Sightseeing Spot

Old Town

Old Town was a flourishing town since Takayama Jinya was established more than 300 years ago. Streets and main roads were established around castles, shrines and temples that contributed to the development of busy towns. Just like this important establishments like Takayama Jinya attracted many people too.

The district is beautifully preserved and designated as a Historically Significant Traditional Building Preservation Area. Even now only suitable architecture with brown and black color is permitted to be built or renovated so that it will not ruin the harmony of the place.

Town people used high grade timbers such as cypress, cedar and other trees for their houses even though these timbers were legally prohibited. They painted the timbers with soot so that the officials would not find and destroy them.

Takayama Jinya was a governmental office for higher-class samurai directly dispatched from Edo so there was a law that all local resident buildings must be lower than the gate roof of the Jinya so not to look down on authority. As a result, the building sides facing main streets are set lower.

Waterflow called “Samachiyousui” running through gutters on both sides of the streets was once used for households.

The upstair is called “rubbish upstair” as the height of the first floor was very low and this is one of the main characteristics of Takayama old townhouse architecture. Another characteristic is fire patterned latticed bay windows so that people cannot see inside.

Once you enter the house, you may notice a stairwell to let wind through the building as well as spacious tatami rooms. It is a very comfortable space. This is another good example that rich town people enjoyed luxury of their own despite of all restrictions from the authority just like use of high grade timbers for the houses.

Many old buildings are still in use today as sake warehouses, machiya cafes, restaurants and souvenir shops. When you visit the shops, you will enjoy not just merchandise but also the architecture.

10 minute walk from the Takayama Station to Old Town

Many shops and museums are located on the streets so walking is the best way to explore. Approximately two hours just for a walk, more than three hours for visiting buildings and museums is recommended.

What is there? What can we do?

You may lose track of time you spend by just walking down these beautiful historic streets. Activities include shopping for souvenirs, tasting sake, trying local delicacies such as soba noodles and visiting a number of small museums.

What is the painting of the horse displayed at shops and houses?

A long time ago, farmers dedicated religious paper plaques (kami ema) for the Matsuura Kannon which is located in southwest Takayama. They wished for the safety of their cows and horses, or for an abundant harvest of silkworm cocoon. Sometimes they brought their cattle to the Kannon for their safety. The ema market is where these paper plaques are sold.

People believe if you put a dedicated ema on the wall of a house entrance, your family will be prosperous and healthy.

The ema market is around the 9th and 10th of August at the Matsuura Kannon Temple, Yamazakura Shrine in Hon-machi 2 chome, Sogen Temple in the Higashiyama Teramachi.

Morning Markets

Two morning markets — the Jinya-mae Morning Market and the Miyagawa Morning Market — are among the town’s most popular attractions. These developed in the Edo period and were known for their rice, mulberry trees and flowers.

Hours: 6:00 am to noon (Apr. - Oct.)
7:00 am to noon (Nov. - Mar.)

Takayama Jinya

Takayama Jinya served as the government’s administrative office for the Hida area during the Edo period. It is the only remaining government office from that period in Japan. The building is open to the public.

Hours: 8:45 am to 5:00 pm (Mar. - Oct.) to 4:30 pm (Nov. - Feb.), 6:00 pm (Aug.); Closed: Dec. 29, 31 and Jan. 1; Admission: ¥400

Takayama Museum of Art

The museum building was once the storehouse of an old local family. It displays historical and traditional items and handicrafts of Takayama and is open all year round (with some temporary closings).

Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (exhibition room)
* The garden is open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
* There is a change by the season. Admission: Free

Kusakabe Heritage House

This building brings together many of the various characteristic features of merchant houses of the Edo period. It houses a variety of exhibits.

Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Mar. - Nov.), 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Dec. - Feb.), Closed: Tue. (Dec. - Feb.), Admission: ¥500

Yoshijima Heritage House

The beauty of the wood is shown in the wooden pillars and panel doors, as well as in the ornate carvings on the main pillar of the house and composed of beams (horizontal pillars) and posts (pillars perpendicular to the beams), with sunlight from the top window entering the house, and in the wooden pillars and panel doors.

Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Mar. - Nov.) 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Dec. - Feb.); Closed Tue. (Dec. - Feb.), when Tue. falls on a national holiday, it is open 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Dec. - Feb.) Admission: ¥500

Festival Floats Exhibition Hall & Sakuraya Nikko Kan

The Takayama Matsuri Yatai Kakan (Festival Floats Exhibition Hall) displays four of the 11 parade floats used in the autumn festival.

Sakuraya Nikko Kan exhibits an exact 1:10-scale replica of Nikko’s famous Toshogu Shrine.

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Mar. - Nov.), 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Dec. - Feb.) Admission: ¥800

Higashiyama Temple Area-Higashiyama Walking Course

In the eastern foothills, the Higashiyama Teramachi district contains many temples and shrines that offer a glimpse of the days when the Kanamori clan ruled over a castle town here. The temples and shrines are linked by scenic hiking trails.

Hida no Sato

Here you will find restorations of more than 30 typical old houses, relocated here from various places around the Hida area. Each house displays farming tools and everyday utensils. Hands-on lessons in skills such as straw-work and stitching are available, and various seasonal events can be enjoyed.

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission: ¥700

Yokoyama 2 floor 2 room 1
Okuhida Onsen-go hot spring villages

Okuhida Onsen-go hot spring villages near Takayama City are located in the middle of Japan, containing five hot spring areas and more than 140 open-air baths.

With a great panorama view of the North Alps, these hot springs warm up your body and soul.

Shin Hotaka Onsen

Shin Hotaka Onsen is the center of the Okuhida Onsen-go hot spring villages. The local tradition of Torigi is designated as important intangible cultural heritage by Gifu Prefecture. The village offers both a traditional onsen village stay and modern spa facilities.

Contact: 0578-89-2352
Shin Hirayu Onsen Tourism Association
Access: About 50 minute drive from JR Takayama Station

Shin Hotaka Ropeway

Tochio Onsen

Tochio Onsen is a small onsen village on the Kamatagawa River. From a communal open-air bath on the riverside, you will enjoy a great view of the river and surrounding nature. This onsen village is very popular among fishing-lovers.

Contact: 0578-89-2358
Tochio Onsen Information Center
Access: About 70 minute drive from JR Takayama Station

Shin Hotaka no Yu

Hirayu Onsen

Hirayu Onsen is the oldest onsen village in the region. There is a folk tale that a famous medieval warrior, Takeda Shingen, was led by a white old monkey and discovered it 450 years ago. During Edo period, many feudal lords stayed here to rest on the way to Edo.

Contact: 0578-89-3030
Hirayu Onsen Tourism Association
Access: About 50 minute drive from JR Takayama Station

Hirayu otakai

Fukui Onsen

Fukui Onsen is a onsen village nestled deep in the mountains with a very nostalgic atmosphere. There are many accommodations with Japanese hearts, and guests can use “Nobukosui ticket” pass which allows them to visit different onsen among those facilities.

Contact: 0578-89-2458
Okuhida Onsen-go hot spring villages Information Center
Access: About 55 minute drive from JR Takayama Station
### Event Calendar

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### Local Speciality Food

- **Sake**
  - Hida sake is known for its high quality and craftsmanship. It is made from local rice and high-malt content, providing a unique taste.

- **Hida Beef**
  - Hida beef is from the Hida region, known for its tender and juicy texture. It is often used in traditional dishes like beef donburi or sukiyaki.

- **Hooba Miso**
  - Hooba miso is a unique miso paste made from the Hooba fruit, which is native to Hida. It has a distinct flavor and is often used in local dishes.

- **Sticky Rice Flour Ball Dipped in Syrup**
  - These sweet treats are made from sticky rice flour and are dipped in a syrup made from sweetener and sake, giving them a soft and chewy texture.

- **Sakurabuta**
  - Sakurabuta is a type of pork raised in Hida, known for its rich flavor and tender meat. It is often used in local dishes like onigiri or sashimi.

### Local Specialty Products

- **Sarubobo Doll**
  - These dolls are made from traditional materials and are known for their intricate designs and craftsmanship.

- **Lacquerware (Hida Syunkei)**
  - Lacquerware from Hida Syunkei is famous for its delicate and intricate designs, often featuring natural motifs.

### Furniture

- **Woven Baskets**
  - Hand-woven baskets are a traditional craft in the Hida region, often made from local materials like straw and bamboo.

- **Wooden Carving (ichi-ro-bo)**
  - Traditional wooden carvings are made from local woods, featuring intricate designs and skilled craftsmanship.

### Local Activities

- **Sake Festival**
  - Local sake brewers often host festivals showcasing their products, where visitors can taste different varieties of sake.

- **Mushroom Hunting**
  - The Hida region is known for its rich forests, where visitors can enjoy mushroom hunting during the fall season.

- **Sakura Viewing**
  - Cherry blossom viewing is a popular activity in Hida, especially during the spring season.