

Jōshi no Sekku (Peach Festival)

In ancient China, people purified their bodies at the riverside on Jōshi (the first day of the snake) in the third month of the lunisolar calendar. This custom was introduced to Japan. Since then, the event called Banquet at a Meandering Water Stream has been held regularly at the court.

In many regions of ancient Japan, people had a custom of “floating dolls”. A doll made of grass, straw, or paper was used to stroke their body parts for removing impurities, and then flushed down a river. In the Heian period (794-1185), games using hiina (doll) became popular among children of aristocrats, and it is considered that these games developed into Hinamatsuri (hina means “doll” and matsuri means “festival”) in later periods.

It is said that people started to display ornamental dolls and celebrate the day with their family members from the mid-Edo period (the first half of the 18th century) onward. Since then, this festival has continued to exist until today as a uniquely Japanese event for wishing for the happiness of girls.

