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Ojeh & Arishi Festival of Aboh Kingdom: *A Celebration of Igbo Culture*

By Idenze Ezeme

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FEATURE
IMAGE

Ojeh & Arishi Festival of Aboh Kingdom

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OJEH & ARISHI FESTIVAL OF ABOH KINGDOM

Ojeh & Arishi Festival of Aboh Kingdom: A Celebration of Igbo Culture

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The Ojeh & Arishi Festival in Aboh Kingdom is more than a festival. It is a time when the people of Aboh come together to honour their ancestors, celebrate their traditions, and strengthen their community. The festival happens every year in one quarter out of the community's five quarters.

Aboh is home to the Ndokwa people, who have a rich history and culture. The Ojeh & Arishi Festival is when people return to their hometown to participate in traditional activities, share food, and enjoy music and dance. It is a time for happiness, togetherness, and respect for their ancestors.



Aboh Kingdom's Ojeh & Arishi Festival: A Vibrant Igbo Celebration. Photo: Ogbahu TV

Ojeh Festival: A Time for Unity and Tradition

The Ojeh Festival, usually in March, is a time for the Aboh people to unite and honour their ancestors. It is a spiritual event that connects the past with the present.

One of the main highlights is the boat parade on the River Niger. The boats are beautifully decorated, and people sing and dance as they paddle through the water. The songs tell stories about their history, bravery, and culture. On land, the streets become lively with music, drumming, and dancing.



The boat parade on River Niger. Photo: Ogbahu TV

Arishi Festival: A Sacred Celebration

The Arishi Festival, also called Arishi Ugbo, is an important part of Aboh culture. It is a time when people connect with their gods and ancestors through rituals, music, and dance.

Masquerades play a big role in the festival. They dress in colourful costumes and perform dances that have deep spiritual meaning. Masquerades like Igba dance groups are considered side entertainment to add colour to the event, and are also adorned by various age groups to entertain visitors and to raise money. The Arishi are invited from Ayama, which means new own, an Ijaw coastal village, where the deity has its origins.

A key part of the Arishi Festival is when the elders offer prayers and gifts to the gods. The Diokpa (eldest man) leads these prayers, asking for protection, good harvests, and peace in Aboh Kingdom. This shows the Igbo belief in Chukwu (the Supreme God) and the role of ancestors

in guiding the people.

Food and Hospitality

Aboh people love to share food during the festival. Some popular dishes include:

- Ofe Nsala – A delicious fish soup with local spices.
- Palm Wine and Kola Nuts – Served to guests as a sign of friendship and hospitality.

During the festival, both locals and visitors are welcomed warmly. The people of Aboh make sure everyone enjoys the celebrations.



Ojeh & Arishi Festival of Aboh Kingdom. Photo: Ogbahu TV

Why You Should Experience the Ojeh & Arishi Festival

If you love culture and tradition, the Ojeh & Arishi Festival is an event you must see. It is a great way to learn about Igbo customs, experience traditional music and dance, and be part of an exciting cultural celebration.

Every year, people from Nigeria and other countries attend the festival. It is a chance to see history come to life and enjoy the rich culture of the Aboh Kingdom.

If you want to experience something truly special, visit Aboh Kingdom during the Ojeh & Arishi Festival. You will see the Igbo people's deep traditions, lively music, and joyful spirit.

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Ojeh Aboh festival

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Idenze Ezeme

Nze is an Igbo history and culture enthusiast with an in-depth passion for exploring the rich cultural heritage, traditions, and historical narratives of the Igbo people. His works is mostly focused on pre-colonial Igbo societies, traditional belief systems, leadership systems, and the impact of European colonialism.



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