

Contents

02 What's New at This Year's Shingen-Ko Festival!

03 Prefectural News

 This Month's Topics

04 [Series] Taro Yabe × Takasugi 'Jay' Jiro goes over there, here Yamanashi
 The manager's destination

The Shingen-Ko Festival — a beloved tradition that colors Yamanashi's spring.
This spectacular historical pageant continues to evolve, slowly but surely, toward the future.

Takeda Hishimaru introduces the ever-growing appeal of the Shingen-Ko Festival!



What's New at This Year's Shingen-Ko Festival!

The samurai procession of 1,000 participants is one of the largest in the world. Heiwa-dori Street in front of JR Kofu Station evokes a vivid historical tableau.



Since the 50th festival, when Ai Tominaga became the first female Shingen-Ko, new themes such as "coexistence" and "unity" have been adopted. This year, the festival goes one step further with the message: "Seeking peace, opening the path to the future."



POINT

This year's Shingen-Ko is played by kabuki actor Ichikawa Udanji. Having carved his own path from apprentice to his current status, he embodies the spirit of challenge. "Challenge" is also a key theme for this year's festival!

Plenty of Events for Families with Children

Since the 50th edition, the festival has expanded programming aimed at children and families.

Beyond simply "learning" history through card games and layered stamp rallies, visitors can now "play and experience" it. The goal is to create a Shingen-Ko Festival that children today will still want to attend as adults 10 or 20 years from now.



First-Ever In-Prefecture Expo: Showcasing Local and International Sister-Region Attractions

"We want every resident to be interested." With this in mind, the prefecture will add the prefectural government courtyard as a new venue, creating a mini-expo-style space with food and PR booths from municipalities across the prefecture. It will also introduce the food, culture, and traditional arts of sister and friendly regions — a place to experience an "open Yamanashi." The Shingen-Ko Festival is becoming a hub where people and cultures meet.

Yamanashi Influencer: Shingen-Ko Festival Ambassador Koihime

The "Koihime Collection," which selected someone to play Shingen-Ko's consort Koihime, is being renamed the "Shingen-Ko Festival Ambassador Koihime" this year. Regardless of gender or appearance, candidates who are passionate about promoting Yamanashi will be selected.

Koihime will promote Yamanashi Prefecture year-round, not just at the festival. Enthusiasm for sharing the great things about Yamanashi is essential. Ambassadors are also expected to attend events and local gatherings across municipalities and convey local charm in their own words.

Expanding the Shingen-Ko Brand: Festival Original Beer "SHINGEN RED"

Municipalities, sponsoring companies, and organizations participate in the Shingen-Ko Festival with a commitment to their communities. The collaboration between the festival, tourism, and business activities creates a positive cycle for the local economy.

The Shingen-Ko Festival also serves as a bridge connecting people and communities with businesses.



52nd Shingen-Ko Festival Schedule

Apr. 3 (Fri.) Eve Festival 17:00–20:00

Apr. 4 (Sat.) Koshu Army Departure 10:00–20:00

[Main Event Time Schedule]

- 13:15 Prayer Ceremony
- 16:00 Departure Ceremony
- 16:30 Koshu Army Procession Begins
- 18:40 Return Ceremony

Apr. 5 (Sun.) Kofu City Shingen-Ko Festival 10:00–16:00



History of the Shingen-Ko Festival

1947 "Cherry Blossom Festival" begins at Maizuru Castle Park

1966 Renamed "Kofu Shingen Festival"

1970 Renamed "Shingen-Ko Festival." Duration extended to two days

1976 Cancelled due to the oil crisis

1977 Management shifted to Yamanashi Prefecture and other local governments

1995 First celebrity as Shingen-Ko (Tetsuo Watari). Koihime role created

2006 Yamamoto Kansuke role created

2007 NHK Taiga drama "Furin Kazan" aired (Kansuke played by Seiyo Uchino)

2011 Cancelled due to the Great East Japan Earthquake

2020 Postponed due to COVID-19 (2021 as well)

2022 49th festival held in October

2023 50th festival held in October. First female Shingen-Ko (Ai Tominaga)

2025 51st festival held in April (no 2024 event as the previous was held in autumn)

The Elite Horse Supporting the Shingen-Ko Festival

"Warawara BigBan," a 15-year-old horse carrying the Shingen-Ko role in the procession, is an "elite horse" that has succeeded its predecessor "Bunker" and appeared in NHK Taiga dramas and many other productions. Horses that move calmly and consistently regardless of rider or location are an extremely rare find anywhere in Japan.

Horses are naturally timid animals that struggle with loud noises and crowds. Walking alone, separated from their companions, surrounded by large audiences, is far from easy for them. Mitsunori Tanaka (59) of the Kobuchizawa riding club "Wrangler Ranch" says, "Getting a horse to walk safely at an event is truly difficult. The Shingen-Ko Festival is the most nerve-wracking moment of the year."

The sight of around 30 horses carrying samurai generals as they march gracefully is a rare spectacle anywhere in Japan.

How do they gather such exceptional horses? For over 40 years, riding clubs in Kobuchizawa have worked together, building relationships of trust with their horses over many years. Next-generation candidates also participate in the festival, gradually getting accustomed to its atmosphere and building experience. "Horses are indispensable to the Shingen-Ko Festival. That sense of responsibility is why we raise horses for the next generation," says Tanaka.



Prefectural government news

Measures Against Population Decline

Companies and Organizations Pledge: Making Tomoiku the New Normal

On January 28, the prefecture held the "Yamanashi Tomoiku Future" declaration with municipalities, companies, and organizations.

The declaration sets a goal of 100% male employee paternity leave uptake with a minimum duration of two weeks, aiming to make paternity leave the standard across the prefecture.

The prefecture promotes work environments where men actively participate in household and childcare duties while continuing to work, in order to achieve a society where both men and women can balance home and work. It is important for society as a whole — not just individual families — to support child-rearing so that young people can approach childbirth and childcare with peace of mind.

At the declaration ceremony, Governor Nagasaki expressed his resolve: "I want to achieve a new Yamanashi normal where paternity leave is standard, driven by the power of leaders across all organizations to transform workplace culture."



This Month's Topics

• Prefectural Staff Recruitment Exam <Recruitment>

Exam Category	Guide Distribution Start	1st Exam Date
University Graduate Level (Early Track)	March 2 (Mon)	April 1 (Wed) ~ 13 (Mon)
University Graduate Level (Regular Track)	Thursday, May 1	Sunday, June 21
High School Graduate / Elem. & Middle School Admin / Persons with Disabilities or Intractable Diseases	June 30 (Tue)	September 27 (Sun)
Private Sector Experienced / Non-Regular Employees	July 10 (Fri)	September 11 (Fri) - 27 (Sun) Non-regular employees will be on Sunday, September 27
Police Officer A (Round 1)	Tuesday, March 10	May 10 (Sat)
Police Officer A (Round 2) / Police Officer B	Tuesday, March 10	September 20 (Sun)

Police Officer B: September 20 (Sun.)

► Guide distribution: Available on the prefectural website or at the 1F General Information Desk, Prefectural Office Main Building

Inquiries: Personnel Commission Secretariat

TEL 055-223-1821 / FAX 055-223-1819

*Police officers A and B are police officers at the Police Headquarters Police Division

TEL 0120-314874

• Young Staff's Videos Going Viral! <Notice>

TikTok "Where Your Taxes Go" is live! Surprisingly bold content despite the serious subject. Some videos have surpassed 500,000 views!!

Inquiries: Public Relations Division

TEL 055-223-1338 / FAX 055-223-1525

• **Let's Thoroughly Prevent Forest Fires** 〈Notice〉

Forest fires can become major disasters affecting nearby homes. Please cooperate to protect the precious assets of our residents.

- Refrain from using fire during forest fire advisories; stop completely during warnings
- Fully extinguish cigarettes and always take them with you
- Do not light bonfires or burn fields during strong winds or dry conditions
- Never leave a bonfire; extinguish it completely
- Do not conduct burning without permission

Inquiries: Fire Fighting and Safety Administration Office

TEL 055-223-1430 / FAX 055-223-1429

Forest Planning and Silviculture Division

TEL 055-223-1646 / FAX 055-223-1678

• **Women's Chat Consultation Service** 〈Notice〉

A chat consultation service for women. Whether it's school, work, friends, relationships, family, or health — feel free to talk about whatever is on your mind.

- ▶ Hours: Mon.–Sat., 7:00–9:00 p.m. (excluding national holidays and year-end/New Year)
- ▶ How to consult: Via the dedicated site "Kamoshika" (anonymous OK)
- ▶ Fee: Free

Inquiries: Women's Consultation Support Center

TEL 055-254-8633 / FAX 055-254-8636

• **Yamanashi Erosion Control Fest** 〈Notice〉

The "Ashiyasu Embankment," Japan's first concrete erosion-control facility, is celebrating its 100th anniversary. Why not learn about the value of the embankment and the role of erosion control through 100 years of history?

- ▶ Date: Sat., Mar. 7, 1:00–4:00 p.m. (held in light rain)
- ▶ Venue: fumotto Minami Alps (Minami Alps City)
- ▶ Content: Disaster prevention talk session by celebrities, student performances, natural disaster experience vehicles, food trucks, etc. ※Visitors receive a "100th Anniversary Premium Erosion Control Card" and commemorative pamphlet

Inquiries: Yamanashi Erosion Control Fest Office

TEL 055-231-3311

• **March 1 is "Yamanashi Life Day" / March is "Suicide Prevention Awareness Month"** 〈Notice〉

If you notice someone acting differently than usual, start by reaching out. If you yourself

are troubled, don't struggle alone — please call first.

Mental Health Consultation Unified Dial TEL 0570-064-556 (weekdays except 12:00–1:00 p.m.)

Inquiries: Health Promotion Division

TEL 055-223-1495 / FAX 055-223-1499

• **Mirai Energy Fest 2026** 〈Notice〉

Would you like to experience next-generation energy "hydrogen" with all five senses?

▶Date: Sat., Mar. 14, 9:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m. ▶Venue: Assist Engineering Yocchyabare Plaza (Kofu City) ▶Content: Hydrogen-cooked food, fuel cell carts, etc. ※Some events require advance reservation



A tour of Nesrad (Komekurayama Next-Generation Energy Research & Development Village) will be held simultaneously! ※Reservation required, first-come first-served

Inquiries: Regional Energy Promotion Division

TEL 055-223-1846 / FAX 055-223-1320

• **Yamanashi Media Arts Award 2025-26** 〈Notice〉

No genre restrictions = complete freedom. Once again this year, we showcase a carefully selected collection of award-winning works that challenged the judges.

▶Period: Until Sun., Mar. 22 ▶Venues: Chiisana Kura no Bijutsukan (Kofu City) 10:00–18:00, closed Tuesdays / GASBON METABOLISM (Hokuto City) 11:00–17:00, closed Tue.–Thu. ▶Admission: Free

Inquiries: Cultural Promotion and Cultural Property Division

TEL 055-223-1790 / FAX 055-223-1793

Taro Yabe and Takasugi 'Jay' Jiro go here and there Yamanashi

〈Yamanashi connoisseurs competing for one or two with Yoshimoto Kogyo's talent〉

Taro Yabe (manga artist, comedian)

From Higashimurayama, Tokyo. Made his manga debut in 2017 with 'The Landlady and I,' which became a bestseller. Obtained his weather forecaster license in 2007. Latest work: 'Go-Jiai-san.'

Jiro Takasugi 'Jay' (Sports DJ, Radio DJ)

From Katano, Osaka. American-trained DJ. Also a special lecturer at Yamanashi Prefectural University. Appears live on an FM station in Yamanashi every Saturday from 11:00 a.m. Also runs SUP schools at Fuji Five Lakes and elsewhere.

A Weather Forecaster's Heartfelt (!?) Bloom Forecast & Greetings from the Peach Blossom Land

[Jiro]: I live right near peach orchards, so I go flower-viewing during my daily dog walk. In blossom season, everywhere you look is pink — it's stunning. They even run flower-viewing taxis.

[Taro]: The "peach blossom land" (Tougennkyou) is said to be a paradise, and it truly feels fleeting. Just when you think it's bloomed, the wind blows and it's already gone.

[Jiro]: When it warms up, the flowers burst open all at once — they look so delicate and soft. And Yamanashi has so many famous cherry blossom spots too.

[Taro]: The "Space Cherry Tree" at Jissoji Temple in Hokuto City is a cherry tree that came back from space — to be precise, it sprouted from seeds that were taken to space on the Space Shuttle.

[Jiro]: January was really cold this year, so I think the blossoms will bloom early.

[Taro]: The cherry buds were awakened from dormancy by the cold — that's called 'dormancy breaking' — and from there, you add up each day's maximum temperature using the '600-degree rule.' Sorry, I just went full weather-forecaster mode.

[Jiro]: That's the professor's cherry blossom forecast!

[Taro]: Well, sort of? Anyway — please recommend your favorite peach and cherry blossom viewing spots, Jiro.

[Jiro]: For peaches, the whole basin (laughs). Fuefuki City is definitely the top pick. Yachiyo Furusato Park, viewed from the hilltop, turns completely pink — gorgeous. It's the main venue for the 'Peach Blossom Land Spring Festival.'

[Taro]: For cherry blossoms, I love the 'Wanizuka no Sakura' in Nirasaki City. A single enormous cherry tree standing alone in the middle of a field — it feels so dignified.

[Jiro]: So many people come with cameras. You can get both Mt. Fuji and the Yatsugatake range in the background.

[Taro]: Based on the professor's theory, expect early blooms. Wherever you're heading, better hurry — the buds are already awake. Getting ready to bloom, probably.

Manager's Favorite Spot

Introducing this edition's guest:

Yamanashi Chuo Bank Human Resources Dept., DEI & Healthy Management

Promotion Division Manager

Naomi Suzuki



The Go-To French for Girls' Nights Out

My three-hour one-way commute from Tokyo is precious "me time." Reading newspapers and online articles on the train, gathering hints on diversity and healthy management, has become my daily routine.

When I joined in the 1990s, it was still unusual for women to continue working. As the first woman at the company to stay after marriage, I now draw on that experience to build a workplace where everyone can thrive.

My go-to spot is French restaurant "Bon Marché." From meat dishes that pair beautifully with Yamanashi wine to desserts — everything is reliably delicious, making it the staple choice for our office girls' nights.

Over good food, my staff open up honestly — about work worries, family, children's exams, everything. That's also precious time for me.



Bon Marché

1-5-12 Chuo, Kofu City, Yamanashi 400-0032 (Nishiki-dori)

TEL: 055-233-7877

Hours: Café 11:30–21:00, Lunch 11:30–14:00, Dinner 17:30–20:45 (Closed Mondays & 4th Sundays)

Reader Giveaway

Answer the survey and enter!

Please answer items ①–⑤ and the survey question.

Submit via the "Entry Form."

① Postal code ② Address ③ Name ④ Age ⑤ Phone number

※One entry per person.

Q: What topic in this issue interested you most, and why?

※Some responses may be featured in future issues.

Entry Form Here

<https://forms.office.com/r/6tBtTZ6wpW>

Deadline: Tuesday, March 31

Winners will be announced via prize shipment.

Personal information may be used for prize delivery and prefectural announcements.



• Chozenji-na Pickled Vegetable Set (soy sauce / white soy sauce / Bimisan flavor)

Provided by: Nokeisha Nakamichi Regional Council On sale at: Fudoki-no-Oka Farm

Produce Stand (1070-3 Shimosone-cho, Kofu City)

3 winners by lottery

A traditional Kofu City vegetable rescued from the brink of extinction

FUREAI MONTHLY is also available in English and Chinese.

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FUREAI MONTHLY 还有英文和中文版。

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