

Seasonal traditional events and ceremonies are held almost every day in Kyoto.  
No matter which season you visit Kyoto, there is something waiting for you.

# 1

## January



### Shogatsu Celebrating New Year's Day

From January 1st to 3rd is Japanese New Year's Day called shogatsu. Shogatsu means the month that all spirits become new and rejuvenated. People welcome the god of farming who visits them only New Year's Day and pray for a healthy new year for the family. As the symbol of shogatsu, they decorate the house gate with kadomatsu (bamboo decoration) and shimenawa sacred rope and put special rice cakes called kagami mochi in the house. During New Year's Day, people visit shrines to pray for a healthy, happy year. One of the most famous shrines is Fushimi Inari Shrine. About 2.4 million people visit it during New Year's Day. Yasaka Shrine, Heian Shrine, Kamigamo Shrine are also famous. People cook special food for New Year's Day called osechi ryori. Various dishes associated with happiness or celebrations are put in one big box (3-4 stories high) to represent pile of happiness. The dishes vary from the local regions, but generally food that can be preserved long days is preferred like black beans, kazunoko (herring egg), prawn, sea kelp, etc.

#### ● Obukucha at Rokuharamitsu-ji Temple (Jan. 1-3)

Obuku-cha is a cup of tea with small plum pickles and sea kelp in it. It is believed that drinking this at the beginning of the year will lead to a healthy year. The tea is available from 9:00-17:00.

#### ● Karuta hajime at Yasaka Shrine (Jan. 3)

From 13:00, people dressed in gorgeous Heian period kimono (junihitoe) demonstrate the old card game called karuta. Two pairs compete each other and quickly flip the cards.

#### ● Kemari hajime at Shimogamo Shrine (Jan. 4)

Kemari, traditional Japanese hackysack, originally from China, became popular with aristocrats in the Heian period. Eight men in the Heian period costume stand in a circle and kick the small ball made of deer skin and try to keep it from hitting the ground.

#### ● Hatsu Ebisu at Ebisu Shrine (Jan. 8-12)

Ebisu is the god of good business and big festival is held. The symbol of this festival is bamboo that represents the feature of the plants (hardly broken or growing straight). The event starts from 8:00 on the first day.



# 2

## February



### Setsubun Welcome fortunes into the family

Setsubun literally means the division of the season. One of the famous rituals of setsubun is Oni harai (sending out the demons). A sorcerer wearing an awful mask gets rid of evil demons. At home, people scatter dried soy beans chanting 'oni wa soto, fuku wa uchi' (out with the evil, in with the good). It is believed that beans have power to get rid of evils. It is believed that people can have a healthy life if they eat the same number of beans as their age. Another tradition of setsubun is eating rolled sushi facing in a fortunate direction. They must not speak until they finish eating it and that brings fortune next year. The most famous setsubun event in Kyoto is held at Yoshida Shrine from 2nd to 4th. The shrine priest, holding a pike and shield, chases three demons (blue, red and yellow) and drives them away. On 3rd, a mountain of old amulets (7m high) are burned.

#### ● Hari Kuyo at Kokuzo Horin-ji Temple (Feb. 8)

People bring old pins and needles from all over Japan to thank them for their service and pray for the better improvement of sewing, from 13:00-15:00. Free sweet white sake available.

#### ● Nanakusa gayu at Jonan-gu Shrine (Feb. 11)

People eat rice porridge after the New Year's Day cooked with 7 kinds of spring plants and pray for a healthy new year. The rice porridge is available for 450 yen on the day from 10:00-16:00.

#### ● Godai Rikison Nin-o-e at Daigo-ji Temple (Feb. 23)

This is an interesting event where people show their power by lifting huge mochi rice cakes (150kg for men, 90kg for women). Amulets called godairiki-san that can get rid of all misfortune are available too, from 9:00-17:00.

#### ● Sanyare Festival at Kamigamo Shrine (Feb. 24)

This is a celebration for young boys who become 15. The previous night, the boys play drums and march to Kamigamo Shrine. Then on the 24th, from around 11:00, they pray to the deities of mountain, Ota Shrine and Kamigamo Shrine and tell them that they will become adults.

#### ● Baika Festival at Kitano Tenmangu Shrine (Feb. 25)

This is the biggest even held at this shrine, about 150,000 people visit (10:00-16:00). It is the death anniversary of the enshrined deity, Sugawara no Michizane. There is a big plum garden in the precinct and geiko and maiko from Kamishichiken Flower Town offer tea ceremony.



3 March



## Hina Matsuri Festival Celebrating the healthy growing of girls

In the Nara period, there was a ritual called nagashi bina. People made small dolls with paper or plants and release them to the river after rubbing their body with them. They believed that the dolls took the misfortunes away with them. This is believed to be the origin of Hina Matsuri Festival. In the Heian period, girls in aristocrat families played with dolls and it led to the hina matsuri festival (March 3rd). People display dolls on stages (15 dolls officially: including emperor, empress, three female servants, minister of right, minister of left, five music players, three guards). The special foods for the festival (peach flower, diamond shaped rice cake, white sweet sake, rice cracker, clam, etc.) and furniture (dresser and wardrobe) that woman brings to the new family when she gets married are also put on the stage. Recently, as Japanese houses became smaller, people display only emperor and empress on the one stage. One of the famous traditional festivals in Kyoto is held at Ichihime Shrine. To pray for the fortune, they re-create Heian period hina matsuri festival. People dress like the hina ningyo dolls and dance. The demonstration of wearing junihitoe kimono will be performed too. Also at Shimogamo Shrine, the nagashi bina ritual is held to pray for the healthy growth of children.

### ● Dolls Exhibition at Hokyo-ji Temple (Mar. 1-Apr. 3)

This temple is called Doll Temple as it has hundreds of dolls including the doll that the empress Komei loved. During the exhibition period (10:00-16:00), valuable dolls are shown. A special memorial ceremony for dolls is held every day.

### ● Geino Jotatsu Kigan Festival at Horin-ji Temple (Mar. 10)

The deity of this temple specializes in entertainment and art. On this day, a ceremony praying for the improvement of music and entertainment will be held. From 13:00, enjoyed performance by Shigeyama Chuzaburo family will be enjoyed too.

### ● Hanezu Odori Dance at Zuishin-in Temple (last Sunday of Mar.)

Hanezu is an old word for pale pink. There is a fine plum tree garden in the temple. Their plum trees are called Hanezu ume that bloom later than the common ones. From 14:00, girls will perform a graceful Haneze dance pretending Ono no Komachi and Fukakusa Shosho (samurai).

### ● Hanatouro at Higashiyama District (Mid March every year, 18:00-20:00: foreordination)

Hanatouro is set up in one of Kyoto's most popular tourist areas, parallel to the Higashiyama ridge between Kiyomizu Temple in the south and Shoren-in Temple in the north through Yasaka Shrine, Maruyama Park, Kodai-ji Temple, etc. The 4.6-km route will be lined with 5 kinds of about 2,400 lanterns (Kyoto pottery, Kiyomizu pottery, bamboo, stone and Kitayama cedar). It is the perfect route for a romantic, relaxing evening or a nighttime stroll in the elegant Kyoto atmosphere.



4 April



## Cherry blossom Viewing Under the elegant cherry flowers

In ancient times, Japanese people enshrined certain god for mountain. They believed that the god comes down to the most beautiful cherry tree, so that people offered things to the tree. It is the origin of the cherry viewing of Japan. Cherry viewing was enjoyed by aristocrats in the Heian period and spread among the common people in the Edo period. It was a great pleasure for poor people in those days as rare opportunity to enjoy something beautiful. In Kyoto there is a lot to do during cherry season. One of the famous cherry viewing spots is Nijo Castle. There are 46 kinds of 355 cherry trees. On April 9th, a cherry viewing tea party is held in the garden that is not open to the public generally. Another recommended spot is Hirano Shrine. Their cherry tree bloom earliest in Kyoto. On April 10th, a festival is held and a number of food and fun stalls open.

### ● Benishidare Concert at Heian Shrine (Mid April)

There is a famous weeping cherry tree in the precinct and it is lit up elegantly. The special stage is set in the two sacred gardens and soft music is played. People can enjoy the illuminated cherry tree and concert is very popular every year.

### ● Taiko Hanami Gyoretsu at Daigo-ji Temple (Second Sun. of Apr.)

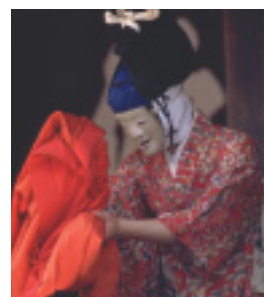
This is the annual festival of temple. About 200 people dressed in costumes of the Momoyama period follow the gorgeous Toyotomi Hideyoshi to re-enact a luxury cherry blossom party held in 1598 by him.

### ● Yoshino Tayu Hana Kuyo at Josho-ji Temple (Third Sun. of Apr.)

Yoshino Tayu was a famous geisha in Shimabara in the Edo period for her beauty and talent. This is the memorial ceremony for her as her grave is set in this temple. The Yoshino Tayu in gorgeous kimono followed by male servants looks splendid with the cherry blossom.

### ● Mibu Kyogen at Mibu Temple (Apr. 21-29)

This kyogen is different from general kyogen as all performers wear masks playing mime with music of drum, bell, whistle. Basically the story is comical but it takes some religious world. The performance starts from 13:00 to 17:00.



# 5 May



## Aoi Matsuri Festival Grand festival with 1,400 history

The Aoi Matsuri Festival is one of the three biggest festivals in Kyoto along with Gion Matsuri Festival and Jidai Matsuri Festival. This is the annual important festival of both Kamigamo and Shimogamo Shrine. The origin dates back to 1,400 years ago when Kyoto had bad harvest and plague. The emperor had a fortune-telling and the result showed that those bad situations were come from the curse of gods of Kamo. The emperor held a sacred ceremony and that is the start of Aoi Matsuri Festival. On the 15th, the 700m long procession of about 500 people in the Heian period costume starts from the Imperial Palace to Kamigamo Shrine, halting for a break at Shimogamo Shrine and finally the procession reaches Kamigamo Shrine. It is like a picture of Heian period. The schedule of the procession: Imperial Palace (10:30) Shimogamo Shrine (11:40) leaving (14:20) Kitaoji Bridge (14:55) Kamigamo Shrine (15:30). When the procession reaches both shrines, the priest offers the sentence and people offer dance and things.

### ● Shinsen-en Kyogen at Shinsen-en Garden (May 1-4)

This kyogen is come from Mibu kyogen that performs principle of moral and justice without lines. For those four days, the festival is held in Shinsen-en Garden and interesting kyogen are performed based on the story of religion, folk, sword fight, etc.

### ● Senbon Enma-do Kyogen at Senbon Enma-do Temple (May 1-4)

It is one of the great nenbutsu kyogen of Kyoto along with Mibu kyogen, Shinsen-en kyogen and Saga kyogen. However it is unique as only this kyogen has lines while others don't. It is said that this kyogen is strongly effected by noh performance.

### ● Yabusame Shinji at Shimogamo Shrine (May 3)

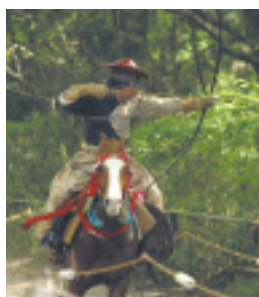
Hanezu is an old word for pale pink. There is a fine plum tree garden in the temple. Their plum trees are called Hanezu ume that bloom later than common ones. From 14:00, girls will perform a graceful Haneze dance pretending Ono no Komachi and Fukakusa Shosho (samurai).

### ● Kurabe-uma Shinji at Kamigamo Shrine (May 5)

The special horse course is set between two torii shrine gates in Kamigamo Shrine. Two people ride on the horses one by one and compete the speed of the horse. The race starts from around 14:00.

### ● Mifune Matsuri Festival at Kurumazaki Shrine (May 15)

The elegant Heian period river entertainment is recreated with over 20 boats on Oi River for about 2 hours. This is very popular event that over 100,000 tourists come to watch. The festival starts from around 14:00.



# 6 June



## Takigi Noh Drama by Torch Light at Heian Shrine Illuminated noh drama performance

The annual Takigi Noh (Noh by Firelight) performance at Heian Shrine is an amazing and exceptionally beautiful thing since 1950. This ancient dramatic art, with the exquisite backdrop of Heian Shrine's classic architecture, its many magnificent pines, and the Higashiyama hills off in the distance, is extraordinary. The special stage is set in the precinct and prominent noh performers from four schools (Kanze, Kongo, Kinshun and Okura) fascinate the audience. Each night's program consists of four plays, kyogen (a short comic interlude) and some dances. A number of foreign tourists come to watch this extraordinary performance of Japanese art. It worth seeing this event: traditional Japanese performance in Heian Shrine, a symbol of Kyoto. The performance starts at 17:30 on June 1 and 2.

### ● Kibune Water Festival at Kibune Shrine (Jun. 1)

Because it is the water source of Kamo River, the water of god is enshrined in Kibune Shrine since ancient times. This is the biggest festival of the shrine. People scatter the rice cake to pray for the safety in the family and healthy life. Also the kagura play will be performed based on the story of getting rid of evil huge snake.



### ● Nobunaga Matsuri Festival at Honno-ji Temple (First Sat. & Sun of Jun.)

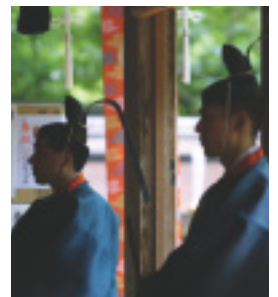
A memorial service for Oda Nobunaga who was betrayed and killed by his traitor general, Akechi Mitsuhide on June 2nd. Cheerful parade, Japanese stone board game (go) match, Japanese dance, tea service and market is held too.

### ● Rice Planting Festival at Fushimi Inari Shrine (Jun. 10)

This is the festival that people replant young rice plant that was grown in the temple to the real rice field. They pray for the good harvest in autumn. The festival starts from 13:00 and the rice planting starts from around 14:00.

### ● Takekirie Bamboo Cutting at Kurama Temple (Jun. 20)

This ceremony is originated in the story in the late 9th century that the high ranking monk got rid of the huge snake with his Buddhist power. Instead of the snake, they use big bamboo and monks cut them. It is one of the symbolic ceremonies of summer starting from around 14:00.



### ● Nagoshi-no-harai Purification Festival (Jun. 30)

Every year around this time, many shrines hold an ancient Japanese purification rite called nagoshi-no-harai. In this ceremony people atone for their sins in the first half of the year by walking through a chinowa (a giant wreath made of a kind of rush called chigaya). Sending the human shaped doll off the river is common too. Kitano Tenmangu Shrine, Jishu Shrine, Jonan-gu Shrine are famous.



## Gion Matsuri Festival Highlight of Kyoto Summer

Gion Matsuri Festival is one of the three largest festivals in Japan along with Tenjin Matsuri Festival in Osaka and Kanda Matsuri Festival in Tokyo. Various related events and rituals are held through the month. The first Gion Matsuri, one of Japan's oldest goryo-e festivals, was held in the early Heian period to stop a series of devastating plagues. In desperation, the emperor decreed that special prayers be said at Yasaka Shrine, and that the country's 66 provincial hoko (double-axe-headed military spears) be paraded through the city. The festival has its peak on 16th, the night of yoiyama. People stroll around the city until midnight in the gion bayashi music. On following day, all the 32 floats of the festival attend the grand parade. The first is Naginata-boko float. The parade starts from 9:00 at Shijo Karasuma and proceeds to Oike St. through Kawaramachi St. It is said that loud festival music is for quiet the evil spirits. The festival ends with the nagoshi no harai purification ritual on the 31st in the Yasaka Shrine.

### ● Tanabata Festival (Jul. 7)

This children's festival originated from an ancient Chinese legend about two lovers who were turned into stars by the gods. They are reunited but once a year on July 7th. At Kitano Tenmangu Shrine, people bring offerings (special leaf, seasonal vegetables, dango dumpling, etc.) to the deity to pray for the healthy life. At Jishu Shrine, pairs of paper kokeshi dolls are sold. Write your name on one and your partner's name on the other and hang them together in a bamboo thicket to wish for eternal love. At Kibune Shrine, the precinct is lit up and people thank for the god of the water and pray.

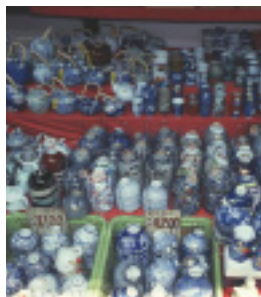


### ● Pottery Ceremony and Market at Senbon Shaka-do Temple (Jul. 9-12)

A ceremony thanking for the potteries and praying for the development of the pottery industry will be held from 14:00 on 10th. Many pottery dealers set up stalls in the temple (10:00-20:00).

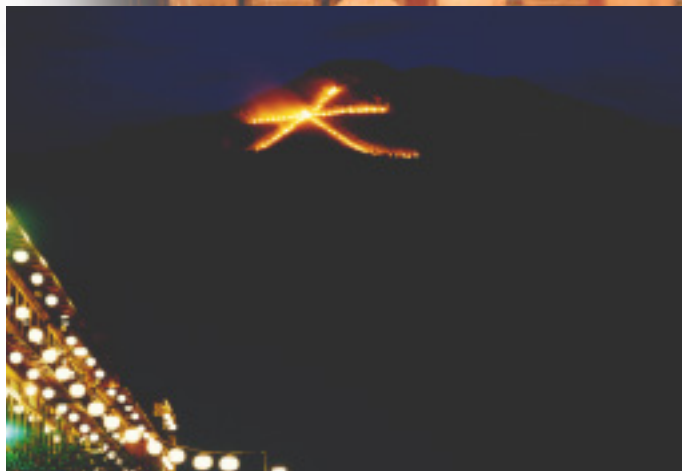
### ● Kiyomizu Danchi Pottery Fair (Jul. 18-20)

A popular summer pottery fair, this event is based in the area where the famous Kiyomizu pottery kilns are currently located in Yamashina ward. All kinds of pottery at reasonable prices (30-50% less than normal). Visitors can also enjoy 1-day pottery classes, tea ceremony, and many other events.



### ● Sennichi Mairi Annual Night Walk Up Mt. Atago (Jul. 31)

On this night, thousands of pilgrims climb Mount Atago in an annual spiritual event known as Sennichi-mairi. One trip to Atago Shrine (at the summit) on this date earns you the equivalent of 1,000 visits. People climb this 4km lit up route from Kiyotaki to the top of the mountain.



## Obon Send-off Bonfires Symbol of ending summer

From 20:00 on August 16th, the huge symbol appears on the summer night of Kyoto. This is the sigh of the end of Kyoto summer. On the five mountains surrounding the city, five characters are illuminated. The first fire, and the most famous one, is daimonji (big character). It is lit high up the slopes of Mount Daimonji on the east side of town, above Ginkaku-ji Temple. The other fires are myo (life), ho (Buddhist law), funagata (ship), and hidari daimonji (the left daimonji fire). It is believed that this fire has a power to get rid of evils. This event is strongly connected to Japan's unique Obon Festival, an ancient religious rite to honor the souls of one's ancestors. Obon is special four days, usually from July or August 13th to 16th. During it, the spirits of deceased ancestors come home and people welcome them and send them off again. Obon is very important period for Japanese people to cherish the spirit of ancestors.

### ● Pottery Festival at Wakamiya Hachiman-gu Shrine (Aug. 7-10)

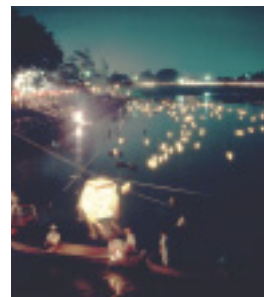
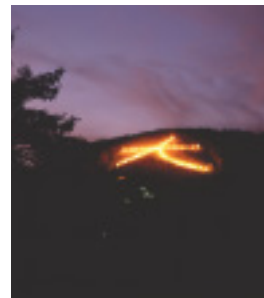
This shrine is called the shrine of pottery. Because the shrine is located on the center of Kiyomizu pottery industry, pottery dealers from all over Japan come together. The stalls are open from 10:00 to 22:00. Also the ema amulet made of pottery is available.

### ● Rokusai Nembutsu Summer Dances (Mid Aug.)

Rokusai refers to the six days a month (8th, 14th, 15th, 23rd, 29th, last day of the month) when demons were traditionally believed to be out and about. To keep people safe, Buddhist chants and dances with music performed and it is Rokusai Nembutsu started in the mid Heian period among local people. Daigo-ji Temple, Togetsu Bridge, Hirotsawa Pond, Rokuhara Mistu-ji Temple.

### ● Manto Nagashi (ten thousand lights sending) Ceremonies (Mid Aug.)

Manto Nagashi ceremonies are memorial services held during Obon for the spirits of the departed and thank to the life. At Daigo-ji Temple, 500 lanterns and 600 offered paper lanterns are lit up and create fantastic atmosphere. At Rokuhara Mitsui-ji Temple, a number of lanterns are set in the shape of kanji represents 'big' to welcome the spirit of the ancestors. The amulet for fire prevention is distributed. Also at Togetsu Bridge in Arashiyama or Hirotsawa Pond, local people send the lanterns off to the water.





## Karasu-zumo (Crow Wrestling)

Unique ceremony of early autumn

This unusual event is held in Kamigamo Shrine on September 9th, the day of getting rid of misfortunes called Choyo. People offer chrysanthemum flowers to the deity and pray for the healthy life. After the ceremony, unique Karasu-zumo wrestling begins, after which two Shinto priests. Children play sumo. It is said that this sumo was started because people lived Kamo region were called karasu (crow). Free chrysanthemum flower sake will be offered that is believed to be effective for healthy longevity.

## Jidai Matsuri Festival (Oct. 22)

Picturesque procession of Japanese history

People can see all Kyoto history and culture from Jidai Matsuri Festival, a colourful, exotic costume party. It is one of the three great festivals in Kyoto along with Gion Matsuri Festival and Aoi Matsuri Festival. It was started to celebrate the Old Capital's 1,100-year history. On the day, all 2,000 people wear accurate costumes from each era consisting of 18 groups. The procession reaches 2km long. The procession starts from Imperial Palace and reach to Heian Shrine through Karasuma, Oike, Kawaramachi and Sanjo. The total route is about 4.5km. All the costumes, furniture and fittings are recreated from accurate research, so that they look so real and attract audience.

### ● Hagi (Bush Clover) Festival at Nashinoki Shrine (Third Sun. of Sep.)

This shrine is famous for its hagi bushes. Red and white auspicious bush clover flowers and bell cricket are offered to the deity. People come here to write haiku (17-syllable poems) on strips of paper and tie them to the flowering bushes.

### ● Comb Festival at Yasui Konpira Shrine (Fourth Sun. of Sep.)

The memorial ceremony for old comb and hair accessories is held. This is a great opportunity to see Japanese women all dressed up in traditional costumes and with the most incredible hairdos from around 14:00.

### ● Osuna-fumi-hoyo (Sand Stepping) at Imakumano Kannon-ji Temple (Set. 21-25)

The sand from 88 holy places of Shikoku island has been brought to this temple and people in the special costume walk on it. Without travelling to Shikoku, they can same blessing from Shikoku visiting.

### ● Special Rei-sai Ceremony at Seimei Shrine (Late Sep.)

Seimei Shrine is strongly linked with Abeno Seimei, who becomes very popular recently as the motif of movie. In the main hall, special stone he used in yin-yang study remain. On the day, the memorial ceremony for Seimei is held and flower offering and tea service is available.



### ● Zuiki (Taro Stem) Festival at Kitano Tenmangu Shrine (Oct. 1-5)

This festival is famous as autumn festival to thank for good harvest. Zuiki is the taro stem. Two unique mikoshi (portable shrines) with roofs made of taro stems, and sides made of other vegetables are constructed. Festival highlights include a parade of 250 people in the Heian period costumes.

### ● Ningyo Kuyo at Hokyo-ji Temple (Oct. 14)

This temple is called Doll Temple as it has hundreds of dolls including the doll that the empress Komei loved. A number of dolls are displayed in the main hall and big memorial ceremony is held.

### ● Kurama Fire Festival at Kurama Temple (Oct. 22)

From 18:00 people holding torches chant auspicious words 'sairei sairyo'. Every year 20,000 visitors come to watch this powerful festival of fire.

### ● Hatsuka Ebisu Festival at Ebisu Shrine (Oct. 19-21)

The origin of the festival dates back to the Edo period when a merchant from Kyoto thanked the god of Ebisu when he safely came back from Edo (present-day Tokyo). The unique ceremony of knife that clean a fish only using knife and chopsticks is held too.



# 11 November



## Kyokusui-no-utage at Jonangu Shrine (Nov. 3)

Experience the elegance of Heian period

This is an elegant poetry game dating back to the Heian period. Men and women dressed as Heian aristocrats sit on the banks of the stream that flows through the Jonan-gu Shrine's Rakusui-en garden. A red sake cup is released upstream and before it reaches the next participant that person must compose a poem. When they finish making the poem, they drink the sake in the cup. It is very popular event that a number of people come to watch every year.

### ● Hitaki Festival at Fushimi Inari Shrine (until Nov. 3)

This is the festival to thank to the god for good harvest. Its ohitaki burning bonfires is the biggest in Japan. Hundred thousands of goma prayer sticks are burned.



### ● Kanikakuni-sai Festival at Gion Shirakawa (Nov. 8)

This private memorial service is for the poet and play maker, Yoshii Isamu who loved the Gion pleasure quarters until died at the age of 74. At the Shirakawa stream, there is a stone monument inscribed his poem to commemorate his contribution.

### ● Arashiyama Maple Festival around Togetsu Bridge (Second Sun. of Nov.)

Arashiyama is famous for its beautiful scenery in autumn. On this day, from 10:00, a performance of Japanese traditional arts (dance, ancient comedy, and plays) called the Momiji Matsuri (Maple Festival) will be staged on boats on the Oi River.



### ● Shotoku Taishi Ohitaki at Koryu-ji Temple (Nov. 22)

Koryu-ji Temple is one of seven temples Orinze Shotooku established. It is known as the temple of getting rid of bad desire. The day is his death memorial day and treasury's two famous images of Prince Shotoku and Yakushi-Nyorai are open to the public.

### ● Memorial Service for Brushes at Shokaku-an (Nov. 23)

The memorial ceremony is held for old pens and brushes are held. On this day, calligraphers and writers burn their old brushes (fude) in gratitude and in hopes of better penmanship ability. The prayer and music by the monks are performed. The tea ceremony will be held too.



# 12 December



## Joya no kane and Japanese New Year's Eve

Close the old year and welcome the new year

Joya no kane is the name of the Japanese bell-ringing ritual on the midnight of December 31st. Joya means the last day of the year. The bell is rung 108 times that, based on the Buddhism philosophy, represents the number of worldly desire a person has. It is believed that listening to 108 bells can get rid of those desire and purify the body and mind. Visitors can ring the bell at many temples including Kiyomizu Temple, Daigo-ji Temple and Nanzen-ji Temple. At Yasaka Shrine, okera mairi is famous shrine visiting on the New Year's Eve. Okera is a kind of chrysanthemum flower. It was used as herb medicine for stomach since ancient times and also was believed to be effective to drive away the evils. Since people used stem of this plant for the lantern fire, the visitors but the fire on the fortunate bamboo rope and take it home twiddling it not to extinct the fire. The fire will be used for the candle of Shinto alter or cooking fire for New Year's Day to pray for the healthy new year.

### ● Kaomise Kabuki at Minamiza Theater (until Dec. 26)

The Kaomise (lit. actor's face showing) is started from November and it was created to get publicity for the star kabuki actors' at the end of the season. Minamiza Theatre is the most famous of this event and attracts many audiences. At the front of the theatre, the big wooden signs (maneki) that show actors' names are displayed dignifiedly.



### ● Kencha Festival at Kitano Tenmangu Shrine (Dec. 1)

A great warlord, Toyotomi Hideyoshi held a big tea party inviting Sen no Rikyu and Imai Sokyu. The iemoto, head of the school, demonstrate the tea ceremony while a number of people see him. A big screen is set up and visitors can watch the ceremony.



### ● Daikon-daki Radish Boiling at Ryotoku-ji Temple (Dec. 9-10) and Senbon Shaka-do Temple (Dec. 7-8)

About 750 years ago, the founder of Jodo Shin-shu Sect, Shinran was welcomed by the local people with white radish (daikon) when he stopped in Kyoto. On the day, cooked daikon is available for about 10,000 people (10:00-16:00).



### ● Hari Kuyo Pins & Needles Memorial Service at Horin-ji Temple (Dec. 8)

This is a thanksgiving ceremony for old needles. Housewives and professional seamstresses stick their used needles in a slab of konnyaku, a rubbery food made from the starch of a root vegetable.