

Mino Washi Akari Art Festival

The Mino Washi Akari Art Festival is held over one month each year. The warm glow of hundreds of lanterns illuminates the streets of Mino's Udatsu Preservation District.

During the festival, the traditional Edo-period (1603–1867) merchant houses are illuminated by the soft light of paper lanterns, enhancing the period atmosphere of the historic district, which is free of powerlines and modern streetlights. Many of the shops in the area stay open late during the festival.

The festival began in 1994 as a way to promote the creative potential of Mino washi paper and to attract more visitors to the area. Mino washi was a key material in making lanterns, and Gifu Prefecture has been a center of lantern production (*Gifu chochin*). In more recent years, Gifu lanterns have become popular as a sculptural medium as much as a source of light.

The festival lanterns are displayed for only a short time, but selected lanterns from each year are on display at Mino Washi Akari Art Museum, year-round.