

Choko-ji Temple

: Onioi-Odori Dance for bumper crops and sound health)



Main Hall of Choko-ji Temple



Choko-ji Bell Tower



Tsukubane-no-Taki Waterfall



Petunia berry



Onioi-Odori Dance
(dance to drive demons out)



Choko-ji Temple is said to have been founded by Hodo Sennin. The main hall which is a national treasure is a magnificent building with Hoshichiken structure that blends Japanese and Chinese style details into the architecture. It is said to have been built during the early Muromachi Period.

The Onioi-Odori Dance of Choko-ji Temple that is dedicated every year on May 5 is a prefecturally-designated intangible folk cultural property. While the origins of this dance are unclear, it can be traced back to the Muromachi Period. Dancing to the beat of taiko drums are the old man (Sumiyoshi Myojin) and red demon holding a torch, the blue demon holding an axe, the black demon holding a sword, and the yellow demon holding a priest's staff. The dance is a prayer for bumper crops and sound health, and is performed to the monotone beat of a bell and includes repetitive movements such as big leaps and swinging the Torimono (the implements held by the dancers). In the final Mochiwari (cutting a large round rice cake) event, a Kagamimochi wrapped in Japanese anise is baked on a torch.

Source: Furusato-no-Genzo (Hometown Images) (published by Kobe Shimbun Sogo Shuppan Center), Kato City website, Kato 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area	Location	609 Hata, Kato City
	Famous sights	Prefecture-designated intangible folk cultural property
	Festivals and events	Onioi-Odori (dance to drive demons out)
	Associated parties	Hodo Sennin
	Organizations	Chokoji Onioi Odori Preservation Society
	Related sights	Tsukubane-no-Taki Waterfall

Toryunada, Takino Funaza-ato

: The most perilous passes for ship transport on Kakogawa River



Toryunada



Sweetfish Kakeiryo
(open water conduit fishing)

On the Kakogawa River where ship transport had developed from olden times due to the wide basin area and calm currents, Takasebune (barges) were the most efficient means of transport on river basins until the main mode of transport shifted to overland routes.

The most perilous pass for ship transport on the Kakogawa River was Toryunada. This pass was christened as such by Seigan Yanagawa, a composer of Chinese poems during the late Edo Period, Bedrock juts up from the riverbed, and the obstructed current sending up spray makes for an exciting scene worthy of its name. This geography was made use of in an industry that thrived in the past called “jumping sweetfish fishing” (open water conduit fishing) which involved catching sweetfish stranded on the rocks. Sweetfish fishing is opened for fishing on May 1 every year.



Source: Hyogo Fukei Hyakusen (Top 100 Sights in Hyogo) (published by Kobe Shimbun Sogo Shupan Center), Hyogo Fukei Hyakusen: Kaze-to-Aruku (walk with the wind) (published by Asahi Shimbun Kobe Branch), Kato City website

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	Famous sights	Top 100 Hyogo Landscapes (Hyogo Prefecture) Top 100 Sights in Hyogo That I Like (Hyogo Prefecture) Kaze-to-Aruku (walk with the wind) “Top 100 Sights in Hyogo” (Asahi Shimbun)
	Festivals and events	
	Associated parties	
	Organizations	
	Related sights	Takimibashi Bridge

Banshu Kiyomizu-dera Temple : Miraculous sacred mountain



Banshu Kiyomizu-dera Temple



Konponchudo Hall



Daikodo (Great Lecture Hall)



Colors of the Four Seasons

(left: Cherry blossoms, top right: Japanese Primrose, bottom right: Autumn leaves)



Banshu Kiyomizu-dera Temple borders the former provinces of Harima, Settsu, and Tanba, and is located within Kiyomizu-Tojoko-Tachikui Prefectural Natural Park. It is a Tendai Sect Buddhist temple on Mt. Ontake-san at an altitude of approx. 542m. The temple is said to have been founded by Hodo Sennin, a priest who travelled from India 1800 years ago. It is described in the Konjaku Monogatari-shu (Tales of Times Now Past) written during the late Heian Period as “a miraculous sacred mountain to the north-east of Harima Province.” It is also known as the 25th temple on the Saigoku Sanjusansho Pilgrimage (thirty-three Kannon temples in Western Japan) which still today receives an endless stream of pilgrims. There is a pilgrimage route called “Gotani-godo” leading to Banshu Kiyomizu-dera Temple, and signposts scattered throughout the city to assist pilgrims, which indicates just how many pilgrims come to the city.

Within the temple precincts are magnificent temple buildings (registered tangible cultural property) such as the Daikodo (Great Lecture Hall) designed by Goichi Takeda, as well as the Honbo, the Konponchudo Hall, the Bell Tower, Jizodo (hall dedicated to Jizo Bosatsu), and Tsukimitei, among others. The view is also spectacular, as one can see all the way to Seto Inland Sea.

It is also a place noted for viewing the cherry blossoms. On the path leading to the summit are approx. 600 Someiyoshino cherry trees and Botanzakura cherry trees which can be viewed for about one month period. May is the best time to see the splendid Japanese Primrose flowers (designated as a natural monument by the city).

Source: Hyogo Fukei Hyakusen: Kaze-to-Aruku (Top 100 Sights in Hyogo: Walk with the Wind) (published by Asahi Shimbun Kobe Branch), Kato City website, Kato 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural sights particular to the area	Location	1194 Hiraki, Kato City
	Famous sights	100 Forests in Hyogo (Hyogo Prefecture) 50 Forests and Hotsprings in Hyogo (Hyogo Prefecture) 48 Autumn Views in Hyogo (Kobe Shimbun) Hyogo Fukei Hyakusen: Kaze-to-Aruku (Top 100 Sights in Hyogo: Walk with the Wind) (Asahi Shimbun)
	Festivals and events	
	Associated parties	Hodo Sennin (Hodo the Hermit), Goichi Takeda
	Organizations	
	Related sights	Lake Tojo-ko, Mt. Ontake-san

Shinto ritual dance of Kamikamogawa Sumiyoshi Shrine

: For the first time in the country designated important intangible folk cultural property under Hyogo Prefecture as a ritual dance



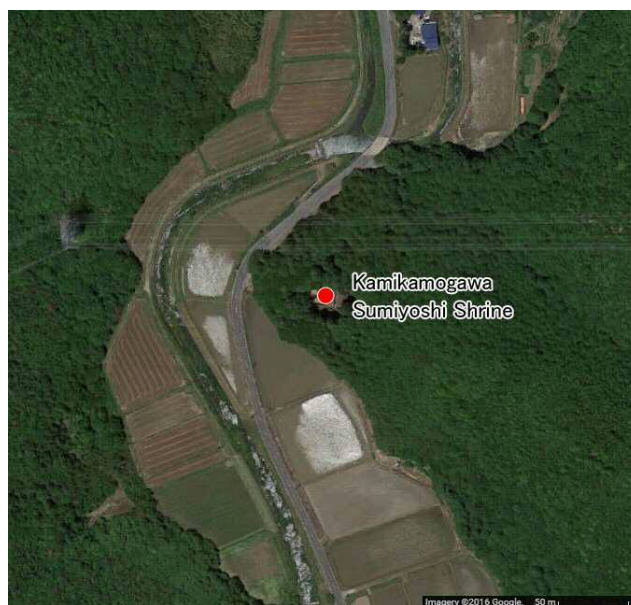
Dengaku Dance
(photo contributed by: Takayoshi Araki)
(“Hometown Kitaharima That I Want To Preserve Photo Contest” prize-winning photo)



Shinjimai (Shinto ritual dance)



Kamikamogawa Sumiyoshi Shrine



Within the precincts of Kamikamogawa Sumiyoshi Shrine (designated a historic site by the city) are a group of buildings which include the Inner Shrine (important cultural asset), Worship Hall, Maidono (court music pavilion), Nagatoko, Gokubeya (offering room), and Komiya. The Inner Shrine’s ridge plaque indicates the building was built in 1316, and the present day Inner Shrine was rebuilt in 1493. It was dismantled and repaired in 1970.

Within the Shrine precincts, Shinto ritual dance (nationally designated important intangible folk cultural asset) is dedicated on the 1st Saturday and Sunday of October every year, to pray for bumper crops and sound health. In the main shrine, a Shinto priest gives a prayer and drinks the sacred sake, followed by the performance of dances including “Ryonsan-no-mai Dance,” “Shishi-mai Dance (lion dance),” “Dengaku Dance,” Iri-mai Dance,” “Taka-ashi Dance (short stilts dance),” “Okina-mai Dance,” “Chichinojo Dance (old man dance),” and “Miko-no-mai (shrine maiden’s dance),” after which children’s sumo is dedicated by Gionza. Shinto ritual dance has been strictly observed and passed down in its Kamakura Period format by Miyaza (organization of shrine parishioners in a hamlet) and is known nationwide as a precious dance which is reminiscent of Japan’s Middle Ages.

Source: Kato City website

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	Famous sights	Nationally designated important intangible folk cultural asset
	Festivals and events	Shinto ritual dance
	Associated parties	
	Organizations	Sumiyoshi Shrine Shinto Ritual Dance Preservation Society
	Related sights	