

Itsukushima Shrine

Marōdo Shrine (shrine for guest deities)

Ameno-oshihomimi-no-mikoto, Amenohohi-no-mikoto, Amatsuhikone-no-mikoto, Ikutuhikone-no-mikoto and Kumanokusubi-no-mikoto are enshrined here.

Five-storied Pagoda

The pagoda is about 27 meters tall. It is closed to the public.



Hōkoku Shrine (Senjōkaku)

Toyotomi Hideyoshi is enshrined here. The shrine has a floor space of about 857 tatami mats and is commonly called Senjōkaku (one thousand tatami hall).



Main Shrine of Itsukushima Shrine

Ichikishimahime-no-mikoto, Tagorihime-no-mikoto, and Tagitsuhime-no-mikoto are enshrined here.

Entrance

Hitasaki

Ōtorii

The gate is about 16 meters tall. The circumference of each main pillar is about 10 meters. This is one of the biggest wooden torii gates in Japan.



About 200 meters from Hitasaki

Daikoku Shrine

Ōkuninushi-no-mikoto, or Daikoku, the deity of matchmaking, is enshrined here.

Votive picture tablets are offered here.

Mikuji (paper fortunes) can be tied on here.

Tenjin Shrine

Sugawara no Michizane, who was deified as a patron of scholarship, is enshrined here.

Noh Stage

Soribashi

Exit

Amulet Office

Visit the office to request Shinto services, obtain a *shuin* (the stamp of the shrine) or purchase amulets or talismans.

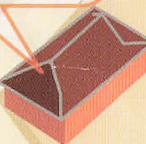
Takabutai (elevated stage)

Ancient court dances called *bugaku* are performed on this stage. The accompanying music is played in one of the musicians' chambers to the right or left of the stage, called the Ugakubō and Sagakubō.

Ugakubō

Sagakubō

Treasure Hall of Itsukushima Shrine



More Information



Bugaku at Itsukushima Shrine

In the Heian period, Taira no Kiyomori (1118-1181) worshipped at Itsukushima Shrine and built the edifice we see today. It is said that ancient court dances called *bugaku* began to be performed at Itsukushima Shrine when Kiyomori introduced them from Shitennōji Temple in Osaka. In later years the Ōuchi, Mōri and Asano clans worshipped at the shrine, and the *bugaku* dances have been passed down to the present day.



Festivals and *Bugaku*

(Names of the *bugaku* dances are indicated in italics.)

January 1 *Saitansai*

Ceremony from 5 a.m. *Bugaku* from around 6:30 a.m.
Enbu

January 2 *Futsukasai*

Ceremony from 9 a.m. *Bugaku* from 1 p.m.
Manzairaku, Engiraku

January 3 *Genshisai*

Ceremony from 9 a.m. *Bugaku* from 1 p.m.
Taiheiraku, Komaboko, Kotokuraku, Ran Ryōō, Nasori, Chōgeishi

January 5 *Chikyūsai*

Ceremony from 5:30 a.m. *Bugaku* from around 7 a.m.
Enbu, Kanshū, Ringa, Batō, Genjōraku, Chōgeishi

April 15 *Tōkasai*

Ceremony from 5 p.m. *Bugaku* from around 6:30 p.m.
Enbu, Manzairaku, Engiraku, Tōrika, Ikkyoku, Soriko, Sanju, Kitoku, Ran Ryōō, Nasori, Chōgeishi

May 18 *Suiko Tennō-sai Yōhai-shiki*

Ceremony from 9 a.m. *Bugaku* from around 9:30 a.m.
Enbu, Manzairaku, Engiraku, Ran Ryōō, Nasori, Chōgeishi

June 5 *Ichitatesai*

(old calendar) Ceremony from 9 a.m. *Bugaku* from around 10 a.m.
Enbu, Manzairaku, Engiraku, Ran Ryōō, Nasori, Chōgeishi

October 15 *Kikkasai*

Ceremony from 5 p.m. *Bugaku* from around 6:30 p.m.
Enbu, Manzairaku, Engiraku, Katen, Ikkyoku, Soriko, Sanju, Kitoku, Ran Ryōō, Nasori, Chōgeishi

~~December 23~~ *Tenchōsai*

On the Birthday of the emperor Ceremony from 9:30 a.m. *Bugaku* from around 11 a.m.
Enbu, Manzairaku, Engiraku, Ran Ryōō, Nasori, Chōgeishi

Bugaku

Enbu

The first dance performed at *bugaku* programs, *Enbu* is a ceremonial dance to purify the stage by offering prayers to the deities on high and on the earth and to ancestors' spirits.

Manzairaku

In the Tang dynasty in China, it was said that during the reign of a wise king, a phoenix flew over and sang, "Long live the king!" The music depicts the song of the phoenix, and the dance shows its graceful movements.

Engiraku

It is said that this dance was created in 908 in the Engi era, during the reign of Emperor Daigo and that Fujiwara no Tadafusa composed the music and Prince Atsuzane choreographed the dance. This dance was not introduced from China or Korea but is one of the few *bugaku* dances that originated in Japan.

Ikkyoku

Two dancers with musical instruments come on stage, one from the left and the other from the right, and dance together. It is said that this dance originated from the dances performed when people walked in procession.

Soriko

It is said that in Korea people traditionally purified the stove and the well when they brewed alcoholic beverages. This practice was made into a dance. It is also called "Dance for the Stove Ceremony."

Sanju

This dance is said to have been created when Shakyamuni (the Buddha) was born. The dancer depicts a brave warrior and dances to appease the spirits of the earth.

Kitoku

During the reign of the Han dynasty in China, there was a brave general who surrendered to the Emperor. It is said that this dance depicts his valor.

Ran Ryōō

About 1400 years ago, Ran Ryōō (Prince of Lan Ling), or Emperor Changgong of Northern Qi, was so beautiful that he wore a fierce mask on the battlefield to command the army to heighten his soldiers' morale. In this way he won the war against a large army of Zhou.

Nasori

This is also called "Dance of Two Dragons." It depicts male and female dragons playing together. The dance is customarily performed by two dancers. When performed by one dancer, it is called Rakuson.

Taiheiraku

This dance is based on a historical anecdote about the first emperor of the Han dynasty. When he realized someone dancing a sword dance at a banquet was attempting to assassinate him, he joined in the dance and protected himself with his sleeve.

Komaboko

This dance is said to depict a ship that came from Goryeo to offer a tribute. It enters the port, steered with poles painted in five colors.

Kotokuraku

This comical dance shows a banquet scene. The tipsy dancer staggers off the stage.

Kanshū

This dance is believed to have been named after a place called Kanshū (Ganzhou), which existed during the Tang dynasty in China. It is said that there were many bamboo forests with poisonous insects there but that when this music was played the insects did not harm people because the music sounded like birdcalls.

Ringa

It is said that in ancient times, this dance was performed on the day of *Kinoe-Ne*, the first day of the Chinese sexagesimal cycles. *Kinoe* is the first of the ten celestial stems, and *Ne*, or mouse, is the first of the twelve Oriental zodiac signs. Pictures of mice are embroidered on the costumes. This dance seems to be about mice, but its origin is unknown.

Batō

This dance is based on an Indian story. A man's father was killed by a savage beast in the mountains. After going into the mountains and avenging his father's death, the man comes down the mountains gallantly.

Genjōraku

It is said that this dance was created to depict people in the Western Regions of China who were happy to find snakes as they liked eating them and that it was originally called *Genjaraku*, meaning "happy to see snakes."

Chōgeishi

This music is played at the end of *bugaku* performances. There is no dance.

Itsukushima Shrine

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