

Daimyo Parade

A major event during the Hassaku Festival, held every year on September 1st, is the Daimyo Parade. This is a reenactment of the feudal parades one might have witnessed in Tsuru centuries ago, when the local lord would depart to or return from Edo Castle.

During the event, a procession of people dressed as feudal lords and ladies, warriors, and various other retainers and servants, passes through the city streets. It evokes the days when Tsuru was a castle town under the rule of the Akimoto clan (1633–1705). The Akimotos were well-loved by the townspeople for their benevolent rule and development of the local economy. They would pass through the city on their way to or from Edo in a magnificent display said to rouse the hearts of the people. However, in 1705 the clan was moved to Kawagoe at the command of the shogun. They left behind a great empty space not only in the middle of the town where they and their retainers once lived, but also in the hearts of the townspeople, who missed the festivities associated with their lord. Not long afterward, the townspeople began to imitate those parades themselves. The practice was interrupted for about fifty years during the twentieth century but was revived in 1989 and continues on to this day as the Daimyo Parade.