

Sendai NOW!

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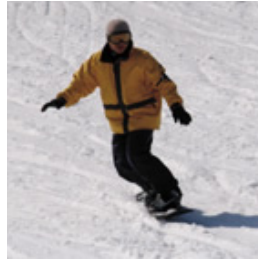
Overview of Sendai City



Sendai, located within Miyagi prefecture, is a city with a population of one million and is the political and economic center of Japan's Tohoku (northeast) region. Although Sendai is a big city, it is known throughout Japan as a modern city in harmony with nature.

2009-2010 Ski Season Open in Sendai

The ski season in Sendai officially opens this month, with the majority of ski slopes open by December 20th for the winter 09-10 ski season.



Sendai, surrounded by mountain ranges in Miyagi and Yamagata, is a paradise for snow sports enthusiasts. The Izumigatake Ski Ground and Izumi Kogen Spring Valley Ski Resort are both under an hours' drive while other major ski resorts are all within 2 hours' drive from downtown Sendai.

For those without a car, all ski slopes are reachable by public transport and some even offer a pick-up service from

designated stops. There are courses to suit all levels and all equipment can be rented at the facilities.

For a list of ski fields in the Sendai area see www.sentabi.jp/1000 or turn to page 2. Check directly with the ski slopes for the latest information or call the English Hotline for assistance (see above).



(c)Miyagi Prefecture

Night Skiing at Izumigatake Ski Ground

Upcoming Events



Dec 12 to 31 - The Pageant of Starlight. See the zelkova trees on Johzenji dori avenue lit up by thousands of lights in one of Sendai's most famous events.

Jan 2 - New Year Sales. Many stores in Sendai will offer big discounts.

Jan 14 - Dontosai. See article on right.

New Year's Traditions in Sendai

In Sendai, *Dontosai* is a festival where people visit a shrine to burn their New Year's decorations in a bonfire and pray for their good fortune.



One of the most famous Dontosai festivals in Sendai is held on January 14th at the Osaki Hachiman Shrine. As January is a time of ritual purification in Japan, visitors to Osaki Hachiman Shrine will see groups of locals brave the cold and walk through the streets of Sendai wearing little more than a loin cloth. At the end of their pilgrimage they will be blessed for good luck in the New Year by the priest at the shrine.

Santa in the Sun Mall

Shoppers walking through the Sun Mall in downtown Sendai will be greeted by a giant smiling Santa hanging from the ceiling of the arcade.

This is not exactly Santa Claus, but Sendai Shiro, an icon in Sendai, wearing a Santa suit.



Sendai Shiro was a real person who lived during the late 19th century. He is said to be a "God of Fortune" who brought prosperity to the shops he visited. Even today shopkeepers in Sendai still display images or figurines of Shiro for good luck.

2009 Japan-ASEAN Student Conference held in Sendai



Nov 16. Field trip to the site of Sendai

The Japan-ASEAN Student Conference was held in Tokyo and Sendai from the 13th to 19th of November. 120 university students from the 10 ASEAN nations and 30 students selected from Japanese universities across the country came together in Sendai for the Japan-ASEAN Student Conference, the first time this event has ever been held.

Students discussed three topics at the conference, “the environment,” “politics and economy”, and “regional identity.” Following the discussions, students were divided into three groups and went on field trips to local facilities in Sendai to learn more about these topics firsthand.

As a result of their discussions, the students compiled the Sendai Statement on “Future Partnership between ASEAN and Japan” which will be presented at the 13th ASEAN-Japan Summit in Vietnam.

In addition to the ASEAN Student Conference, Sendai

hosts numerous other international conferences. In 2010, Japan will host APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) related meetings and the “3rd Senior Officials Meeting” will be held in Sendai in September 15-26, 2010.



Nov 16. Friendship party held for the students and organizers.

Ski Fields Near Sendai

Approximate driving times and contact numbers:

Izumi Kogen Spring Valley - 50 mins drive. 022-379-3755 .

Izumigatake Ski Ground - 40 mins drive. 022-379-3104.

St Mary Ski Field - 50 mins drive. 0224-84-5880.

Miyagi Zao Sumikawa Snow Park - 75 mins drive. 0224-87-2610

Miyagi Zao Shiroishi Ski Field - 60 mins drive. 0224-24-8111

Miyagi Zao Eboshi Ski Field - 70 mins drive. 0224-34-4001

Yamagata Zao - 120 mins drive. 023-694-9328

Jangle Jungle - 90 mins drive. 023-741-5555

Snapshot of November



The Sendai International Center located in picturesque Aobayama is surrounded by statuesque trees. By November the leaves have started to fall creating a carpet of golden leaves.

Ask the Locals! Q&As

Question: What special dish do people in Sendai eat during New Years?

Answer: “There are many traditional foods eaten in Japan during New Years. A popular soup that is eaten across Japan is *Ozoni* and the flavor of *Ozoni* varies from area to area. The Sendai version is a clear soup made with soy sauce, bonito fish flakes, *mochi* (pounded rice cakes), *haze* (goby fish), and fresh vegetables like *daikon* and *gobou*

(burdock root). If you are in Sendai for New Years please try it!”

