

Rausu Festivals and Events

Every year, the Rausu local community hosts events celebrating the town's history and culture. There are festivals to honor Shinto deities, seasonal celebrations, community-wide dances, and events centered around local food. Visitors to Rausu during festival and event periods can experience the festivities.

Celebrating the seasons

The Shiretoko Snow Wall Walk at the beginning of April is held to celebrate the coming of spring. Participants can walk a snow-walled section of the Shiretoko Pass, the winding mountain road that connects Rausu with Utoro on the peninsula's east side. The road is closed from early November to late April because of heavy snowfall. The event is held two weeks before the road reopens to traffic.

The Aki Matsuri, or "autumn festival," takes place during the first 10 days of September. Residents set up a market to sell seasonal produce and local wares.

Giving thanks to gods, fisherfolk, and the local community

Rausu-jinja Shrine holds its annual festival during the first three days in July to express gratitude to the deity venerated there, who is believed to protect fisherfolk. Portable shrines are paraded around the area, and there are dance performances by local groups.

The Isaribi Festival at the end of September celebrates the local fisherfolk who support Rausu's fishing industry, the town's primary industry. During the event, volunteers hand out free bowls of rice topped with freshly caught fish (*kaisendon*) to festivalgoers.

The Shiretoko Biraki festival on the third Saturday in June is an opportunity for the Rausu community to gather together. During the festival, which roughly translates as "Shiretoko Open House," many of the 4,800 residents gather around the fishing port to enjoy dance performances, and play competitive games of dodgeball and tug of war.

Local food showcase

The Shiretoko Rausu Kombu Festa is held on three consecutive days between the end of July and beginning of August. The event promotes Rausu kombu, the local kelp that has garnered a worldwide reputation for its umami. Eventgoers can learn about the kelp, try harvesting it, and sample it raw.

