

Tengu Plaza and Giant Mask

Tengu Plaza in central Numata can be an intimidating place to happen upon at night, with its giant, long-nosed, red-faced being staring at passersby from a perch inside a small building with floor-to-ceiling glass panels. But there is no need to fear: this *tengu* is a guardian deity of the area, and the massive mask displayed at Tengu Plaza is a central feature of the annual Numata Festival, a spirited celebration of local heritage held over three days in August.

The mask weighs 150 kilograms, is 4.3 meters long, and has a 2.9-meter nose. During the festival, some 300 women parade it through the streets of central Numata along with another *tengu* mask stored at Kashozan Mirokuji Temple.

Tengu Plaza offers free parking for those wanting to get a close look at the giant *tengu* mask. Public bathrooms are available next to the parking lot,

and there is a small grocery shop for picking up local produce and products
such as jam, honey, and pickles.