

## Hinamatsuri (Doll Festival)

It is a festival held on March 3rd to pray for girls' health and happiness, and is also called *Momo no Sekku* (Peach Festival).

### Hina ningyo (Hina Dolls)

A set of dolls representing the emperor, empress, attendants and musicians in ancient court dress, and pieces of furniture are displayed on the tiered platforms together with, *hishimochi* (diamond shaped rice cake), and peach blossoms.



The display differs according to the district.

For celebration people drink *shirozake* (made with rice malt and sake).

You can see the traditional seven tiered *hina ningyo* display in the house of formerly owned by Kuriyama family. It is located in Suzume no Oyado Park in Himonya.

**Address:** Himonya 3-11-22  
just near the Himonya 3-chome bus stop,  
5 min walk from Himonya Hachimangu Shrine.

## Setsubun

**Setsubun** (The day before the first day of spring)

The term *setsubun* was originally referred to as a division (*bun*) of season (*setsu*), and later widely interpreted as the day before the first day of spring (*risshun*). As it was near the New Year's Day of the ancient lunar calendar, it became a representative spring event.

In the evening of *setsubun*, people welcome the gods that bring in spring, and wish for rich harvest and safety for rice farmers.

**Onioi** (The practice of dispelling demons)

*Onioi* and *yakuotoshi* are the traditional ceremonies to dispel demons when people invite in the gods. They were observed at first in the imperial court and gradually spread to local shrines and temples.

**Yaikagashi** (Sprigs of Holly and grilled heads of sardine)

*Yaikagashi* is a traditional rite to drive away demons, where people hang leaves and heads of sardine at the front door of the house wishing for good fortune and health of the family. This is a Kyoto tradition dating back to the Heian period. Sharp and smelly things were thought to drive demons away from entering the house.



**Mamemaki** (Bean scattering practice)

Beans, usually soybeans, are oblation to the spring gods on the eve of *setsubun*, grilled beans are scattered inside and outside the house, and people say "*oni wa soto, fukuwa uchi*" (Out with demons! Got in good luck!) three times each at each room of the house. When *mamemaki* is finished, it is customary for family members to eat the same number of beans as their age, and to pray for happiness throughout the year. You might like to experience *mamemaki*, which is held at Meguro Fudo Ryusenji on February 3rd.



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**Meguro Fudo Ryusenji**

Tel: 03-3712-7549

- 15 min walk from Megurofudomae station of Tokyu Meguro line
- taking a bus from JR Gotanda station #72 Shibuya, to Megurofudo-keidai bus stop

## Let's go for the Discount Sale!

In Japan, most department stores, shopping malls, electronics discount stores and other retail stores have large-scale discount called "bargain sale" or "clearance sale" in January and July.

The winter bargain held in January and February can be called the final sale following the Christmas, end of year and new year sale. When this sale ends, stores will replace winter goods with spring ones.



uritsukushi

You may expect a huge price reduction of the winter wears. In February, another discount sale called *uritsukushi* will be applied to the remaining merchandise.

As cold days continue in January and February, you will still need a coat and a heavy jacket. You might be lucky enough to find a real bargain of rather expensive winter wears, if you go to the sale during this time of the year.

