



[TAKAYAMA]: THE ESSENTIALS 高山

<https://www.hida-kankou.jp/kanko/foreign/en/>

GETTING HERE

Meitetsu Bus Center (Nagoya) → [Nohi Bus/Meitetsu Bus/JR Tokai Bus on the Takayama-Nagoya Line • 2 hr 40 min • ¥2,980] → Takayama Nohi Bus Center
~ Or ~

JR Nagoya Station → [JR Limited Express Wide View Hida • 2 hr 20 min • ¥6,030] → Takayama Station

MAIN FEATURE

1 The Old Quarter of Takayama

Known by the name "Sanmachi," the old quarter of Takayama consists of three streets in the center of town that preserve much of the look and feel of the castle town as well as hundreds of years ago. Located within a 10 minutes' walk of Takayama Station, the old quarter is easily accessible and has become one of the must-see destinations in Gifu Prefecture. Old merchants' houses and sake breweries line both sides of the streets, lending the area a very traditionally "Japanese" atmosphere and architectural style.

From the *sugidama* balls of cedar that hang from the breweries to signify the arrival of a new sake brew to the *kashi* latticed doors and windows that grace the housefronts, Takayama's old quarter has much of which to boast. Indeed, Sanmachi is designated a "Nationally Recognized Important Historical Building Preservation Area" and is the heart of Takayama tourism. The striking black luster of these buildings, which one immediately notices, tells a tale of just how prosperous Takayama was: the wealthy merchants who lived in the area used the best quality wood in the construction of their houses, even though use of such timber was forbidden. Thus, they painted their homes black with soot so that this act would go unnoticed!

Among the many shops you can enjoy in Sanmachi are cafés, gift shops, and restaurants of many varieties. In addition, snacking on a local delicacy such as Hida beef sushi while strolling the town is certain to satisfy your stomach and your soul and is the recommended way to explore the town! The wisteria flowers that adorn the eaves of the old houses in the springtime give Takayama's old quarter an even more refined air, if indeed that is possible, so the spring is a particularly recommended time to visit.



Takayama City is a basin-shaped region that, as the largest city area-wise in all of Japan, is roughly the same size as Tokyo itself! High above sea level, the city sees plenty of snowfall, though the mountainous areas on the outskirts of the basin experience much more of it than does the downtown center. The historical part of Takayama was initially built up by the Kanamori clan which ruled over the region beginning in 1586 and which poured its resources into promoting culture and industry in the castle town that was established. When Japan entered the Edo period (1603 ~ 1868), Takayama came under the direct rule of the Tokugawa shogunate military regime, which protected commerce in the region, allowing it to flourish like never before. Central Takayama today retains much of its elegant architecture and flavor from that age of prosperity, causing many to call it a "Little Kyoto." Outside the city center, however, lush nature dominates the landscapes. It should be noted that Takayama is often referred to as "Hida Takayama," a remnant of the age in which the entire northern part of modern-day Gifu Prefecture was known as Hida Province (not to be confused with Hida City!).

Takayama Festival



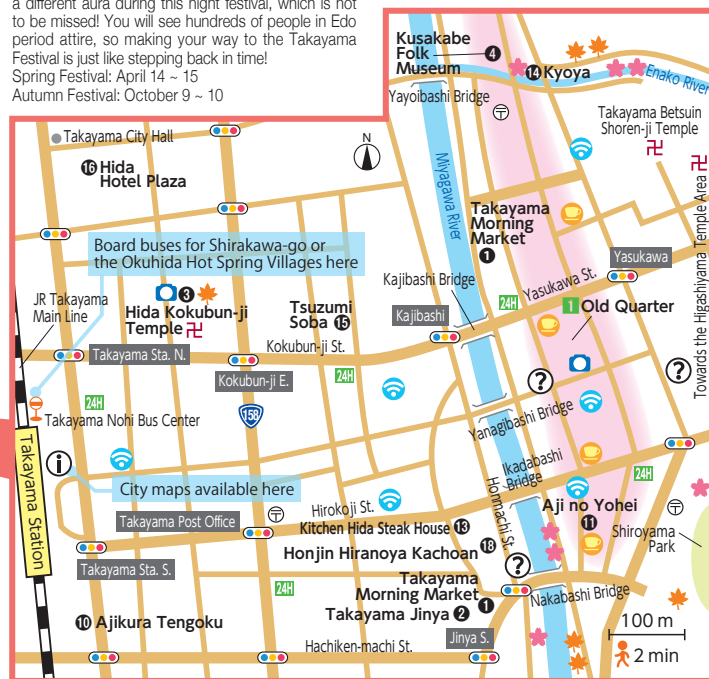
A twice-a-year spectacle that is held during spring and autumn, the Takayama Festival is also known as the Sanno Festival (spring) - the annual festival of Hie Shrine - and the Hachiman Festival (autumn) - the annual festival of Sakurayama Hachiman Shrine. It is counted as one of Japan's Three Most Beautiful Festivals, thanks in part to the splendor of the festival floats, or *yatai*, that are displayed and pulled around the town. These floats - 23 in all - are fantastic works of craftsmanship that speak to just how distinguished the wood and metal workers were in Takayama. Each district of the town has its own *yatai*, and the craftsmen held nothing back when constructing them, aiming to make the most glorious float of them all! You can really appreciate the exquisite craftsmanship when seeing the floats up close. Other highlights of the Takayama Festival are the *karakuri* marionette performances that are featured on some of the floats and the night festival, which gives you a chance to marvel at the *yatai* in an entirely different light; adorned with hundreds of glowing lanterns, each float takes on a different aura during this night festival, which is not to be missed! You will see hundreds of people in Edo period attire, so making your way to the Takayama Festival is just like stepping back in time!

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

SPOTLIGHT

Sarubobo

One of the most famous and most popular souvenirs of Gifu Prefecture is the *sarubobo* doll; it originated here in Hida Takayama and you will find it almost everywhere you go in the area. The name *sarubobo* was created by combining the Japanese word for monkey: "saru," with the word from the local Hida dialect for baby: "bobo" (the red face of the doll also reminded people of that of a Japanese macaque). Thus, the name *sarubobo* came to be. Since times of old, the color red was thought to have the power to ward off evil spirits and to stave off epidemic diseases, so *sarubobo* dolls have historically been used as protective charms. The people of Takayama would make the dolls and give them to loved ones in order to protect their children or to wish for a good marriage match or a safe childbirth. Of course, *sarubobo* are exceedingly cute and unique, making them popular items to bring back home regardless of the deeper meaning that they possess!



Detailed MAP ▶ <http://www.hida.jp/english/practical-guide/mapdownload-pamphlet>

[TAKAYAMA] 高山



1 Takayama Morning Market 朝市



Back in the Edo period, rice and flower markets were held in Takayama, laying the foundation for the morning markets that would eventually emerge and become a fixture of the Takayama experience. It was after the establishment of these first markets that farmers began to bring vegetables and other fruits of their labor to be sold, and from then on the scale of the markets only continued to grow. At present, there are two separate morning markets that open every day in Takayama, one along the Miyagawa River and one in the plaza in front of the Takayama Jinya. At each of these locations, around 40 ~ 50 stalls are set-up, though that number may decrease significantly during the winter or on rainy days. Among the products you can buy here are freshly picked fruits and

vegetables, pickled goods and Japanese sweets, flowers, folkcraft goods, and more! Coming to the morning market is also a nice way to interact with the locals and learn a bit about them and their culture.

📍 Miyagawa Market: Shimo-sannomachi, Takayama City; Jinya Plaza Market: 1-5 Hachiken-machi, Takayama City
🕒 7 am ~ 12 pm (November ~ March: 8 am ~ 12 pm) 🚫 None 📍 Takayama Station → [10-minute walk]
✉ nakabashi.info@gmail.com (Nakabashi Tourist Information)
🌐 <http://www.hida.jp/english/activities/sightseeing-information/morning-market>



2 Takayama Jinya 国史跡 高山陣屋



As a domain under the direct control of the Tokugawa shogunate during the Edo period, Takayama was home to a magistrate, or governor, sent from the capital of Edo to administer the rule of government in Hida Province. The Takayama Jinya, a historical government house, is where this magistrate lived and worked. Along with conducting legal trials and sentencing criminals, one of the main duties of the magistrate and his subordinates was collecting taxes, which in that time came in the form of barrels of rice. Thus we have the rice storehouse located right next to the main building, which is one of the largest such storehouses in all of Japan. Because of the economic influence of the Hida area, with its abundant forest and natural metal resources, the Takayama Jinya was among the most important magistrate offices in the country. And of the 60 or so offices that were of that same top rank during

the Edo period, the Takayama Jinya is the only one still standing, making it truly one-of-a-kind! You can tell a lot about Japanese society as it used to be by exploring the Jinya. For example, the tatami straw mats are indicative of the hierarchical structure that existed, as the mats in the rooms where lowly subordinates worked have no decorative fringes, the mats in the rooms where mid-level workers carried out their duties have black fringes, and the mats in the rooms where high ranking officials - such as the magistrate himself - worked have colorful fringes featuring the Tokugawa family crest! 📍 1-5 Hachiken-machi, Takayama City 🕒 8:45 am ~ 5 pm (August: until 6 pm, November ~ February: until 4:30 pm) ¥430 (High school students and younger: free admission) 📅 December 29, December 31 ~ January 1 📍 Takayama Station → [10-minute walk]
☎ 0577-32-0643 🌐 <http://www.pref.gifu.lg.jp/foreign-languages/English/tourism/takayama>



Takayama's Sake

There is a saying in Japan that "where there is cold, there is good sake," which gets to the very heart of what is required in the sake production process. In addition to cold weather, clean water and high-quality rice are also prerequisites, and Hida Takayama boasts all of these in plenty. Since the mid-Edo period, sake production has flourished in this town, and while many more breweries used to exist in the past, there are still a number that continue to this day. Each brewery produces its own unique sake, which visitors can sample and/or purchase when they stop in for a peek. Japanese sake is made during the winter months, and throughout this period, Takayama's breweries open their doors to the public and show visitors where all the magic happens. From mid-January to late February, they take turns offering these "Sake Brewery Tours," with one brewery every week holding them. Getting to see where sake is made is a rare opportunity, so be sure not to pass up this chance if you come to Takayama in the winter!



Munch While You Stroll!



Of the many ways to enjoy the old quarter of Takayama, a highly recommended one is to sample some of the many foods available at stalls and in shops while exploring the area on foot! Hida beef, for example, is available in many different shapes and forms, from *gyukushi* grilled skewers to *gyuman* beef-filled steamed rice buns to mostly-uncooked Hida beef sushi! You can also get delicious *mitarashi dango* - sticky rice balls skewered and painted with a sweet soy sauce - and a free taste of fragrant, concentrated miso soup at a miso shop. Finally, there's nothing quite like ice cream on a hot summer's day, so whatever the season, be sure to satisfy your taste buds as you stroll the town!



3 Hida Kokubun-ji Temple 飛騨国分寺



The oldest temple in Takayama City, Hida Kokubun-ji Temple is worth a visit...even if you don't actually enter the temple! The Main Hall of the temple, over 1,200 years old, is a designated national Important Cultural Property, and adjacent to that is a three-story pagoda that is a prefectural Important Cultural Property. But perhaps most stunning is the massive ginkgo tree set within the temple grounds opposite the pagoda, said to be 1,200 years old itself. A designated Natural Monument of Japan, this tree shows a different side of itself every season, especially during the fall when it turns a brilliant yellow. 📍 1-83 Sowa-machi, Takayama City 🕒 9 am ~ 4 pm 📄 ¥300 (Middle and elementary school students: ¥250) 📅 December 31 ~ January 1 📍 Takayama Station → [5-minute walk] ☎ 0577-32-1395 🌐 [http://hidakokubunji.jp\(JPN\)](http://hidakokubunji.jp(JPN))



4 Kusakabe Folk Museum 日下部民藝館



Representative of the typical construction of merchants' houses in the Edo period, the Kusakabe Folk Museum has been designated a national Important Cultural Property. Its architectural beauty is such that American oil magnate John D. Rockefeller reportedly desperately wanted to buy the house and transport it back to the United States!

📍 1-52 Oshin-machi, Takayama City 🕒 9 am ~ 4:30 pm (December ~ February: until 4 pm) 📄 ¥500 (Middle and elementary school students: ¥300) 📅 December ~ February: Tuesday 📍 Takayama Station → [20-minute walk] ☎ 0577-32-0072 🌐 <http://www.kusakabemingeikan.com/english.html>



🎁 ¥50 off admission fee (No expiration date)



Takayama Ramen

Said to have originated in street stalls long ago, Takayama ramen is a unique kind of ramen cherished by the locals. Also known by the name "*chuka soba*," which means "Chinese buckwheat noodles," Takayama ramen is actually not made out of buckwheat and is therefore NOT actually soba! A couple of the defining characteristics of this delicious regional dish are as follows.

Light soup with soy sauce base: Unique among ramen is the process by which Takayama ramen's soup is made: the soy sauce is boiled in the pot together with the broth made from chicken and pork bones. With other kinds of ramen, the broth is prepared separately and poured on top of the noodles and soy sauce just prior to serving. Because of this special cooking method, Takayama ramen has an extremely unique quality: its taste changes slightly depending on how long the soup stock has been boiling!

Curly noodles: Compared with most other types of ramen, *chuka soba*'s noodles have more volume to them because they are wavy as opposed to straight. This means that the noodles trap the soup and its taste more effectively, adding more flavor to every bite! And finally, the curly form gives Takayama ramen a somewhat different texture than other types when slurped!

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5 Hida Folk Village 飛騨民俗村 飛騨の里



A beautiful open-air museum with lush, verdant scenery, the Hida Folk Village is home to over 30 structures that represent the various styles of houses found in the Hida region throughout its history. Including *gassho-zukuri* thatched roof houses typical of Shirakawa-go, many of these houses are hundreds of years old and were moved to and reassembled in the Folk Village for preservation purposes. Indeed, the aim of the Hida Folk Village is to give visitors a glimpse into the old lifestyle of Hida locals, and what better way to accomplish this than to transport them to a setting that recreates the original environment! In addition to the houses themselves, many old articles of daily use are exhibited here. Furthermore, you can watch demonstrations of various crafts, such as pottery and woodworking, at locations throughout the village. With no reservation required, you can also try your hand at making some of these crafts yourself (the exact menu of hands-on activities available depends on the day)! Finally, the Hida Folk Village has illumination events during the peak season of autumn and during the winter, making the landscape even more magical!

📍 1-590 Kamioka Motomachi, Takayama City ☎ 8:30 am ~ 5 pm ¥700 (Middle and elementary school students: ¥200) ✕ None 🚌 Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Sarubobo Bus • 10 min] → "Hida no Sato" bus stop ☎ 0577-34-4711 🌐 <http://www.hidanosato-tpo.jp/english12.htm>



Picture postcard (Valid until March 31, 2021)



飛騨高山 思い出体験館

6 Hida Takayama Crafts Experience Center



This workshop is the place to go for hands-on activities, as you can try mastering one of 10 different crafts (no reservation required). From *sarubobo* dolls representative of Takayama (¥1,500) to your own set of chopsticks and case (¥1,400), there is an exciting variety of items to be made here. And few things make better mementos than those made with your own two hands, so stop by here before or after making your way to the Hida Folk Village located right nearby! 📍 1-436 Kamioka Motomachi, Takayama City ☎ 10 am ~ 4 pm (Reception time) ✕ Thursday (During the busy season: none)

🚌 Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Sarubobo Bus • 10 min] → "Hida no Sato" bus stop ☎ 0577-34-4711 (Hida Folk Village) 🌐 <http://www.omoidetaiken.jp/JPN>



¥100 off an activity of your choice (Valid until March 31, 2021)



高山祭屋台会館

7 Takayama Festival Floats Exhibition Hall



This museum displays some of the gorgeous *yatai* festival floats, national Important Cultural Properties, that are actually used during the Takayama Festival. Awarded a 2-star rating by the Michelin Green Guide Japan, the Exhibition Hall is affiliated with the adjacent Sakurayama Nikkoku Museum, where you can wonder at a 1/10 scale replica of the World Heritage Site Toshogu Shrine located in Nikko. For those who are unable to make their way to Takayama during the days in which the festival is held, a trip to the Takayama Festival Floats Exhibition Hall is highly recommended! 📍 178 Sakura-machi,

Takayama City ☎ 9 am ~ 5 pm ¥900 (High school students: ¥550, Middle and elementary school students: ¥450) ✕ None 🚌 Takayama Station → [20-minute walk] ☎ 0577-32-5100 🌐 <http://www.hidahachimangu.jp/english/index.html#sec04>



Picture postcard (Valid until March 31, 2021)



8 Higashiyama Temple Area 東山寺町



Set in the mountain foothills to the east of Takayama's old quarter is the Higashiyama Area, in which there is a high concentration of Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. This area was first built up during the Warring States period of Japanese history (mid-15th century to the early 17th) by Nagachika Kanamori, who ruled over Hida Province at the time. When he built the castle town near Takayama Castle, he also decided to move existing temples and shrines to, and build new ones at, the foot of the mountain, modeling the area after the Higashiyama district of Kyoto from which it gets its name. Each and every temple and shrine has a long and distinguished history, and many important people with connections to Takayama are buried here. Located a short distance away from the center of town, the Higashiyama Temple Area is a very quiet place steeped in nature where you can enjoy a tranquil stroll, appreciating the beauty of the temples lining the walking path. Designated an Important Cultural Property of both the prefecture and the city, the Higashiyama Area represents another beautiful side of Takayama and is, along with the old quarter, a central reason as to why Takayama is known as a "Little Kyoto."

📍 Tensho-ji-machi and elsewhere, Takayama City 🚌 Takayama Station → [20-minute walk] ✕ nakabashi.info@gmail.com (Nakabashi Tourist Information) 🌐 <http://www.jp/english/activities/sightseeing-information/higashiyama-temple-area-higashiyama-walking-course>



9 Forests of Goshikigahara 五色ヶ原の森



Located at the southern edge of the Chubu-Sangaku National Park are the forests of Goshikigahara in the foothills of Mt. Norikura. A vast wooded area of around 3,000 hectares, Goshikigahara is a gem of nature that was chosen as one of the "Gifu Brand New Treasures." For many years, Goshikigahara remained untouched by human hands, thereby preserving its lush natural environment and biological diversity. Visitors can enjoy a trek through and along the many mountain streams, wetlands, and moors that dot the area under the supervision of the local guides. From early summer to late autumn, come experience the beauty of Gifu Prefecture's wild natural environment here in Goshikigahara! Reservations required at least 10 days in advance. Time required: 8 hours (Including time for lunch and breaks)

📍 471-3 Nyukawa-cho Kute, Takayama City ☎ 7 am ~ 4 pm ¥9,000 ✕ Wednesday, November 1 ~ May 19 🚌 Takayama Station → [Taxi • 30 min] ☎ 0577-79-2280 🌐 <http://www.hida.jp/english/activities/sightseeing-information/goshikigahara-plateau>



Hida Beef



Hida beef is a designation awarded to Japanese Black cattle of the highest quality that is bred in the Hida region of Gifu Prefecture and that meets the strictest of standards. Recognized as Japan's best beef multiple times, the name "Hida beef" is synonymous with succulent taste and exquisite, marbled texture. The soft, pink meat will melt in your mouth and can be enjoyed in many forms, from steak to *shabu-shabu* style, which involves dipping thin slices into hot water for a few seconds to cook them. When eating Hida beef, you can almost taste the time and labor that went into caring for the cattle, resulting in this meat that is among the most delicious foods in Gifu.

[TAKAYAMA] 高山



10 Ajikura Tengoku 味蔵天国



This restaurant is run by the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan and stocks the very best in Hida beef.

📍 4-147 Hanasato-machi, Takayama City
🕒 11 am ~ 2 pm, 5 pm ~ 9 pm ☒ Tuesday
📍 Takayama Station → [2-minute walk]
☎ 0577-37-1129
🌐 <http://www.ajikura.jp> (JPN)

📺 Free dessert for those dining here (valid for up to 5 people)
(Valid until March 31, 2021)



11 Aji no Yohei (Funasaka Sake Brewery) 味の与平 (船坂酒造)



Run by the Funasaka Sake Brewery, Aji no Yohei is a restaurant where you can enjoy Hida beef and locally grown vegetables while enriching your meal with some of the brewery's finest sake.
📍 105 Kami-sannomachi, Takayama City ☎ 11:30 am ~ 2:30 pm (Last order), 5 pm ~ 8 pm (Last order) ☒ No set closing day (closed during dinner time Sunday - Thursday in the winter)
📍 Takayama Station → [15-minute walk] ☎ 0577-32-0016
🌐 <http://www.funasaka-shuzo.co.jp> (JPN)

📺 Original small sake cup (Valid until March 31, 2021)



12 Jingoro Ramen 甚五郎らーめん



At this Takayama ramen shop, the ramen soup base - made by boiling chicken and pork bones to bring out their flavor and then adding a special homemade soy sauce - is delightfully rich and yet not too heavy. The thinly pulled, curly noodles and tender roasted pork fillets that absorb the surrounding flavors add the finishing touches to this ramen, whose parts mesh perfectly with one another.

📍 2-132-1 Nishinoishiki-machi, Takayama City ☎ 10:30 am ~ 3 pm, 8 pm ~ 2 am ☒ Closed during dinner time on Sundays and Mondays
📍 Takayama Station → [8-minute walk] ☎ 0577-34-5565

📺 One bowl of rice and pickles with every order during lunchtime
(Valid until March 31, 2021)



13 Kitchen Hida Steak House ステーキハウス キッチン飛騨



With a brickwork façade that you won't likely miss, Kitchen Hida is a Hida beef specialty restaurant with 50 years' history serving the best in Japanese beef. Be sure to stop by for a truly delicious experience!

📍 1-66 Honmachi, Takayama City ☎ 11:30 am ~ 2:45 pm (Last order), 5 pm ~ 7:45 pm (Last order) ☒ Wednesday 📍 Takayama Station → [10-minute walk] ☎ 0577-36-2911
🌐 <http://www.kitchenhida.com/english>

📺 One drink (Valid until March 31, 2021)



14 Kyoya 京や



At this restaurant, you can enjoy the flavors of Hida beef, other regional cuisine, and fresh seafood shipped straight from the Japan Sea, all in a beautiful interior space that retains its 160-year-old charm.

📍 1-77 Oshin-machi, Takayama City ☎ 11 am ~ 9 pm (Last order)
☒ Tuesday 📍 Takayama Station → [15-minute walk]
☎ 0577-34-7660
🌐 <http://www.kyoya-hida.jp> (JPN)

📺 One small glass of homemade perilla juice (No expiration date)



15 Tsuzumi Soba つづみそば



Ever since its founding in 1956, this shop has been protecting the famed tradition of Hida's "chuka soba," otherwise known as Takayama ramen. The soup - created by boiling chicken and pork bones and vegetables and adding to this a dried sardine-based broth - is a fragrant delicacy that is sure to please. Unlock the pockets of rich flavor in this light ramen soup when dining at Tsuzumi Soba!

📍 52 Asahi-machi, Takayama City ☎ 11:30 am ~ 2 pm, 5 pm ~ 9 pm (Sunday: 11 am ~ 2 pm) (Or until supplies last) ☒ Tuesday 📍 Takayama Station → [6-minute walk] ☎ 0577-32-0299
🌐 <http://j47.jp/tsudumi> (JPN)

📺 One boiled or raw egg with an order of noodles
(Valid until March 31, 2021)



16 Hida Hotel Plaza ひだホテルプラザ



This hotel prides itself on its complete array of facilities, from the two large communal *onsen* baths to the three restaurants featuring Japanese, Western, and Chinese cuisine.

📍 2-60 Hanaoka-machi, Takayama City
¥ 1 night + 2 meals: from ¥12,960
📍 Takayama Station (NORIKURA Gate) → [5-minute walk]
☎ 0577-33-4600
🌐 <http://www.hida-hotelplaza.co.jp/english>

📺 Small gift (Valid until March 31, 2021)



17 Hida Takayama Tensho-ji Youth Hostel ひだ高山天照寺ユースホステル



A youth hostel located in the annex to a Buddhist temple with over 800 years of history, Tensho-ji is found in the heart of the Higashiyama Temple Area, an elevated position that offers fantastic views all around.

📍 83 Tensho-ji-machi, Takayama City ¥ 1 night (No meals included): from ¥2,800 📍 Takayama Station → [20-minute walk]
☎ 0577-32-6345
🌐 <http://www.tenshoji.jp/english/about.html>

📺 Drip coffee and tea bags (Valid until March 31, 2021)



18 Honjin Hiranoya Kachoon 本陣平野屋 花兆庵



At this *ryokan* that offers the best in hospitality, you can enjoy delicious meals brought out dish by dish and served in tableware to match the season.

📍 1-34 Honmachi, Takayama City
¥ 1 night + 2 meals: from ¥25,920
📍 Takayama Station → [7-minute walk]
☎ 0577-34-1234
🌐 <http://www.honjinhiranoya.co.jp/english>

📺 Complimentary yukata rental for those who request one when making their reservation (Valid until March 31, 2021)



19 Takayama Green Hotel 高山グリーンホテル



Combining the functionality of a city hotel with the atmosphere of a traditional Japanese *ryokan* inn, the Takayama Green Hotel is a resort hotel perfect for a relaxing stay in Takayama.

📍 2-180 Nishinoishiki-machi, Takayama City
¥ 1 night + 2 meals: from ¥11,880
📍 Takayama Station (HAKUSAN Gate) → [6-minute walk]
☎ 0577-33-5500
🌐 <https://www.takayama-gh.com/translation>

📺 Mineral water for staying guests (No expiration date)



Visit the website of the Hida Takayama Ryokan & Hotel Association in order to reserve accommodations: 🌐 <http://www.takayamaryokan.jp/english/>



[OKUHIDA HOT SPRING VILLAGES]: THE ESSENTIALS 奥飛騨温泉郷

<http://www.okuhida.or.jp/en/>

GETTING HERE

Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Nohi Bus on the Hirayu/Shinhotaka Line • 1 hr • ¥1,570] → Hirayu Bus Terminal ("Hirayu Onsen" bus stop)

MAIN FEATURE

The Five *Onsen* Towns of Okuhida

Hirayu Hot Spring:

Said to have been discovered by the feudal lord Takeda Shingen in the Warring States period (mid-15th century to the beginning of the 17th), Hirayu is now a central hub for tourism in and between Okuhida, Kamikochi (in Nagano Prefecture), and Mt. Norikura. Visitors can enjoy various types of hot spring water here.

Shinhirayu Hot Spring:

Located in central Okuhida, Shinhirayu boasts an elegant atmosphere and elaborately designed open-air *onsen* baths that are favorites of visitors to this region. The hot spring water has proved effective at relieving fatigue and wiping away one's stress!

Fukuji Hot Spring:

A secluded area that captures the charm of the Hida region even more than the other Hot Spring Villages. In Fukuji, you can also find bicarbonate *onsen* baths that will make your skin as smooth as silk!

Tochio Hot Spring:

Most of the accommodations in this village are guest houses, lending Tochio a very homely air. The deeply personal hospitality that is found at these inns and the velvety quality of the hot spring water make Tochio an extremely appealing destination.

Shinhotaka Hot Spring:

Of the villages in Okuhida, Shinhotaka is located deepest in the mountains, and for this reason the area is rich in open-air hot spring baths from where you can take in the beautiful mountain scenery. The clear, colorless, odorless hot spring water is about as easy on the skin as *onsen* come!



SPOTLIGHT

Okuhida's Winter Festivities



With its cold and snowy winters, the Okuhida Hot Spring Villages are the stage for a number of festivals and events that highlight the charms of this winter wonderland. From frozen waterfalls to snow huts and sculptures, there are many unique sights across the five villages that you can only enjoy in a region such as this. In addition, many of these sights are illuminated at night, bringing them vividly to life amongst the darkness of winter!

Major Events:

Aodaru Illumination (Late December ~ late March), Taruma Kanekori Illumination (Late December ~ end of February), Tochio Hot Spring Winter Illumination (Late December ~ end of February), Hirayu Waterfall Ice Festival (February 15 ~ 25), Nakao Kamakura Festival (February 1 ~ 14)

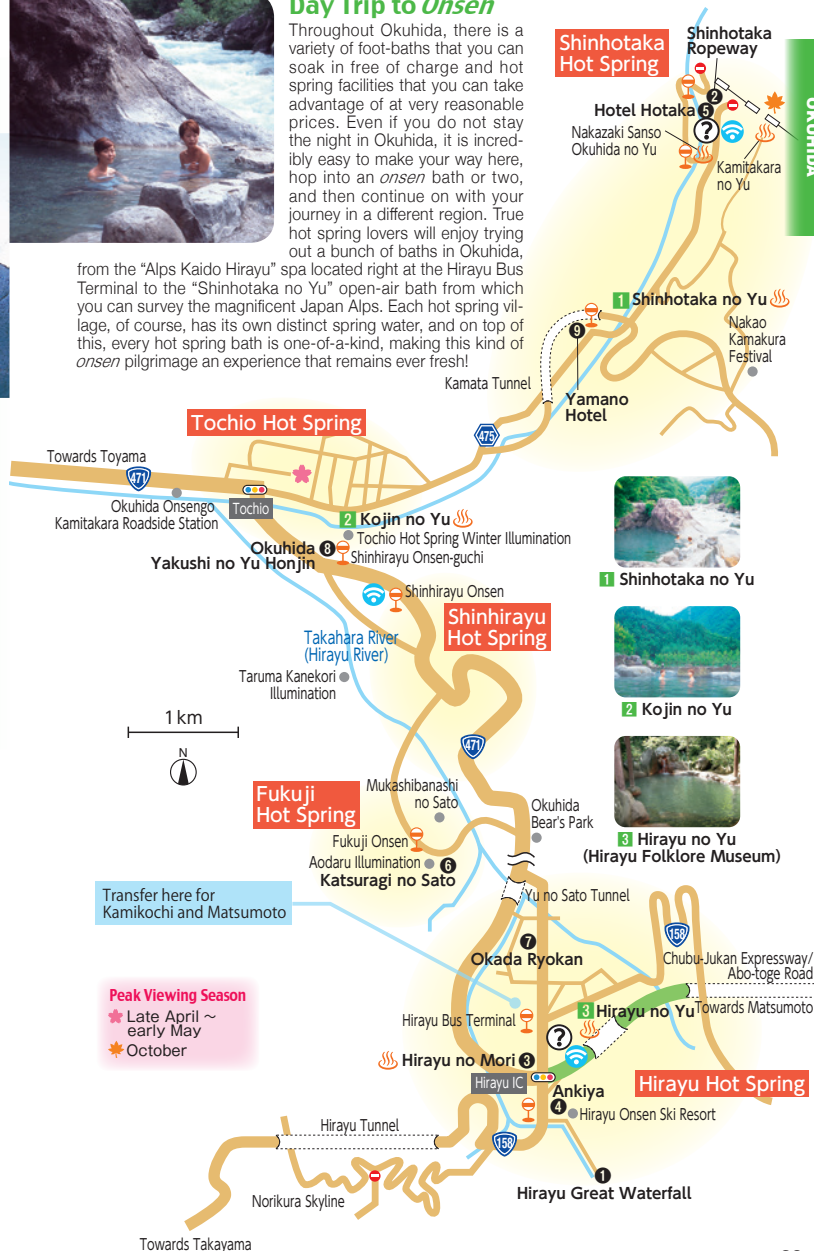
The magnificence of the Northern Alps takes on a different look and feel every season of the year, and it is this grand natural environment that encircles the Okuhida area of Takayama City. Okuhida is composed of five distinct hot spring villages: Hirayu, Shinhirayu, Fukuji, Tochio, and Shinhotaka. These villages all have their own unique charms in addition to their own particular types of *onsen* water. A hot spring area with much history, Okuhida is blessed with an abundance of spring water bubbling forth from the earth, and because of this there are more open-air hot spring baths here than anywhere else in Japan! It is the perfect place to experience traditional Japanese hospitality and the old way of life at a simple, tranquil inn tucked away in the valleys between the mountains.



Day Trip to *Onsen*

Throughout Okuhida, there is a variety of foot-baths that you can soak in free of charge and hot spring facilities that you can take advantage of at very reasonable prices. Even if you do not stay the night in Okuhida, it is incredibly easy to make your way here, hop into an *onsen* bath or two, and then continue on with your journey in a different region. True hot spring lovers will enjoy trying out a bunch of baths in Okuhida,

from the "Alps Kaido Hirayu" spa located right at the Hirayu Bus Terminal to the "Shinhotaka no Yu" open-air bath from which you can survey the magnificent Japan Alps. Each hot spring village, of course, has its own distinct spring water, and on top of this, every hot spring bath is one-of-a-kind, making this kind of *onsen* pilgrimage an experience that remains ever fresh!



[OKUHIDA HOT SPRING VILLAGES]

奥飛騨温泉郷



1 Hirayu Great Waterfall 平湯大滝



Selected as one of Japan's 100 best waterfalls, the Hirayu Great Waterfall is a 64-meter tall, 6-meter wide beauty of nature. In February, it is illuminated after freezing over, creating a giant pillar of ice that is the center of one of the region's main winter festivals, the Hirayu Waterfall Ice Festival! ② Hirayu, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Nohi Bus on the Hirayu/Shinhotaka Line • 52 min] → "Otaki-guchi • Kyampujo-mae" bus stop → [20-minute walk] ④ 0578-86-2111 (Takayama City Kamitakara Region Office) ⑤ <http://www.okuhida.or.jp/en/archives/1804>



2 Shinhotaka Ropeway 新穂高ロープウェイ



The only two-tiered gondola in all of Japan, the Shinhotaka Ropeway takes visitors to a height of 2,156 meters in 25 minutes, broken down into two trips. Unlike some other destinations such as the Alpine Route, this ropeway is in-service year-round, offering spectacular views of each season's mountain scenery. In particular, the winter view - both from the windows of the gondolas and from the observation point at the top of the mountain - will make your jaw drop! As you might expect from its high altitude, the area around the ropeway sees meters of snowfall in the dead of winter, and you can enjoy a stroll through a "snow corridor" at the top of the mountain where walls of white surround you on both sides. Don't miss this beautiful location that has won a 2-star rating from the Michelin Green Guide Japan!

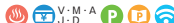
② Shinhotaka Onsen, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ 8:30 am ~ 4 pm (Times may change depending on the season) ④ Roundtrip: ¥2,900 ⑤ None (There may be occasions when the ropeway is closed for inspection) ⑥ Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Nohi Bus on the Hirayu/Shinhotaka Line • 1 hr 30 min] → "Shinhotaka Ropeway" bus stop ⑦ 0578-89-2252 ⑧ <http://shinhotaka-ropeway.jp.e.uk.hp.transer.com>



3 Hirayu no Mori ひらゆの森



A multi-purpose lodge where you can enjoy shopping, dining, hot springs, and recuperative walks through nature that the Japanese refer to as "forest baths." There are a total of 16 open-air *onsen* baths at Hirayu no Mori, making it an ideal destination for refreshing oneself! ② 763-1 Hirayu, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ 10 am ~ 9 pm (Last entry: 8:30 pm) ④ Hot spring entry fee: ¥500 (Children: ¥400) ⑤ None (April, September, and December: closed on certain days for maintenance) ⑥ Hirayu Bus Terminal → [3-minute walk] ⑦ 0578-89-3338 ⑧ <http://hirayunomori.co.jp/contents/english>

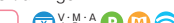


4 Ankiya あんき屋



Come enjoy some *teppanyaki* cuisine cooked on an iron griddle or the weekly lunch specials that are favorites of the locals! And the distinctly Japanese interior will further add to your enjoyment, making Ankiya the complete package!

② 768-36 Hirayu, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ 11 am ~ 9 pm (Winter: from 8 am, Wednesday: until 5 pm) ④ Hirayu Bus Terminal → [15-minute walk] ⑤ 0578-89-2755 ⑥ <http://hirayunomori.co.jp/contents/english/dining01.html>



One soft drink (Valid until March 31, 2021)



5 Hotel Hotaka ホテル穂高



The closest hotel to the Shinhotaka Ropeway, Hotel Hotaka boasts a beautiful open-air garden hot spring bath that looks out onto the Northern Japan Alps.

② Shinhotaka Onsen, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ 1 night + 2 meals: from ¥13,110 ④ Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Nohi Bus on the Hirayu/Shinhotaka Line • 1 hr 30 min] → "Shinhotaka Ropeway" bus stop ⑤ 0578-89-2200 ⑥ http://www.hotel-hotaka.jp/lg_en



Discount coupons for nearby tourist destinations (Valid until March 31, 2021)



6 Katsuragi no Sato かつら木の郷



This *ryokan* takes great pride in the hot spring water that bubbles up from the ground on the premises itself. Enjoy Hida beef cuisine in the traditional style - over an *irori* sunken hearth!

② 10 Fukuji, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ 1 night + 2 meals: from ¥21,600 ④ Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Nohi Bus on the Hirayu/Shinhotaka Line • 70 min] → "Fukuji Onsen" bus stop ⑤ 0578-89-1001 ⑥ http://www.hitou.or.jp/en/hymbrrs/hymbr_pg01.html?yc=gk155



One cup of coffee or juice in the lobby (No expiration date)



7 Okada Ryokan 岡田旅館



With hot spring baths drawing water from four sources in Hirayu that have slightly different mineral properties, this *ryokan* is a place where you can enjoy *onsen* to its fullest.

② 505 Hirayu, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ 1 night + 2 meals: from ¥12,750 ④ Hirayu Bus Terminal → [3-minute walk] ⑤ 0578-89-2336 ⑥ <http://www.okadaryokan.com/> (JPN)



One packet of hot spring mineral deposits per guest (Valid until March 31, 2021)



8 Okuhida Yakushi no Yu Honjin 奥飛騨薬師のゆ本陣



At this Japanese-style inn, you can enjoy two different kinds of *onsen* baths as well as steamed cuisine in the evening that is prepared using hot spring water.

② 208-48 Shinhirayu Onsen, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ 1 night + 2 meals: from ¥12,000 ④ Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Nohi Bus on the Hirayu/Shinhotaka Line • 75 min] → "Shinhirayu Onsen-guchi" bus stop → [1-minute walk] ⑤ 0578-89-2026 ⑥ http://www.yakushi-hj.com/lg_en/



Ticket for a complimentary coffee (Valid until March 31, 2021)



9 Yamano Hotel 穂高荘 山のホテル



With an unrivaled location overlooking the Northern Alps and one of the largest outdoor hot spring baths in the region, Yamano Hotel takes immense pride in everything it offers its guests. One more such source of pride is the food prepared in the kitchens, which overflows with seasonality and local flavor. ② 577-13 Kansaka, Okuhida Onsen-go, Takayama City ③ 1 night + 2 meals: from ¥16,350 ④ Takayama Nohi Bus Center → [Nohi Bus on the Hirayu/Shinhotaka Line • 1 hr 26 min] → "Yamano Hotel" bus stop; Alternatively: Takayama Station → [Shuttle bus at a small fee] ⑤ 0578-89-2004 ⑥ <http://shinhodaka-yamanohotel.jp/en>



Coffee in the lounge (No expiration date)





[HIDA]: THE ESSENTIALS 飛驒

<https://www.hida-kankou.jp/kanko/foreign/en/>

GETTING HERE

Takayama Station → [JR Takayama Main Line • 16 min • ¥240] → Hida-Furukawa Station

MAIN FEATURE

The Furukawa Festival and Its Soul-Stirring *Okoshi-daiko*

The town of Hida Furukawa may trump all other destinations in Gifu when it comes to the number of truly unique festivals and events that are held here. Chief among these is the Furukawa Festival, which takes place every year on April 19th and 20th. With over 400 years of history, this Shinto ritual is considered one of Japan's Three Great "Naked Festivals," though not to worry, the men are in fact half-clad in loincloths! It is also a famous "fighting festival," a class of festivals in Japan that involves much colliding and competing for dominance. The festival also includes more traditional elements, such as the parade of festival floats and the procession of the *mikoshi* portable shrine that houses the deity being worshipped.

It is said that the Furukawa Festival represents both "stillness" and "movement," with the former embodied by the elaborate *yatai* floats and the calm *mikoshi* procession. This part of the festival has much in common with the famed Takayama Festival, including *karakuri* marionette performances. But one thing that you do not find in Takayama is the adorable children's kabuki that is performed on one of the nine *yatai*. The festival's "still" side can be enjoyed during both days, but the star of the show is undoubtedly the "movement" component that takes center stage on the night of the 19th.

From 9 pm to around 2 am, the spectacle of the *okoshi-daiko*, the "rousing" or "waken-drum," takes place. It is thought that long ago, the striking of this large drum served as a literal wake-up call for the townspeople, signaling the start of the festival. Both in that sense and in the more abstract sense of "rousing" the spirits of all in attendance, the naming of this stirring drum performance is spot-on! Soon after the beating of the drum begins, hundreds of half-clad men divided into many groups begin to rush towards the *okoshi-daiko*. The members of each group - which represent the town's different districts - hold a smaller drum called a *tsuke-daiko* tied to a long stick. The goal is to get one's *tsuke-daiko* as close to the *okoshi-daiko* as possible, resulting in the vigorous jostling, or "fighting," that is seen. Occupying that closest position is thought to bring good luck, and the men of Furukawa spend all night attempting to gain and hold that position as the *okoshi-daiko* parades through the town. A nationally designated Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property, the Furukawa Festival is the most important period of the year, and the chance to be one of the men beating the *okoshi-daiko* is a once-in-a-lifetime honor of which Furukawa men dream.



Peak Viewing Season
 ★ Mid ~ late April
 ★ Mid-October ~ early November

A town overflowing with traditional Japanese old-world charm, Furukawa is the heart and soul of Hida City. In many ways similar to Takayama, Hida Furukawa was, in the Edo period (1603 ~ 1868), a flourishing castle town populated by merchants and artisans. From Japanese candles to sake, a variety of traditional Japanese commodities have a long history of being produced here. Along the center of Furukawa runs a picturesque little canal that creates a delightful scene when viewed together with the *koshi* latticed window shades of the merchants' houses and the white-walled storehouses that have long been the sites of sake production. You can get a sense of the depth of Hida's history and culture by walking the town, which is neatly arranged in an easy-to-explore grid. Most of the time, Furukawa is a very tranquil, low-key town, but this all changes on April 19th and 20th with the arrival of the Furukawa Festival, a staple of Hida's spring season that is perhaps the most electric event in all of Gifu!



Town of White-Walled Storehouses Along the Seto River

Through Hida Furukawa flows the Seto River canal, which features prominently in the center of town. Home to around 800 brilliantly colored Japanese carp, the canal gives the streets of Furukawa a very tranquil feel, with a little flair added by the reds and yellows of the fish. The canal runs beside a string of distinctive white-walled storehouses that are a visually striking background to the flowing water and colored carp, making the old castle town of Furukawa - the other "Little Kyoto" of the Hida region in addition to Takayama - an exceedingly picturesque destination.



SPECIALTY PRODUCT

1 Japanese *Warosoku* Candles

At the Mishima Candle Shop in Furukawa, traditional Japanese *warosoku* candles have been made since the Edo period using techniques introduced from China. Handmade *warosoku* are rare in Japan and make fantastic gifts. Japanese candles differ from western candles in several ways: they last longer, are made such that the wax forms concentric rings around the core, and produce flames that flicker even in the absence of wind because of how the wicks are made. At Mishima, they produce uniquely patterned candles in addition to the more traditional plain red and plain white ones! ☎ 9:30 am ~ 5 pm ☒ Wednesday (there may be irregular closures)



LOCAL SPECIALTY

2 Miso *Senbei*

You can get your hands on some delicious baked *senbei* rice crackers made using miso at the Inohiro Seikaho shop in Furukawa. They make their own miso here, fermenting it in one of the white-walled storehouses for three years, resulting in a sweet and salty taste that will keep you wanting more! They are best when fresh out of the oven, and you can get some piping hot crackers if you make your way to the shop! ☎ 8 am ~ 8 pm ☒ January 1



Detailed MAP ▶ https://www.hida-kankou.jp/kanko/foreign/en/plan-your-visit/pdf/Hida_Furukawa_Sightseeing_Map.pdf 33



1 SATOYAMA EXPERIENCE



One of the top "things to do" in all of Japan - according to Trip Advisor - a tour offered by Satoyama Cycling gives visitors the opportunity to get close to the "real" Japan by enjoying a ride through the countryside scenery, interacting with Japanese locals, and maybe even sampling some delicious locally grown fruit! With a knowledgeable guide at the helm, take in the outdoors of Hida Furukawa and learn about the Japanese *satoyama* - the ideal of a rural village existing in harmony with its surrounding natural environment - on a tour suited to your pace. ②8-11 Ninomachi, Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③9 am ~ 6 pm ④Standard course:

¥7,600, Half-course: ¥4,900 (Children 12 and under: 50% off) ⑤Hida-Furukawa Station → [7-minute walk] ⑥0577-73-5715 ⑦https://satoyama-experience.com/cycling



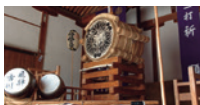
2 Santera Mairi "Three Temples Pilgrimage"



The *Santera Mairi*, held on January 15th, is another unique festival with a history of over 300 years. It is well-known nationwide as a festival where young people's prayers for finding love and for luck in marriage come true! Originally, though, it had none of this connotation, and was simply a pilgrimage to each of the three Buddhist temples in Furukawa. There are many charms to the festival, from the giant Japanese candles and snow candles that line the snowy streets to the 1,000 candles that are placed along the Seto River canal by worshippers. These last candles are either white - signifying a prayer for fortune in love - or red - representing thanks for love found during the year past! ②Central Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③From 12 pm actual time may vary ④Hida-Furukawa Station → [5-minute walk] ⑤0577-74-1192 (Hida Tourism Association) ⑥https://www.hida-kankou.jp/kanko/foreign/en/things-to-do/festivals



3 Hida Furukawa Festival Museum 飛驒古川まつり会館



Though it cannot compare to attending the Furukawa Festival in person, the detailed glimpse into the goings-on of the festival that you get at this museum is the next best thing. Here, you can look upon a *yatai* float used during the festival, see a *karakuri* marionette demonstration, and watch a 3-D video that actually brings you closer to the *okashi-daiko* action than if you were there in the flesh! This museum is a fabulous substitute that will make you want to come back to Furukawa to experience the real thing! ②14-5 Ichinomachi, Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③9 am ~ 5 pm ④¥500, Middle and elementary school students: ¥300 ⑤None ⑥Hida-Furukawa Station → [5-minute walk] ⑦0577-73-3511 ⑧http://www.okosidako.com/ (JPN)

10% off admission fee (No expiration date)



4 Kitsunebi "Fox Fire" Festival きつね火まつり



A re-enactment of a local nursery tale, the *Kitsunebi* Festival is yet another of Hida Furukawa's fascinating and alluring annual events. *Kitsunebi* is a phenomenon of ghostly lights seen at night, literally meaning "fox fire" in English, and is comparable to the will-o'-the-wisp of European folklore. In local Hida folklore, the *Kitsunebi* is said to be the torch light from a wedding procession of foxes. This festival re-creates the procession and following marriage ceremony, turning the town of Hida Furukawa into the mystical stage of a fairy tale on the 4th Saturday of September. Those who catch a glimpse of the foxes' marriage ceremony are said to be blessed with a bountiful harvest, booming business, and safety for their families, so make your way to Furukawa, get some fox-themed face paint applied, and take in the spectacle! ②Central Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③Wedding procession: 6:30 pm actual time may vary ④Hida-Furukawa Station → [5-minute walk] ⑤0577-74-1192 (Hida Tourism Association) ⑥http://www.hida-kankou.jp/event/16/article/



5 Yu Kobo Hand Weaving Workshop 手織り 由布衣工房



Cloths and garments of all kinds, dyed using plants that have long been used as medicinal herbs, are woven by hand here at the Yu Kobo Workshop. Pick up some of their beautiful creations to take home! ②5-12 Ichinomachi, Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③9:30 am ~ 4:30 pm ④Hida-Furukawa Station → [5-minute walk] ⑤0577-73-7066 ⑥https://www.yuh-koubou.com



6 Rail-MTB Gattan Go!! レールマウンテンバイク ガッタンゴー!!



Cruise along abandoned railway tracks on a mountain bike! Choose from two courses: the Town Course, a perfect choice for families that will take you through tunnels, over bridges, and past locals' houses; and the Canyon Course, a route jam-packed with thrills that will have you cruising over a variety of tall bridges and old, iron bridges. The mountain bikes are electric assisted - and there are even wagon-styled carts - so those who aren't confident in their leg strength can enjoy the ride! Due to the popularity of this activity, it is recommended to reserve bikes in advance. ②1327-2 Azumo Kamioka-cho, Hida City, Gifu ③April ~ September: 9:00 am ~ 4:30 pm, October ~ November: 9:00 am ~ 3:30 pm Registering at least 15 minutes before desired departure time is required. ④For two-person bike: from ¥3,000 ⑤Wednesdays ⑥Nohi Bus "Kyukuhida Onsenguchi Eki" bus stop ⑦https://rail-mtb.com/en/

Original button (Valid until March 31, 2021)



7 Ichinomachi Café 壱之町珈琲店



Elegant in its simplicity, this café operates out of a restored house that was built over 100 years ago. Enjoy a moment of blissful respite, listening to some jazz tunes as you savor a light meal. During your time here, English-speaking staff will tend to your every need. ②1-12 Ichinomachi, Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③10 am ~ 5 pm ④Tuesday ⑤Hida-Furukawa Station → [8-minute walk] ⑥0577-73-7099

¥50 off the bill (Valid until March 31, 2021)



8 Hida Furukawa Speranza Hotel 飛驒古川スぺランツァホテル



With immediate access to the train station, this hotel also offers a variety of reasonably priced plans that allow guests to fully enjoy the flavors of high-quality Hida beef. ②10-33 Kanamori-cho, Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③1 night + 2 meals: from ¥10,000 ④Nearby Hida-Furukawa Station ⑤0577-73-7001 ⑥http://www.hida-sp.com (JPN)

Yukata (summer kimono) rental of your choice (Valid until March 31, 2021)



9 Hotel Kikori ホテル季古里

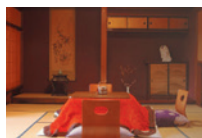


A quiet hotel deep in the mountains, Hotel Kikori offers beautiful views of the snowy winter landscape and open-air hot spring baths from which to enjoy them! Additionally, guests can use the annexed *onsen* health spa at no additional charge, making this a perfect place to rejuvenate oneself! ②1400-1 Kurouchi, Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③1 night + 2 meals: from ¥10,800 ④Hida-Furukawa Station → [Courtesy car (Reservation required) • 15min] ⑤0577-75-3311 ⑥http://www.hotelkikori.com (JPN)

One cup of coffee (Valid until March 31, 2021)



10 Yatsusankan ハツ三館



A famed, gorgeous *ryokan* that represents the best of Hida City's warm hospitality and style of living. At Yatsusankan, you can step back in time and experience "old Japan" as it used to be and as it lives on in wonderful inns such as this. ②1-8-27 Mukaimachi, Furukawa-cho, Hida City ③1 night + 2 meals: from ¥20,520 ④Hida-Furukawa Station → [7-minute walk] ⑤0577-73-2121 ⑥http://en.823kan.com

Original postcard (No expiration date)

