

The Hachiman Festival

Markings resembling a pair of slashes inside a ring can be often seen in the village, generally on the walls of homes and on boats. The symbol is made up of the character for the number eight, or *hachi* (written 八), surrounded by a circle, and takes its name from Hachiman, the deity worshipped by the island's fishing communities. It is believed to protect residents from danger at sea and ensure a good harvest. The marks are re-applied in the same spots every January during the island's annual Hachiman Festival.