

Minakami

— PHOTO SELECTIONS —



Discover
your own as-yet-unknown favorite “Oasis”.

Find your oasis.




Minakami Tourism Association

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Minakami



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Welcome to
Minakami!

Welcome to Ichinokurasawa,
of which Minakami is proud.

About an hour walk along the paved road,
And in front of your eyes suddenly appears a rock face.
It is Ichinokurasawa, a symbol of Minakami, one of the three great rock faces in Japan.
Have an overwhelming view of this rock face!



【Suwa-kyo Gorge】 View of snow-covered Mount Tanigawa and the Tone River in April. This is a typical Japanese landscape which makes you feel the arrival of spring.



【Nishigawa】 Fantastic view on a foggy morning deep in the mountainous village.



【Lake Akaya】 Akayako E-Boat Tournament in May. The competition between the “e-boats” and “Koinobori (carp streamers)” flying in the wind blowing over the lake is a regular sight in this season.



【Norn Minakami Flower Garden】 One of the biggest daffodil flower gardens in the northern Kanto region. You feel as if you are on the yellow flower carpet. Really fantastic when lit up at night.



【Rafting】 Spring, when the river is swollen, is the best for rafting. Come and work together toward the goal, feeling the snow meltwater with your whole body!

World class Water Activity

“Whitewater”

Melting snow means the beginning
of outdoor season.

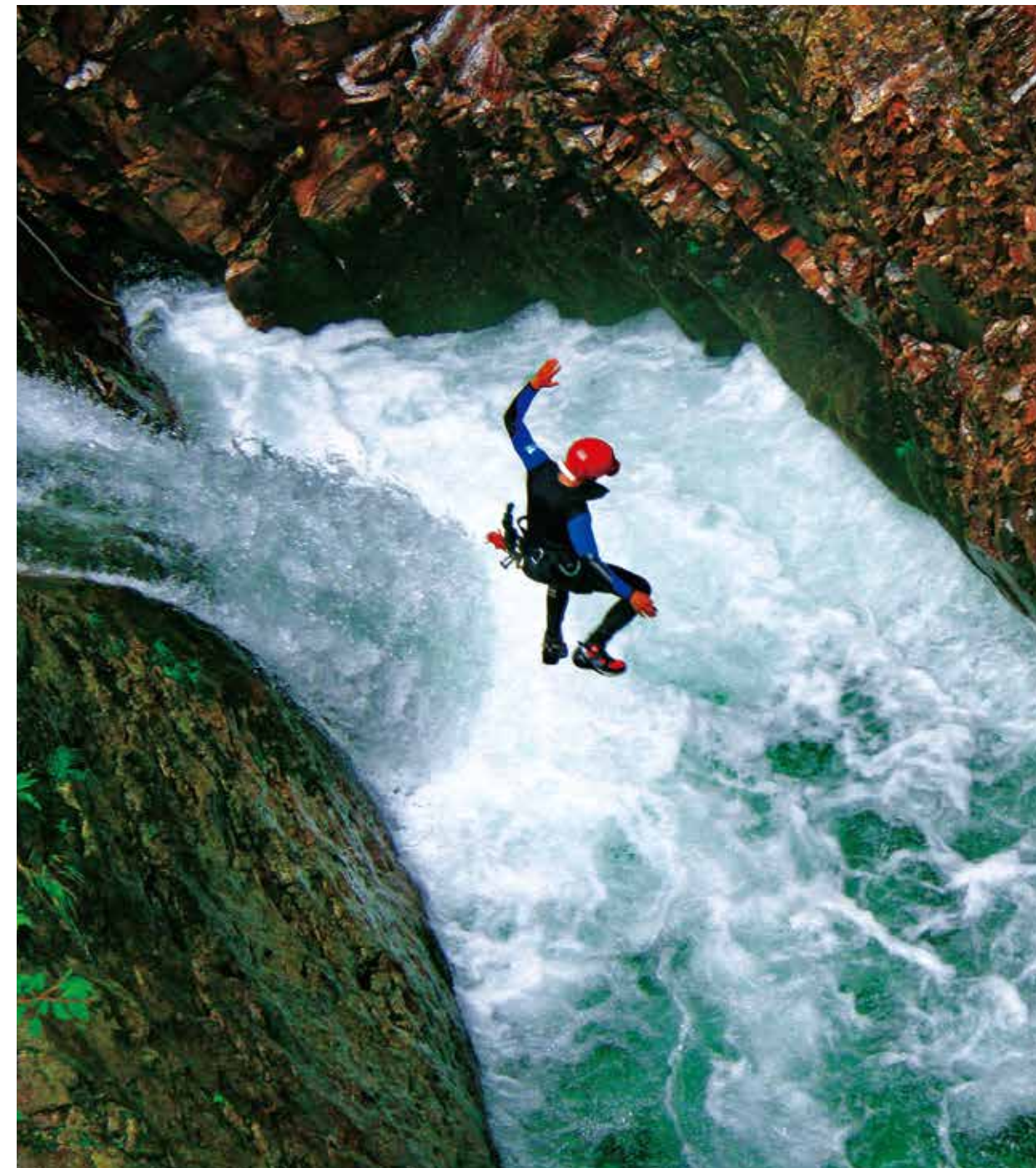
The Tone River, swollen by melted snow,
runs very quickly and looks white.

The condition of the river is suitable for the activity called
“whitewater rafting”. It’s time for this activity.

Now, have the guts to dive in!



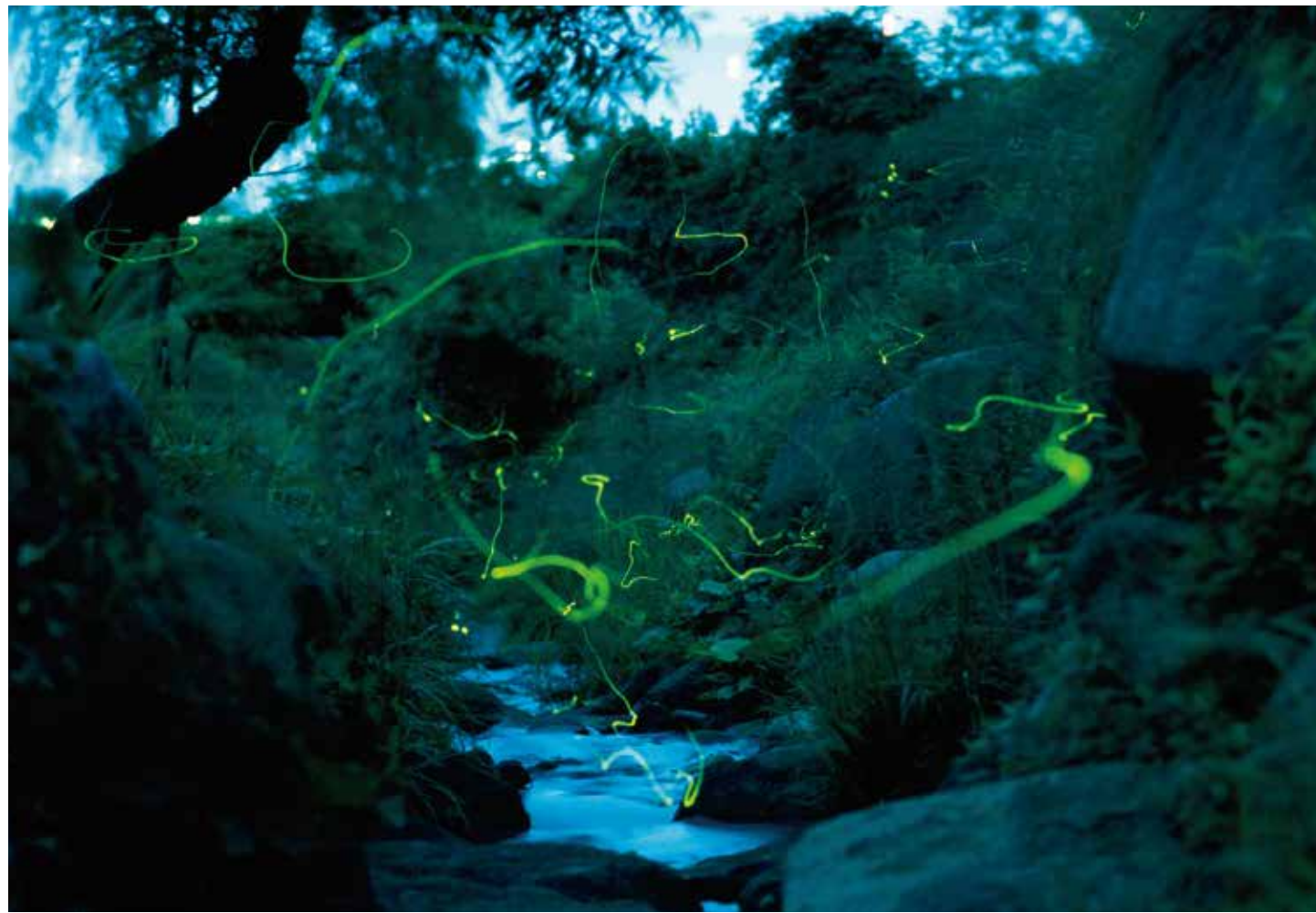
【Bungee Jumping】 Don’t hesitate to jump! Get the ultimate thrill and enjoy the stunning view!



【Canyoning】 Natural water slider and jump into the waterfall are nothing but refreshing.
Feel the nature of Minakami with your whole body!



【Hydrospeeding】 It’s really thrilling to slide down the river on the body board with your eyes at almost the same level as the water surface. And far more thrilling when the river is swollen!



【Tsukiyono Hotaru no Sato】 June is the time when you can watch fireflies dancing. You can enjoy beautiful dancing lights thanks to clean water.



【Lake Akaya】 Enjoying the scenery, you can take an “on-the-water” trip on Lake Akaya, the surrounding area of which is richly endowed with nature. You can enjoy a superb view of Komagata-kyo.

Play with or in the water

The water of Minakami is really clean.
How clean? Come and see.

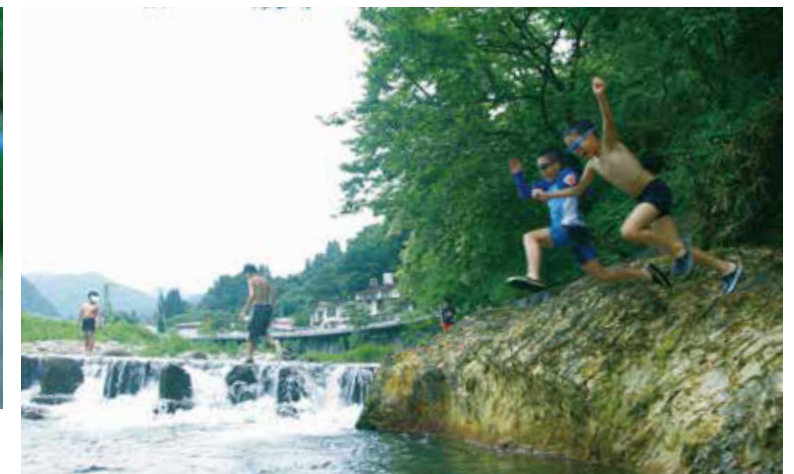
Why not come to play with or in the water in
Minakami especially in the hot summer?
Enjoy being in the water splashing from the dam,
see fireflies dancing, etc.
Rivers and lakes in Minakami are waiting for you.



【Yagisawa Dam】 In May, the water is discharged from the dam for annual inspection. You can see the overwhelming discharge of water totaling 60,000 tons right before your eyes. Soaking wet, you must give a big cry.



【Taineiji Temple in Takumi no Sato】
About 2,000 hydrangeas are in full bloom in late July.





【Waterfall to bring romance】 This waterfall, located in the midst of the forest along the Akaya River, is two-tiered and has a height of 20 meters. This waterfall has been traditionally said to bring its visitors a good marriage.



【Tone River】 The Tone River, which begins from a tiny droplet at Mt. Oominakamiyama, is one of the biggest rivers in Japan. The Tone River headwaters originating from rich nature support our life.



【Fireworks Festival on Lake Akaya】
Fireworks are shot off over Lake Akaya in August. You can enjoy watching fireworks at the same level as your eyes at Sarugakyo Onsen hotels overlooking the lake.



【Tanigawa Mountain Range】
Why not walk on the long ridgeline seeing the beautiful landscape?

Green to Red

Enjoy seasonal changes from
fresh greenery to autumn foliage.

There are a lot of famous mountains in Minakami, including Mt. Tanigawa, one of the 100 top mountains in Japan. You can enjoy seasonal changes here. A lot of people enjoy trekking on the mountain ridges on the prefectural border of Gunma as the course of the “Gunma Kenkyo Ryosen Trail”.



【Tanigawa Mountain Range】
A panoramic view of wild nature and landscape will take away your tiredness from mountaineering.



【Tanigawa Mountain Range】Ridgeline stretching from Katanokoya to Mantaro Mountain. Climbers can enjoy seasonal changes here.



【Hosobahinausuyukiso (Leontopodium fauriei var. angustifolium)】
Rare flower only seen in Mt. Tanigawa and Mt. Shibutsu.



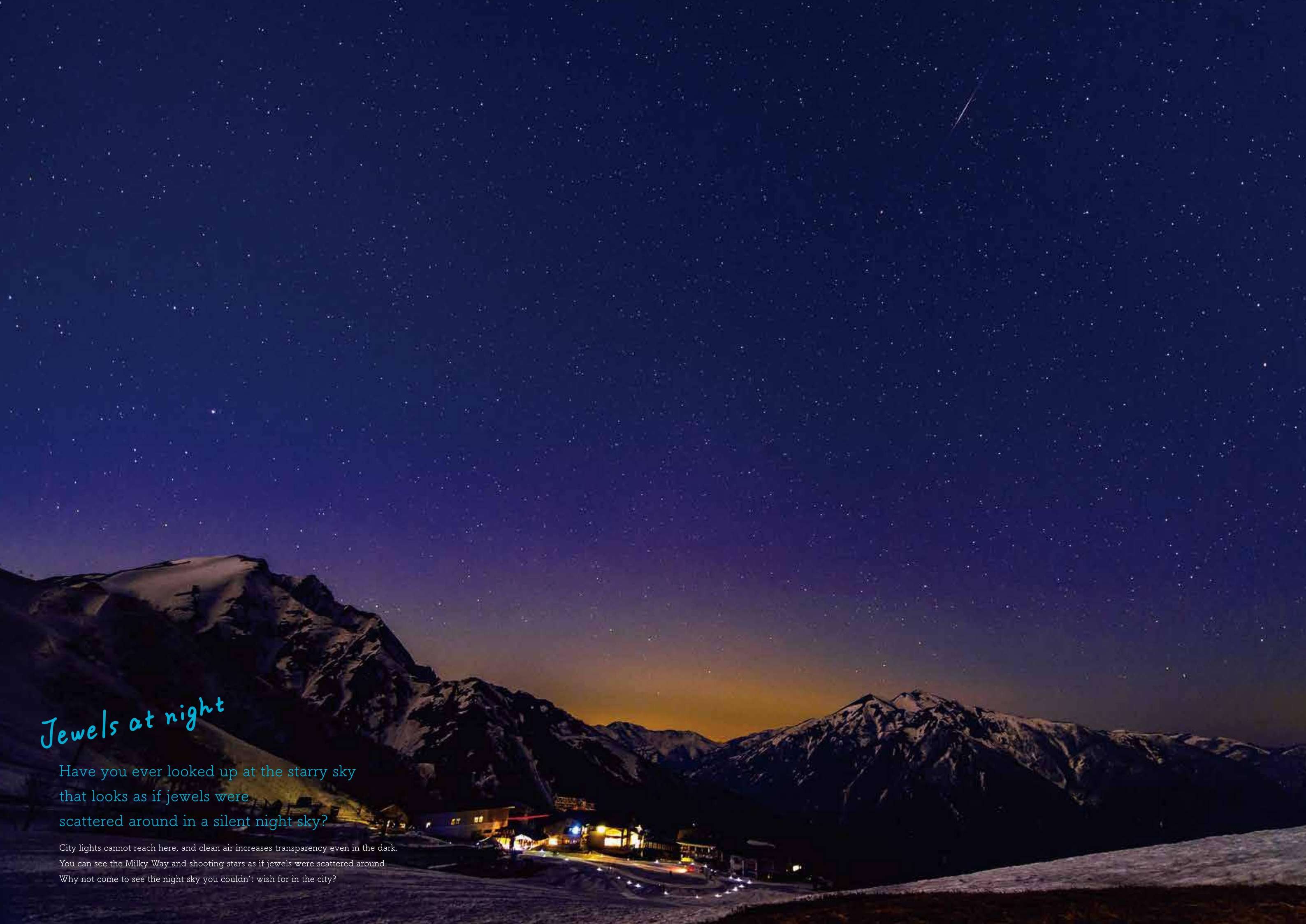
【Shimotsukeso (Filipendula multijuga Maxim.)】
This flower is often called “Highland Queen”.



【Near the Mountaintop】Even children can have a good time with an experienced guide.



【Tanigawa Mountain Range】
In autumn, the ridgeline whose color changes from green to red is definitely beautiful beyond description.



Jewels at night

Have you ever looked up at the starry sky
that looks as if jewels were
scattered around in a silent night sky?

City lights cannot reach here, and clean air increases transparency even in the dark.
You can see the Milky Way and shooting stars as if jewels were scattered around.
Why not come to see the night sky you couldn't wish for in the city?



【Lake Okutone】 In October, canoeing in the lake surrounded by pristine nature. Enjoy this beautiful landscape called “Little Canada”.



The SL Gunma Minakami runs from April until December.

【SL】 The SL train running in autumn leaves is good to ride, good to watch and good to take pictures of.



【Tanigawadake Ropeway】 Riding on the ropeway bound for Tenjindaira enables you to enjoy the contrast between the autumn foliage and the blue sky in a great panoramic view.



Snow Activity

“JAPOW (JAPAN POWDER)” admired by the world

Why not enjoy the best powder snow?

The powder snow in Japan = JAPOW = is now attracting people from all over the world.

Ideal snow, smooth and soft, in Minakami is awaiting all skiers.



Fulfilling Activities in Winter Play as much as you can in the highest quality snow.

The snow in Minakami is “fluffy”.
A lot of people come from overseas
to experience this quality of snow.
Minakami’s powder snow enables both
adults and children to enjoy numerous activities.
Once you experience this snow, you will definitely
come back here again and again.



【Snow Canyoning】
Canyoning in the snowy mountain.
Feel JAPOW with your whole body!



【Dog Sled】 Minakami is the only place in Japan’s main land where you can enjoy dogsledding.



【Snowshoeing】 Walking around the snow-covered world.
Just walking allows you to make a series of discoveries.



【Snow Rafting】 A roller coaster on the snow!
Everybody from children to adults can enjoy it!



【Kamakura (Snow Hut)】 A snowy region is associated
with Kamakura. Really warm inside.



【Hyojun (Ice Bamboo Shoots)】 Upside-down ice pillars shaped like bamboo shoots.
You can go and see them on the snowshoes.



Minakami 18 Hot Springs

Enjoy this bathing tour around
Minakami's proud 18 hot springs.

Minakami is where you can enjoy a variety of delicious food and bathing
at 18 hot springs in four seasons throughout the year.
Why not find your own favorite, relaxing in the landscape
that changes colors with each season?

Minakami 18Hot Springs *Not available at present

Hoshi Onsen	Minakami Onsen
Kogen Chibamura Onsen*	Mukoyama Onsen
Namesawa Onsen	Uenohara Onsen
Kamimoku Onsen	Kawafuru Onsen
Unose Onsen	Yujuku Onsen
Takaragawa Onsen	Tsukiyono Onsen
Sarugakyo Onsen	Tanigawa Onsen
Akaiwa Onsen*	Yubiso Onsen
Sanazawa Onsen	Yunokoya Onsen



Eating spree in Minakami

Nature and water in Minakami, which produce ingredients and various dishes.
Taste all of them with all your senses.



Sobadokoro Kadoya
Dedicated to serving handmade soba noodles. After being boiled, soba noodles are cooled using spring water, which is also used to grow wasabi (Japanese horseradish). This cold spring water in Minakami is essential to Kadoya's soba noodles.

Ikufudo
Reasonable menu prices have been achieved at this butcher shop. You can have a good time in Minakami's nature having homemade ham and sausage and German beer.



Amenimo Makezu
"Shabu-shabu" eaten with soba dipping sauce. This specialty is made by combining the Gunma Barley-fed Pork selected by "Ikufudo" with the unique soup stock based on the sauce by "Sobadokoro Kadoya".

OCTONE Brewing
Feel the great nature in Minakami changing with each season while enjoying homemade beer brewed with high-quality water and local ingredients.



Mogitore
Various fruits are grown here throughout the year. You can enjoy fruit picking every season and eating homemade fruit cake baked by using fresh ingredients picked up directly from this farm.



Cafe Restaurant Asima
Specialty is baked curry. Enjoy the atmosphere of European cottage style restaurant with a terrace, and also enjoy the water drip coffee which has been served since its foundation.



Hearth-baked Pizza Place "La Biere"
Authentic Neapolitan Pizzas baked in the hearth used only for pizzas. Enjoy the dough made with tasty water in Minakami.



Gin no Tsuki
This restaurant serves homemade dishes and desserts made with ingredients produced in Gunma. Enjoy your meal in a spacious restaurant with a modern interior design.



Abe Apple Farm
Every day throughout the year, you can enjoy freshly-baked apple pies made using plenty of apples grown in this orchard.

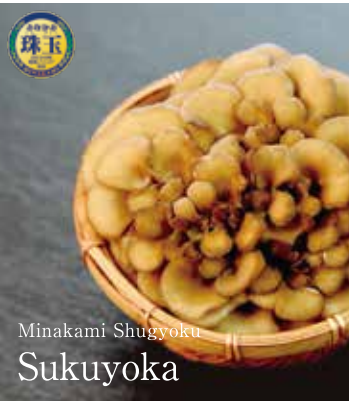
Minakami Agricultural Products

"Minakmai Shugyoku (Gem)" products certified as local brands by Minakami Town are "treasures" of Minakami, created by great nature and people in Minakami.

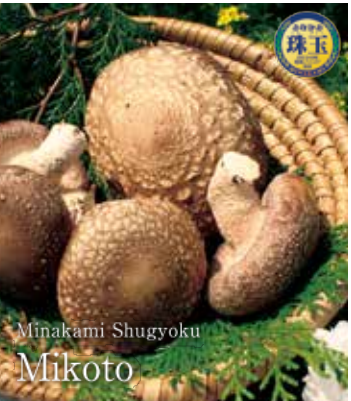
"Minakmai Shugyoku" products certified as local brands by Minakami Town are food ingredients which are assessed and certified by the committee including external experts with regard to excellent products local people make with passion for quality by utilizing local farm products and local specialties.



Minakami Shugyoku
Gunma Meigetsu



Minakami Shugyoku
Sukuyoka



Minakami Shugyoku
Mikoto



Minakami Shugyoku
Minatsukiyo

Food ingredients produced in Minakami are not only "Shugyoku".
Be sure to enjoy fruits and herbaceous plants grown with great care in rich nature in Minakami.



Strawberry



Blueberry



Mountain vegetables

Minakami Souvenirs

To your special person, together with memories of Minakami...



Nama-Dorayaki Pancake
Fresh cream and sweet bean paste are in harmony. This highly recommended souvenir is made with great passion by utilizing carefully-selected seasonal ingredients produced in rich nature here.

Where to buy: Isagoya, Fueki Seika, Osakaya Kashiten, Koarai Seika, etc.



Onsen Manju (steamed sweet bun)
Onsen Manju is definitely the most popular souvenir sold at a hot spring resort. Onsen Manju in Minakami, made with the water of Mt. Tanigawa, is characterized by its moist texture and slight sweetness.

Where to buy: Marusu Seika, Tasuke Drive-in, Koarai Seika, etc.



Jack the Tart Fantasy
"Freshly Baked Cheese Tart in Minakami" is a natural cheese tart. You can feel its special cheese mousse melting in your mouth. This is a pleasing souvenir.

Culture and Crafts in Minakami

Culture, festivals and crafts passed down in the mountain village.
Why not experience the tradition and craftsmanship here?



Horaku Matsuri (Festival) & Ookarasu Tengu Mikoshi

Horaku Matsuri is an autumn harvest festival held at Takumi no Sato. Ookarasu Tengu Mikoshi (Portable Shrine for Great Crow Tengu (Goblin)) is carried around the venue. This powerful performance is worth watching.



Shigetsukai at Gakurinji Temple in Mt. Omine

You can watch the beautiful moon which is suitable for the place name “Tsukiyono” (literally translated as “Moon Night Field”). Tsukiyono’s moon watched at “Shigetsukai”(moon watching party) is designated as one of Japan 100 moons by the General Incorporated Association YAKEI Convention & Visitors Bureau.



Unique Festival “Ogawajima Yassa Matsuri”

This is a wild and exciting festival with a history of 400 years. Praying for the productiveness of grain, the state of perfect health, and the elimination of flood disaster, participants in the festival, shouting “Yassa, Mossa, Shinjuro”, run around, walk around, crawl around the shrine precinct and cut the rope of the large bell at the end.



Takumi no Sato

Takumi no Sate is the place where you can try making various things such as wood crafts, bamboo crafts and washi (Japanese paper) crafts. Surrounded by clean air, clean water and a lot of smiling faces, you feel time goes by slowly here.



Minwa to Kamishibai no Ie (Folktales and Picture Story House)

Sarugakyo Onsen, Gunma Prefecture, once flourished as a post station on the Mikuni Kaido Road connecting Edo (current Tokyo) and Echigo (current Niigata). Merchants and travelling entertainers came and went, telling locals a lot of folktales. At the Minwa to Kamishibai no Ie, more than five hundred folktales passed down locally are narrated live, the history of Kamishibai (picture story) is explained by using a peep show, about two thousand Kamishibai stories including those before World War Two are exhibited and demonstrated, and hand-made Kamishibai stories are introduced.



Tsukiyono Yaki

Tsukiyono Yaki is a type of unique-colored pottery made by burning the bowls which are formed by the pottery wheel technique passed down for Hasami Yaki pottery and to which individually prepared glazes have been applied. The fiery red cinnabar glaze is the most remarkable of all.



Tsukiyono Vidro Park

Tsukiyono Vidro Park has a lot of attractions, including glassworks factory tour, Glass Art Museum, glass workshop experience, glass shop, and craft beer restaurant called “Dobry Den”. Have a good time and make a lot of memories by watching & learning, eating, experiencing and shopping.



Taiga Glass

Each work created individually becomes the only one glass work in the world that is unique in fascinating patterns and whose color doesn’t match any of the hundreds of colors.



Castanet Kobo (Workshop for castanets)

Tan , Ta, Tan! These sounds echo in the forest. Many of the castanets many Japanese people may have clicked in their school days used to be made in Minakami Town, Gunma Prefecture.

MINAKAMI TOWN INFORMATION.

What Minakmai Town Is like

Situated in the northernmost of Gunma Prefecture in the northern part of the Kanto region, Minakami is a beautiful town rich in nature and hot springs, which is at the foot of Mt. Tanigawa and Mt. Mikuni, and home to the headwaters of the Tone River, and is often referred to as the “Water Reservoir for Kanto”. Minakami is the largest town in the Kanto region and each area in Minakami has its own distinctive traits.



Minakami/Fujiwara area



This area lies along the valley at the head of the Tone River. You can enjoy mountains, water and rich nature actively. Throughout the year, you can have a good time in doing various activities.

Sarugakyo/Mikuni area



This area along the Mikuni Kaido road offers rural scenery and the historical atmosphere of the old road. You can enjoy pottery making in a laid-back atmosphere.

Tsukiyono/Kamimoku area



Situated at the entrance to Minakami, this is an area where you can find how local people live their everyday life. People love Tsukiyo (Moon Night) as it is named, and cultural atmosphere and nature are in harmony.

MINAKAMI BIOSPHERE RESERVE.



Town – home to the headwaters of the Tone River, and “UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (also known here as UNESCO Eco Park)” nurturing water, forests and people

We must leave the natural environment and landscape, which are the greatest regional treasures, and a lot of “gifts” from forests, including water, to our children who will build the future of Minakami. We are aiming to maintain the status of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve which nurtures “people” with abilities to nurture water and forests, and “protect, utilize and spread” them in order to build a sustainable town where people can live in harmony with nature while being grateful to the natural environment which has been protected with great care.



Overview

Minakami UNESCO Biosphere Reserve consists mainly of Minakami Town, which is situated in the northernmost of Gunma Prefecture, and partly of adjacent Uonuma City, Minami Uonuma City and Yuzawa Town of Niigata Prefecture. It has a total area of 91,368 hectares (more than 90% of the area is occupied by forests) and is about 300 to 2000 meters high. This area is situated in the upper-most part of the Tone River, which is Japan’s representative great river with a length of 322 km (the second longest in Japan), and a drainage area of 16,840mi (the largest in Japan). From this area originates the first drop of the water which supports the lives and livelihood of 30 million people, about 80% of those who live in the metropolitan area (around Tokyo, capital of Japan) which is one of the largest economic and most populous areas in the world.



Characteristics

The mountain ridge bordering Gunma Prefecture and Niigata Prefecture is the mountainous backbone where the atmosphere on the Pacific Ocean side clashes with that on the Sea of Japan side, that is, the central divide. This area is one of the world’s heaviest snowfall areas. Mainly due to the effects of heavy snowfall in winter, the mountainous region has a variety of distinctive land features such as nivation hollows, floodplains, river terraces, in addition to steep rocky cliffs and bare rock surfaces, and land features peculiar to heavy snowfall belts, such as periglacial landform. Traces of glaciers have also been found despite the region being less than 2,000 meters high. These unique landscape and geological factors, together with the fact that this region is in the transitional zone of climate conditions between the Sea of Japan side and the Pacific Ocean side, have nurtured various rare animals and plants, creating a unique ecosystem.



Annual Schedule of Events in Minakami

April

- Norn Minakami Flower Garden
- Dai Dai Kagura (Shinto music and dancing) Spring Festival at Sarugakyo/Aimata
- Noyaki (open burning) in Uenohara Kayaba, a special spring feature
- Koinobori (carp streamers) over Lake Akaya



July

- Evening for Fireflies at Takumi no Sato
- Tanigawadake Week (starting the season of climbing Mt. Tanigawa)
- Catching of Trout



May

- Sakura-no-sato (cherry blossom land) Festival at Minakami/Fujiwara
- Starting the season of climbing Mt. Omine and praying for safety
- Akayako E-Boat Tournament
- Large volume of water discharged from Minakami’s three dams during the spring inspection
- Tenku no Night Cruising
- Minakami Outdoor Festival



August

- Fireworks Festival on Lake Fujiwara
- Fireworks Festival on Lake Akaya in Sarugakyo
- DESCENT Lake Fujiwara Marathon
- Event on Mountain Day



June

- Minakami Candle Night on the day of the summer solstice
- Tanigawadake Week
- Evening for Fireflies in Tsukiyono
- Starting the season of climbing Mt. Joshu Hotakayama.



September

- Cosmos Flower Garden at Fujiwara Snow & Spa Resort
- “Shigetsukai”, moon watching party in Tsukiyono
- Minakami’s Unique Festival “Yassa Matsuri”
- Oide Matsuri (Festival) at Minakami Onsen
- Tenku no Night Cruising



October

- Cosmos Flower Garden at Fujiwara Snow & Spa Resort
- Horaku Matsuri (Festival) & Ookarasu Tengu Mikoshi
- Uesugi Kenshin Musha Gyoetsu (Samurais Procession Festival) on the Mikuni Kaido Road
- Tenku no Night Cruising



November

- Straw Art Festival at Takumi no Sato
- Minakami Walk in Takumi no Sato
- Sarugakyo Sekisho (border checkpoint) Matsuri



December

- Takumi no Sato Christmas Torch Night
- Minakami Candle Night on the day of the winter solstice



January

- Tanigawadake Ichinokurasawa Snowshoeing
- Minakami SnowShoe Festival



February

- Tanigawadake Ichinokurasawa Snowshoeing with a Mountain Guide

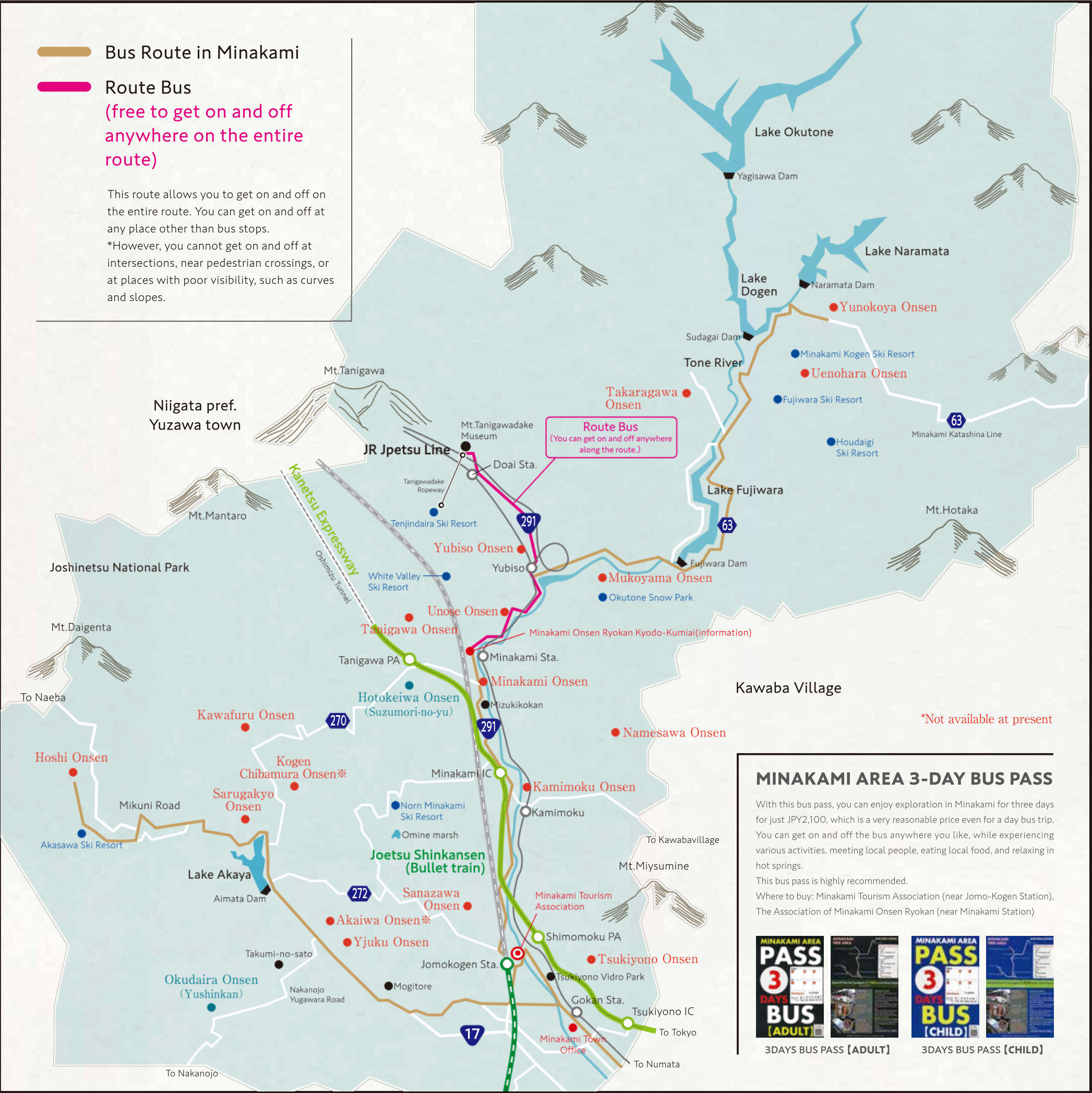


March

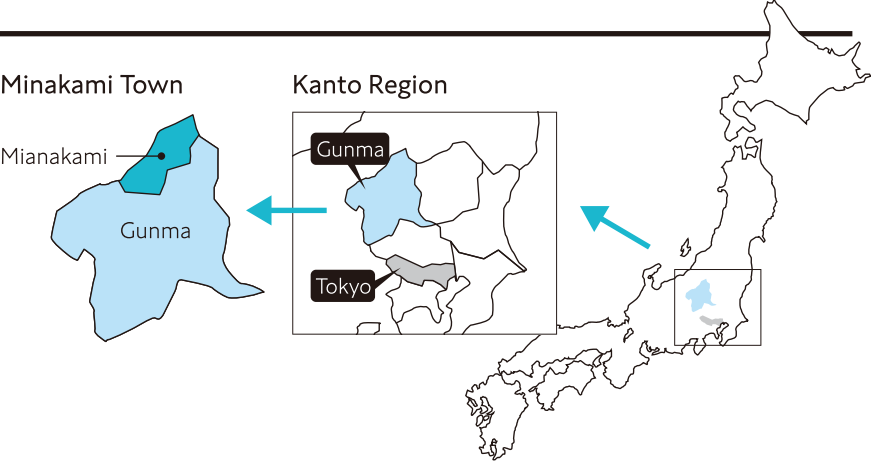
- Spring Festival for Mozaemon Jizoson (for commemoration of Mozaemon, who saved the lives of local farmers at the sacrifice of his life)
- Yubiso Snow Statue Festival
- Fujiwara Snow Festival
- Tsurushi-bina (Hanging Hina Dolls) & Hina Meguri (Hina Tour) at Takumi no Sato
- Minakami Snow Festival



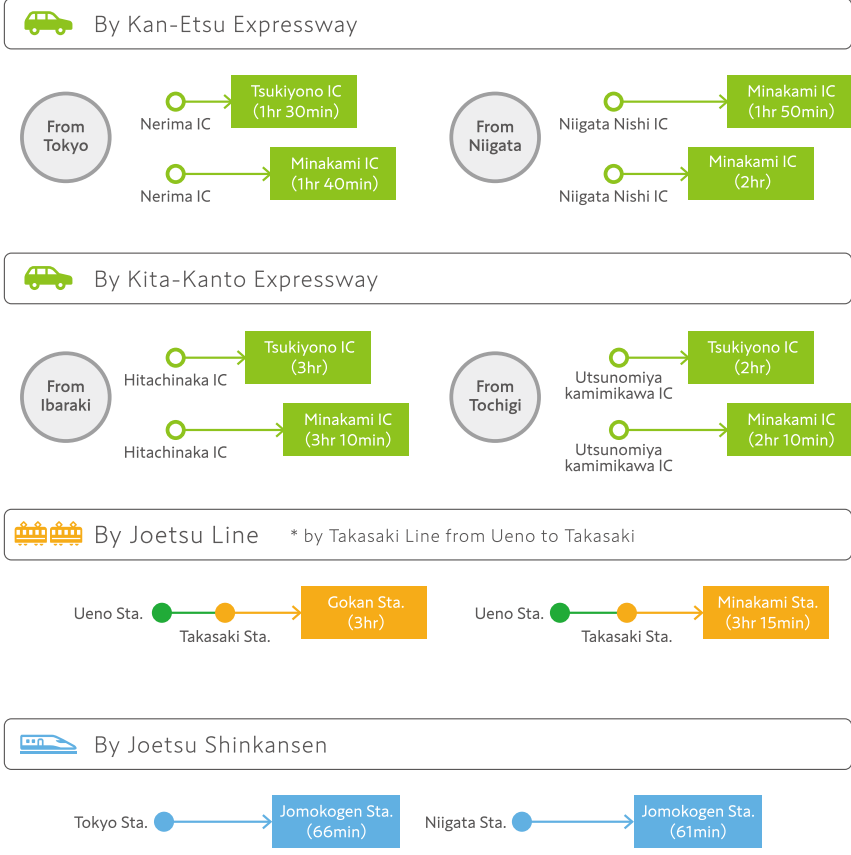
SL Minakami runs from April until December.



MINAKAMI AREA MAP.



Access to Minakami



MINAKAMI AREA 3-DAY BUS PASS

With this bus pass, you can enjoy exploration in Minakami for three days for just JPY2,100, which is a very reasonable price even for a day bus trip. You can get on and off the bus anywhere you like, while experiencing various activities, meeting local people, eating local food, and relaxing in hot springs.

This bus pass is highly recommended.

Where to buy: Minakami Tourism Association (near Jomo-Kogen Station), The Association of Minakami Onsen Ryokan (near Minakami Station)

3DAYS BUS PASS [ADULT]

3DAYS BUS PASS [CHILD]

►For inquiries about mountains and mountaineering, contact the Minakami Mountain Guide Association.

Minakami Mountain Guide Association
TEL.0278-62-0401 (Business hour : 8:30am~5:30pm)

►For inquiries about sightseeing and other services, contact the Minakami Tourism Association

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