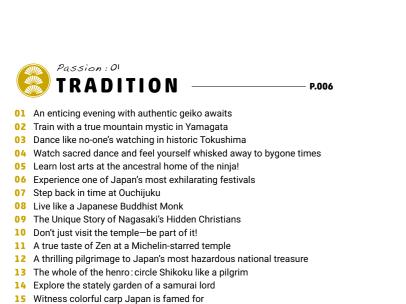


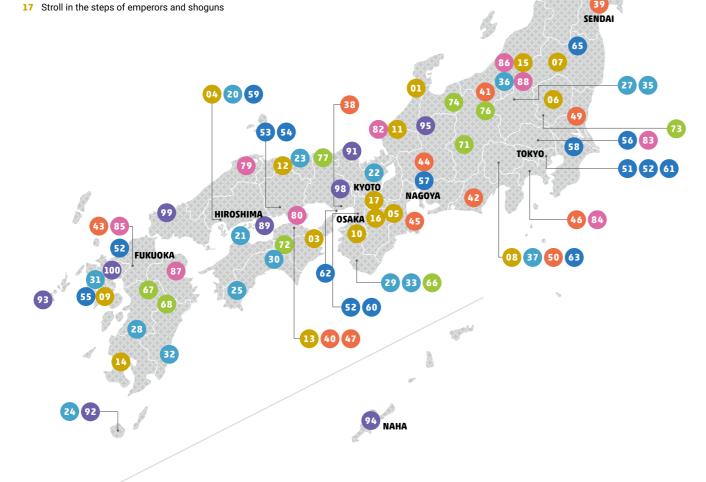




16 Have one of Japan's most scenic temples all to yourself

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62 Experience the world's longest suspension bridge from 300m up!

63 An amusement park in Mt. Fuji's shadow

64 Larger-than-life, ice sculptures downtown

65 Experience authentic drifting at one of Japan's most popular circuits



66 Find your spiritual side on the famous Kumano Kodo Trail 67 Explore Kumamoto's active volcano Mount Aso up close

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80 Experience the wonder of art on a canvas of islands!

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84 East Asian art galore in a striking, scenic setting

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87 Wood, washi paper and world-class works of art

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90 Stayover at this unique new Yamagata concept hotel

91 A night to remember at a traditional boathouse

92 Paradise awaits at a UNESCO world heritage site

93 Starlit camping on the Goto Islands

94 Luxury lodging in Japan's paradise

95 Embrace rural charm in one of Japan's most scenic villages

96 Heartwarming farm stays in rural Japan

97 Lose yourself at an inn truly at one with its surroundings

98 Experience the rich tradition of an old castle town at Hotel NIPPONIA

99 Refresh by the river at hot-spring hide away

100 Stayover in a garden paradise









# TRADITION

Japan is a nation uniquely in touch with its past. At ancient shrines and in the heart of historic cities, its rich cultural heritage lives on as something not just to be admired from afar, but actively appreciated.

From the transformative travel experience of participating in yamabushi—the mountain ascetic tradition—to hands-on practice at a seat of Zen Buddhism, take in the spirit of Japan and its people with all five senses.

You'll come away with a profound understanding of the culture, and rediscover yourself in the process. What better destination for a journey of self-reflection and personal growth?

Let Japan's past be a window into your future.

01

# An enticing evening with authentic geiko awaits

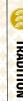
The height of Japanese hospitality awaits you at Kanazawa's largest teahouse

Veteran geiko will welcome you into their world at Kaikaro, a stunning Michelin-starred teahouse right in the heart of historic Kanazawa. Lady Baba, the English-speaking landlady, leads a group of elegant entertainers who will treat you to a tour-de-force as they perform traditional song and dance and shed light on the mysterious world of geiko culture and its history. Join the ladies on stage for some handson taiko drumming, time-honored party games and a truly otherworldly feeling! This is a special event only held in the spring and fall. Kanazawa is located 2.5 hours from Tokyo via the Hokuriku Shinkansen bullet train.

#### Higashi Chayagai District Kaikaro

ひがし茶屋街 懐華樓(かいかろう)

**Q** 1-14-8 Higashiyama, Kanazawa-shi, Ishikawa **⊞** http://geishaevenings.jp









### Dance like no-one's watching in historic **Tokushima**

Take part in one of Japan's most famous traditional dance events

Every year, from August 12-15, beating drums, stomping geta clogs and high-spirited calls of "Yattosa!" and "Yatto yatto!" bring the city of Tokushima alive. Synonymous with summer, nationwide festivals feature this traditional dance, but it all started here, over four centuries ago. This makes it the biggest festival of its kind in the country, drawing people in the hundreds of thousands. Enjoy parading dancers, with an electric atmosphere and infectious energy. Move to the beat and if you're lucky enough, try the fun first-hand in one of the groups open to non-professionals. The Awa Odori Kaikan offers daily performances at noon, with further insights into the dance at the Awa Dance Museum inside.

#### Awa Odori

Q 2-5 Saiwai-cho, Tokushima-shi, Tokushima

### Train with a true mountain mystic in Yamagata

Get in touch with nature by authentically embracing this ancient faith

About 300 km north of Tokyo, in Yamagata prefecture, is a trio of sacred mountains: the Dewa Sanzan. Journey there and immerse yourself in the ways of the local yamabushi, white-robed followers of the ancient Japanese mountain religion called Shugendo. Meet Master Hoshino, who will guide you in an authentic training program to reconnect with nature and refresh mind and body. Various programs offer different activities: stay at the Daishobo pilgrim lodge where you can try vegetarian cuisine, hike sacred trails and even try your hand at waterfall meditation.

Yamabushido Team

株式会社めぐるん

Q 99 Toge, Haguro-machi, Tsuruoka-shi, Yamagata m https://www.yamabushido.jp/

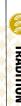






# http://setouchitrip.com/travel-directory/940?dir=list







### Learn lost arts at the ancestral home of the ninja!

Eco-tourism, history and martial training amidst the Akame falls

At the 48 falls of Akame — training ground for the famed Iga ninja clan in the 15th and 16th centuries – you, too, can become a ninja for a day. Wearing authentic clothing, you'll get the lowdown on time-honored techniques of concentration, climbing, and infiltration. Dodge throwing stars and defend yourself in a VR-assisted shuriken throwing star simulation. The 90-minute tour takes in ancient forests and rushing rapids along the way on a course sure to delight the whole family - nature lovers and aspiring ninja alike. Children under seven must be accompanied by an adult. Akame is 2.5 hours by train or car from Chubu Centrair International Airport.

The Akame 48 Falls

赤目四十八滝エコツアーデスク

Q 671-1 Nagasaka, Akame-cho, Nabari-shi, Mie

### Watch sacred dance and feel yourself whisked away to bygone times

Lose yourself in the world of Kagura, one of Japan's most ancient performing arts

Over a millennium old, Kagura is a theatrical dance form whose origins lie in ancient Shinto ceremony. Come to Hiroshima, where this still-thriving ethereal art continues and enjoy an evening performance. Delight in the strikingly colored costumes and bold movements and follow the story every step of the way, thanks to English-language guidance and subtitles. As an after-show bonus, you can engage the performers in a question-and-answer session, as well as trying on the elaborate outfits for yourself and taking commemorative photos. So rewind to yesteryear and ancient Japan - no time machine required!

Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum/Hiroshima YMCA 広島県立美術館/広島YMCA

Q 2-22 Kaminobori-cho, Naka-ku, Hiroshima-shi, Hiroshima /7-11 Hatchobori, Naka-ku, Hiroshima-shi, Hiroshima # https://www.hiroshima-kagura.com/





Q 1668-1 Imamiya, Kanuma-shi, Tochigi # https://visitkanuma.jp/

### **Experience one of Japan's** most exhilarating festivals

A centuries-old tradition roars to life each autumn with this visually striking seasonal ritual

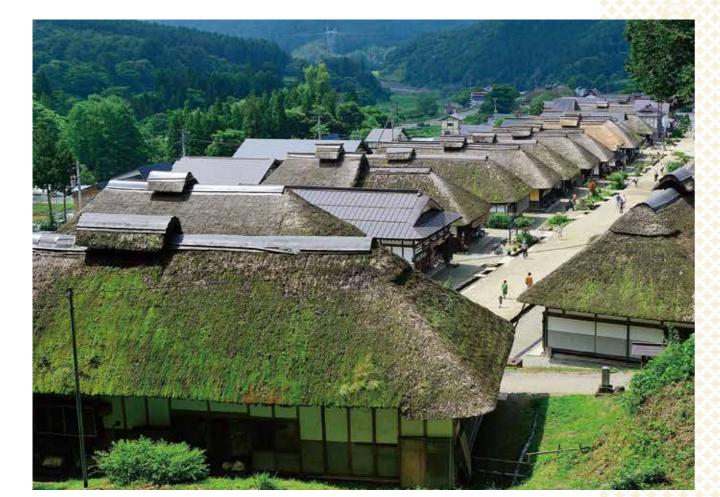
Japan may have more than its fair share of festivals, and among the most enchanting of them all is the Kanuma Autumn Festival, held every second week of October at Imamiya Shrine, near Nikko. The centerpiece of the celebration - itself designated a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage - are 27 massive wooden floats, exquisitely maintained by artisans using ancient skills. These mighty structures are hauled down the streets when they meet up, the musicians on the floats compete musically, adding to the excitement. From the dazzling waterfront fireworks display to streets lined with food stalls serving tasty treats - enjoy this truly otherworldly experience and a one-of-a-kind feast for all five senses.





Kanuma Autumn Festival

鹿沼秋まつり実行委員会







### Step back in time at Ouchijuku

Discover a traditional post town setting in Fukushima

This Edo-era post town, established around 1640, was once a stop on the road from Nikko to Aizu but it is now a major destination in its own right. The picture postcard idyllic row of thatched houses is even more photogenic in the winter, blanketed by snow. Step inside Misawa-ya to warm up by the irori ('sunken fire pit') hearth, and don't leave without sampling negi-soba - with a leek in place of chopsticks!

### Ouchi-juku

Q Yamamoto, Ouchi, Shimogo-machi, Minamiaizu-gun, Fukushima http://ouchi-juku.com/index.php?English

### Live like a Japanese **Buddhist Monk**

Learn about the traditional Buddhist lifestyle while enjoying views of Mt. Fuji

Mount Minobu (Minobu-san) is home to Kuonji Temple, the headquarters of the Buddhist Nichiren-shu sect. Kuonji offers you the chance to embrace traditional Japanese Buddhist customs - the aroma of incense, droning sutra chants and the calming rhythm of copying sutras by hand, are your gateways to an all-new experience. To really do it properly, book a stay at the nearby Gyogakuin Kakurinbo temple lodgings. Eat simple but nourishing shojin ryori - traditional vegetarian Buddhist fare - as you feed your spiritual curiosity. Mt. Minobu is in Yamanashi Prefecture, about 3 hours by road, from Tokyo.

### Minobusan Kuonji Temple

身延山久遠寺

Q 3567 Minobu, Minobu-cho, Minamikoma-gun, Yamanashi

# https://www.kuonji.jp/english/entop.htm



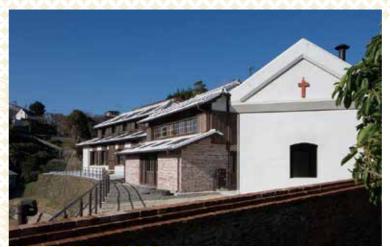




## The Unique Story of Nagasaki's Hidden Christians

Learn how their faith survived even as Christianity was prohibited

Take a visit to five locations in Nagasaki Prefecture, visited by Martin Scorsese when making the movie Silence: Tomogi Village (Sotome Town), Nagasaki City, the Shimabara Peninsula, Hirado City, and the Goto Islands. Based on Endo Shusaku's novel, the film depicts how Japanese Christians survived the prohibition of Christianity which started in 1587. In 2018, twelve "Hidden Christian" sites in the Nagasaki area were recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Start at the Twenty-Six Martyrs Museum near JR Nagasaki Station, just as Scorsese did, and learn about the history in English. Oura Cathedral, the oldest church in Japan, is a short tram ride away, and buses to Sotome, Shimabara, Hirado area depart from the station and ferries from Nagasaki Port to the Goto Islands. After the ban was lifted in 1871 and the era of the "Hidden Christians" ended, tragedy followed when the atomic bomb exploded almost directly above Urakami Cathedral. These sites are sure to strengthen your faith in humanity, no matter what your religious beliefs may be.







- Q 2F Dejima-Wharf 1-1-205 Dejima-machi, Nagasaki-shi, Nagasaki Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region Information Centre
- https://www.discover-nagasaki.com/silence/
- # http://kyoukaigun.jp/en/

© PIXTA

# Don't just visit the temple—be part of it!

From tourist to temple lodger - Experience Koyasan life like a monk

In the lush, misty Kii mountains of Wakayama prefecture, you'll find the awe-inspiring Buddhist temple site of Koyasan, founded more than 1,200 years ago. Koyasan is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most important spiritual locations in Japan. Long a draw for sightseers and day-trippers, Koyasan has since unveiled a more enlightening experience in the shape of its popular temple stays option. For a stay of one or more nights, you can live just like the full-time monks and share their meals. Enjoy the subtle simplicity of shojin ryori (Buddhist vegetarian cuisine), served to overnight guests in the evening and again the following morning. You can also meditate and pray with the monks: early morning meditation usually starts around 6 am.







Koyasan Shukubo Association 高野山宿坊協会

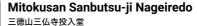
**Q** 600 Koyasan, Koya-cho, Ito-gun, Wakayama **⊕** http://eng.shukubo.net/

## 12

# A thrilling pilgrimage to Japan's most hazardous national treasure

Panoramic vistas and steep climbs await at sacred and scenic Mount Mitoku

The path up Mount Mitoku has been said to mirror the Buddha's own journey to enlightenment. Begin the hike and you'll soon see why, as you cling to the mighty roots of primeval trees to scale steep and slippery rock surfaces. You'll be rewarded for your efforts with up-close looks at ancient temples and breathtaking views of the mountainside along the way. It all culminates with your arrival at the Nageiredo—a striking national treasure set in a sheer cliff face whose origins are shrouded in mystery. When you return from the 90-or-so minute journey and cross the river representing the boundary between this world and the next, you'll truly feel as if you've been reborn.



川二四4投入王

• 1010 Mitoku, Misasa-cho, Tohaku-gun, Tottori

https://sanin-japan.com/en/featured/mitokusan







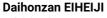




# A true taste of Zen at a Michelin-starred temple

Experience the ascetic life at one of Japan's most historic Zen Buddhist temples

Visitors looking to find themselves are welcome at the "Sanro" Zen practice program at Eiheiji Temple in Fukui Prefecture, home to the Soto school of Zen Buddhism. In majestic yet austere settings, meticulously preserved since the year 1244, you'll embrace the life of a monk over two days and a night. Join the monks for zazen (sitting zen meditation) and sutra transcription, dine with them on strict vegetarian fare and rise early in the morning to take part in a morning incense-burning service. All of this takes place in a vast temple complex of 70 buildings set in an ancient forest, housing numerous historical treasures. Fukui Prefecture is just 2 hours from Osaka by limited express train, or 3-plus hours from Tokyo by Shinkansen and local trains.



大本山永平寺

♥ 5-15 Shihi, Eiheiji-cho, Yoshida-gun, Fukui # http://www.fuku-e.com/lang/english/







13

# The whole of the henro: circle Shikoku like a pilgrim

Visit all 88 temples of the famous henro trail on Japan's smallest main island

Join a centuries-old pilgrimage route on the island of Shikoku as you visit 88 temples connected to the famous monk Kukai (also known as Kobo Daishi). The route, or henro, will take you to serene hidden spots across Shikoku's four prefectures. Scenery is at its most enticing in spring or autumn, when changing colors brighten the path. It is said that all those completing the entire pilgrimage will have their prayers or wishes answered.

### Association of the Shikoku Pilgrimage Temples 四国八十八か所需場会

♥ 1065-1 Zentsuji-cho, Zentsuji-shi, Kagawa # https://www.my-kagawa.jp/en/sightseeing/sightseeing05









### Sengan-en and Shoko Shuseikan Museum

仙巌園·尚古集成館

• 9700-1 Yoshino-cho, Kagoshima-shi, Kagoshima https://www.senganen.jp/en/

### **Explore the stately** garden of a samurai lord

Take in the beauty of Kagoshima's Sengan-en

Sengan-en is a classic Japanese manor home and garden, a tranquil oasis just 20 minutes from Kagoshima's city center. Spread over 12 acres, the estate was built in 1658 by the 19th head of the Shimazu clan-a storied lineage of samurai lords who ruled this part of Japan's far south. Stroll in the footsteps of proud warriors who shaped Japan's history, and share the inspiration they must have felt gazing out on panoramic views of glittering Kinko Bay and Mt. Sakurajima, an active volcano. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is adjoined by the Shoko Shuseikan Museum, which explores the region's industrial heritage and the modernization of Japan during the Meiji period (1868-1912). For a closer look at another local export. admire the skilled craftsmanship on display at the Kiriko Glassworks. Here they produce colorful Satsuma Kiriko cut crystal glass, which you can also browse in the onsite shop. Kagoshima is less than 2 hours from Tokyo by plane.







### Stroll in the steps of emperors and shoguns

Let an English-speaking guide show you around a historic castle in the heart of Kyoto

Nijo Castle was built by Tokugawa leyasu (1543-1616), the founding shogun (supreme samurai warlord) of the Edo period (1603-1867). He commissioned ornate and unique architectural structures, some of which still stand today: the Karamon Gate's elaborate carvings will amaze you. As you explore the Ninomary Palace, one of only two castle palaces to survive, marvel at the gleaming and opulent gilded art around every corner, and hear the famous "nightingale floors" squeaking underfoot - a deliberate feature intended to prevent assassins from sneaking in undetected. Nijo Castle also boasts acclaimed Japanese-style gardens, the most famous of which is the Ninomaru Garden. Relax while watching tumbling waterfalls and reminisce about the samurai of old and their elegant kimono-clad ladies appreciating this same tranquil setting. To make the most of your visit, take an interactive guided tour.

### Nijo-jo Castle English Guided Tour

二条城英語ガイドツアー

O 541 Nijo-jo-jo-cho, Horikawa-nishi-iru, Nijo-jo-dori, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto-shi, Kyoto https://www.govoyagin.com/ja/activities/japan-kyoto-nijo-castle-guided-tourinkvoto-with-ninomaru-palace-access/9995



### Have one of Japan's most scenic temples all to yourself

In the stillness of night, a sacred and ethereally beautiful experience awaits

Ever wanted to experience a Japanese temple without the crowds? If you're looking to spend a truly divine night, turn your eyes to Tsubosaka-dera in Nara, Japan's first permanent capital city in the 8th century. After closing hours, let a monk take you on an exclusive tour of this magnificent temple, which overlooks Mount Yoshino, long Japan's most famous cherry blossom viewing spot. You'll learn about the temple's history, don traditional dress, take part in a Buddhist prayer session and receive a good-luck talisman. All that remains is exploring the grounds to your heart's content before an enchanting and otherworldly night. Group reservations are welcome.

### Tsubosaka-dera Temple

Q 3 Tsubosaka, Takatori-cho, Takaichi-gun, Nara # http://nara-experience.com/detail/index/247



## Witness colorful carp Japan is famed for

At the Nishikigoi center, enjoy these fish in a beautiful garden setting

Nishikigoi are the ornamental colorful brocaded carp that attract admirers and photographers to Japan's many garden ponds. They can be seen up close in the beautiful gardens of the Nishikigoi breeding center in Niigata Prefecture in western Japan. You can learn about the conditions needed to successfully raise these popular piscine species before strolling the exquisite scenic grounds, where the carp are kept in large ponds.

### Ojiya Nishikigoi no Sato

O 1-8-22 Jonai, Oiiva-shi, Niigata mattp://nishikigoinosato.jp/eng/index.html





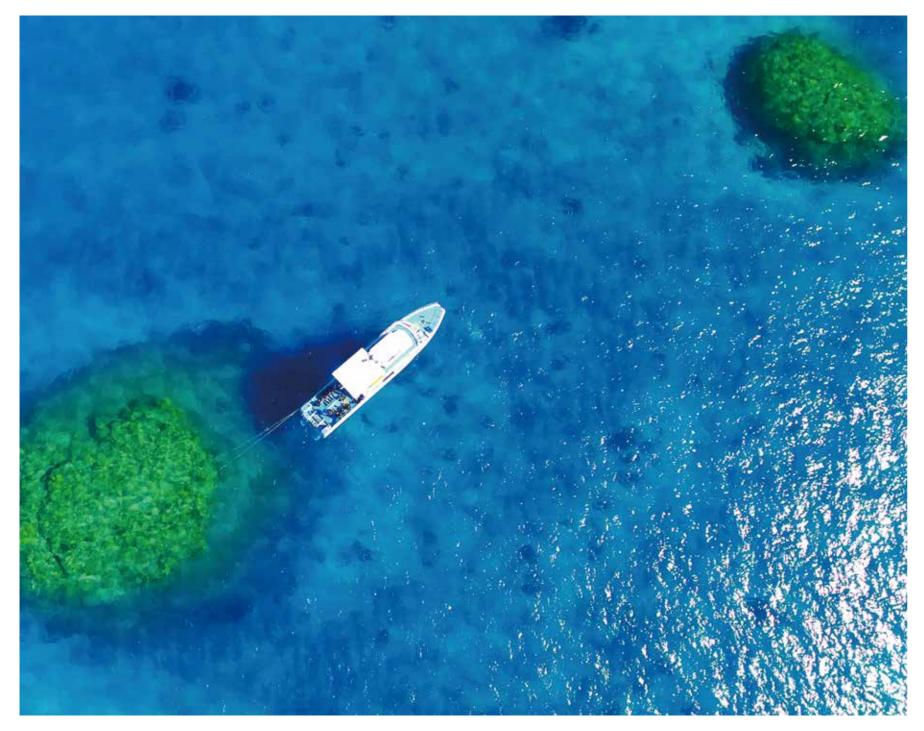








©KYOTO CITY TOURISM ASSOCIATION









© Prime Scuba Ishigaki



# OUTDOORS

Japan's natural wonders aren't just for the eyes-they offer exhilarating activities sure to stir the heart of any outdoor enthusiast. Go diving in pristine ocean waters. Soar above sweeping sand dunes by paraglider. Venture deep into virgin forests for thrilling rafting down rushing rapids. Snowshoe or rappel your way across stunning snowscapes. Experience the fusion of Japanese tradition and outdoor excitement as you paddle-board through the famous shrine gates of Miyajima, or go log-riding down the Kitayama River. When you're done, hop on a bicycle to explore your surroundings, treat yourself to healthful and tasty regional delicacies, or get hands-on with local traditions. With so much to do, you won't have time to catch your breath!

18

## An exceptional island paradise

Sensational subtropical scuba diving in Ishigaki, less than 4 hours from Tokyo

Ishigaki Island in Okinawa has warm and inviting weather all year round—as you'd expect of a place in Japan's far south. Scuba diving fans, you won't find a better spot to watch magical manta rays gliding through calm, crystal-clear waters. And Ishigaki is so accessible: direct flights daily from Tokyo and Osaka, as well as hotels to suit all budgets. Cruise among the coral and discover why Ishigaki is a must-see destination for divers the world over.

Prime Scuba Ishigaki

プライム・スクーバ石垣

**Q** 345-9 Maezato, Ishigaki-shi, Okinawa





# Swoosh down the snowy slopes of a volcano

90 minutes from Asahikawa, Mt.Asahidake welcomes skiers and hikers

2,291-meter Mt. Asahidake may be an active volcano but it is very much open to visitors! Hikers and skiers can enjoy breathtaking views of the Daisetsuzan mountain range as they explore an enchanting snowscape. Just as impressive as the powder snow are the clouds of steam rising from the many fumaroles. For a quick ascent, the Mt. Asahidake Ropeway will carry you 1,600 meters up the slopes.

### Asahikawa Maru-un Travel

旭川まるうんトラベル

• 10-3-2 Miyashitadori, Asahikawa-shi, Hokkaido • https://www.goakj.com/winterdaisetsuzan/





# 20

# Ultimate stand-up paddling awaits

SUP Miyajima: Enter the most famous shrine gate in Japan!

Hiroshima prefecture in west Japan is where you'll find one of Japan's most beautiful locations, the 'Otorii' gates of Itsukushima shrine; 16 meter high, a stone's throw from Miyajima Island and a UNESCO World Heritage site. But now, instead of just snapping a picture and throwing a coin like most other visitors, why not experience the magic of a self-powered stand-up paddle (SUP) tour through the famous vermilion pillars? MAGIC ISLAND SUP tours are reasonably priced, fit into half a day and have certified staff on hand to ensure even beginners can enjoy a memorable and magical experience. Exciting. Exhilarating. And all captured for posterity with your own commemorative photo. Tap into the energy of this 1400-year old venue – there's even a special 2-km course for advanced participants!

#### MAGIC ISLAND

マジックアイランド

Q 102 6-3-25 Yaga, Higashi-ku, Hiroshima-shi, Hiroshima

m https://attractive-j.com/engdetail/?product\_code=PDCPX1&language=EN Renovation of the torii gate will begin June 2019.







sokoiko





# **Experience rural hearts** and homes

Bike around Lake Biwa and Lunch with Lakeside Locals

The Tour du Lac Biwa offers an unforgettable and heartwarming rural Japanese experience through local eyes. And a menu of visual and edible feasts! It gets going around halfway up the western side of Lake Biwa, Japan's largest, around 40 minutes north of Kyoto by train. A bicycle tour is one of the many activities you can partake in before making lunch together with your bilingual hosts, who will welcome you into their century-old homes. It doesn't get more authentic than this. For friendship, farming experiences and a home away from home feel, look no further. Arrive as a visitor and leave as a newly embraced friend of those for whom Lake Biwa is home.

Tour du Lac Biwa

ツールドラック ビワ

Q 4-1 Minami-funaji, Otsu-shi, Shiga ⊕ https://www.lacbiwa.com/



21

### Sea-view cycling at its best

The Shimanami Kaido: Conquer Japan's most scenic and famous cycle trail

The 'Shimanami Kaido', Japan's most famous bikeway, is an elevated cycling trail that links the cities of Onomichi and Imabari, in Hiroshima and Ehime Prefectures respectively is western Japan, spanning around 70km and six islands along the way. There's no Alps-style climbing either! Even the more reluctant bikers among you will delight in pedaling the mostly level trails, amid stunning scenery wherever you look. No wonder it was voted one of the Top 7 cycling routes in the world by CNN. To make it even easier to enjoy, there are bike-friendly hotels in both terminal cities and numerous points to pick-up and drop-off rental bikes. You can also expect help and support if you run into any problem – so grab a helmet and get your two-wheeled tour underway!



### Sunrise ITOYAMA

サンライズ糸山

Q 2-8-1 Sunaba-cho, Imabari-shi, Ehime

ttp://www.sunrise-itoyama.jp/archives/english/





23

# Soar above sweeping sands by paraglider

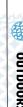
Breathtaking vistas await where desert meets ocean at the Tottori Sand Dunes

The Tottori Sand Dunes are one of Japan's true wonders of nature: up to 50 meters tall and straddling kilometers of coastline — ever-shifting, but dating back millennia. What could be more exhilarating than swooshing through the brisk sea air high above the dunes, riding the wind on a paraglider? Marvel at the Sea of Japan stretching as far as the eye can see. And this thrill is even open to first-timers, with friendly experienced staff ready to help you get airborne and gentle sands ensuring a soft landing. If you'd rather stay on the ground, hop on an off-road "fat bike" and race across the sands with incredible traction. Daily from late March to November. Tottori is a 75-minute flight from Tokyo.

### Zero Paraglider School/TRAIL ON

ゼロパラグライダースクール/トレイル オン

• 2164 Yuyama, Fukube-cho, Tottori-shi, Tottori • http://www.tottori-inaba-gt.jp/





# Paddle Shikoku's clear waters

Rediscover the island as you float down the Shimanto River

See a different side of Kochi Prefecture emerge as you paddle, kayak, or pilot an SUP (stand-up paddle board), gently carried by the Shimanto River. Spot dozens of aquatic species in the crystal-clear waters as you negotiate its meandering curves. And look out for the Shimanto River's stand-out two dozen chinka bridges; structures without rails that are designed to be easily flooded should the river ever rise.

#### withRIVER

ウィズリノ

• 1841 Misato, Shimanto-shi, Kochi • http://www.withriver.info/english/

# 24

# Explore a primeval forest untouched by time

Japan's mightiest, most ancient tree awaits you in the heart of Yakushima

The island of Yakushima is an awe-inspiring destination for any nature lover. Visit its lush, expansive cedar forest—a National Park and UNESCO World Heritage Site—and commune with trees that have stood for thousands of years. Hike into its depths, amidst pristine streams and charming forest creatures like monkeys and deer. In the heart of the wood, you'll come face-to-face with the Jomon Sugi, a majestic cedar that has watched over the Japanese people for millennia. English-speaking guides are available to teach you all about your surroundings with a variety of courses catering from a few hours hiking to one day trekking. The island offers a great selection of places to stay-from luxury resort hotels to shared budget accommodation. Yakushima is a short 90-minute flight from Osaka's Itami Airport, and trains and buses are available to take you to the trail route.

### Go! Yakushima

ゴー!屋久島

• Yakushima-cho, Kumage-gun, Kagoshima • https://www.goyakushimatour.com/





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# Kayak on winter waters of diamond-like clarity!

Experience wonderful nature up close on the water and on the shore

Lake Shikotsu: a sparkling jewel within the Shikotsu-Toya National Park in Hokkaido famed for its crystal-clear waters. So pristine, in fact, they've been rated the purest nationwide for 10 consecutive years! Nowhere else in Japan can you see so deep into the lake – sights you can now savor to the full on our clear-bottom kayak tours. Autumn visitors can expect a visual feast of colored leaves and sockeye salmon. Winter, meanwhile, sees the lake at its most transparent, with the added magic of surrounding snowy peaks and glimpses of wild deer and foxes on the shores. Less than a 90-minute drive from Sapporo or 40 minutes from Chitose Airport.

#### Ocean days

オーシャンデイズ

**Q** Bangaichi, Shikotsukoonsen, Chitose-shi, Hokkaido ⊕ http://h-takarajima.com/detail/index/4120&ml\_lang=en







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# The original and best canyoning

NZ-run with Tone River rapids rafting also available

If thrills, white water and outstanding outdoor fun are your thing, check out the Canyoning company, based on the Tone River in Gunma Prefecture's Minakami Town. Owned by a New Zealander with a quarter-century of experience, they are the original canyoning pioneers in Japan, offering a wide range of tours since 1998. What better winning formula?!

Unique to the line-up of packages is the snow canyoning tour: reacquainting you with powder snow in epic style. Alternatively, why not try and tame the Tone torrents, with rapids rafting from April to October, especially spring, when water levels peak? Breaking new boundaries and borders for beginners and epiclevel adventurers alike. Pick-up available: a 30-minute bus ride from Jomo-Kogen Station and just 70 minutes by bullet train from Tokyo.



キャニオンズ

Q 45 Yubiso, Minakami-machi, Tone-gun, Gunma

https://canyons.jp/en/







© Minakami Tourism Associatio

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# Dorokyo Gorge scenic river adventure!

A 600-year-old Japanese tradition offers exhilarating wet thrills

Come to Kitayama, a historic village tucked away in the mountains of the Kii peninsula, and hop aboard a log raft for an exciting whitewater ride. Part of the Yoshino-Kumano National Park, Dorokyo Gorge is the ancestral home of the river runners—loggers who navigated the rapids long before roads were paved. Your guides will lead you downstream using the same techniques employed by their ancestors. You'll laugh and scream with joy at every twist and turn of the rushing river, taking in breathtaking scenery along the way. Memories of this off-the-beaten-track adventure will stay with you long after your return home. Kitayama is located about 4 hours from Nagoya, or 5 hours from Osaka, by train and bus. Travelers are encouraged to arrive the night before and spend the night at the rustic Okutoro Onsen hot spring resort.







© Tanahe City Kumano Tourism Bures

### **Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau**

田辺市熊野ツーリズムビューロー

O 1-20 Minato, Tanabe-shi, Wakayama

# https://www.kumano-travel.com/en/tours-activities/log-rafting-in-dorokyo-gorge-ikada-kudari

# 28

# An historic ex-castle town on the Kuma River

This Kyushu gem features a steam train, hot springs and more

Like the sound of a shrine 1200 years old, hot springs and a river worth writing home about? Plus a steam locomotive? Head for Hitoyoshi City in Kumamoto Prefecture, which ticks all the boxes. The Kuma River, one of the fastest and cleanest in Japan, runs through the Kyushu mountains and breathes life into this hotbed of culture and craft. The river earned its reputation over seven centuries, since midway through the Edo Period (1603-1867), when it became an active thoroughfare carrying people and timber between the towns of Hitoyoshi and Yatsushiro. Having ceded this role to the train, nowadays, the river is best enjoyed on one of the regular pleasure cruise ships that ply these waters, including heated table seating at colder times of year.

### Kumagawa Kudari

球磨川くだり株式会社

**Q** 333-1 Shimoshin-machi, Hitoyoshi-shi, Kumamoto **⊕** https://www.kumagawa.co.jp/







© Happy Raft

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### **Epic Yoshino River rafting**

Head for Happyraft: no-one tames the torrents better!

The Yoshino River, which winds its way for 194 km through the heart of Shikoku Island, offers thrills aplenty and the best rapids rafting and canyoning anywhere in Japan. Leave your next river adventure to the multilingual Happyraft team, many of whom have decades of experience. Excitement, foam, fun and photo opportunities all come guaranteed.

As well as half- and one-day tours, family-friendly rafting experiences are also available at reasonable prices. Located next to Tosa-Iwahara Station, Happyraft is based in central Shikoku, which is bordered by Tokushima to the east and Kochi Prefecture to the south. Ryoma Airport in Kochi Prefecture is just an hour's drive away. And if you want to stay right next to the action, why not stayover at one of the on-site guest houses? Discount available for tour participants!

#### **Happy Raft**

株式会社ハッピーラフト

• 221-1 Ikadagi, Otoyo-cho, Nagaoka-gun, Kochi • https://en.happyraft.com/





### Set sail to the islands of Kujukushima in Nagasaki

Navigate the clear blue waters from the opening scene of "The Last Samurai"

Just a stone's throw from the city of Sasebo lies one of Japan's most stunning ocean views, the Kujukushima islands in Saikai National Park. Literally meaning 99 islands, there are actually more than 200 verdant of them scattered along the coastline and while undeniably beautiful, their real charm only emerges at closer quarters. Head to the Kujukushima Pearl Sea Resort kayaking or a choice of relaxing or uninhabited island cruises. Alternatively, embark on a solo ocean trip with one of the many rental yachts or kayaks at the resort. Finally, during Golden Week or weekends between August and October, why not board a sunset cruise and snap the islands at their very best—the glittering on-water reflection means they resemble dark droplets in a sea of gold. (only available Mar. - Oct.)





©Sasebo Convention & Visitors Association

#### Kujukushima Pearl Sea Resort

九十九島パールシーリゾート

• 1008 Kashimae-cho, Sasebo-shi, Nagasaki

thtp://www.pearlsea.jp/english/cruising.html







SURF CITY Miyazaki SURF CITY 宮崎

• 2-1-11 Aoshima, Miyazaki-shi, Miyazaki ttps://surfcity-miyazaki.jp/rentalen 32

### Kick back on sun-soaked Aoshima Beach

Enjoy fun and nature galore at this coastal Miyazaki resort

Aoshima Beach, just south of Miyazaki City, is Japan's paradise for surfers. Miyazaki, in eastern Kyushu and the far south-west of Japan, boasts balmy weather and postcard-worthy views of the blue Pacific waters. Set in this ideal location, Surf City Miyazaki offers a host of activities to entertain beachgoers of all stripes. In addition to the sublime surfing, there's also stand-up paddle boarding a popular choice for first-timers. It's also a haven for yoga enthusiasts, with instructors certified in a wide range of yoga schools leading classes in the studio, on the beach, or even right on the water! Go for a hike or trail run on one of the beach or mountain courses, and take in stunning ocean vistas and other delightful sights, including a Shinto shrine and Japanese torii gate right on Aoshima. All-comers can soak up a relaxed community vibe, with many shops and cafes open in the summer months.

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# Warm year-round and coral galore

Kushimoto and the Japan Current will delight all divers and snorkelers

In search of enticing and toasty-warm underwater surroundings? Then you should head to Kushimoto, right at the bottom of Wakayama prefecture. You may be surprised to hear that thanks to the Kuroshio, or 'Japan Current', the seawater here, the southernmost point of Japan's main island, Honshu, never goes below 15 degrees Celsius. This warmth is also what nourishes over 100 beautiful varieties of coral in the area and abundant marine life, from tiny inland sea species to the larger migratory fish in the open ocean. Fully PADI-affiliated, the Kushimoto Dive Station caters to all skill levels and is a stone's throw from Kushimoto Station. You can reach Kushimoto in under 4 hours from Tennoji, Osaka by the Limited Express Kuroshio.

#### **Kushimoto Dive Station**

串本ダイブステーション

• 642-1 Kushimoto-cho, Kushimoto, Higashimuro-gun, Wakayama • https://www.kushimoto.com/english.html







# Top-quality skiing at Niseko Hanazono

Find powdery slopes and quality accommodation in western Hokkaido

Few other resorts can rival Niseko in winter, blanketed by over 15 meters of light snow which means ideal winter sport conditions from December through April. Get a ski lesson with top-notch instructors, tackle the slopes yourself or hit the pistes in snowshoes or snowmobiles instead. If warmweather fun is more your thing, white water rafting, ducky, canyoning, road biking and golf offer more than enough to keep any summer visitors happy too. Once you've worked up an appetite, book yourself in for a memorable meal at hotel eatery Asperges, with a kitchen run by a Michelin-starred chef.

#### Hanazono Niseko

ニセコHANAZONOリゾート

Q 328-36 Aza-Iwaobetsu, Kutchan-cho, Abuta-Gun, Hokkaido





© Niseko HANAZONO Resort

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# Experience extreme fishing at your own private mountain stream

Whether veteran angler or first-timer – anyone can enjoy reeling in tasty native trout at these hidden fishing holes

Tucked away in the scenic forests of Niigata, these pristine waters are nearly untouched by human hand. Take our exclusive guided tour to access areas normally off-limits to visitors and cast your lure into rivers teeming with trout, a population combining both native and fishery-populated species alike. Enough fish to reach out and touch means noone need to worry about going home empty-handed. What's more, these are ideal conditions to kick back, close your eyes, breathe deeply and take in all Mother Nature's blessings. Be in no doubt, you'll return recharged and refreshed—and with plenty of tasty trout to cook up for dinner.

#### **HOME away from HOME Niigata**

株式会社 HOME away from HOME Niigata

O Matsudai, Tokamachi-shi, Niigata

https://homehome.jp/en/product/having-a-mountain-stream-all-to-yourself native trout febing/









# Learn to "mush" in Minakami

Enjoy a dog-sledding adventure in the Gunma mountains

While most winter resorts offer skiing and snowmobiling, Minakami Kogen is the only place in Honshu where you can try your hand at dog-sledding too. Meet your canine team, hook up your sled and learn how to mush, before they help you wend your way through the snowy wonderland of Gunma's mountains. Even elementary-school age students are welcome, making this a truly family-friendly activity. And if all that's not enough, you can also add snow rafting, airboard and crosscountry skiing to the mix. Finally, why not finish by unwinding in the resort's picturesque open-air bath, under the steadily falling snow?

#### Minakami Kogen Hotel 200

水 上高原ホテル200

• 6152-1 Fujiwara, Minakami-machi, Tone-gun, Gunma • https://www.minakamikogen200.jp/en/



© Minakami Tourism Association







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#### **Fuji Golf Course**

富士ゴルフコース

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# Golf with breathtaking views of Mt. Fuji

Japan's loveliest 18-hole course will delight beginners and low handicappers alike

Japan-bound golfers should look no further than here to get in a round, at the base of Japan's iconic Mt. Fuji. The course which opened in 1935, making it one of Japan's historic and prestigious, optimally exploits the natural terrain to serve up stunning sights and challenging rounds. Walk amidst majestic Japanese red pines as you play a truly memorable round surrounded by mountains, then relax and refresh in the hot spring. Round off your day with fine dining at the open-terrace restaurant, featuring seasonal cuisine and a fine selection of local Yamanashi wines, some of Japan's finest. All this only 80 minutes or so from central Tokyo by car.