

# Festivals and Fairs

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Hello, everyone! It's Rebecca with another English Extravaganza! This week, I would like to talk to you about festivals. It seems like there has been a festival every day since I arrived!



A couple weeks ago, I went to the Yoshida Fire Festival. There were so many people! I was surprised with how close you could get to the fire. My friends and I tried a lot of different foods, like shaved ice, yakisoba, and takoyaki. We also went to the shrine, which was so beautiful, and I learned how to pray. I also went to the Ishikawa Fireworks Festival a few weeks ago. It was wonderful to hear the music while the fireworks went off. I hear that each season has different festivals in Japan. In the summer, there are fireworks and firefly festivals. In the spring, there are flower viewing festivals.

Japanese festivals are different from American festivals. To start, there are not as many festivals in America. We usually only have fireworks displays twice a year: on Fourth of July and on New Year's Eve. Instead, especially during the summer, we have fairs and carnivals. At the fair, there are a lot of different tents selling food, just like in Japan. They have hamburgers, hotdogs, candied apples, and my favorite - elephant ears, fried dough(揚げパン) with sugar! They are called elephant ears because of how they look and how big they are. Fairs



also have a petting zoo(体験型動物園), where you can pet(なでる) horses, cows, sheep, pigs and rabbits. Sometimes, they will even have real elephants! Carnivals have lots of rides, too, like rollercoasters, Ferris wheels, and mazes.



I heard that there was a big dance parade in Tokyo recently, called the Yosakoi Soran Festival. Parades are also popular in the U.S. Usually, the parades are small and local. School marching bands parade through the street. New York, however, has some of the biggest parades. For St. Patrick's Day in March, an Irish holiday celebrated in the U.S., about 150,000 people take part, playing bagpipes, dancing with flags, or with a school band. One of the largest parades is the Thanksgiving Day Parade, which lasts for about three hours. This parade has famous performers, Broadway shows, marching bands, and huge balloons! Some of the balloons are so big that it takes 90 people to hold one!

That's all for this week, but I'll be back next week with more English Extravaganza!

