they slowly wind their way around the main stage.

Festival Schedule

| August 15th Friday | | | | | | August 16th Saturday | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| | Kikuchi Riverside | Festival Plaza | Omiya Shrine | Yachiyoza | Yamaga ES Gym | Engei Stage | | Festival Plaza | Thousand Lantern Dance Yamaga ES Grounds | Omiya Shrine | Yachiyoza | Engei Stage |
| 10AM | | | | 9AM - Open to public | | | 10AM | | | 10AM-11AM Omiya Shrine Festival Kenpei-shiki | 9AM - Open to public | |
| 4PM | | | | 10AM - 4PM Yachiyoza Noryo Show | | | 4PM | | | | 10AM - 4PM Yachiyoza Noryo Show | |
| 5PM | | | | 4PM - 10PM Open to public | 3PM - 8PM | 4PM - Culture Association | 5PM | | | 5PM - 10PM Yamaga JC Omatsuri Hiroba (food trucks) | 4PM - 10PM Open to public | |
| 6PM | | | 5PM - 10PM Yamaga JC Omatsuri Hiroba (food trucks) | | Thousand Lantern Dance Lantern Exhibition | | 6PM | | | | | |
| 7PM | | 6:40PM-7:10PM Yamaga Lantern Nagashi Dance Culture Association | | | | 6PM - Kuradan Cosplay- zero station- anime song LIVE Deer King ~the Local character Performance | 6PM - Makoto Umeda nursery rhyme etc. | | | | | |
| 8PM | 8PM-8:50PM Fireworks | 7:10PM Hi Parade 7:15PM-7:35PM Lantern Dance Kamoto Ag. HS Folk Performance Club | 7:10PM-7:30PM Hi Parade 7:30PM- Purification 7:45PM-8PM Lantern offering dance | | | 7PM - Physical Communication- Kids dance 7:30PM - Hula Dance by Yoshinaga | 6:30PM - CRAIN Live | | | | | |
| 9PM | | 7:50PM-8:20PM Yamaga Lantern Nagashi Dance Culture Association 8:30PM-8:50PM Lantern Dance Lantern Dance Preservation Society | | | | 7PM - 07 th train | | | | | | |
| 10PM | | 9:25PM-9:45PM Lantern Dance Kamoto Ag. HS Folk Performance Club | | | | 7:30PM - Hula Dance by Yoshinaga | 7:30PM - Capua aloha Rani Live of Era hula dance studio | | | | | |
| 11PM | | 10PM-10:30PM Lantern Dance Lantern Dance Preservation Society | Festival HQ Yunohata Park 8/15(Fri) 1PM-10:30PM 8/16(Sat) 10AM-10:30PM General info,emergency services, stamp rally desk(untill 10:30PM on both days) | | | 8PM - Lantern Dance Kamoto Ag. HS Folk Performance Club | | | | | | |
| 12AM | | | | | | | 8PM | 8PM-8:20PM Kids Lantern Dance | 8PM-9PM Thousand Lantern Dance | | | 8:30PM - Old Silent Live |
| | | | | | | | 9PM | 8:40PM-9:10PM Yamaga Lantern Nagashi Dance Culture Association | 9PM-9:30PM Yamaga Taiko | | | 9PM - Kamoto Sanshin Group Okinawa Folk Songs Uta & Shamisen |
| | | | | | | | 10PM | 9:30PM-9:50PM Lantern Dance Yamaga Resident & Non-Resident Participants | | 10PM-12AM Agari Toro Naorai | | 10PM - Lantern Dance Kamoto Ag. HS Folk Performance Club |
| | | | | | | | 11PM | 10PM-10:30PM Lantern Dance Lantern Dance Preservation Society | | 11:40PM-12AM Lantern Dance Lantern Dance Preservation Society Sagari Toro | | |
| | | | | | | | 12AM | | | | | |



Check out the Yamaga Tanbou website for the latest info



Entranced
by the lights
and the dance

Yamaga Lantern Festival

Yamaga Lanterns - A Traditional Japanese Craft

Yamaga Lanterns have been designated by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry as a Traditional Craft, a designation created to promote traditional craft industries in Japan. A total of 218 items have been designated in Japan, with Yamaga Lanterns being the fourth in Kumamoto, after Shodaiyaki pottery, Amakusa Tojiki pottery, and Higo Zogan inlay.

About Yamaga Lanterns

Yamaga Lanterns are three-dimensional pieces crafted by skilled lantern artists, who carefully fold and glue traditional *washi* paper into spectacular designs. No metal or wood pieces are used—just paper and glue. As such, they are referred to as *hone-nashi toro*, meaning literally "boneless lanterns." The Yamaga Lantern tradition started in the Muromachi era (14th-16th centuries), and in addition to their original ceremonial uses, they are now popular as decorations, presents, and souvenirs.



Gold Lantern



Model shrines



See the lanterns up close!

The lanterns paraded to the shrine on the 16th are available for viewing during the festival at the locations numbered 1 through 30 on the map.

AUGUST 15TH & 16TH

How the Lantern Festival came to be:

Long ago, the Emperor Keiko was traveling along the Kikuchi River, but he found his progress hampered by a thick fog. The townspeople of nearby Yamaga gathered together with torches to light the way for the Emperor. In the years following, the townspeople continued to gather together with torches in honor of the Emperor. Around the 14th to 16th centuries, elaborate lanterns made from washi paper replaced the torches.

Yamaga Lantern Festival Map

