

FEATURES

Summer Traditions in Japan



Photo: Yosakoi Festival Promotion Association



Photo: Kyogashi Takasa Suetomi



Photo: Aomori Tourism and Convention Association

Above: Teams also come from outside Japan to participate, like this team from Poland in 2019.

Middle: *Ajisai* ("Hydrangea") made of sweet potato mash colored in refreshing color tone and decorated with agar drops that resemble sparkling rain.

Below: The Nebuta Grand Prize of the 2022 festival went to the Ryuoh (Dragon King) *nebuta* featuring the Hachidai Ryuoh (eight deities that protect the Dharma) that are enshrined in the Asamushi district of the city of Aomori.

In Japan, summer corresponds to the months of June, July, and August in terms of weather conditions. While summer in Japan is an important season for growing crops, the extremely high heat and humidity can make it uncomfortable as well. Many different summer traditions, or *fubutsushi*, have developed as forms of wisdom or inventive means of coping with the intense heat. In this month's issue of Highlighting Japan, we explore a range of different typical Japanese summertime *fubutsushi*, from summer festivals and fireworks displays to summer-style confectionery, fireflies, wind chimes, and more.

