**Central & East Area**

Home of Omiya, the prefecture’s premier shopping destination, and dotted with tourist spots for art and Japanese culture. Have fun in the city!

**Chichibu & North Area**

Chichibu Area and the North Area are full of excitement. Refresh the soul in magnificent natural beauty of Chichibu and Nagatoro, and taste local dishes of the North Area that have been developed independently.

**West Area**

The West Area has a historic feel, highlighted by streets with kurazukuri-style houses. Come take a trip through Edo period townscapes and vintage Showa period settings!
Visit Saitama Prefecture, where you can experience the past and present of Japan!

The Chichibu Area and North Area are full of the appeal of rich nature, the West Area is where you can feel the atmosphere of Japan, and the Central Area and East Area are a fusion of city and nature. Experience Japanese history and culture in Saitama Prefecture, which is full of attractions!

Chichibu & North Area

This popular area is accessible from the city, featuring historic townscapes in Chichibu and beautiful forest and streams in Nagatoro. Come here to enjoy nature firsthand!

Experience Nature

Shibazakura Hill in Hitsujiyama Park overlooks the streets of Chichibu. With a backdrop of Chichibu’s symbol Mt. Buko, more than 400,000 of 9 varieties of shibazakura flowers bloom on the vast expanses of Shibazakura Hill.

Shibazakura Hill, the Carpet of Flowers

Shibazakura Hill in Hitsujiyama Park overlooks the streets of Chichibu. With a backdrop of Chichibu’s symbol Mt. Buko, more than 400,000 of 9 varieties of shibazakura flowers bloom on the vast expanses of Shibazakura Hill.

- Shibazakura Hill
  - Address: 6360 Omiya, Chichibu City, Saitama (Hitsujiyama Park)
  - Hours: 8:00-17:00 (Fees required time) Flower season [Mid-Apr. to early May]
  - Entry fee: ¥300 (Adult)
  - Approx. 20 min. walk from Yokoze Sta. on Seibu Chichibu Line or approx. 20 min. walk from Chichibu Railway Ohanabatake Sta.

You can eat such local dishes as butamisodon (miso pork over rice) in this area.
Nagatoro Valley has been a popular spot for its scenery since long ago. Taking a traditional boat down the river with gorgeous views of the Iwadatami rock terraces on one side and the grand Chichibu Sekiheki red cliff on the other is a Nagatoro tourist mainstay.

The Paleo Express is a steam locomotive with service on the Chichibu Railway. The tranquil views from the train window are worth it.

Nagatoro River Boating

The Icicles of Ashigakubo

Icicles are formed here by the severe cold. For a certain period of time, they are all illuminated during weekends, creating a fantastical world. Enjoy a space made up of the art of light and ice!

Fifteen million Shirley Poppies grow at an elevation of 500 meters on the Chichibu Kogen Farm. The red from the vast fields of the flowers makes the skies feel even bluer.

Minane

A spot with illuminated ice. It’s great to go in the winter!

Fun white water rafting also available!

Poppy-Filled Hills Color the Skies

Poppy Festival is held on weekends during the peak season.

* Operating period: Mar. to early Jan.
* Nagatoro River boating is available from Mar. 6th to Mar. 15th.
* Boat service availability subject to weather and river conditions.

Nagatoro 2949-1 Oaza-Sakamoto, Higashi Chichibu-mura, Chichibu-gun, Saitama 0494-62-1462 (Poppy Festival Organizing Committee)
09:00-18:00 (Mid-May to early June)
Entrance fee Weekday ¥500, Sat. & Sun. ¥600 (Adult)
Approx. 20 min. by shuttle bus of fee from Chichibu Railway Minano Sta. (Minano Line)
Chichibu & North Area

More Places to Enjoy Nature

Mandarin orange picking, with 400 years of history みかん狩り

Yorii is one of the northernmost areas growing mandarin oranges in Japan, with a history spanning back over 400 years. During the orange season, many hikers visit the orange orchards to pick fruit.

Yorii

Fujiwara & Kobayashi area of Yorimachi, Osato-gun, Saitama

9:00-17:00 (late Oct. to mid-Dec., closed due to weather)

Entrance fee ¥700 (pickling and take-home orange) orange 3 oranges ¥200

Appriox. 30-40 min. walk from Chichibu Railway Hagure Sta.

http://yoriikanko.jp/technology/yoriikin/index.html

Eat fresh-picked mandarin oranges straight from the tree!

Waterfall in Chichibu is one of the must-see spots ?

Free volunteer guides available.

A Touch of History

Shodendo Hall is the main hall of Menuma Kangiin Shodenzan Temple with brilliantly-colored, ornate carvings. Come see the masterful carving technique which earned the hall its designation as a national treasure in July of 2012 and is said to be the pinnacle of early modern decorative architecture.

Menuma Kangiin Shodenzan Temple Shodendo Hall Designated National Treasure

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Look at all the snacks!

**West Area**

**Walk the Streets of Koedo**

Featuring streets where kurazukuri-style houses stand in a row, the Kawagoe area has the feel of a castle town. Enjoy a leisurely stroll through Kawagoe, dotted with historic and cultural tourist spots.

**Time Bell Tower, 時の鐘**

**Symbol of Koedo (Traditional Town)**

The Time Bell Tower is a symbol of Kawagoe, conspicuously towering over the streets with kurazukuri-style houses. Heraldising to the days of the early Edo period, when it was used to tell time in the castle town of Kawagoe, the townspeople have grown fond of this bell tower.

To this day, the tower still keeps time and sounds four times a day. To this day, the tower still keeps time and sounds four times a day.

**Kawagoe Hikawa Shrine, 川越氷川神社**

**Home to a God of Matchmaking**

Kawagoe Hikawa Shrine is a popular tourist destination known for being home to a god of matchmaking. The towering large vermilion torii gate on the approach to the shrine is one of the largest wooden torii gates in Japan.

The Sakurasaku Omamori charm is a popular souvenir.

**Kawagoe Festival Museum**

Museum conveying the excitement and high spirits of Kawagoe Festival.

Kawagoe Festival is a nationally designated important intangible folk cultural property. Come visit Kawagoe Festival Museum to see how the culture has developed over the festival’s more than 360-year history, adding Kawagoe-specific features.

The Sakurasaku Omamori charm is a popular souvenir.

**Kita-in Temple**

**喜多院**

**Housing Numerous Important Cultural Properties**

Built in 830, Kawaoge Daishi Kita-in Temple has numerous nationally designated important cultural properties and buildings on its grounds, including the birthplace of Iemitsu Tokugawa and the powder room of Kasuga-no-Tsubone.

Take a walk through Kashiya Yokocho (Penny Candy Alley) and sample various cheap snacks ♪

A Touch of History at 川越まつり会館

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The Sakurasaku Omamori charm is a popular souvenir.

Also come to see the 500 Rakan statues!
Plenty of Other Sites!

**Kinchakuda**, one of Japan’s biggest red spider lily fields

Located in the forest around Heirinji Temple, Suisokuken no Mori, it is a 5.5-hectare grounds that is one of Japan's largest groups of the flower with 5 million bulbs. Open 365 days. Located in the forest around Heirinji Temple, Suisokuken no Mori Ranzan Valley, designed by the serpentine route of the Koma River, is beautiful through all four seasons. Known in particular for its red spider lilies in autumn, approx. 1.3 thousand red spider lilies bloom. Named for its resemblance to Arashiyama in Kyoto, the charm of Ranzan Valley is best enjoyed in autumn. The tranquility and pleasant air invite you to take a stroll down the well-maintained promenade. Popular attractions include a washi paper demonstration tour and a washi papermaking experience tour. Doubling as the Ogawamachi Roadside Station, the local products section of the center also offers shopping for local vegetables, snacks, handicrafts and more. Come here to try Zen meditation and get in touch with traditional Japan.

**Learn about traditional culture at Suisokuken no Mori**

Located in the forest around Heirinji Temple, Suisokuken no Mori (scenic area) once lied on the grounds of the Yasuzaemon Matsunaga, also known as the great tea master Jian in the Showa era. Since lent to the city free of charge, it has been opened as a place for learning about traditional Japanese culture.

**Hand Papermaking Experience at Saitama Craft Center**

Hand Papermaking Experience at Saitama Craft Center

Popular attractions include a washi paper demonstration tour and a washi papermaking experience tour. Doubling as the Ogawamachi Roadside Station, the local products section of the center also offers shopping for local vegetables, snacks, handicrafts and more.

**Washi no Sato**

Hand Papermaking and Seasonal Views

Visitors can take a tour to see approx. 1,300-year-old traditional methods for hand-making washi paper, or try for themselves. Also, take a soothing walk through the courtyard of the thatched roof papermaking house and take in the seasonal views.

**Ranzan Valley, with Beautiful Kyoto-like Views**

Named for its resemblance to Arashiyama in Kyoto, the charm of Ranzan Valley is best enjoyed in autumn. The tranquility and pleasant air invite you to take a stroll down the well-maintained promenade.

**Extraordinary experiences await!**

**Yasuragi Peace House**

Experience and interact with a rural village house

This facility is more than 100 years old private house relocated and reconstructed into a hall for experiencing and interacting with rural life. Visitors can either make their own udon noodles (reservation required), or just purchase meals.

**Naguri Canoe Atelier**

Enjoy paddling wooden canoes made at this atelier on Lake Naguri. Forget your daily troubles in the quiet lake of Lake Naguri, surrounded by tranquil mountains under blue skies.

**Experience and interact with a rural village house**

Enjoy paddling wooden canoes made at this atelier on Lake Naguri. Forget your daily troubles in the quiet lake of Lake Naguri, surrounded by tranquil mountains under blue skies.

**Grills for barbecuing also available!**
Look at all the stylish women!

Pick up that souvenir or other items you’re looking for here.

Omiya is called a shopping paradise, with Lumine Omiya which connected directly to the station and Omiya Rakuun, a commercial facility.

Central & East Area

Downtown Saitama City

The Saitama City Area is full of spots for shopping, arts, and Japanese culture. It offers the refinement as only city can!

Saitama Prefecture’s Premier Shopping Destination

Omiya

Omiya is called a shopping paradise, with Lumine Omiya which connected directly to the station and Omiya Rakuen, a commercial facility.

The Omiya Bonsai Art Museum, Saitama

Next to the celebrated bonsai village

Showcases tree pots, viewing stones, painting materials, historic materials and more with a focus on bonsai trees. The 8th World Bonsai Convention in Saitama is also scheduled in 2017 at the museum as a sub-venue.

The Omiya Bonsai Art Museum, Saitama

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Showcases tree pots, viewing stones, painting materials, historic materials and more with a focus on bonsai trees. The 8th World Bonsai Convention in Saitama is also scheduled in 2017 at the museum as a sub-venue.

Ruins restored at

Iwatsuki Joshi Park

The castle grounds are full of color, with cherry blossoms in spring and Yatsushari Bridge, a vermilion bridge stretching across an iris pond. There are events held year round, including a cherry blossom festival, Nagashibina, the doll memorial celebration, and more.

Many lively events are held here.

Drive a train at

THE RAILWAY MUSEUM!

Features exhibitions on Japan’s railway heritage and resources, as well as actual train carriages, parts, and models, hands-on workshops on railway history, fundamentals, structure and more.

Railcar and steam locomotive engine simulators available!
Outside the City

Kawaguchi Autorace
Largest motorcycle racing track
Kawaguchi Autorace is the largest among the 6 racing tracks in Japan. Come and feel the exhilarating races with motorcycles roaring, sprinting at speed of 150 km/h!

Washinomiya Shrine
Kanto's oldest grand shrine
Kanto’s oldest grand shrine has been well protected by powerful supporters in each period, with the Kamakura shogunate rebuilding the main building and the Tokugawa shogunate contributing 400 koku to the shrine.

Remains of Oshijo Castle
Once called one of Kanto’s 7 greatest castles
Built in Bunmei era of Muromachi period, Oshijo Castle earned a reputation as a floating fortress when it withstood an attack at the end of the Sengoku period in the subjugation of the Kanto region by Hideyoshi Toyotomi.

View

Kawaguchi Autorace
Capacity for 44,000!

Historical Tours

As seen in the anime Lucky Star!

Remains of Oshijo Castle

Washinomiya Shrine

View

Flower Park with a wide spread of flowers

View

Sate Gongendo cherry embankment, scenic spot in Sate

View

Central & East Area

Park Walks

The Wisteria in Ushijima
National Special Natural Plant
It is a giant violet tree, famous for being very big and blooming more than 1,088 years, admired as the No. 1 in the world. The flower clusters in full bloom may reach as much as 2 meters, and the beautiful wisteria purple of the flowers are fascinating.

View

View

Kasukabe Information Center

This is a facility that provides information on the appeal of the city of Kasukabe. Visitors can learn about tourism, events, city government and more. There is also a section featuring Crayon Shin-chan, who serves as a guide to the town, so feel free to stop in.

View

View

Flower Garden

Remains of Ushijima

Kamakura Shogunate rebuilding the main building and 4,800 rose bushes

View

Big Bonsai Road

View

Soka Matsubara Promenade
National scenic beauty place of “Oku no Hosomichi”

View

Sakura Matsubara Promenade
National scenic beauty place of “Oku no Hosomichi”

View

View

Scenic spot in Satte

Scenic spot in Satte

View

View

View

View

View

View

View

View

View

View
In a prefecture offering both natural and urban sites, each area of Saitama has developed its own regional cuisine. Here is a selection of 4 great dishes!

**Local Dishes**

**Ogano**

**Warajikatsu**  わらじかつ
A Chichibu specialty
Beloved by the locals, this katsudon dish features two large deep-fried pork cutlets atop a bowl of rice. This specialty combines the crisp, juicy pork cutlets in a secret recipe sauce.

**Kawagoe**

**Unagi**  うなぎ料理
A Kawagoe specialty
Being surrounded by rivers, the specialty in Kawagoe is unagi, or freshwater eel. The unagi is well marbled with a soft texture that you have to try at least once. There are numerous long-established unagi restaurants in Kawagoe City that date back to Edo times.

**Higashi-matsuyama**

**Yakitori (pork)**  豚のカシラ肉
Slow-cooked over a charcoal grill
The famous yakitori (pork) of Higashi-matsuyama is an original recipe of skewered meat of pig’s head, slowly and carefully grilled over charcoal fire. It is served with a spicy miso sauce, which combination is exquisite! Try it once, and you’ll be hooked.

**Koma-nabe Hotpot**  高座渕
Healthy cuisine with local vegetables
This local dish was created to commemorate the 1,300-year anniversary of the establishment of the former Koma County. Required ingredients are kimchi, locally grown vegetables from Hidaka, and ginseng.

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**Hands-on Experience**

Saitama offers plenty of opportunities to get in touch with Japanese culture and nature! Get a more intimate look at Japan by trying on some traditional dress, baking sembei crackers, and many more cultural experiences.

**Local Experience**

Local Dishes

- Ogano: Warajikatsu (Soka Sembei Ikedaya)
  - Address: 4-1-40 Yoshicho, Soka City, Saitama
  - Tel: 048-922-2061
  - Operating Hours: 10:00-16:00
  - Baking experience ¥300 (small children must be accompanied by parents or guardian)
  - Approx. 7 min. walk from Yatsuka Sta. on Tobu Skytree Line
  - Website: soka-senbei.jp/free/taiken

- Kawagoe: Warajikatsu
  - Address: 220 Nagaru, Oganomachi, Chichibu-gun, Saitama (Chichibu Furusatomura)
  - Tel: 0494-75-4065
  - Operating Hours: 9:00-18:00 [Reservation required]
  - Soba making experience ¥2,300
  - Ride a bus for approx. 25 min. from Chichibu Railway Chichibu Sta., get off at Matsuida bus stop and walk approx. 5 min.
  - Website: www.chichibufurusatomura.co.jp

- Higashi-matsuyama: Yakitori (pork)
  - Address: 17-23 Honmaru, Gyoda City, Saitama (Gyoda City Folk Museum)
  - Tel: 048-554-5911
  - Operating Hours: 9:00-16:30 (Last admission: 16:00) [Apr. to June, Oct. to Nov.]
  - Sun. & Hol.: 13:00-16:00
  - Entrance fee ¥200 (Adult), Armor wearing experience available for free (visitors to the museum only)
  - Approx. 15 min. walk from Chichibu Railway Gyodashi Sta.
  - Website: www.city.gyoda.lg.jp/kyouiku/iinkai/sisetu/hakubutukan.html

- Koma-nabe Hotpot
  - Address: 14-5 Saiwaicho, Kawagoe City, Saitama
  - Tel: 0494-23-3557 (Chichibu Tourism Forest and Agriculture Association)
  - Operating Hours: Vary by farm
  - Website: www.cknk.jp

Hands-on Experience

- Ogano: Unagi with the perfect combination of eel and sweet sauce!

- Kawagoe: Have your picture taken in a kimono!

- Gyoda: Try on surprisingly heavy samurai armor!

- Others:
  - Try farmwork with fruit picking.
  - Bake your own Soka sembei crackers, the local specialty.
  - Learn the art of making soba noodles.
Saitama, abundant in nature, allows you to experience the four seasons. From flowers that create an atmosphere, Plum and Wisteria, to richly colored autumn leaves, there's a spectacular scenery in every season.

### CALENDAR

**March and April**

- **Kurome River (Asaka)**
  - Cherry blossoms in full bloom in the spring is worth seeing.
  - The sight of the Kurome River reflecting the colors of the row of cherry trees and rape blossoms in full bloom is an enjoyable activity.
  - Promenade along the river is an enjoyable activity.

- **Cherry blossoms at Gongendo (Satte)**
  - Full bloom: Late Mar. to early Apr.

- **Safflower (Okegawa)**
  - Full bloom: Mid-May to early June

- **Tree peony (Higashi-matsuyama)**
  - Full bloom: Mid-Apr. to early May

**May and June**

- **One of Japan's largest tree peony park
  - Higashi-matsuyama**
  - Full bloom: Mid-Apr. to early May

- **Cherry blossoms along Kurome River (Asaka)**
  - Full bloom: Early June to late June

- **Shibazakura (Chichibu)**
  - Full bloom: Mid-Apr. to early May

- **Wisteria (Kasukabe)**
  - Full bloom: Late Mar. to early Apr.

**September**

- **A safflower field in Okegawa**
  - Full bloom: Mid-June to early May

**October**

- **Iris and Lavender**
  - Full bloom: Early June to late June

**November**

- **Jomine Park**
  - Where rare light crimson winter cherry blossoms bloom
  - A park that features full facilities such as camping grounds, a restaurant, souvenir shop, barbecue area and viewing deck in addition to blooming seasonal flowers, making it perfect for families to enjoy.

**Ranzan Valley**

- **Ranzan**
  - Where rare light crimson winter cherry blossoms bloom
  - A park that features full facilities such as camping grounds, a restaurant, souvenir shop, barbecue area and viewing deck in addition to blooming seasonal flowers, making it perfect for families to enjoy.

- **Ranzan**
  - Full bloom: Early Jan. to late Feb.

**Higashi-matsuyama**

- **Shibazakura**
  - Hill carpeted with Shibazakura
  - Full bloom: Mid-Apr. to early May

- **Higashi-matsuyama**
  - Tree peony (Higashi-matsuyama)
  - Full bloom: Mid-Apr. to early May

**Asaka**

- **Kurome River (Asaka)**
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  - Promenade along the river is an enjoyable activity.

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  - Full bloom: Early Jan. to late Feb.
**EVENT**

**Chichibu**

**Chichibu Yomatsuri, Night Festival**

One of Japan’s top 3 hikiyama (float) festivals. Counted as one of Japan’s 3 great float festivals along with Gion Festival in Kyoto and Takayama Festival in Hida. It is the Big Annual Festival of Chichibu Shrine, which enshrines several gods from the Chichibu region of Saitama Prefecture, and has a history of more than 300 years.

Dates: 3rd Sat. & Sun. of Aug.

**Kawagoe**

**Kawagoe Festival**

Luxurious floats are pulled around all day long, and when they pass (traditional Japanese orchestra) musical battle known as “hikkawase”. This is a festival in which 250 large, handmade lanterns are floated in the Furutone River. A belt of light from the lanterns completely fills about 1 kilometer of the river’s surface. That wondrous scene has a beauty like that of the Milky Way.

Dates: Mid-Feb. to early Mar.

**Kamagaya**

**Kumagaya Fan Festival**

A passionate festival

Dates: July 20 to 22

**Konosu**

**Konosu Doll Festival**

Featuring Japan’s tallest hina doll pyramid

The platform with 1,830 Hina dolls is the highlight!

Dates: Jan. 1, 2 & 3

**Sagito**

**The Furutone River Floating Lantern Festival**

Features wondrous scenery

Dates: Annually on Sat. & Sun. in early Aug.

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Full of interesting events, such as Saitama’s three Night Festival”, “Kawagoe Festival” and “Kumagaya Fan Festival”.

**Kanajwa**

**Kanasana Shrine**

is lively during the Japanese New Year and the daruma doll fair.

Dates: Jan. 1, 2 & 3

This shrine is said to have been founded by Yamato Takeru during his eastern expedition. Mt. Mimuro and the area around it behind the hall of worship are enshrined as a deity. During the first three days of the new year, a great many people make their first shrine visit of the year at Kanasana Shrine and Daikofusho-ji Temple (Kanasana Daish). Many visit them for the daruma doll fair.

Dates: Jan. 1, 2 & 3

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Enjoying many types of dance is one of the best parts!

The scenery of the sunset and floating lanterns is breathtakingly beautiful!
### Special train and bus deals!

**For Kawagoe**

**SEIBU Rail Pass**
Discount round-trip passes between Seibu-Shinjuku Sta. or Takadanobaba Sta. and Hon-Kawagoe Sta. on sale.
SEIBU Railway
[www.seibu-group.co.jp/railways/tourist/english/](http://www.seibu-group.co.jp/railways/tourist/english/)

**KA WAGOE DISCOUNT PASS**
Special discount round-trip passes from Ikebukuro Sta. to Kawagoe Sta. or Kawagoe City Sta.
TOBU Railway

**For Saitama City**

**TOKYO Wide Pass**
Ride freely on JR Shinkansen, limited express, express, local trains, etc. within Kanto area for 3 days.
East Japan Railway
[www.jreast.co.jp/e/](http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/)

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### Tourist offices by area

#### Saitama City

**Omiya Tourist Information Center**
4-30 Nishikicho, Omiya-ku, Saitama City, Saitama
048-644-1144
9:00-18:00 (Tourist association staff’s normal working hours: 10:00-18:30, with break from 13:30-14:30)
Inside JR Omiya Sta.  [www.stib.jp/e/](http://www.stib.jp/e/)

#### Kawagoe

**Kawagoe City Kawagoe Station Tourist Information Office**
24-9 Wakitamachi, Kawagoe City, Saitama
049-222-5556 9:00-17:00
Near the Tojo Line ticket gate in Kawagoe Sta. on JR Kawagoe Line and Tobu Tojo Line
[www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/spot/tc/kawagoe_city.html](http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/spot/tc/kawagoe_city.html)

#### Chichibu

**Chichibu Tourist Information Center**
1-16-15 Nosakamachi, Chichibu City, Saitama
0494-21-2277
[www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/spot/tc/chichibu_city.html](http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/spot/tc/chichibu_city.html)

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*This publication is current as of January 2016.*
*The prices listed in this brochure include tax.*