

Guide to Ryukyu Dance

Okinawa was once called The Ryukyu Kingdom, which existed for 450 years. In this era, Ryukyu Dance had been improved and sophisticated to entertain the ambassadors from China. After the collapse of the kingdom, the warrior-class people lost their jobs and started entertainment business for a living. In the process, the dance for common people was born and called “Zou Odori”.

Mixture of the classic dance refined in the tumultuous years of the kingdom and “Zou Odori” created by the energetic common people – Ryukyu Dance is the fruit of the culture of Okinawa and various emotions of Okinawan people.

< Program >

Yotsudake



This dance is commonly performed in the opening of banquet. The dancers put on the traditional Bingata dresses, hats adorned with lotus flowers and have Yotsudake (4 small pieces of bamboo) in their hands. It is very popular program with its gorgeous costume and a fluid motion.

Tanchamee



It's “Zou-Odori” which vividly describes the living of young people in a fishing village. A male and a female dancer have an oar and a basket respectively to perform their work. They put on Bashou-fu, everyday clothes for farmers in Okinawa. The dialogue between a man and a woman is also the highlight of this dance.

Kurushimakuduchi



Kurushima is one of the island of Yaeyama Islands in Okinawa and well known for a place of entertainment. This dance features the generous heart and cheerfulness, known as the ethnic distinctions of Okinawan people. It is performed to pray for the productiveness of grain and express the islanders' life merrily with Ohayashi, a musical accompaniment.