Kinosaki Onsen

Kinosaki Onsen is located in Toyooka city, to the northwest of Kyoto. It is famous for its seven public hot springs and tradition of wearing yukata. Nearby is the historic town of Izushi, home to a three-hundred-year-old castle. There is so much traditional Japanese scenery and culture in this one area, why don’t you come and discover it for yourself?
In Kinosaki Onsen, an atmosphere of the good old days still remains. Here, you can experience true Japanese culture. Stay at a traditional Japanese inn called a ryokan and enjoy a Japanese-style course dinner. Or slip on a comfortable yukata (light cotton kimono) and stroll around the town enjoying the quaint traditional stores or the hot springs.

Traditional Wooden Ryokan

There are only a few traditional style onsen towns which retain the look and atmosphere of old Japan left in the country. In the central area of Kinosaki Onsen, there are no modern large hotels, and the beautiful townscape of old times is preserved.
The Town is One *Ryokan*, the Station is Its Entrance

*Kinosaki has been welcoming tourists as one town since old times with the mentality that “the whole town is a *ryokan*: the station is the entrance, the *ryokans* are the guest rooms, the hot springs are the baths, and the streets are the hallways.” Everyone can relax in a *yukata*, even outside because after all, the streets are the hallways of one big *ryokan*!*

---

**Yukata Rental**

At the *ryokans* of Kinosaki Onsen, yukatas are lent for free to guests staying for the night. The *ryokan* staff will show you how to put one on, and will offer tips for wearing it while walking around the town. There is one shop which provides yukata rental services for day trip visitors.
The History of Kinosaki Onsen

It is said that the hot spring waters of Kinosaki were discovered in between 629-641, when an oriental white stork was seen healing its wounds in the waters. But the official history of the town doesn’t start until the Nara period (710-794). According to the record, Kinosaki’s waters were discovered by a priest named Dochi Shonin. He received a vision from a god, and after praying for a thousand days, waters sprang from the ground.

In the old times, people who came to Kinosaki to visit the hot springs for health reasons had to go to Onsenji Temple, the main temple of Kinosaki, first. There, after paying their respects to the spirit of Dochi Shonin, they received a wooden ladle, were taught the manners of bathing and then they could go to the public hot springs. The ladle was a substitute for the sacred hands of Dochi Shonin.

Also, the town of Kinosaki has been loved by many writers and artists for so long. Among them was the great writer Naoya Shiga who wrote a book titled “At Kinosaki” describing his time in Kinosaki in 1913, which lead to the town becoming even more well known nationally.

Straw Craft

Straw craft, which is known as “mugiwara zaiku” originated in Kinosaki Onsen. Around in 1720, its history began when a craftsman named Hahhichi came to convalesce in Kinosaki. During his stay, he started to stick colored straw to flutes and spinning tops and sold them for his lodging expenses.

Straw craft crossed the country when a doctor Philipp Franz von Siebold visited Japan from the Duch government in 1823, and returned to the country with a collection of Japanese artworks, in which Kinosaki straw craft was included, currently being preserved in Europe.

The straw craft technique has been handed down for generations. It takes the process of bleaching, dying, cutting, and spreading. Different-colored stripes of straw are attached to make basic patterns. By sliding into horizontal thin strips, and changing the positions slightly, beautiful and distinctive patterns stand out. Today, Kinosaki is the only place in Japan producing traditional straw crafts, with a various pieces of postcards, fans, key chains, boxes, and so on. Making straw crafts can be experienced at the Kinosaki Straw Craft Museum.
Kyoto and Himeji - both home to World Heritage Sites - are two of the most popular tourist spots in Japan. Kinosaki is easily accessible from both cities. After visiting Kyoto and Himeji, we invite you to come experience traditional Japan in Kinosaki.

**JR-WEST RAIL PASS**
A convenient and affordable rail pass for visitors to Japan. With this pass, tourists can take unlimited rides on JR trains in Western Japan. For more information on which pass would suit you best, please see the following JR website:
Yukata Village Kinosaki Onsen

Many visitors enjoy walking around this traditional town and visiting the public hot springs while dressed in a yukata.

Highlight
Onsen
(Hot Spring Baths)

In Kinosaki Onsen, there are 7 public hot springs called sotouy. Each sotouy has its own distinct atmosphere and style. If you haven’t tried onsen yet, come to Kinosaki Onsen and experience the ultimate relaxation and comfort.

YUMEPa

Visitors staying at a local ryokan get a free pass called YUMEPa to visit the sotouy as many times as wanted until 10 a.m. of their checkout day. There is also a one day ticket available for day trip visitors. It can be purchased at any of the sotouy from the ticket machine.
Onsenji Temple

Founded by Doci Shonin in 738, Onsenji Temple was named by Emperor Shomu and designated guardian temple of Kinosaki Onsen. It is located halfway up Mt. Daishi.

Access

Get off at the middle station of the Kinosaki Onsen Ropeway.

Mt. Daishi

The view from Mt. Daishi received one star in the Michelin Green Guide Japan.

Access

Get off at the top station of the Kinosaki Onsen Ropeway.

Strolling Around Kinosaki at Night

The real pleasure of staying in Kinosaki is to take a walk at night. Most of the public hot springs are open until 11 p.m. Some shops are open until around 10 p.m. You can look for souvenirs or relax at a cafe or a bar. You can even try your luck at shateki (Japanese shooting game). How about taking an evening stroll in your yukata, clip clapping your way down the streets in geta (wooden clogs)?

Shateki (Japanese shooting game)
There is a free shuttle bus to each ryokan from JR Kinosaki Onsen station.
※ The actual bus may differ from the photo.
Izushi Castle Town

Izushi is accessible within a hour by bus from Kinosaki Onsen. It prospered as a castle town during the Edo period. Sights related to samurai families such as the chief retainer’s residence and the entrance gate still exist today. The central area is designated as a national area of importance for the preservation of traditional buildings.

Highlight  Eirakukan

Built in 1901, it is the oldest theater building in Japan that is still standing at the same place it was built. Various performances such as kabuki, kyogen, and rakugo are performed even today since its restoration in 2008. Take a tour and get a behind the scenes look at the stage, dressing rooms and more. Unique Japanese theater mechanisms such as a revolving stage, trap cellar, actor’s road and a small elevator hidden in actor’s road are some of the interesting attractions.

Highlight  Izushi Castle Ruins

The ruins of a castle built in 1604 by a samurai of the Sengoku period named Koide. Elements such as the wooden bridge used by samurai have been recreated. If you go up the impressive entrance path lined with torii gates, you will reach the Inari Shrine which sits at the foot of Arikoyama Mountain and provides a nice, expansive view of Izushi.
Sukyoji Temple

A zen temple that served as the family temple for the lord of Izushi Castle. It is the quasi-head temple of Kyoto’s Daitokuji branch of the Rinzai school of Japanese zen in Tajima. The temple was restored by Takuan Osho, a priest famous for influencing swordsmen like Yagyū Munenori and Miyamoto Musashi. Besides having a look around the garden, you can experience* zazen meditation at a real Zen meditation hall. *Advanced reservation required.

Izushi Sara Soba

Izushi is a soba (buckwheat noodle) town about 50 soba shops. If you plan to have lunch at Izushi, soba is a must. Generally, soba in Japan is served in a large dish. But Izushi Sara Soba is served in small portions in small plates. Enjoy a variety of tastes by using many types of seasonings. The seasonings served differ with shops. It might be fun to visit 2 or more places. There are also delicious Japanese confectioners in Izushi, so after you had soba, what about enjoying some sweets?

Other tourist spots

Takeno Beach

Beautiful beach by the Sea of Japan. Just 1 station away from JR Kinosaki Onsen.

Genbudo Cave

Caves formed from the cooled lava of a volcano which erupted 1.6 million years ago.

Hyogo Park of the Oriental White Stork

At this park, discover how Toyooka City brought the Oriental White Stork back from extinction.

Kei Beach

The nearest beach to Kinosaki Onsen. A popular spot in summer.
Cherry blossom trees illuminated by paper lanterns and snowscape in winter. The town is full of charm.

Spring

Cherry blossoms in Kinosaki Onsen

Autumn

Sea of clouds at Mt. Kuruhi

Red leaves in Tanto
in spring, fireworks in summer, red leaves in autumn, no matter which season you visit.
**Food & Drink**

Washoku (traditional Japanese cooking) was recently registered in UNESCO’s list of intangible Cultural Heritage. At most ryokans in Kinosaki Onsen, traditional washoku meals are served for both dinner and breakfast.

**Matsuba Crab**

The best winter food of Kinosaki Onsen is the local snow crab, referred to as the “Matsuba Crab” in this region. The crabs unloaded at Tsulyama Port near Kinosaki are especially high-quality and have become their own brand name, “Tsulyama Crab”.

**Tajima Beef**

Kobe Beef is a world famous luxury food. The stock cattle of Kobe Beef are cows bred in the Tajima region of Hyogo prefecture, which includes Kinosaki. Be sure to enjoy the high-quality taste of Tajima Beef while you are visiting Kinosaki!

**Japanese Sake**

The world famous Japanese alcoholic beverage, brewed from rice. The quality of sake depends a lot on the rice quality and on the toji, or brewer’s skills. Don’t miss a chance to try the many excellent sake of Tajima where many skilled brewers reside.

**Stork Natural Rice**

Rice is a staple food for Japanese people, so it is no wonder why so many different types exist. Toyooka City is the producer of an especially tasty rice known as “Konotori Rice”. It is named after the Oriental White Stork which is the symbol of the city. To restore the storks to the region, environmentally friendly cultivation techniques are used, which makes a delicious rice.
Information

Where to go

Kinosaki Onsen Tourist Information
SOZORO

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact
the tourist information in Kinosaki Onsen.
English-speaking staff is available.
Open daily 8:45 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Services: free-wifi, rental bicycles, coffee, souvenirs,
optional local tours, computer use, bus tickets,
currency exchange (USD, EUR, TWD, CNY, HKD, THB)
Tel : +81-796-32-0013
E-mail : info@kinosaki-info.com
HP : http://global.kinosaki-info.com/

Using the buses

ZENTAN GREEN PASS

Once you have arrived, buses are a convenient way to access the
many sites around Kinosaki Onsen. The Zentan Green Pass is a
one day pass for foreign tourists (residents & students excluded).

Price

500 yen (valid for printed day only)

Valid bus routes

In Kinosaki Onsen and surrounding areas
(excluding express & community buses)

Sold

SOZORO

How to Use

When purchasing: please show your passport and a document
to prove that you are a temporary visitor (return trip air ticket,
Itinerary, etc.).

Foreign Money Exchange

International ATM Service of
Japan Post Office Bank

You can draw cash at all Japan Post Bank ATMs
in the country using your credit card or cash card
issued by financial institutions overseas.

Seven Bank

A Seven Bank ATM is placed in the
corner of the souvenir shop located
inside the JR Kinosaki Onsen station.

Tajima Shinkin Bank

Purchased Currency • USD

Tajima Bank

• USD

• EUR

* For exchange rates, please contact the bank counter.
* You will be asked for your identification, such as your passport (with address written).
Access to Kinosaki Onsen

From Kyoto-JR limited express train: 2 h 30 min
From Osaka-JR limited express train: 2 h 40 min
   Zentan Express bus: 3 h
From Kobe-JR limited express train: 2 h 30 min
   Zentan Express bus: 3 h
From Himeji-JR limited express train: 1 h 40 min

www.westjr.co.jp/global/en/
https://japanbusonline.com/en

Visit Kinosaki Homepage
English http://visitkinosaki.com/
French http://visitkinosaki.com/fr/

Visit Kinosaki Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/visitkinosaki

Visit Kinosaki Instagram
https://www.instagram.com/visitkinosaki

Information
Tourism Section, Toyooka City
2-4 Chuo-machi, Toyooka City, Hyogo, 668-8666, JAPAN
Tel: +81-796-21-9069
Email: travel@city.toyooka.lg.jp

Published in August 2018