

Omiya Hachiman-gu Shrine

: Thrilling Autumn Festival and Onioi-shiki (ceremony to drive demons out)



Miyairi in good spirit (ending event with the portable shrines carried into the shrine)

Photo contributed by: Sadao Araki

(“Hometown Kitaharima That I Want To Preserve Photo Contest” prize-winning photo)



Omiya Hachiman-gu Shrine and regularly held Autumn Festival



Miki Onioi-shiki



Yabusame (horseback archery)



Omiya Hachiman-gu Shrine

The shrine was founded by Keisan, the abbot of Getsurin-ji Temple in 1111. While the enshrined deity was the guardian deity of Bessho Miki for successive generations, the shrine was destroyed by fire in the war during the Tenso period. It was rebuilt by Hidemasa Nakagawa in 1585, and thereafter became the ubusunagami (guardian deity of one's birthplace) of Miki Gokacho (five city blocks of Miki City), among others.

A thrilling Autumn Festival is held in October. 8 yatai (portable shrines dedicated to a god and shaped like a house) of each Ujiko-machi (town of shrine parishioners) are carried around to introduce them to the audience (neri). For the Miyairi, they ascend the 85 stone steps to the shrine precincts and are carried into the shrine, and for the Miyade, they are carried out of the shrine descending the stone steps. This “ascending the stone steps carrying the yatai (designated an intangible folk cultural property by the city)” differs greatly from the yatai neri of other shrines and is very rare for a festival rite of the Banshu district. The spectacle of lifting and carrying a yatai that weighs approx. 2 tons is the highlight of this event.

On the third Sunday of January, the Onioi-shiki (ceremony to drive out demons) is held. It was held at Getsurin-ji Temple from around the latter part of the 17th century during the Edo Period, but was discontinued in 1939. In 1963, it was restored through the work of volunteers at the Miki Onioi Preservation Society with the cooperation of Omiya Hachiman-gu Shrine and Getsurin-ji Temple. The demons who receive a prayer at Getsurin-ji Temple say prayers for the repose of the souls at Monjudo (hall dedicated to the Bodhisattva of Wisdom) and Fudomon, visit the worship hall of Omiya Hachimangu, transfer the sacred flame to torches, brandish torches from the top of the stone steps of the torii (archway to a Shinto shrine), and after praying for peace for the town folk, the red demon and black demon perform the big demon and little demon dance. The big demon also performs mochitsuki (pounding boiled rice into mochi) and mochimaki (scattering rice cakes for people who come to the Shinto ritual).

Source: Miki City website, Miki City Tourism Association website

Main sights which make up the hometown of Hyogo <input type="checkbox"/> Rich natural landscape <input type="checkbox"/> Rural vistas rich in nature and greenery <input type="checkbox"/> Expressive urban vistas and historic sights handed down through generations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area	Location	2-19-1 Honmachi, Miki City
	Famous sights	
	Festivals and events	Autumn Festival, Onioi-shiki (ceremony to drive demons out), Yabusame (horseback archery)
	Associated parties	Hidemasa Nakagawa
	Organizations	Miki Onioi Preservation Society
	Related sights	

Gaya-in Temple

:Shugendo (Japanese mountain asceticism–shamanism incorporating Shinto and Buddhist concepts) near Shijimigawa



“Chinkon-no-Akari”

(illumination for the repose of souls)

Photo contributed by: Tamotsu Kobayashi

(“Hometown Kitaharima That I Want To Preserve
Photo Contest” prize-winning photo)



Gaya-in Temple, Kondo (Main Hall)
and Tahoto (Two-Storeyed Pagoda)



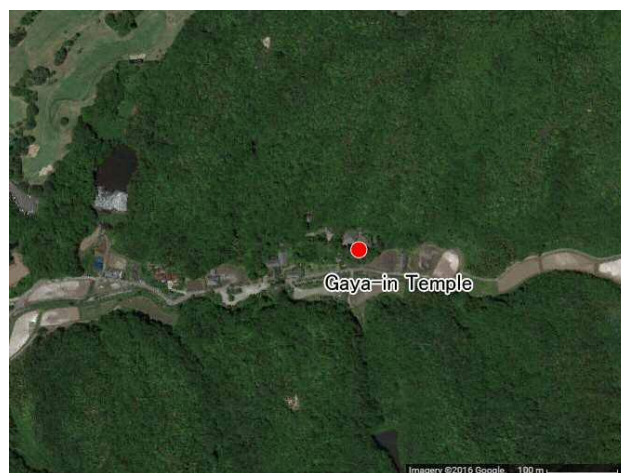
Gaya-in Ogoma Mass
(large-scale holy fire)

One of the few Shugendo temples (Japanese mountain asceticism–shamanism incorporating Shinto and Buddhist concepts) in the area is located in Shijimicho Otani, sandwiched between Shijimigawa River, opposite to Shijimi-no-Iwaya. According to temple lore, Hodo Sennin received a divine message from Bishamonten (Buddhist god of wealth and virtue) and founded the temple around the middle of the 7th century. It flourished greatly during Japan’s Middle Ages. However, during Hideyoshi’s siege of Miki Castle, it caught fire together with Myoyo-ji Temple on Mt. Nibuyama to the south-east, and was completely burned to the ground.

Later during the Edo Period, it was converted to Buddhism by the Lord of Himeji Castle Terumasa Ikeda and by Lord of Akashi Castle Tadazane Ogasawara, and a portion of it was rebuilt. Imperial visits were made by Emperor Kazan, and it is said that in its heyday, there were several tens of edifices and more than 130 Buddhist priests.

In October, Shugenja (mountain ascetics) from around the Kansai area gather in the guise of mountain priests. The sound of conch shells echo throughout the mountains, and an Ogoma mass (large-scale holy fire) is held as smoke billows up to the sky.

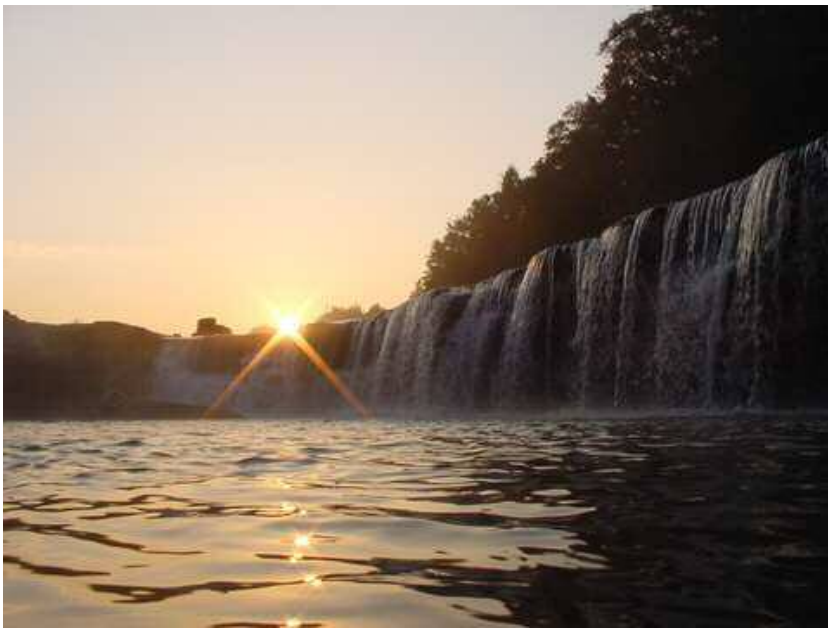
Source: Miki City website



Main sights which make up the hometown of Hyogo <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rich natural landscape <input type="checkbox"/> Rural vistas rich in nature and greenery <input type="checkbox"/> Expressive urban vistas and historic sights handed down through generations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area	Location	410 Shijimicho Otani, Miki City
	Famous sights	48 Sights for Hyogo Autumn Colors (Kobe Shimbun)
	Festivals and events	Gaya-in Temple Ogoma (large-scale holy fire)
	Associated parties	Hodo Sennin, Lord of Himeji-jo Castle Terumasa Ikeda, Lord of Akashi-jo Castle Tadazane Ogasawara
	Organizations	
	Related sights	Shijimigawa River, Shijimi-no-Sekishitsu

Kurotaki Falls

: Scenic waterfall on the Minogawa River



Kurotaki Falls in the morning



Kurotaki Falls



Kurotaki Falls is a waterfall on the Minogawa River that flows through a verdant hilly area. With a 4m fall and 30m width, it is a scenic spot to see two tiers of waterfalls—a greater waterfall and a smaller waterfall. The current flows over a large black slab of rock like many white threads, creating a resplendent landscape. One can also read a signboard describing a folktale associated with this waterfall about Manhachi raccoon and Oman fox having a shape-changing showdown. As Manhachi raccoon's shape-changing skills were appreciated by the villagers, he is worshipped beside the falls as “Manpuku Daimyojin (Daimyojin God of Health and Happiness)” .

Source: Top 100 Landscapes in Hyogo (Hyogo Prefecture), Miki City website, Miki City Tourism Association website, Hato-ni-Gutto Kitaharima website

Main sights which make up the hometown of Hyogo <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rich natural landscape <input type="checkbox"/> Rural vistas rich in nature and greenery <input type="checkbox"/> Expressive urban vistas and historic sights handed down through generations <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area	Location	Yoshikawacho Kinkai, Miki City
	Famous sights	Top 100 Landscapes in Hyogo (Hyogo Prefecture)
	Festivals and events	
	Associated parties	
	Organizations	
	Related sights	

Yu-no-Yama Kaido (mountain hotspring road) : Road with a historical townscape



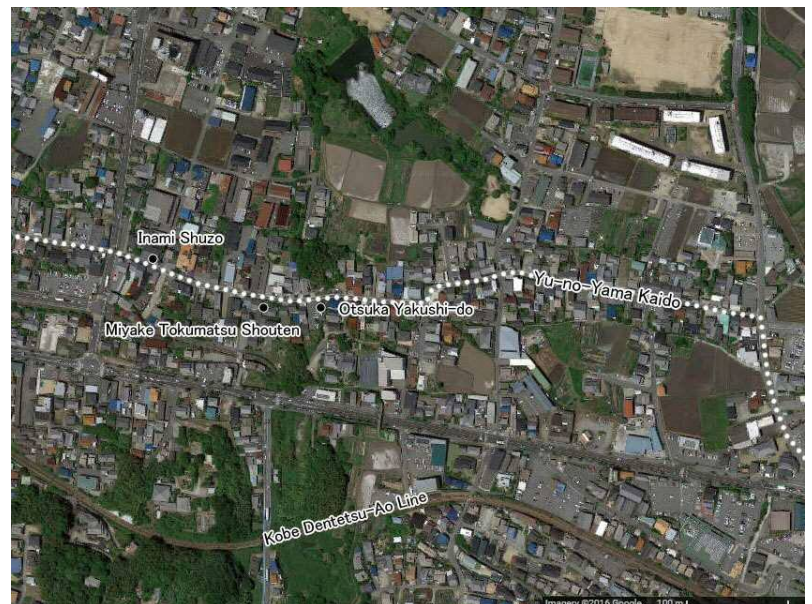
Yu-no-Yama Kaido



Otsuka Yakushi-do
(Hall worshipping the Buddha of
Healing as the principle image)



Inami Shuzo (Inami Brewery)



In the Heian Period, the road to Arima Hotsprings, by way of Himeji and Miki, started to be built. This road was also used to supplement the Sanyo-do road. During the Warring States Period, it is said that Hashiba Hideyoshi heard about Arima Hotsprings and used the water from Arima hotsprings to heal soldiers in the open-air bath of Abuta.

Since then, it has been called Yu-no-Yama Kaido (mountain hotspring road) and was used during the Edo Period by daimyo who took turns attending the Shogun in Edo, and by hotspring visitors from the western part of Japan.

Source: Miki City website, Miki City Tourism Association website, Kita-Harima Regional Tourism Association website

Main sights which make up the hometown of Hyogo	Location	Miki City	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rich natural landscape	Famous sights	Top 100 sights in Hyogo that I like (Hyogo Prefecture)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural vistas rich in nature and greenery	Festivals and events	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expressive urban vistas and historic sights handed down through generations	Associated parties	Hideyoshi Hashiba
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area	Organizations	
	Related sights		