

More than forty of Nagasaki City's historic towns perform at the festival, alternating with each other in a seven-year cycle. The performances are considered to be an offering to the deity of Suwa Shrine. This year's five performing towns are as follows:

① Uma-machi 馬町

Hon-odori 本踊 (the original dance)



Hon-odori is a traditional Japanese dance. It began in 1972. It is performed by six women. The content of this year's shamisen performance

in the original dance is to pray for the rich harvest, and the choreography features rice planting.

② Higashi-hama-no-machi 東濱町

Ryugusen 竜宮船 (dragon palace ship)

Ryugusen is a dance dedicated to the legend of the Dragon Palace. It has been performed since 1974. The legend concerns Urashima Taro, who is brought to the palace and meets a young princess named Otohime. This legend has been spread across the sea of Nagasaki.



The boat's body is red and white, which is characteristic of the palace. The dance of Otohime is also performed by school girls.

③ Yasaka-machi 八坂町

Kawafune 川船 (river boat)

The Kawafune performance has been shown since 1903. A ship is ridden by children who play the drum and gong. There is also a child who plays the role of the fisher. The performance features fish nets being cast,



which represents fishing done in the Edo period. This year's Kawafune uses a cannon cart given by the army as the handcart to carry the ship.

④ Doza-machi 銅座町

Nanbansen 南蛮船 (early European ship)

Westerners, such as the Portuguese and Spaniards, visited and traded with Japan during the late 16th century. A merchant ship called "Nanbansen" that Westerners had ridden on is featured in this performance. It is a reproduction of the lively bustle of trade at that time, and its crew members wear colorful costumes.



The highlight of the performance is the ship spinning like it is caught in a whirlpool, and it is called "tornado" (tornado).

⑤ Tsuki-machi 築町

Goزابune 御座船 (pleasure boat)

Goزابune is a ship that noble people ride. Tsukimachi's Goزابune has a history of 85 years since 1932. The ship is the only one that has three wheels attached and the rudder is controlled by the front wheel. The highlight of the performance is a powerful move called "Naruto", where the ship spins very fast as if it's



caught in a whirlpool. The ship's fast spinning is very dynamic.

Kasaboko 傘鉾 (combined parasol and halberd)



Each town's performance begins with the dance of a kasaboko, which is a very big and decorated article that looks like a parasol and is a sacred and dedicated town symbol. Its height is 2-3.5 meters and its weight is 130-150kg. It is carried and rotated by one person inside. People believe that a good deity rides on a kasaboko if they spend a lot of money on it.

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