

Excursions

Toyohashi Gion Matsuri: Traditional Japanese Fireworks Festival

Gion Matsuri originated as a purification ritual to appease the gods thought to cause disasters such as fire, floods, and earthquakes. Since then, it has been celebrated annually.

On the eventful day, it was drizzling prior to the "Hanabi" (fireworks) display. It was a welcomed change in the weather as the rain gave us some relief from the unbearable summer heat.

I also attended the Toyohashi Gion Matsuri in 2009. However, this time I still felt the same excitement as before for Gion as I made my way to the venue. The anticipation of watching my first fireworks display this summer and the buzz from the Yukata donning crowd really did set the mood for the festival.

The firework extravaganza took place along a stretch of the Toyokawa River. The atmosphere was amazing and wherever I looked, excited crowds of Japanese and foreigners were mingled together as they looked forward to the fireworks display.

The fireworks started at about 6 pm and lasted for more than 2 hours. The spectacular fireworks display, exhilarating music, and the cool breeze that evening made a perfect event. The crowd was in awe throughout the continuous fireworks display.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Toyohashi Municipal Council for their generosity in providing international students from Toyohashi University of Technology the opportunity to attend this eventful festival every year. The warm hospitality and kindness of the staff throughout the festival was very much appreciated.

All the international students, some with members of their family and other who attended with friends, had an unforgettable and exhilarating evening. This day, which marks a long standing tradition accompanied by the spectacular fireworks display, will be vividly etched in our memories for ever. What a lovely way to celebrate summer. I expect that everyone is looking forward to next year's Toyohashi Gion Matsuri.



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