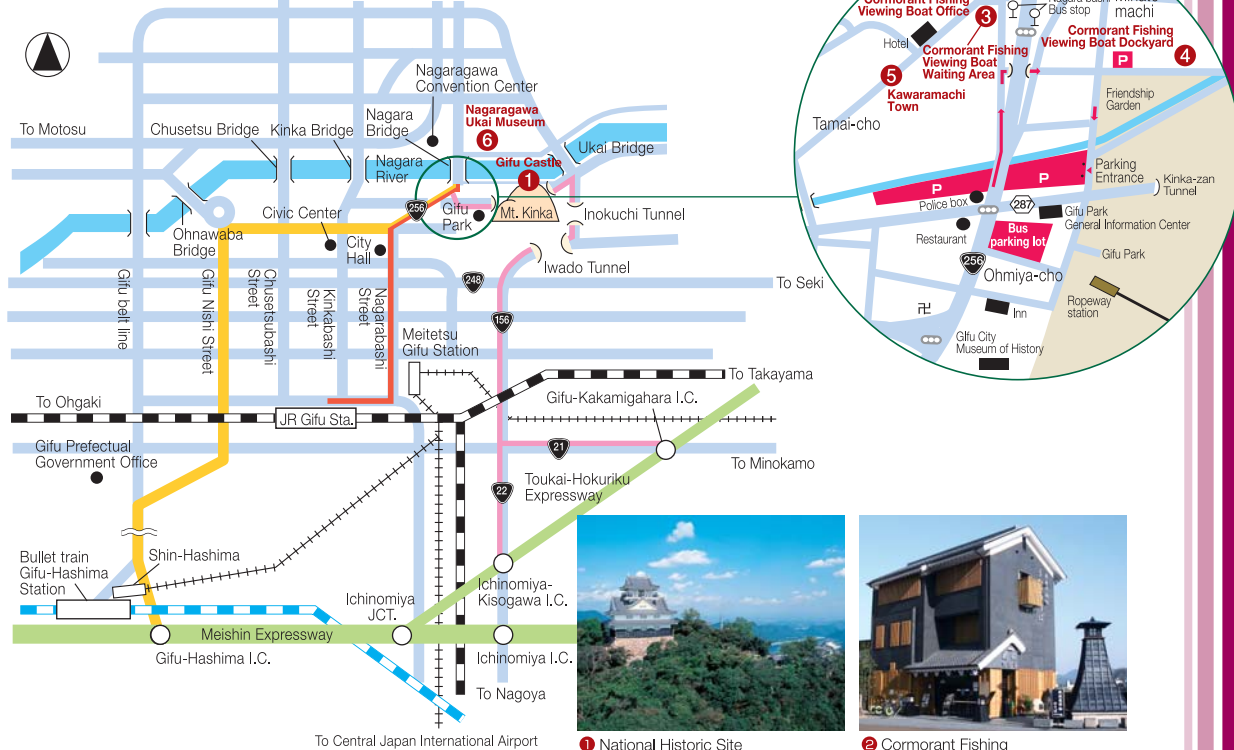


Transportation



1 National Historic Site Ruins of Gifu Castle

2 Cormorant Fishing Viewing Boat Office



3 Cormorant Fishing Viewing Boat Waiting Area



4 Cormorant Fishing Viewing Boat Dockyard
Viewing schedule: 9:00 - 16:00
(Closed for New Year's holiday)



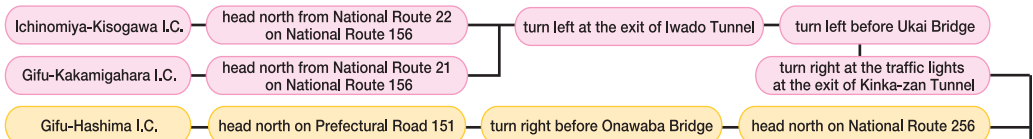
5 Kawaramachi Town



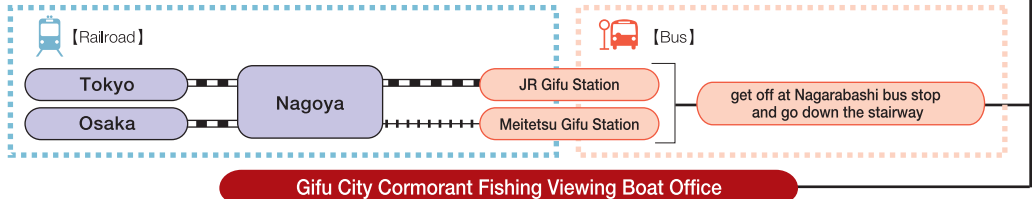
6 Nagaragawa Ukai Museum

Access

Automobiles



Public transportation



Tourist Information

Gifu City Tourism and Convention Division 11 1-chome Kanda-machi, Gifu City, 500-8720 TEL: 058-265-4141
 Gifu City Tourist Information Office JR-Gifu Station (2F), 500-8856 TEL: 058-262-4415
 Gifu Convention and Visitors Bureau 2 2-chome, Kanda-machi, Gifu City, 500-8727 TEL: 058-266-5588

For inquiries:

Reservation is required for viewing on the boats. (Individual reservation from one person)
Gifu City Cormorant Fishing Viewing Boat Office
 1-2, Minato-machi, Gifu City, 500-8009
TEL: 058-262-0104 FAX: 058-264-2061
URL <http://www.ukai-gifucity.jp/ukai/>



Ooh-tan



CORMORANT FISHING ON THE NAGARA RIVER

ぎふ長良川の鵜飼



Cormorant fishing season:
May 11 ~ October 15
 City for Int'l Conference and Tourism
Gifu City

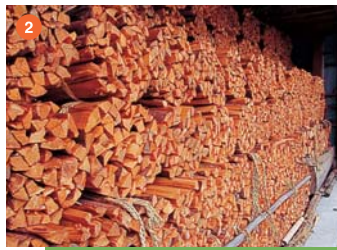
Cormorant Fishing on the Nagara River

Elegance of 1300 years, depicted in the spectacle

■ Cormorant fishing season: **May 11 ~ Oct. 15**

Fishing process

- 1 Select cormorants**
Select 10 to 12 healthy cormorants on each day to take fishing in the evening.
- 2 Prepare cormorant boat**
Load tools needed for cormorant fishing, such as split pinewood used to light a torch fire that will light up the river, on the boat. Insert leaves of a rose of Sharon in the pole supporting the fire basket, so that the sap will allow the pole to move smoothly.
- 3 Load cormorant basket**
After preparing the boat, load the cormorant basket with cormorants inside on the boat.
- 4 Go upstream**
Go up the river in the boat to a place to prepare for fishing.
- 5 Wait for sunset**
Make a wood fire and wait for the sun to set.
- 6 Draw lots to determine fishing order**
Each day, six boats draw lots to determine the order in which they will fish.
- 7 Start cormorant fishing**
①Take out the cormorants from the basket one by one and tie a rope to each of them for the fishing masters to control them while paying attention to their condition. Adjust the tightness of the knots depending on the cormorants' condition and the size of sweetfish to catch.
②Light the touch fire, and now it is time to go fishing.
- 8 Go down the river with the spectators' boats.**
Spectators can start watching the fishing.
- 9 Finish**
The cormorants rest on the edge of the boats after their work.



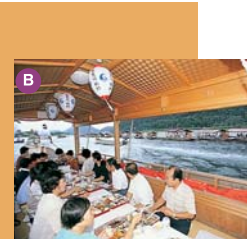
Viewing

Course A
For visitors planning to dine on board
Departure: 6:15 p.m.

Course B
For visitors NOT planning to dine on board
Departure: 6:45 p.m. 7:15 p.m.

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1
5:30~ | 1
5:30~ | 1
5:30~ |
| 2
5:45 | 2
6:45 | 2
7:15 |
| 3
5:30~ | 3
6:45 | 3
7:15 |
| 4
6:15 | 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 6 | 6 | 6 |
| 7
About 7:45 | 7
About 7:45 | 7
About 7:45 |
| 8 | 8 | 8 |
| 9 | 9 | 9 |
| 10
About 8:30 | 10
About 8:30 | 10
About 8:30 |

The visitors can either charter a private boat in a group or ride a general passenger boat with other spectators. The schedule for the passenger boat is as follows: Charter boats may depart from the dock anytime after 5:30 p.m.



Reception

Complete your registration before the reserved time at Cormorant Fishing Viewing Boat Office and receive your boat ticket (Your ticket shows the name of the boat).

Fishing orientation: 5:45 p.m. (photo A)

The fishing master describe cormorant fishing at the spectator boat terminal. * Only at the terminal behind Cormorant Fishing Viewing Boat Office.

Boarding

Board the boat reserved for you.

Departure (photo B)

The boats head for the viewing point. Enjoy the sight of the Nagara River and Mt. Kinka and the surrounding scenery.

Stop at the edge of the river

The boats stay near the edge of the river until cormorant fishing begins.

Dine on board

Enjoy your dinner and drinks.

Cormorant fishing begins: About 7:45 p.m.

Fireworks to signal the beginning of cormorant fishing are set off and the event begins.

Fishing toward lower river (photo C)

The spectator boats travel downstream alongside one of the cormorant boats. The spectators can watch the mastery of the fishing masters in controlling the birds and how the birds capture sweetfish.

* The spectator boats may not be able to travel alongside the cormorant boats if the weather or river conditions do not permit.

"Sogarami": formation of all six boats (photo D)

This is the climax of cormorant fishing, in which the six cormorant boats line up side-by-side all across the river and descend together to drive the fish into the shallows.

Leaving the boats

Leave the boats as you enjoy the afterglow of the spectacle.



* The time schedule is subject to change due to the weather conditions, number of boats, other events, etc.

Profound unity between fishing masters and cormorants, passed down through the history



Cormorant Fishing Master

Cormorant Fishing Master is a position in the Board of the Ceremonies of the Imperial Household Agency. There are six Cormorant Fishing Masters of the Nagara River and the title and occupation are inherited in their family. Their lives are dedicated to cormorant fishing, in which they master the skills and techniques learned from their parents and lovingly raise their cormorants all year around. You will witness their majestic figure in the traditional attire and brilliant techniques.

A master of haiku, Matsuo Basho, once read, "splendid, then ends in sorrow, the boat of cormorants." Cormorant fishing has a very long history in Japan, which is mentioned even in *the Chronicles of Japan (Nihon Shoki)* (A.D. 720) and *the Records of Ancient Matters (Kojiki)* (A.D. 712). Cormorant fishing in the Nagara River has a history of approximately 1,300 years (according to historical records of year 702). The practice has been maintained as one of Gifu's distinctive summer events reportedly because it has been protected by historical leaders, including Oda Nobunaga, who established "Cormorant Fishing Masters" as an official title, and Tokugawa Ieyasu, who was fond of sweetfish sushi and had it delivered to his Edo Castle. In 1890, the Cormorant Fishing Masters came under the Board of the Ceremonies of the then Department of the Imperial Household (today's Imperial Household Agency), and the tradition has been preserved while their performance has been perfected to artistry. The scene of fishing masters in traditional costume skillfully manipulating their cormorants while calling "ho, ho" as they fish invites the spectators into the world of ancient elegance where they feel the history in the burning torch fire.

Cormorants



The cormorants for fishing are migratory birds. They are Temminck's cormorants captured in the wild and intensely trained to grow into fishing cormorants. Current cormorants are captured in Juo-cho, Hitachi, in Ibaraki Prefecture. Guided by their master's ropes, they work very hard and hunt down sweetfish, which is sure to touch your heart.