

# The Broader Region Surrounding Gifu

## To Central Gifu City

### Departing from Nagoya

**JR Nagoya Station → JR Gifu Station**  
[JR Tokaido Main Line Rapid • **18 min** • ¥470]

### Departing from Central Japan International Airport

**Central Japan International Airport → Meitetsu Gifu Station**  
[Passing through Meitetsu Nagoya Station] → Meitetsu Gifu Station  
[Meitetsu Limited Express • **1 hr 20 min** • ¥1,340]  
[Meitetsu Airport Rapid Ltd. Exp. μ-SKY (read "mu-sky") • **1 hr** • ¥1,700]

### Departing from Tokyo

**Tokyo Station → JR Nagoya Station → JR Gifu Station**  
[JR Tokaido Shinkansen • **1 hr 40 min**] →  
[JR Tokaido Main Line • **18 min** • ¥11,310 in total]  
~ Or ~

**Tokyo Station (Nihonbashi Exit) → JR Gifu Station (North Exit)**  
[JR Tokai Bus "Dream Nagoya" • **8 hr** • ¥6,580]

### Departing from Osaka

**Shin-Osaka Station → JR Nagoya Station → JR Gifu Station**  
[JR Tokaido Shinkansen • **50 min**] →  
[JR Tokaido Main Line • **18 min** • ¥7,210 in total]

## To Shirakawa-go

### Departing from Nagoya

**Meitetsu Bus Center → Shirakawa-go**  
[Gifu Bus on the Shirakawa-go Express Line • **3 hr** • ¥3,900]  
Customers cannot be accommodated when seats are full, so prior reservations are highly recommended. Two buses per day.  
(☎058-240-0489)



## To Hida Takayama

### Departing from Gifu City

**JR Gifu Station → Takayama Station**  
[JR Takayama Main Line Limited Express Wide View Hida • **2 hr** • ¥4,940]  
~ Or ~

**Meitetsu Gifu Station Bus Terminal → Takayama Nohi Bus Center**  
[Nohi Bus/Gifu Bus on the Takayama-Gifu Line • **2 hr** • ¥2,570]

### Departing from Nagoya

**JR Nagoya Station → Takayama Station**  
[JR Limited Express Wide View Hida • **2 hr 30 min** • ¥6,030]  
~ Or ~

**Meitetsu Bus Center → Takayama Nohi Bus Center**  
[Nohi Bus/Meitetsu Bus/JR Tokai Bus on the Takayama-Nagoya Line • **2 hr 30 min** • ¥2,980]

### Departing from Tokyo

**Tokyo Station → JR Nagoya Station → Takayama Station**  
[JR Tokaido Shinkansen • **1 hr 40 min**] → [JR Limited Express Wide View Hida • **2 hr 20 min** • ¥14,920 in total]

**Tokyo Station → JR Toyama Station → Takayama Station**  
[JR Hokuriku Shinkansen • **2 hr 8 min**] → [JR Limited Express Wide View Hida • **1 hr 30 min** • ¥15,830 in total]  
~ Or ~

**Shinjuku Expressway Bus Terminal → Takayama Nohi Bus Center**  
[Nohi Bus/Keio Bus on the Takayama-Tokyo(Shinjuku) Line • **5 hr 30 min** • ¥6,690]

### Departing from Osaka

**Shin-Osaka Station → JR Nagoya Station → Takayama Station**  
[JR Tokaido Shinkansen • **50 min**] → [JR Limited Express Wide View Hida • **2 hr 20 min** • ¥10,810 in total]  
~ Or ~

**Osaka Namba Station West Exit → Takayama Nohi Bus Center**  
[Nohi Bus/Kintetsu Bus on the Takayama-Kyoto/Osaka Line • **5 hr 32 min** • ¥3,300]

Note: All times and prices indicated are variable, are dependent on a variety of factors (such as the time of year), and are subject to change.



## Contact Information

**Central Japan Railway Company (JR Central)**

☎ <http://english.jr-central.co.jp>

**Nagoya Railroad (Meitetsu)** ☎ <http://www.meitetsu.co.jp/eng/>

**Nohi Bus** ☎ <https://www.nouhibus.co.jp/english/>

# The Broader Region Surrounding Gifu

## 石川 / Ishikawa



### Kenroku-en Garden

Thought to be one of the finest gardens in Japan, Kenroku-en is a spacious area complete with ponds and tea gardens that is rife with seasonal beauty.



### Omi-cho Market

Almost 300 years old, this marketplace is the perfect place for purchasing fresh fish or any of Ishikawa Prefecture's many unique products.

## 富山 / Toyama



### Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route

This route takes those who pass through it on a journey through the Northern Japanese Alps, which includes mountains over 3,000 meters tall. Marvel at the many wonders of Mother Nature that can be seen here, including great valleys of snow.

### Gokayama

This UNESCO World Heritage Site is home to many *gassho-zukuri*-style thatched roof houses that can only be seen in certain areas that experience heavy snowfall.

## 長野 / Nagano



### Matsumoto Castle

One of but five castles in Japan to be considered a National Treasure, this castle is known for its black exterior. Completed in the late 16th century, it remains largely unchanged from its original state.



### Kamikochi

This highland valley deep in the mountains of the Northern Japanese Alps is often lauded as one of the greatest treasure troves of natural beauty in all of Japan, and plays host to great plant and animal biodiversity.

## 静岡 / Shizuoka



### Mt. Fuji

Often seen as a subject in paintings or spoken of in poetry and song, this mountain is the tallest in Japan and is the very symbol of the nation itself.



### Lake Hamana

This large natural lake is the ideal location for enjoying water sports or collecting shells at low tide, and its intricate coastline makes for gorgeous scenery.

## 愛知 / Aichi



### Nagoya Castle

Originally constructed in 1612 and then largely destroyed in the fires of the Second World War, the remnants of the original were carefully integrated into its reconstruction.



### Shopping in Sakae

The single most prosperous area in Nagoya, Sakae is home to many famous department stores, entertainment spots, and restaurants. With a vibrant night life and a varied assortment of shops, Sakae is a must for anyone looking for a taste of city life.

## 福井 / Fukui



### Tojinbo

Stretching for over one kilometer, these precipitous cliffs were formed by volcanic activity millions of years ago, and are thought to be one of Japan's most beautiful natural wonders.



### Awara Hot Spring

As Fukui's foremost hot springs district, it boasts many scenic areas that are unique to hot springs towns. Explore this location as you enjoy the feel of stone pavement beneath your feet and the fragrance of steaming hot spring water in the air.

## Ishikawa

Wakura Hot Spring

Toyama

Toyama Airport

Kanazawa

Komatsu Airport

World Heritage Site Shirakawa-go

Hida Kiyomi IC

Gujo Hachiman

Mino

Nakatsugawa

Mino-Ota

Tajimi

Yokkaichi JCT

Gifu Hashima

Ichinomiya JCT

Maibara

Otsu

Kameyama JCT

Tsu

Taki

Ise

Toba

## Gifu

Shirakawa-go

Hida Kiyomi IC

Gujo Hachiman

Mino

Nakatsugawa

Mino-Ota

Tajimi

Yokkaichi JCT

Gifu Hashima

Ichinomiya JCT

Maibara

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Toba

# The Different Regions Within Gifu

Located precisely in the center of the country, Gifu Prefecture has long been an important crossroads of east and west Japan. The culture of Gifu has therefore been heavily influenced by both, resulting in a great diversity of traditions nurtured here. Gifu is also a land of varied terrain, from the majestic mountains of Hida to the north - which stretch to heights of up to 3,000 meters above sea level - to the fertile, expansive plains and riverlands of Mino to the south - which are located right at sea level. Gifu Prefecture is broadly divided into these two regions, which used to exist independently - as Hida Province and Mino Province - before Japan's adoption of the prefectural system. The Mino region - a term often used to refer to the entire southern half of Gifu Prefecture, corresponding to the territory of Mino Province - is today further divided into four sub-regions: the western region of Seino, the eastern region of Tono, the central region of Chuno, and the Gifu region that encompasses the capital of Gifu City. Take particular care not to confuse the Hida region and the Mino region with Hida City and Mino City!

**GUJO**  
郡上



P58

The site of one of Japan's most famous summer dance festivals, the *Gujo Odori*.

**MINOKAMO**  
美濃加茂



P72

A place where Edo period townscapes remain preserved.

**SEKI**  
関



P68

The blade capital of Japan and its historical center of sword production.

**MINO**  
美濃



P64

Home of Mino *Washi*, one of the most celebrated types of traditional Japanese paper.

**GIFU**  
岐阜



P52

Home to the spectacle of cormorant fishing, a tradition that has continued on the Nagara River for 1,300 years.

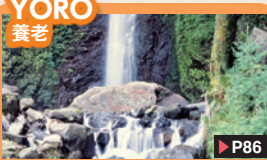
**OGAKI • SEKIGAHARA**  
大垣 関ヶ原



P90

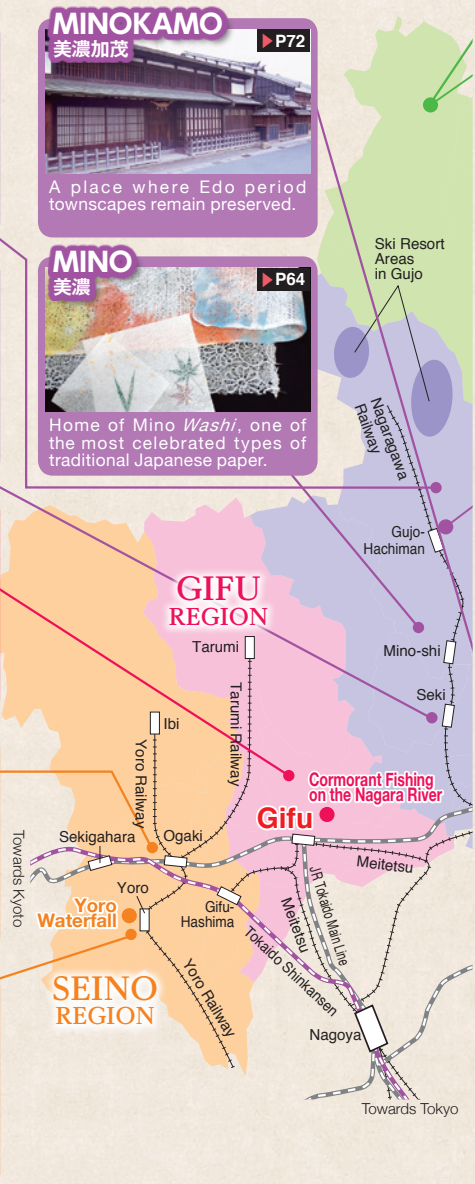
The "water capital" of the region and the site of Japan's most famous battle.

**YORO**  
養老




P86

A place of rejuvenating natural beauty and stunning postmodern art.



**HIDA**  
飛騨



P32

A city with distinctly Japanese townscapes, particularly in the white-walled storehouse district of Furukawa.

**OKUHIDA HOT SPRING VILLAGES**  
奥飛騨温泉郷



P28

Five *onsen* districts nestled in nature that, together, boast the most open-air hot spring baths of any region in Japan.

**TAKAYAMA**  
高山



P20

Internationally famous for its picturesque old quarter and home to one of Japan's most beautiful festivals.

**GERO**  
下呂



P44

An *onsen* paradise which has historically been counted among Japan's Three Great Hot Springs.

**NAKATSUGAWA**  
中津川



P78

Famous for the old post town of Magome and its superb *wagashi* Japanese sweets.

**ENA**  
恵那



P82

Home of Ena Valley, a site of great natural beauty through all four seasons.

**TAJIMI • TOKI • MIZUNAMI**  
多治見 土岐 瑞浪



P76

The production centers and home of Mino *yaki*, the dominant type of pottery in Japan.

# WINTER [Dec ~ Feb]

**Day 1**

JR Nagoya Station

Limited Express Wide View Hida (1 hr 40 min)

Gero Station

**Stroll the streets of Gero's hot spring district**

Gero Station

Limited Express Wide View Hida (45 min)

Takayama Station

**Stay in Takayama**

**Day 2**

**Takayama Sake Brewery Tours**

Takayama Nohi Bus Center

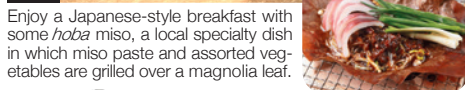
Nohi Bus (50 min)

"Shirakawa-go" bus stop

**Explore the village of Shirakawa-go**

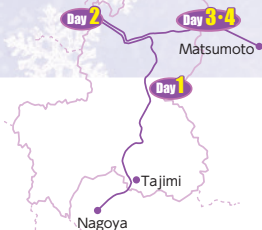
**Stay at the TOYOTA Shirakawa-go Eco-Institute**

Winter in Japan is the absolute best time to enjoy hot springs! Have a soak in Gero's mineral-rich spring water that will refresh your body and mind. Outdoor hot spring baths are especially relaxing in the winter, with the water acting almost as a shield against the crisp air!



Takayama is rich in sake breweries with a long history of excellence. In the winter, each one of them opens its doors to the public and encourages people to both sample its new sake and have a look around the brewery itself.

See Shirakawa-go at its best, buried deep in snow and shining at night under the lights of the famous illumination event!



P44



**Day 3**

**Enjoy an outdoor nature activity at the TOYOTA Shirakawa-go Eco-Institute**

"Shirakawa-go" bus stop

Nohi Bus (50 min)

Takayama Nohi Bus Center

Nohi Bus (1 hr)

Hirayu Bus Terminal

**See the beauty of the Hirayu Great Waterfall frozen and illuminated!**

**Stay in the Okuhida Hot Spring Villages**

**Look upon the grand Japan Alps after taking the Shinhotaka Ropeway to the top of Mt. Shinhotaka**

Nohi Bus (1 hr 30 min)

Matsumoto (Nagano Prefecture)

**One of Japan's very best castles**

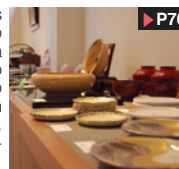
Matsumoto Castle is designated a National Treasure and is one of the most beautiful castles in all of Japan. Come enjoy the castle and the rest of the pleasant city!



If you want to delve deeper into Gifu...

**Shop for ceramics in Tajimi!**

Tajimi is famous for its superb pottery, so it is a perfect place to visit if you want to get your hands on some beautiful, traditional Japanese tableware!



The Eco-Institute offers a wide variety of nature-centered programs for guests to enjoy, so be sure to take advantage of these and have a stroll through the winter wonderland surrounding the facility.

P40

This grand waterfall transforms into a pillar of ice because of the cold. Mid-February marks the beginning of the Ice Festival, during which the waterfall is illuminated to stunning effect.



P30

There are many hot spring baths in the area that you can just drop by and bathe in, regardless of the hotel at which you are staying. Going around and trying out a bunch of these *onsen* baths is one fantastic way to enjoy the region!



Dip some scrumptious Hida beef in hot water a few times and enjoy it *shabu-shabu* style, a very common way of eating beef in the region! After the meat's color changes, dip it in a sauce of your choosing and eat it right up!



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**Day 4**



P30

The trek through the sky in a cable car (split up into two trips) offers gorgeous views of the valley below and the mountains above. The panoramic view from the top is not to be missed!

# SPRING [Mar ~ May]

## Day 1

**JR Nagoya Station**  
JR Chuo Main Line (1 hr 15 min)  
**Nakatsugawa Station**  
Kita Ena Bus (25 min)  
"Magome-juku" bus stop

**Stroll through the old post town of Magome**

"Magome-juku" bus stop  
Kita Ena Bus (25 min)  
**Nakatsugawa Station**  
Kita Ena Bus (1 hr)  
"Kashimo Sogo Jimusho-mae" bus stop  
Nohi Bus (35 min)  
**Gero Station**

**Appreciate the transient beauty of Japan's most famous flower at the Nawashiro-zakura Cherry Trees**

### Stay in Gero Hot Spring

Known across Japan for its "water of beauties," Gero is a perfect place for you to spend some quality relaxation time.

P49

This former post town, where many inns were located and where many travelers stayed for the night, is built along a 600 meter-long stone-paved path that makes for fantastic photos!

P78



Soba (buckwheat noodles) are a specialty of the Magome area.



P48



P47

Relaxing in an *ashiyu* foot-bath or two (free of charge!) is a must, as is checking out some of the delicious local food!

**Explore the streets of Gero's hot spring district**

**Gero Station**  
Limited Express Wide View Hida (1 hr)  
**Hida-Furukawa Station**

**Hida Satoyama Cycling**

### Stay in Hida City

A place where the old traditions and respect for nature are very much alive

P35



P34

Have fun cycling while gazing at the beautiful Japanese countryside scenery all around you!



## Day 3

**Explore the town of Hida Furukawa**

**Hida-Furukawa Station**

JR Takayama Main Line (16 min)

**Takayama Station**

**Walk through the old quarter of Hida Takayama**

**Stay in Takayama**

P27

## Day 4

**Takayama Nohi Bus Center**

Nohi Bus (50 min)

"Shirakawa-go" bus stop

**Explore the village of Shirakawa-go**



Japanese traditional folk crafts make splendid gifts to take home!

Nohi Bus (1 hr 15 min)

**Kanazawa (Ishikawa Prefecture)**

**Kenroku-en, one of Japan's Three Great Gardens**

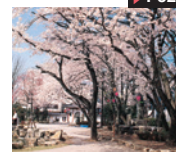
Nearby Kenroku-en, you will find sites such as Kanazawa Castle and the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa.



**If you want to delve deeper into Gifu...**

**Admire Gifu Park's gorgeous cherry trees**

These blossoms reach their peak in early April, and the cherry trees lining the Nagara River are a sight to behold as well!



P52



P33

Famed for the *okoshi-dako* Shinto ritual - part of the Furukawa Festival held every April - and the white-walled storehouses pictured here lining the canal.

You can get some delicious locally-made ice cream made with thick, rich milk.



Sink your teeth into some of the highest-grade Hida beef at any number of restaurants in town.



P20

Elegantly constructed merchant houses line both sides of Takayama's old quarter, making this part of town particularly popular with tourists both from in Japan and from abroad. Springtime here is synonymous with the Takayama Spring Festival, and the cherry blossoms that decorate the town reach their peak from mid to late April.

P36



Ogimachi is a village in which old houses constructed in the *gassho-zukuri* style remain to this day. Their value is recognized far and wide, and Shirakawa-go is even designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

# SUMMER [Jun ~ Aug]

**Day 1**

## JR Nagoya Station

JR Tokaido Main Line  
(18 min)

## JR Gifu Station

Gifu Bus (15 min)

"Gifu Koen/Rekishi  
Hakubutsukan-mae" bus stop

## Gifu Castle

Watch the spectacle  
of cormorant fishing  
on the Nagara River

## Stay in Nagaragawa Hot Spring

Enjoy the iron-rich, cloudy  
water that is characteris-  
tic of the *onsen* here.

**Day 2**

## JR Gifu Station

JR Takayama Main Line  
(35 min)

## Mino-Ota Station

Nagaragawa Railway  
(17 min)

## Hamono Kaikan-mae Station

## Explore Seki City

## Hamono Kaikan-mae Station

Nagaragawa Railway (65 min)

## Gujo-Hachiman Station

Jump right in and  
try your hand  
at the *Gujo Odori*  
Dance

## Stay in Gujo Hachiman

Gifu Castle looming above  
the plains below at the top  
of Mt. Kinka. You can take  
a cable car most of the way  
up the mountain or hike on  
foot.

P54



Sekigahara



P55

These cool and  
refreshing *mizu-  
uchiwa* make for  
perfect souvenirs!

Nagaragawa Cider, made using the  
Nagara River's delicious, pure water



P53

The tradition of *ukai* cormorant fishing has been preserved in  
Gifu City for 1,300 years and is the highlight of the summer  
season.



P68

Seki is a town famous for blades of  
all kinds, dating back to when it was  
the center of sword-making in Japan.



P71

*Unagi* eel is a local  
delicacy in Seki and  
*ayu* sweetfish is a  
specialty of Gujo, so  
be sure to try them  
out!



P58

Anybody is welcome to participate  
in this, one of the most famous *bon-  
odori* dances in Japan!



**Day 3**

## Gujo Hachiman Jokamachi Plaza

Gifu Bus (1 hr 40 min)

"Shirakawa-go" bus stop

## Explore the village of Shirakawa-go

"Shirakawa-go" bus stop

Nohi Bus (50 min)

Takayama Nohi Bus Center

Limited Express Wide View  
Hida (45 min) from Takayama  
Station

## Gero Station

## Stroll the streets of Gero's hot spring district

## Stay in Gero Hot Spring

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**Day 4**

## Gero Station

Nohi Bus (1 hr)

"Gandate Koen Iriguchi"  
bus stop

## Go waterfall-hopping in Osaka Falls

"Gandate Koen Iriguchi"  
bus stop

Nohi Bus (1 hr)

## Gero Station

Limited Express Wide View  
Hida (55 min)

## Mino-Ota Station

## Explore the old post town of Ota-juku on the Nakasendo route

Nagoya

Kyoto

If you want to delve deeper into Gifu...

## Mino-Ota Station

JR Takayama Main Line (35 min)

## JR Gifu Station

JR Tokaido Main Line (10 min)

## Ogaki Station

JR Tokaido Main Line (15 min)

## Sekigahara Station

## Walk the historic bat- tlefield of Sekigahara!

The site of Japan's most fa-  
mous battle 400 years ago that  
determined the path the country  
would follow, Sekigahara sees  
many tourists interested in  
Japanese history.



P36

The view of the thatched roof houses against the countryside  
green is a sight you will never forget!



The perfect time of  
year for tomatoes,  
one of Gero's delica-  
cies!

A cluster of over 200  
waterfalls formed by the  
eruption of Mt. Ontake  
long ago



P51

How about a healthy  
meal after your trek?



P72

The atmosphere of  
an Edo period (1603  
~ 1868) town remains  
to this day.



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# AUTUMN [Sep ~ Nov]

## Day 1

JR Nagoya Station

JR Chuo Main Line  
(1 hr)

Ena Station

Explore Ena and enjoy the beauty and many colors of Ena Valley's fall foliage

Ena Station

JR Chuo Main Line  
(10 min)

Nakatsugawa Station

Kita Ena Bus (25 min)

"Magome-juku" bus stop

Stroll through and stay in Magome-juku

P81

The colors of Ena Valley reach their peak between early to mid-November, and the combination of the red and yellow-draped mountains and the blue lake makes for a beautiful sight.



The *kurikinton*, a delectable Japanese sweet made using chestnuts, is one of the main delicacies of the region. Only available during the autumn season!

P78



The architecture and layout of this old post town, with its steeply sloped stone path, really bring out the charms of autumn!



## Day 2

"Magome-juku" bus stop

Kita Ena Bus (25 min)

Nakatsugawa Station

Kita Ena Bus (1 hr)

"Kashimo Sogo Jimusho-mae" bus stop

Nohi Bus (35 min)

Gero Station

Shop at the Ideyu Morning Market in Gero

Gero Station

Limited Express Wide View Hida (45 min)

Takayama Station

Walk the old quarter of Hida Takayama

Takayama Nohi Bus Center

Nohi Bus (1 hr)

Hirayu Bus Terminal

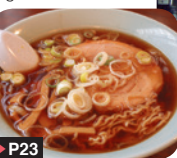


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At the morning market, you can get your hands on a variety of fresh vegetables, local specialty products, and more!



P20



P23

Takayama ramen is famous throughout Japan, and for good reason!

Stay in the Okuhida Hot Spring Villages

A region made up of five fantastic hot spring districts, Okuhida is a wonderful place to relieve yourself of the stress of travel.

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## Day 3

Look upon the grand Japan Alps from the heights of Mt. Shinhotaka's peak!

"Shinhotaka Ropeway" bus stop

Nohi Bus (1 hr 30 min)

Takayama Nohi Bus Center

Nohi Bus (50 min)

"Shirakawa-go" bus stop

Explore and stay in Shirakawa-go

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## Day 4

"Shirakawa-go" bus stop

Gifu Bus (1 hr 25 min)

Gujo Hachiman  
Jokamachi Plaza

Stroll through Gujo Hachiman

Gujo-Hachiman Station

Nagaragawa Railway  
(45 min)

Mino-shi Station

Explore Mino City

Nagoya

Kyoto



P30

The Northern Japan Alps glittering like a sea of gold is truly a sight to behold. Peak season is during the month of October, though different areas change color at different times because of the difference in altitude!



P36

The best time to take in the autumn colors in Shirakawa-go is between late October and mid-November.



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Oyada Shrine is one of the most hand-some destinations in the entire prefecture during the fall season! The giant maple trees engulfing the shrine and its surrounding areas reach their reddish peak during mid to late November.

If you want to delve deeper into Gifu...

Mino-shi Station  
Nagaragawa Railway (30 min)

Mino-Ota Station  
JR Takayama Main Line (35 min)

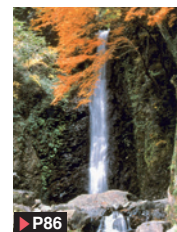
JR Gifu Station  
JR Tokaido Main Line (10 min)

Ogaki Station  
Yoro Railway (25 min)

Yoro Station

Take a trip to the Yoro Waterfall

This waterfall is located deep within Yoro Park, a beautiful natural area that boasts an incredible number of maple trees leading up to the powerful waterfall.



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岐阜の伝統工芸

# Traditional Crafts of Gifu

## Experience the Ancient Crafts of Gifu Prefecture

There is a long history of thriving craft industries here in Gifu Prefecture. Ceramics in the Tono region, woodcraft in Ogaki and the Hida region, Mino *Washi* paper, and Seki cutlery are among the most distinctive local industries found in Gifu. The skills and expertise of the artisans – who have passed down the techniques and technologies of these exceptional products for generations – remain treasured by many to this very day.



### Mino Washi Paper

Mino *Washi* owes its creation to the naturally rich environment of the Mino region and the ingenuity of the local people. With recent industrial expansions, a much wider variety of products (including placemats, lamps, and other accessories) are being produced now more than ever before. In 2014, one of the techniques of making Mino *Washi* by hand was designated as an UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, helping it attract international attention.

[Learn about Mino City ▶ P64](#)

### Woodcraft

With forests occupying more than 80% of the land, Gifu's abundant resources and wealth of unique craftsmanship has resulted in a variety of wood products being produced in the region. Traditional techniques have been passed down through generations resulting in advanced carpentry skills that are used to make a wide range of wooden products today, from the finger-jointed masu boxes of Ogaki to the furniture of the Hida region.

[Learn about Ogaki City ▶ P90](#)

[Learn about the Hida Region ▶ P20~](#)



### Mino Ware

[Learn about Tajimi, Toki, and Mizunami ▶ P76](#)

Mino Ware ("Mino Yaki" in Japanese) is a style of ceramic ware produced in the cities of Tajimi, Toki, and Mizunami. Pottery production in this area goes back 1,300 years, and items such as tableware, tiles, and industrial ceramic products began to be mass produced in the 1930's. Mino Ware boasts more than a 50% share of all pottery goods produced in Japan.



### Seki Cutlery

[Learn about Seki City ▶ P68](#)

Seki cutlery has a long history that dates back some 780 years, and Seki itself originally prospered as a major sword-production area. This was possible because all of the essential elements needed for sword making were found naturally in the surrounding environment. The history and tradition of swordsmithing has been passed down to the present day, helping Seki become known as the largest cutlery production area in Japan – famous for their high-quality knives and scissors.



# Experience Gifu's World-Acclaimed Heritages

In December of 2016, thirty-three traditional float festivals all over Japan were designated as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritages. Three of the 33 festivals - the Takayama Festival, Furukawa Festival, and Ogaki Festival - are located in Gifu. In addition to the three festivals, Gifu Prefecture is home to other world-class heritages such as Shirakawa-go Village and *Hon-Minoshii* Japanese paper. Make sure and tour around these world-class heritages; you won't be disappointed with the tradition and culture they contain!

## Yama, Hoko, and Yatai Float Festivals of Gifu Prefecture Designated as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritages!

### Takayama Festival

Exquisitely Crafted Floats Color Takayama's Historical District



**Spring Festival: April 14 ~ 15**  
**Autumn Festival: October 9 ~ 10**

The Takayama Festival is one of Japan's Three Most Beautiful Festivals and is held twice a year: in the spring and autumn. The *yatai* floats, thought to have been created in 1718, utilize the master-level craftsmanship of the Hida region to the utmost degree (best seen in the *karakuri* marionette dolls and the ingeniously engineered *modoshi guruma* wheels). There are 23 festival floats - 12 in the spring and 11 in the autumn - that color Takayama's historical district with gorgeous, vibrant colors.

▶ P21 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage

### Furukawa Festival

The Historical Spectacle Filled with Raw Emotion and Intensity



**April 19 ~ 20**

The Furukawa Festival is an annual celebration held by Keta Wakamiya Shrine. It is comprised of three elements: the *omikoshi* portable-shrine procession, the intense *Okoshi-daiko* (literally meaning "drum of awakening") performance, and the peaceful *yatai* festival float parade. The highlight of the festival is the *Okoshi-daiko* performance where different districts - each with their own *tsuke-daiko* drums - compete late into the night in order to get as close to the gigantic *Okoshi-daiko* drum as possible.

▶ P32 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage

### Ogaki Festival

Experience the History of Cultural Exchange



**Saturday and Sunday right before May 15**

The Ogaki Festival is a rare instance in Japan where the *yama* floats from both the townspeople and a past feudal lord are displayed together. The central location of the Mino region in Japan plays an important role in the festival because one can see connections to both eastern and western festival cultures: the *karakuri* marionette dolls of the *yatai* floats were influenced by the Chukyo region's *yama* float processions, while the child *kabuki* performances were inspired by those of the Kinki region.

▶ P90 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage

## Enjoy Breath-Taking Scenery While Connecting With Local History and Culture

### Shirakawa-go World Heritage Site

A Japanese Village Unchanged by Time Where Man and Nature Coexist Peacefully



Shirakawa-go has been designated as a World Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO since 1995, and the thatched roof houses - which give insight into the lifestyle of Japanese people long ago - are the symbol of the village with some of them holding over 300 years of history. The village and surrounding scenery changes with each passing season, allowing for a different experience each time one visits.

▶ P36 UNESCO World Cultural Heritage

### Hon-Minoshii Japanese Paper

Genuine *Washi* Paper Shaped by Over 1,300 Years of History



*Hon-Minoshii* was designated as an UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2014 for being one of Japan's Great Techniques for Hand-Making *Washi*. Only ten percent of Mino *Washi* products produced can meet the severely strict standards for becoming *Hon-Minoshii*. When creating *Hon-Minoshii*, artisans strive to create the paper in a way that filters light as beautifully as possible, and the soft, pure-white color of the paper is the result of their supreme craftsmanship - it is also considered the paper's defining characteristic.

▶ P64 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage

### Ayu of the Nagara River System

The Intimate Relationship Deeply Rooted into Everyday Life Here in Gifu



The Nagara River is a symbol of Gifu Prefecture and was chosen as one of Japan's 100 Most Famous Bodies of Water. The *Ayu* sweetfish that thrive in the river are deeply connected to the local economy, history, and culture. This mutual relationship - which is referred to as the *Satokawa* system - between the locals, the river environment, and the fishery organizations, is highly praised and was designated as a GIAHS (Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System) in 2015.

▶ P53 Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System

### Chiune Sugihara

A Humanitarian and the Pride of Gifu Prefecture



Chiune Sugihara was a Japanese diplomat during World War II who saved the lives of thousands of Jewish refugees that were fleeing Nazi persecution by issuing them transit visas through Japan. At the Chiune Sugihara memorial hall in Yaotsu-cho, there is a reconstruction of the office in which Chiune Sugihara made the historic decision to issue the transit visas as it appeared during World War II.  
[http://www.sugihara-museum.jp/index\\_en.html](http://www.sugihara-museum.jp/index_en.html)

### Sodai Yosui

The Canal Created With Human Ingenuity



*Sodai Yosui* is designated as a Heritage Irrigation Structure (HIS) because of the fact that it is both over 100 years old, and a structure of historical and technological value. This 17-kilometer irrigation canal was built over the course of ten years (construction first began in 1663) with the sheer effort of three private residents. The creators used their own personal funds and received no assistance from the central government or local lords.

Heritage Irrigation Structure