

# Gunma Events

## January 2019



### No two Daruma Markets on a same day

Starting with Takasaki on Jan. 1, Daruma market tours the major cities in Gunma throughout January.

[A Daruma production process movie](#)

### Takasaki Daruma Market

On New Year's Day and the following day, part of Takasaki's main street leading to the JR West Exit will be closed to traffic. Daruma dolls will be sold; food stands of local dishes will be set up, and a variety of other New Year events will be offered.

**When:** January 1 (Tue.) & 2 (Wed.) 10:00-16:00

**Where:** JR Takasaki West Exit Street

**Contact:** 027-330-5333 [MAP](#)

### ■ Maebashi Hatsuichi (Daruma Market)

As one of the three major seasonal festivals, it starts with a Buddhist ritual of *Otakiage* to burn old Daruma dolls from the previous year at Maebashi Hachiman-gu Shrine. (These Daruma dolls are good for one year.) Tents selling Daruma dolls and other lucky charms of many varieties as well as food stands will be set up along Route 50 from morning into the night.

**When:** January 9 (Wed.) 10:00 – 21:30

**Where:** On Route 50 & downtown Maebashi

**Contact:** 027-235-2211 [MAP](#)

### ■ Joshu Yakimansai Festival

Four giant Yakimanju's (300 servings) will be roasted as an offering at the Isesaki Jinja Shrine. After the ritual is over, they will be cut in short pieces and given to spectators.

**When:** January 11 (Fri.) 14:00 -

**Where:** Isesaki Jinja Shrine  
(21-1 Hon-machi, Isesaki)

**Contact:** 0270-24-5111

### Daruma Dolls of Gunma

Daruma dolls are a leading form of a good-luck charm in Japan. Approx. 80% of the country's Daruma dolls are made in Takasaki. Different production site has different designs, so Daruma dolls made outside of Gunma have slightly different shapes and faces.

When you buy your own Daruma, you make your wish as you say a prayer for what you want (e.g. a success in an examination, etc.) and fill its right eye. When the wish is granted, you fill in the other eye as a way of appreciation.

### Sericulture farmers' off-season job to earn extra cash

Daruma dolls are originated at Shorinzan Temple in Takasaki. Approx. 200 years ago, farmers in the suburb of Takasaki made Daruma dolls. All work was done manually, and the strong cold winter wind helped dry wet paint fast.

### Designer Daruma Dolls

When a large-scale event like World Cup Soccer, the Olympics and Paralympics, etc., special Daruma dolls are made.

### Senkyo (Election) Daruma

When national and local elections are scheduled, candidates buy the usual Daruma dolls to wish for their victory. This year, the gubernatorial and an upper house election are forthcoming. Look for a Daruma doll when campaign offices are on TV.

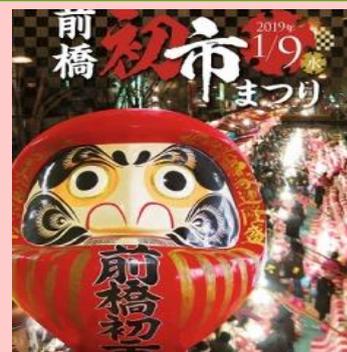
### Daruma Dolls are good for one year.

This is why people go to Daruma market to buy one for themselves every year. They take the old one to a nearby temple/shrine to have *Otakiage* ritual (burning them) performed for a small donation.

### Takasaki



### Maebashi



### Isesaki



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### ■ [New Year's Joshu Ota Shichifukujin Meguri](#)

Ota

How about a 3-hour walking tour of Ota's seven temples, each of which enshrines one of the seven guardian deities? You can walk at your own pace. This could be your chance to exercise after a long NY holidays.

**When:** January 13 (Sun.) From 7:50 to until approx. 13:00

**Where:** Assemble at Daikoin Temple

Registration: 7:30-8:30 a.m. (JPY500 for registration fee)  
(37-8 Kanayama-cho, Ota) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 0276-47-1833



### ■ [Yukake Matsuri, Kawarayu Onsen](#)

Young men dressed only in loincloth participate in this 400-year-old festival early morning on *Daikan* coldest day of the year. They pour onsen waters to each other. Spectators may get splashed with water, but this is considered good omen for the New Year.

**When:** January 20 (Sun.) 5:00-7:00 a.m.

**Where:** Ohyu of Kawarayu Onsen

(234 Kawarayu, Naganohara-machi, Agatsuma-gun) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 0279-83-2591



Naganohara-machi

### The Great Gunma Showcase at [Maebashi Suzuran](#)

Full array of Gunma brand produce will be sold at a department store in Maebashi. Sweets, Tsukemono pickles, ham and sausages, coffee, green tea, etc. You can sample at each of the stores set up.

**When:** Jan. 9(Wed) thru 15 (Tue.) \*Closed at 3 p.m. on the last day

**Where:** 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Maebashi Suzuran Department Store  
(2-12-3 Chiyoda-machi, Maebashi) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 027-243-7271



Maebashi

### The Great Gunma Showcase at [Takasaki Takashimaya](#)

Full array of Gunma brand produce will be sold at a department store in Takasaki. Normally, you would have to travel here and there in Gunma to buy a specific produce. (Not everything is sold online.) Here, you can see them all, well almost all of Gunma's famous produce.

**When:** Jan. 23 (Wed.) thru 29 (Tue.) \*Closed at 5 p.m. on the last day

**Where:** 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> floors Takashimaya Department Store  
(45 Asahi-cho, Takasaki) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 027-243-7271



Takasaki

### ■ [Kusatsu Int'l Ski Resort Treasure Hunt for Children](#)

A special venue is set up for this event. Those eligible to participate are children (6<sup>th</sup> grade of elementary school or under) who have purchased Kids Park ticket.

**When:** January 27 (Sun.) & Feb. 17(Sun.) 13 : 00 ~

**Where:** Kids Park at the Kusatsu Int'l Ski Resort, Kids Park

(158 Rinpan Shiranekokuyurin, Kusatsu-machi, Agatsuma-gun) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 0279-88-8111

Kusatsu Onsen



[2018-2019 Season Gunma Ski & Snowboarding Resorts PDF](#)