

# 'Sea Festa Onomichi -- Sea Festival 2012 Onomichi/Fukuyama/Mihara --' is grandly and successfully held

'Sea Festa Onomichi -- Sea Festival 2012 Onomichi/Fukuyama/Mihara --' was held over the course of 16 days, from July 14-29 in the three cities of Onomichi, Fukuyama, and Mihara. It was originally scheduled to be held in 2011, but was delayed one year due to the East Japan earthquake and tsunami.

The opening ceremony was held on July 14 at the Shimanami Meeting Center (Onomichi). Yuko Hiratani, the mayor of Onomichi and head of the planning committee gave an opening speech, in which he stated that he would like to utilize the region's history and unique characteristics. During the ceremony, awards were also presented to the winners of the slogan and logo contests. The selected slogan was 'Dreaming for the future of the Seto Inland Sea'.

On July 18, the Imperial Prince and Princess Akishino also paid a visit, and a welcoming ceremony was held at the Shimanami Meeting Center. Imperial Prince Akishino-no-miya Fumihito stated, "This region is located in the Seto Inland Sea, which was our nation's first national park. It has historical cultural heritage sites, beautiful inland ocean scenery such as the Shimanami Kaido, shipbuilding and fishing industries, and plays a role as a logistics hub. Holding a Sea Festa with the theme of the ocean here holds a significant meaning. It is our duty to properly recognize the importance of the sea and to transmit that message to future generations." A message from Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda was also read, after which the ceremony concluded with an awards presentation to distinguished maritime industry personnel.

Sea Festa Onomichi, during which many events were held, concluded on July 29. The total visitor count was 1,055,000. During the closing ceremony, Mayor Hiratani stated, "I'm happy that the three cities were able to work together to attract more than one million visitors. As Sea Festa continues on into next year and the year after that, I look forward to creating a city that is thankful for the boon the sea has provided us." Sea Festa will be held in five cities in Akita prefecture in 2013, namely Oga, Akita, Katagami, Mitane, and Ogata, so the Sea Festa flag was passed on from Mayor Hiratani to the mayor of Oga City, Yukio Watabe.



### Sea Festa opening ceremony

During the ceremony, a Japanese calligraphy performance was given by the calligraphy club at Onomichi-kita High School. The logo is displayed on the screen.

### Sea Festa organizer's speech

The organizer's speech was given by planning committee chairperson and city mayor Yuko Hiratani.



### Imperial Prince Fumihito attends a Sea Festa ceremony

This ceremony was attended by Imperial Prince and Princess Akishino. His highness expressed a few words.

### Recognition given at the ceremony

During the ceremony, recognition was given to the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport & Tourism, Director General of the Maritime Safety Agency, Chugoku District Transport Bureau Chief, Chugoku Regional Development Bureau Chief, 6th Regional Coast Guard Headquarters Chief, Head of Maritime Safety Agency (Onomichi division), Director of the Onomichi Marine Day Association, and Director of the Innoshima Marine Day Association.







### 'All about the sea' exhibition

The 'All about the sea' exhibition was held by several maritime-related groups at the Onomichi City Center Mukaishima Kokoro.



### 'All about the sea' proves popular

Showing off paintings and models of ships and the sea, the exhibit was visited by many people, who experienced the sea first-hand.



### A giant rubber duck appears in Onomichi Channel

A giant rubber duck showed up in Onomichi Channel. The duck had apparently never been in sea water before. Many visitors were surprised at how big it was.



### A sensational seaside parade

A seaside parade was held in Onomichi City on July 21. The event was made more sensational by the addition of Tokyo Disney Resort's special parade.



### Sea Festa closing ceremony

After topping a million visitors, Sea Festa came to a close. Pictured right is Mayor Hiratani passing on the flag to Oga mayor Yukio Watabe for Sea Festa 2013.