

Ohiradai Onsen Hime Matsuri

The Ohiradai area is ideal for travelers looking for a place somewhat off the beaten track. The local hot spring was dug in 1951, which is later than in most other places in Hakone, and no large hotels have been established nearby. You can choose to stay at one of about 10 family-run *ryokan* inns, which make up the association that organizes the annual Hime Matsuri. Held on August 11 every year, this festival centers on *Bon odori*, an energetic dance that is a symbol of summer in Japan. *Bon odori* has been practiced in Ohiradai for as long as the locals can recall, but a festival only emerged around it in 1975. Music and street performances complement the main event, which also features stalls selling street food and drinks. This long-established community event is a good opportunity to experience the traditional atmosphere of summer in Japan.