



Matsunovama Onsen Village





As a natural means of relaxation and stress relief, bathing in an onsen has long been treasured as an important part of Japanese culture. These natural hot springs are found throughout Tokamachi, and each one has a different combination of minerals providing different health benefits. With open-air Tokamachi's onsen offer a therapeutic and uniquely Japanese experience.







First held in 1950, the Tokamachi Snow Festival is a spectacular celebration which brings colour to the long and cold Snow Country winter. It's the largest winter event along the Sea of Japan coast, and features a fantasy-like show with live music from popular artists, a kimono fashion show, and lights and fireworks - all unfolding upon a gigantic stage built from snow.







In the Snow Country, there are many traditional pastimes that take full advantage of the regions heavy snowfall. Kamakura "snow huts" are built by piling up snow into a dome shape, and then hollowing out the inside to make a space for people to gather together, chat and enjoy meals. Perhaps the perfect place to enjoy some of Tokamachi's local cuisine, such as Tsumari Pork? Other much loved pastimes include sledding, snow stacking, and creating snow sculptures.

200



A crucial part of life and culture in Tokamachi has always been how we cope with the winter's heavy snowfall. In the past, we had no machines or mechanical tools to clear the snow from our roads and roofs, so people laboured using only show shoes and basic wooden tools. Since then, we have developed the technology to efficiently clear the snow, protecting the city's transport system throughout the winter.

# Snow Country Tekamachi

Tokamachi is located in the southern region of Niigata Prefecture, roughly 2 hours by train and 3 hours by car from Tokyo.

During the winter, the snow which falls throughout the region can accumulate to heights of between 2 and 3 meters.

On a clear winter's day, the snowy landscape has a serene beauty which soothes the human spirit. When the snow melts, crystal-clear water filters through the mountains and forests, helping to grow delicious vegetables, plants and rice.

In living together with the snow, Tokamachi has nurtured a culture, industry and custom unique to the Snow Country region.

















### Plants begin to sprout from the earth in unison, finally awakened from a long winter's sleep.

As the snow melts, swelling the rice fields, flowers bloom, the wind ruffles new leaves as insects being to stir; far and wide the breath of spring breezes gently. This is the call of spring which Snow Country Tokamachi has long awaited.







Blue skies, white clouds and green mountains: the coming of the season of the sun.

In the summer, Tokamachi becomes an outdoor kingdom.

Japan's longest river, the Shinano River, and its banks abundant in greenery, frame the stage for white water rafting, canoeing, trekking, cycling and camping. A summer medley of outdoor activities and experiences.



# The Four Seasons of Tokamachi

#### Autumn is a season of colour and harvest, savoured through the eye and the tongue.

In Tokamachi's satoyama rice paddies, grains of rice ripen bountifully.

Their golden colour is the sign of a delicious harvest.

Susuki grass glitters silver and gold on the mountains.

Tokamachi welcomes a both beautiful and delicious autumn.









Winter

#### The winter is a story woven with snow, bearing the warmth of the people.

The fall colours fade, and so begin the preparations for the winter.

The snowscape stretches to the horizon on a clear winter's morning;

beautiful enough to take your breath away.

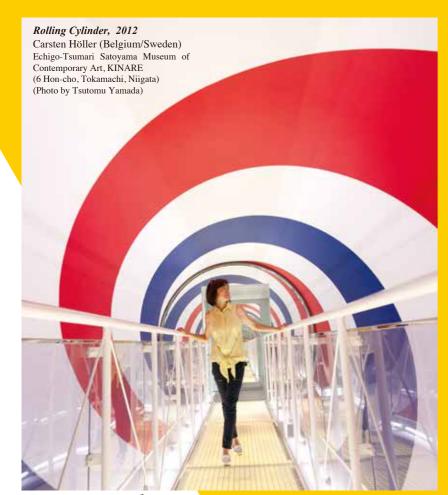
Amid our struggles throughout the winter, our hearts learn to love and enjoy the snow.











#### For Lots of Lost Windows

Akiko Utsumi (Japan)

Kikyogahara-Uruoi Park (1463-1 Kikyogahara-ki, Tokamachi, Niigata) (Photo by Tsutomu Yamada)

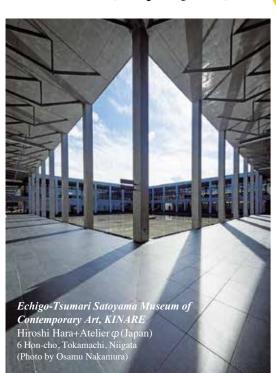




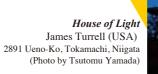
#### **Shedding House**

Junichi Kurakake & volunteers from the Nihon University College of Art Sculpture course (Japan) 776 Toge, Tokamachi, Niigata (Hoshitoge)

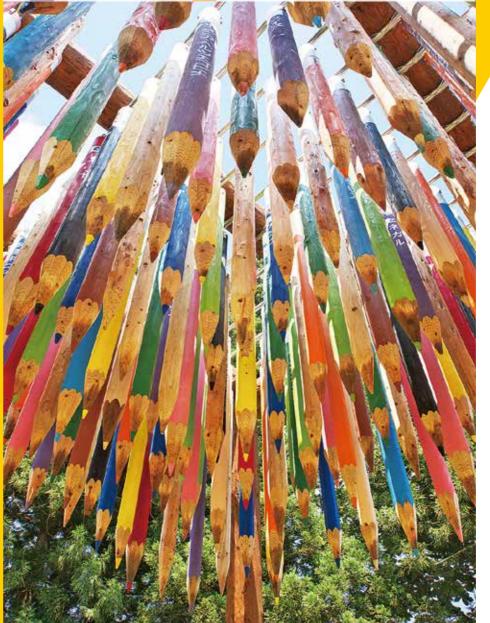
# Echigo-Tsumari Art Field T. KAMACHI



The Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale is a contemporary art festival that happens once every three years in Tokamachi and neighbouring Tsunan Town. With over 350 artworks and events dotted throughout the whole region – also known as the *Echigo-Tsumari Art Field* – this event is one of the world's largest outdoor art festivals. The projects created by both Japanese and international artists are expressions of the values of rural life shown through the medium of contemporary art. A number of artworks are can be viewed all year round, even outside of the festival season. The artworks and facilities introduced here are permanent instalments. (There are artworks that cannot be viewed during the winter season or maintenance periods. Please check before visiting).

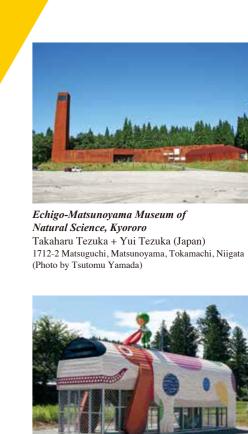






Reverse City

Pascale Marthine Tayou (Cameroon/Belgium) Matsudai NOHBUTAI Area (3743-1 Matsudai, Tokamachi, Niigata) (Photo by Takenori Miyamoto + Hiromi Seno)





Jimmy Liao (Taiwan) Echigo Mizusawa St. (Baba-ko, Tokamachi, Niigata) (Photo by Gentaro Ishizuka)



restructure

Harumi Yukutake (Japan) 3428 Babaoi, Tokamachi, Niigata (Photo by H. Kuratani)







Tsumari in Bloom

Yayoi Kusama (Japan) Matsudai NOHBUTAI Area (3743-1 Matsudai, Tokamachi, Niigata) (Photo by Tsutomu Yamada)



Hachi & Seizo Tashima Museum of Picture Book Art

Seizo Tashima (Japan) 2310-1 Sanada-ko, Tokamachi, Niigata (Photo by Takenori Miyamoto + Hiromi Seno)

#### Snowshoes

Snowshoes are ideal for treading



"Airboarding" is a new snow sport originating in Switzerland. These body boards, which are ridden on your stomach, give the rider a fantastic feeling of speed; once you've tried it you're sure to be hooked.



#### Kamakura

Experience a traditional Lunar New Year festival passed down through generations in Japan's Snow Country. Snow huts like the one shown in the photo are known as 'kamakura', and are built by locals to enshrine water kami 'deities'.



#### **Snow Removal**

Tokamachi is one of Japan's snowiest areas, and snow removal is crucial to life in winter. Learn the basics of using snow scoops and shovels to clear snow in a safe environment. Also, you can learn more about the snow first-hand from people living in the Snow Country.



#### Sledding

Both adults and children can experience either traditional wooden sleds or the latest modern types. These are great fun for kids but adults too can relive their childhood sledding through the midst of a pure white landscape.



Each of the ski resorts across the Tokamachi region boasts both outstanding snow conditions and a unique character. Tokamachi's ski slopes are perfect for beginners, families and pros.





**Strawberry Picking** 

**Rice Planting** 

#### **Experience** the Outdoor

Experience the beautiful natural landscape of Tokamachi's milder seasons through activities like trekking and rafting. Get together with your friends and take to the river for downhill rafting; or to the mountains for a leisurely stroll; or go camping to really appreciate the beauty of the great outdoors. Tokamachi has many outdoor experiences on offer.



**Rafting** 



#### **Experience Traditional Crafts**

**Trekking** 

#### **Textile Experiences (Weaving/Dyeing)**

Tokamachi has long been famous for its textile production. Facilities offering hands-on weaving and dyeing experiences bring you into touch with the traditional techniques and culture of Tokamachi's textile industry.







paths across the snow, and they feel great when you're walking across light and fluffy freshly fallen snow. There are several locations within Tokamachi where you can take part in snowshoe trekking experiences.



Get amid Tokamachi's beautiful natural surroundings and try for yourself experiences in agriculture, outdoor activities, crafting, and the snow. Make some unforgettable memories meeting the local people living in the heart of Japan's idyllic and untouched rural landscape.









#### Mochi

Mochi is a Japanese confection made by pounding steamed glutinous rice until it becomes sticky, and then shaping it into small balls. It is eaten with condiments such as roasted soy bean flour, or a sweet soy sauce. Mochi pounding at celebratory occasions such as the New Year has been a tradition in Japan since ancient times.

Just as it's famous for its rice, Tokamachi is also famous for its sake production. The quality of the natural water and rice in Snow Country Tokamachi, and the skills of the sake brewers are a source of price for the area. The resultant product has an exceptional flavour.



## Local Cuisine in

TOKAMACH

#### **Tokamachi Grown Rice**

The rice grown in Niigata Prefecture is known as the most delicious in Japan. Among this, the brand of rice grown in Tokamachi called Japan for its top class taste. The mineral-rich snow meltwater which filters through the temperature ranges of day and night in the an optimistic elasticity and a faintly sweet, but rich flavour. The farmers in Tokamachi grow their rice with love, and the result is that each grain is delicious and shines like a pearl.

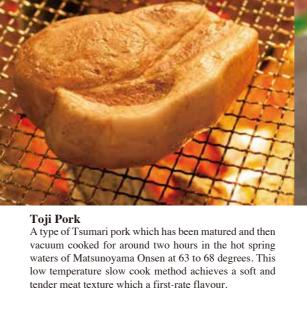


#### **Echigo Hime (Strawberries)**

strawberry which is grown in Niigata Prefecture. It's popular for its dynamic balance of sweet and sour flavour, as well as its soft and



Onigiri are balls of rice which have been shaped into triangles, rectangles or round balls, and seasoned or filled with a variety of flavours. Being ancient times for their convenience, and as part of a bento lunch.





The Tsumari Pork brand guarantees both deliciousness and peace of mind. The pigs are reared carefully in a healthy environment which avoids the use of antibiotics, and the result is a pure white pork with a lower fat-melting point. The meat is firm but tender, and has a rich taste that's full of flavour.

Tokamachi is blessed with a bounty of foods sourced from the natural environment such as rice, sake, soba noodles, pork, vegetables, wild plants, and mushrooms. Please enjoy the vibrant cuisine of both traditional local dishes and creative culinary cooking prepared using the finest quality, fresh, seasonal ingredients.



#### **Hegi Soba and Tempura**

Tokamachi is famous for its soba noodles which are made using funori, a type of seaweed which acts as a binding agent. They are popular for their firm but accompanied by *tempura* of locally sourced seasonal vegetables, wild plants, and mushrooms.



Japan's old farmhouses often had irori fireplaces, a square stone-lined pit in the floor used for heating and meal preparation. Families would gather around an irori to eat and spend time together. Even today there are places in Tokamachi where you can enjoy the ambiance of eating traditional local food cooked in one of these sunken







#### Sumi-nuri

This traditional festival is a celebration of the Lunar New Year. Revellers take the ashes from a sainokami bonfire (also known as a dondovaki) and smear them on each other's faces while wishing for good health and prosperity for the coming year.



#### Echigo-Matsudai Fuyu no Jin

Competitors race through a 3km mountain course to be the first to reach the finish line at Matsudai Castle, 200 meters above the race start point.



#### Ohshirakura Baito

Revellers gather to drink and eat inside small straw and zelkova-wood huts known as baito. At the end of the night, the huts are set on fire and the shape of the flames is used to predict the crop conditions for the following year and to pray for a good harvest.



#### **Snow Carnival Nakasato**

An event celebrating the arrival of Spring in which around 20,000 candles are set down and lit across the snowfield. It also features a wonderful fireworks display, a variety of food stalls and events, and a processions of skiers bearing flaming torches.

## Festivals and Events in

**T\*\*KAMACHI** 

Tokamachi's winter events are inspired by a life lived together with the snow. They are much loved by the local people, as well as attracting many visitors from outside the region too.

#### Muko-nage

An unusual festival where newly-wed grooms are tossed from the grounds of a shrine down a snowy slope of around 5 metres length. This is a ritual performed to pray for a happy marriage and to deepen the bonds between husband and wife.



#### Tokamachi Snow Festival

Featuring snow sculptures handmade by local residents, warm Tokamachi omotenashi hospitality, and the spectacular "Snow Carnival" show - the Tokamachi Snow Festival is full of fun and wonder. It's Japan's number one snow festival!

### **FESTIVAL & EVENT CALENDAR**

Tokamachi Winter Markets (Chinkoro Markets)

(10th, 15th, 20th, 25th)

Ohshirakura Baito (14th)

Muko-nage & Sumi-nuri (15th)

February Tokamachi Snow Festival (3rd weekend)

March Tamonten Nude Crowd Festival (3rd)

Echigo-Tsumari Snow Fireworks (Early March)

Kawanishi Snow Festival (Early March)

Snow Carnival Nakasato (2nd Saturday)

Echigo-Matsudai Fuyu no Jin (2nd weekend)

Matsunoyama Onsen Ski Resort Ski Carnival

(Mid-late March)

April Noguchi Mizubasho Festival (Mid-April – Early May)

Shinano River Terrace Walk (Late April)

Chojagahara Cherry Blossom Festival

(Late April – Early May)

May Tokamachi Kimono Festival (3rd)

Fushikurojo Mountain Opening Festival

(Sunday in Late May)

Matsunoyama Birdwatching Event (Last Sunday)

\*Schedules are subject to change due to weather conditions. Please check before visiting.

June Sasayama Jomon Festival (Early June)

July Tokamachi Ballard Contest (1st Saturday)

Komatsubara Trekking Tour (Early July)

Senju Kannon 17th Night Festival (16th,17th)

Matsudai Kannon Festival (Mid-July)

**August** Midsummer Snow Festival (14th)

Tokamachi Summer Festival (25th-27th)

**September** Akakura Kagura Music Festival (1st Saturday)

Senju Shrine Autumn Grand Festival (Early Spetember)

Koshirakura Tree Pulling (7th)

Kimono Town Quilt Exhibition (Mid-Sept to Early Oct)

October Komatsubara Trekking Tour (Early Oct)

Ro-Man 24 in Matsudai (Early Oct)

Birthplace Festival (2nd weekend)

Senda Harvest Festival (Last Sunday)

Tokamachi Industry Festival (Mid-Oct)

November Echigo-Tokamachi "Soba Kingdom" Local Soba Festival

(Early Nov)



Tokamachi's snow festival character. This snow fairy was born in 1994.



#### Cross 10 Tokamachi

Cross 10 is the region's largest souvenir including farming produce, local sake, and traditional novelty goods - There is also a café-restaurant. In "Kinare" next door, you can find the "Akashi no Yu" onsen baths Make a stop here to soak away your travelling fatigue.



#### **Tokamachi City Museum**

The only location in the prefecture displaying the kaen-gata doki "flame-style pottery", an assemblage of Jomon Period pottery which has been designated a national treasure. Other exhibits based around daily life and textile production in the Snow Country in the past feature old tools, and various other important cultural assets of the Tokamachi region



#### Tokamachi Industry and Crafts Center "Ikote"

The café and bar on the 1st floor offers lunches prepared using fresh, local ingredients and sake from breweries within the prefecture. The second floor contains a function space used for a variety of events The building has a covered alley known as a gangi which was once a distinctive feature of ouse in Tokamachi City.



#### Daigonji-kogen Campsite

hillside known for its stunning Autumn well as equipment for fishing and barbequing. Here you can enjoy outdoor activities such as stand-up paddle boarding and Nordic walking.

Echigo-Tsumari Snow Fireworks

winter's evening.

Every year in March there is an LED light and fireworks display held as one of the Echigo-Tsumari Art Field's winter events. Booming

fireworks and LED lights illuminate the sky and snow on a magical

# Onsen and Accommodation in

**T@KAMACHI** 

Onsen

The mountains surrounding Tokamachi bestow countless blessings on the region. One of these is *onsen* "hot springs", much loved as a part of Japan's traditional culture. There are onsen found throughout Tokamachi including Matsunoyama Onsen, one of Japan's "Big 3 Medicinal Onsen", and Kiyotsukyo Onsen. Travellers can enjoy the wide variety of water properties and scenic ambiences that each onsen bath has to offer.



#### Matsunoyama Onsen Village

Matsunoyama Onsen is an onsen village nestled in a snowy valley near the Nagano prefectural border. These hot springs have long been known for their salty-tasting water and medicinal properties; they are counted as one of Japan's "Big 3 Medicinal Onsen". According to local legend, in the latter half of the 15th century, the Echigo military governor had hidden away these hot springs amid rumours of their strong healing properties. Also, in the 1940's, salt was in such high demand that bathing in these salty waters was forbidden, even in the cold winter.



There are business hotels and ryokans in close proximity to Tokamachi Station. Both will welcome you with Tokamachi's kind *omotenashi* hospitality.



#### Kiyotsukyo Onsen Village

These Onsen baths are located amid the scenic beauty of the Kiyotsu River's gorge. Rumour has it that the monk Kobo Daishi called forth these hot spring waters. These baths were not so well known until recently, thanks to improvements made to road access conditions.



#### Belnatio

The Atema-kogen Resort 'Belnatio' is located on an expansive site in Tokamach Belnatio operates a hotel; pet friendly cottages; onsen and open-air baths; restaurants; banquet and wedding hall; and a number of leisure and sports facilities including a go course. The resort also offers unique experiences including nature-related activities.

#### Accommodation

After taking a bath in one of Tokamachi's onsen, you'll want to relax and take in the nature and fresh air at your own pace. With this in mind, we recommend the following places to stay. This list includes onsen resorts, traditional Japanese ryokans and hotels. Also, accommodation that doubles as an experience in contemporary art, and farming settlement *minshuku* "inns" which offer a true taste of Japanese rural life.



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■Country Code (JAPAN), +81			
Name	Туре	Telephone Number	URL
Hotel Belnatio	Hotel(Hot Spring)	025-758-4888	http://www.belnatio.com/
Hotel New Tokamachi	Hotel	025-752-7400	http://www.new-tokamachi.co.jp/
Hotel & Dining Shimizu	Hotel	025-752-2058	http://www.hotel-simizu.com/
Hotel Mukadeya	Hotel	025-757-1177	http://www.mukadeya.net/
Shinko	Ryokan	025-757-8396	http://tokamachi-ryokan.com/shinkou.html
Haradaya Ryokan	Ryokan	025-752-2121	http://www.mars.jstar.ne.jp/~haradaya/
Ryokan Shimizuya	Ryokan	025-752-2477	http://www.ryokan-shimizuya.com/
Yoshimoto Ryokan	Ryokan	025-752-2767	http://tokamachi-ryokan.com/yoshimoto.html
Hamayaso	Ryokan	025-757-5760	http://tokamachi-ryokan.com/hayamasou.html
Yasuragi	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-757-1547	http://www.yasuragi-yado.com/
Yumotoso	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-752-2169	http://www.tokamachi-ryokan.com/yumotosou.html
Ichibankan	Ryokan	025-757-8837	http://www.tokamachi-ryokan.com/ichibankan.html
Ootaya Ryokan	Ryokan	025-752-3272	
Minshuku Kamiya	Minshuku B&B	025-757-6896	
Minshuku Kakura	Minshuku B&B	025-759-2550	http://www.minshuku-kakura.jp/
Minshuku Bandai	Farm Minshuku B&B	025-752-6627	http://www.yado-bandai.jp/
Hyakunen no Yakata	Rental Japanese-Style Holiday Home	025-761-7123	http://www.100nennoyakata.com/
Kakinokian	Farm Minshuku B&B	025-789-3390	http://www5a.biglobe.ne.jp/~effe/kakinokian/index.html
House of Light (Earth Arts Festival Artworks)	Guest House	025-761-1090	http://hikarinoyakata.com/
Kiyotsukan	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-763-2181	http://www.kiyotsukan.com/
Nakaya	Minshuku B&B	025-763-4087	
Murayamaso	Ryokan	025-763-3757	
Setoguchi	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-763-2431	http://setoguti.info/
Hayashiya Ryokan	Ryokan	025-763-2016	http://www.hayashiya-ryokan.com/
Izumiya Ryokan	Ryokan	025-763-2015	
Mion Nakasato	Hot Spring Health Center	025-763-4811	http://nakasato-mion.com/
Sanzen	Farm Minshuku B&B	025-761-3721	http://www.echigo-tsumarigt.com/sanzen.html
Keizanso	Minshuku B&B	025-763-3762	
Unkai	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-597-3939	http://shibatouge.com/
Asahido Ryokan	Ryokan	025-597-2015	http://www.matsudai.com/syoukoukai/asahido/
Kashiminka Mirai	Dormitory	025-597-2561	http://mirai-net.com/
Yama no Ie	Dormitory	025-595-6770	http://yama-no-ie.jp/
Hina no Yado Chitose	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2525	http://www.chitose.tv/
Izumiya	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2001	http://izumiya-inn.com/
Nomoto Ryokan	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2013	http://www.matsunoyama.com/nomoto/
Shirakawaya	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2003	http://shirakawaya.sakura.ne.jp/
Hotel Fukuzumi	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2323	http://www.iiyuyado.com/
Komeya Ryokan	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2163	http://www.matsunoyama.com/komeya/
Tamakiya Ryokan	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2057	http://www.tamakiya.com/
Ryounkaku	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2100	http://www.ryo-unkaku.com/
Ryokan Myojyo	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2544	http://www.myojyo.in/
Uekiya Ryokan	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2040	http://park11.wakwak.com/~uekiya/
Ofukurokan	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-2200	http://www.matunoyama.net/01_ofukurokan.html
Miyoshiya	Hot Spring Minshuku B&B	025-596-2017	http://minsyuku-miyosiya.jimdo.com/
Yu no Shima	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-3205	http://www.yunoshima.com/
Greenhouse Satomi	Farm Minshuku B&B	025-596-3492	http://satomi555.homepagelife.jp/
Bird Garden	Hot Spring Ryokan	025-596-3055	http://www.matunoyama.net/01_byrd_garden.html
Sansho House	Ryokan	025-596-3854	http://www.sanshohouse.jp/

### Getting to Tokamachi Access from the Airport

Shutoko Expressway - Kan-Etsu Expressway

Approx. 3.5 hours

Niigata

Airport I.C.

Approx. 20 minutes

#### By Train (JR Tokamachi Station) Approx.30 minutes Haneda Airport JR Tokyo Joetsu Shinkansen Station Approx. 80 minutes JR Tokamachi Approx.70 minutes Hokuhokusen Narita Airport Echigo-Yuzawa Approx. 40 minutes Station **Station** Bus or Taxi JR Niigata Joetsu Shinkansen Niigata Airport Approx. 30 minutes Approx. 50 minutes Station By Car Shutoko Expressway - Kan-Etsu Expressway Haneda Airport Approx. 3 hours R253 Muikamachi I.C Approx. 30 minutes

Kan-Etsu Expressway

Approx. 1 hour



Bus	

Echigo Kotsu	TEL 025-757-2103
Tokei Bus	TEL 025-599-2312

R117

Approx. 40 minutes

#### Taxi

Echigo-

Kawaguchi I.C.

Tokamachi Taxi	TEL 025-752-3184
Jikkou Taxi	TEL 025-752-3146
Akashi Taxi	TEL 025-757-3360
Showa Transport	TEL 025-768-2237
Tobu Taxi	TEL 025-597-2254

#### **Rental Cars**

Miyuki Rental Cars	TEL 025-757-0008
Toyota Rental Cars	TEL 025-752-6100

\*Taxi and car rental are great ways to get around Tokamachi City.

#### **Tourist Information**

Tokamachi Tourist Information	
	TEL 025-750-1277
Matsudai and Matsunoyama Onsen	
Tourist Information	TEL 025-597-3442
Michi no Eki 'Cross 10'	
	TEL 025-757-2323

Tokamachi Tourism Information center

TEL 025-757-3345

Tokamachi

City

Country Code (JAPAN), +81

### For tourism inquiries, contact:

Narita Airport

Niigata Airport

#### Tokamachi City Tourist Association (9:00-17:00)

Tokamachi Tourist Information ≥ 251-17 Asahi-Cho Tokamachi, Niigata, 948-0079

TEL 025-757-3345 FAX 025-757-5150 Tokamachi-Tourism Search http://www

The information in this brochure is current as of 3/31/2016. There may be changes, so please confirm before visiting.