



A Historic Parade In Kinosaki The Annual Dezomeshiki



While [Kinosaki Onsen](#) is renowned for its **tranquil riverside ambience and strolls**, the usually calm waters of the Otani River became lively and rippled during the **Kinosaki Fire Brigade's New Year's Ceremony, or Dezomeshiki**. Every year during the beginning of January, the volunteer firefighters of Kinosaki Onsen gather for a spirited parade around town followed by a fire hose water display over the Otani River. The

bright red fire trucks passing by the narrow willow-lined streets and impressive waterworks display of the Fire Brigade's New Year's Ceremony provide visitors and locals alike with a majestic and unique sight that **can only be experienced in Kinosaki once a year**.



Dezomeshiki have been customary in Japan for many years, with records dating back to the 1600s. One day during the year 1657, a fire broke out in the city of Edo (modern-day Tokyo), resulting in an estimated 100,000 deaths. Two years after the fire, the first Dezomeshiki was held by the local governor and fire brigade in an effort to raise the spirits of residents and provide hope for the city's future.



After the first Dezomeshiki was held in Edo, towns across Japan began to adopt their own forms of Dezomeshiki, some with customs and activities unique to specific regions. Due to Kinosaki's special relationship between its citizens and fire prevention efforts, the annual Dezomeshiki is a highly anticipated event with **approximately 100 volunteer firefighters** participating in the parade through town. In addition to donating their time towards the protection of Kinosaki and its citizens, the volunteer firefighters regularly engage in training exercises including hose drills and engine inspections.

Kinosaki's modern-day history with fire prevention began in 1925, the year of the North Tajima Earthquake. Not only were all of Kinosaki's buildings left in crumbling ruin, the 6.8 magnitude earthquake also struck in the late morning, a time when many households were busy cooking lunch. A fire eventually spread throughout the town, scorching the wooden ruins of Kinosaki's buildings and resulting in over 200 deaths. After many

meetings among Kinosaki's residents, it was eventually decided that in addition to **re-erecting many buildings with their original wooden structures, a handful of buildings were planned to be rebuilt with reinforced concrete for the purpose of future fire prevention.**



The Kinosaki which visitors are welcomed to today is a product of [local teamwork and resilience](#). The drive and dedication of Kinosaki's citizens to rebuild their beloved hot spring town with long-lasting fire prevention measures is still celebrated today. Those who walk past [Kiyamachi Street](#) in the center of Kinosaki will come across a long geometric wall with a red and white triangular design. A well-known landmark among residents, the "Hibuse Kabe," or "Fire Prevention Wall,"

is a commemorative piece **symbolizing Kinosaki Onsen's recovery after the 1925 North Tajima Earthquake and fire.** Visitors to Kinosaki Onsen are encouraged to visit Hibuse Kabe during their walk through town. Furthermore, those interested are also welcome to visit Kinosaki during the Fire Brigade's Dezomeshiki, held every year in early January!

For inquiries regarding this press release

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[Kinosaki Onsen](#) is a town of time-honored hot springs dating back 1300 years ago. It is home to seven public bathhouses, all located within walking distance of each other and the train station. Guests are encouraged to wear yukata and geta, stroll through the town, and go onsen-hopping.

[Toyooka](#) is a downtown area home to the Oriental White Stork, a bird that was revived from extinction in this very town. The city's efforts restored the Oriental White Stork population, and now over 260 fly the skies of Japan. Toyooka is also known for the Genbudo Caves.



[Izushi](#) is the resident castle town, popular for its nostalgic atmosphere of Edo-era Japan. It is home to many interesting attractions such as castle ruins, a samurai house, a kabuki theater, and a clock tower. The town's specialty is Izushi Sara Soba, buckwheat noodles served in small portions on small plates.

[Kannabe](#) is a mountainous area with fun activities year-round. In the winter, one can go skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, and sledding. In the warm months, one can go camping, paragliding, fishing, tree climbing, and more. Kannabe is the perfect destination for adventurers.



[Takeno](#) is a quaint fisherman town that is a hidden gem among the northern coast of Hyogo Prefecture. The beach has clear, blue waters while the mountains surrounding it offer great hiking opportunities. It is encouraged to stroll through the peaceful town, where one can find small shops and traditional landscapes.

[Tanto](#) is a quiet countryside town with magnificent nature—including a giant field of tulips in the spring and brilliant red-leaved trees in the fall.

