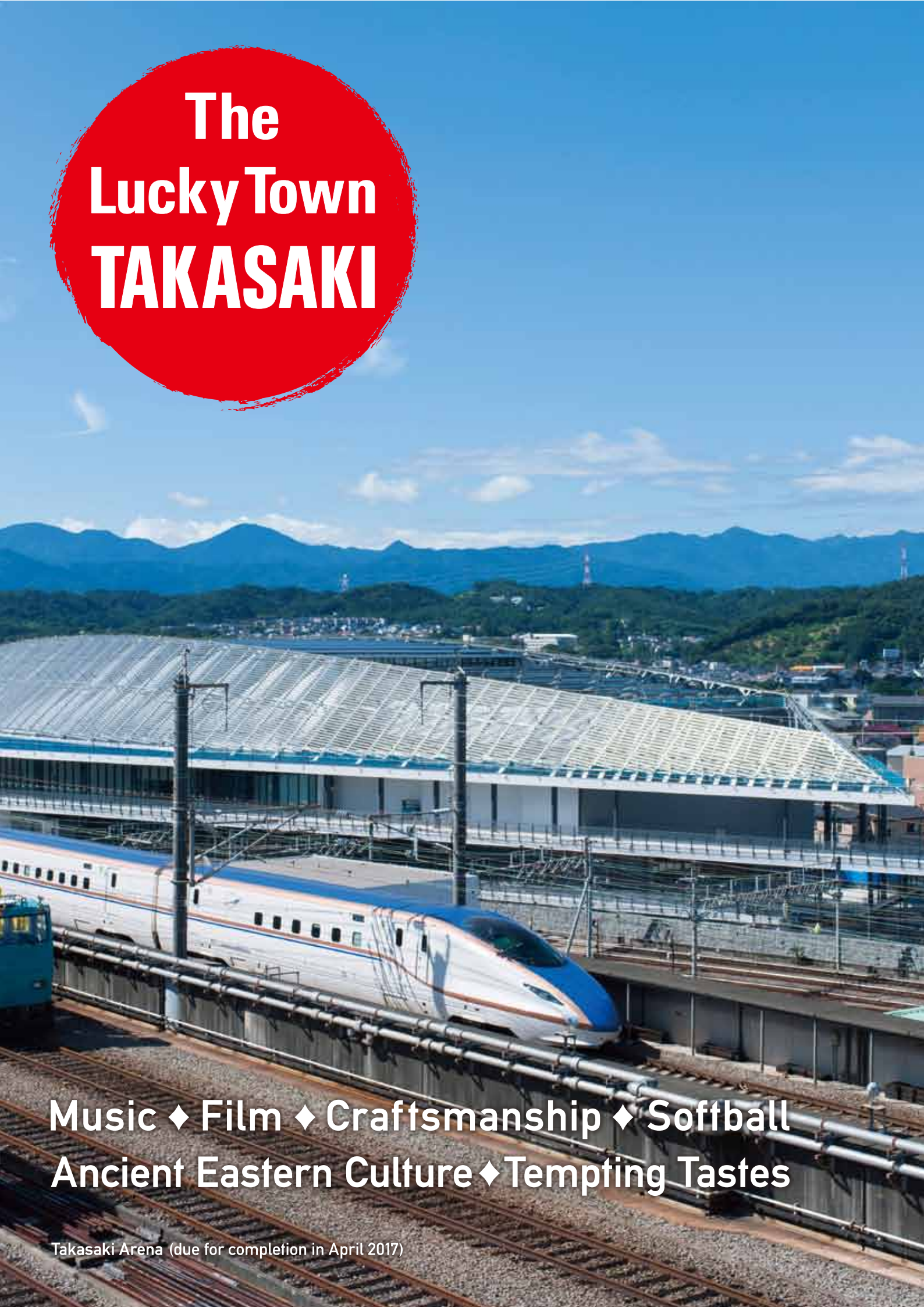
The Lucky Town TAKASAKI



Music ♦ Film ♦ Craftsmanship ♦ Softball
Ancient Eastern Culture ♦ Tempting Tastes

Takasaki Arena (due for completion in April 2017)

Takasaki, Connecting the Kanto and Shin-etsu Regions

With a well-developed transportation network providing great accessibility, Takasaki is a pivotal city in the Joshin-etsu and northern Kanto regions. Boasting first class infrastructure, a rich urban culture and the largest population in Gunma Prefecture, Takasaki is a convenient, comfortable and enjoyable place to live or visit. Outer suburbs are blessed with beautiful nature, adorned by the charms of the four seasons.

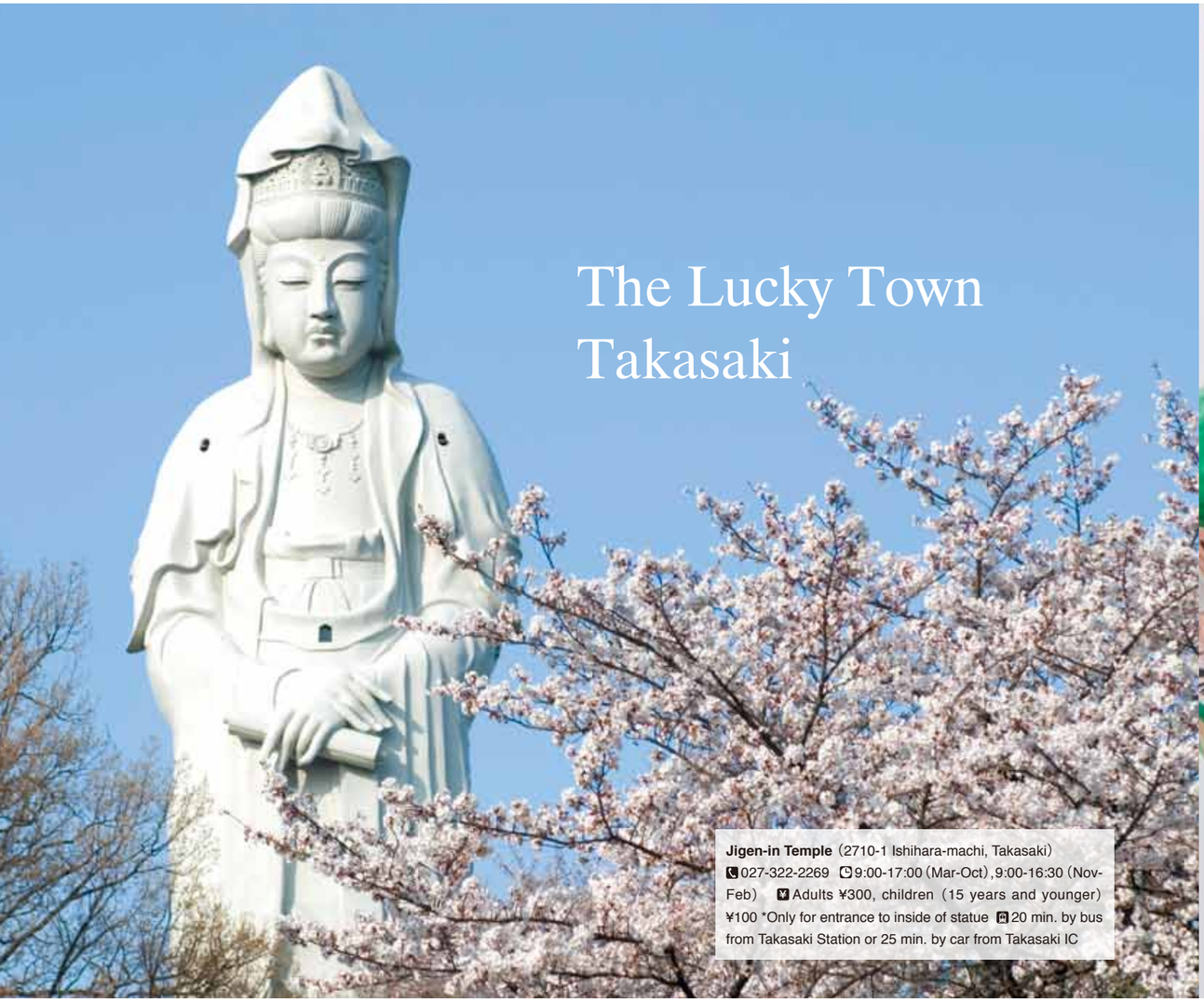
Direct access to Tokyo from Takasaki, the gateway to Gunma Prefecture 50 minutes from Tokyo, 15 minutes to Karuizawa

Takasaki is 50 minutes by Shinkansen from Tokyo or 60 minutes by car from Tokyo's Nerima Interchange on the Kan-etsu Expressway. Takasaki is a residential area within commuting distance of Tokyo thanks to direct access to major train stations in the capital via the Shonan-Shinjuku and Ueno-Tokyo lines.

Located in the center of Honshu, Takasaki is a pivotal point in the inland transportation network, with the Kan-etsu, Kita-Kanto, and Joshin-etsu Expressways, and Joetsu and Hokuriku Shinkansen lines passing through the city. Work was completed on the extension of the Hokuriku Shinkansen line to Kanazawa in March 2015, further improving Takasaki's convenient location.

Takasaki is within easy reach of the internationally-known resort town of Karuizawa. Gunma is also home to the popular hot spring towns of Kusatsu, Ikaho, Minakami and Shima, and Takasaki's transportation network makes it a base for visiting not only Tomioka Silk Mill but also the many other tourist spots in the prefecture. Takasaki Station is surrounded by numerous hotels and traditional Japanese inns convenient for both business and tourism. Visitors will enjoy shopping for souvenirs at the specialty counters inside the station building that sell locally-produced goods from around the prefecture.

Hokuriku Shinkansen



The Lucky Town Takasaki

Jigen-in Temple (2710-1 Ishihara-machi, Takasaki)
027-322-2269 9:00-17:00 (Mar-Oct), 9:00-16:30 (Nov-Feb) ¥ Adults ¥300, children (15 years and younger) ¥100 *Only for entrance to inside of statue 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Station or 25 min. by car from Takasaki IC

Byakue Dai-Kannon (White-Robed Goddess of Mercy Statue)

白衣大観音

From the summit of Mt. Kannonyama at an altitude of 190 meters stands the magnificent statue of Kannon, the White-Robed Goddess of Mercy. Built of concrete in 1936 by businessman Yasusaburo Inoue, the statue measures 41.8 meters in height, weighs 5,985 tons, measures 48 meters around the waist and 0.4 meters around the thumb. The model for the statue was carved by the sculptor from Isesaki, Torizo Morimura.

The statue is a popular tourist spot, and also known as the first stop on the pilgrimage of the 88 holy grounds of Kanto. It was chosen as one of the One Hundred Togoku Flower Temples because of the more than 3,000 cherry trees and other seasonal flowers that adorn the surrounding hills making it a popular place for locals to relax.

The inside of the statue is divided into 9 levels and visitors can enter and climb the stairs to the shoulder of the Goddess. There are 20 small Buddhist statues enshrined along the way and the top level provides a sweeping view of the city as well as the Three Mountains of Jomo, and the distant Nikko, Chichibu and Yatsugatake Mountain Ranges. In 1998 the statue was awarded the Takasaki Urban Scenery Prize and in 2000 it was designated a Tangible Cultural Property of Japan.

Loved as the symbol of Takasaki since its construction, the statue's compassionate and gentle gaze appears to be watching over the people below, protecting their peaceful existence.

The Lucky Daruma

縁起だるま

The Daruma is Takasaki's famous symbol of good fortune, easily recognized by its bold facial features of cranes for eyebrows and turtles for a beard. Said to have originated more than 200 years ago during the Edo Period, Takasaki is now proudly one of the biggest producers of Daruma in Japan. Takasaki is traditionally an area where many households raise silkworms. For such households, the Daruma is especially auspicious because of its ability to return to an upright position when pushed over thanks to a weight in its base. The Japanese proverb "nana-korobi ya-oki" literally means if you fall over seven times, get up eight, with its message being to keep striving for your goals without giving up. Silkworm-raising households think of the Daruma as a precious figure to be worshipped because of this proverb, since the "oki" word in the proverb sounds similar to a word they use to describe the silkworm shedding its skin. The Daruma's round shape is like that of a silk cocoon, and for these reasons silk farmers believe the good luck brought by the Daruma will help them to raise healthy silkworms.

Daruma used for good luck by politicians, who paint the doll's left eye before and the right eye after being elected, are almost all produced in Takasaki.

The strong winds and dry climate of Takasaki's winter are ideal for the production of Daruma. Without doubt the Daruma is a work of art born out of Takasaki's natural environment as well as from the great skills of the local craftsmen.

Takasaki,
the City of Music

Gunma Music Center

群馬音楽センター

The Gunma Music Center is a fine example of contemporary Japanese architecture. Designed by one of the pioneers of Modernism in Japan, architect Antonin Raymond, it was constructed in 1961 almost entirely with donations from citizens. The Music Center was selected by DoCoMoMo（an international organization working to conserve and document modern architecture）in 2000 as one of 20 nostalgic Japanese buildings in the modern style. Situated at the end of Symphony Road, it continues to shine as Takasaki's cultural symbol. Gunma Music Center hosts regular subscription concerts by the highly acclaimed Gunma Symphony Orchestra as well as theater and opera, and traditional Kabuki and Noh performances.

Gunma Symphony Orchestra

群馬交響楽団

Takasaki has also taken bold steps to develop in the field of arts and culture. The Takasaki Citizens Orchestra that later became the Gunma Symphony Orchestra, was founded in November 1945 in the aftermath of the Second World War. The music the orchestra played calmed the hearts of the people and enriched their lives. The movie "Koko ni Izumi Ari" shot in 1952 is the story of the early years of the orchestra. Director Masashi Imai engaged Japanese sweetheart Keiko Kishi in the leading role as a pianist, and shot the film on location in Takasaki and around Gunma Prefecture. The film went on to move the hearts of more than 3 million cinema-goers around the country after its 1955 release.

The Gunma Symphony Orchestra has held regular subscription concerts since 1946, and celebrated its 500th such concert in July 2014. The orchestra's visits to schools have continued ever since its foundation, introducing live, classical music to more than 6 million school children. The orchestra received invitations to perform abroad in 1994, playing at the Prague Spring International Music Competition and at the Vienna Arts Week.

Activities of the Film Commission

Takasaki, the City of Film

The Takasaki Film Festival began in 1988 as a continuation of the cultural pulse running through the city. It focuses on bringing high quality films to regional cinema screens. From its very beginning, the festival has been run entirely by volunteers and is now a much-anticipated spring event in Takasaki. Thanks to the Festival's connections with the film industry, the Takasaki Film Commission has made a name for itself and the city is now often used as a location for shooting and providing movie extras.

Cinematheque Takasaki

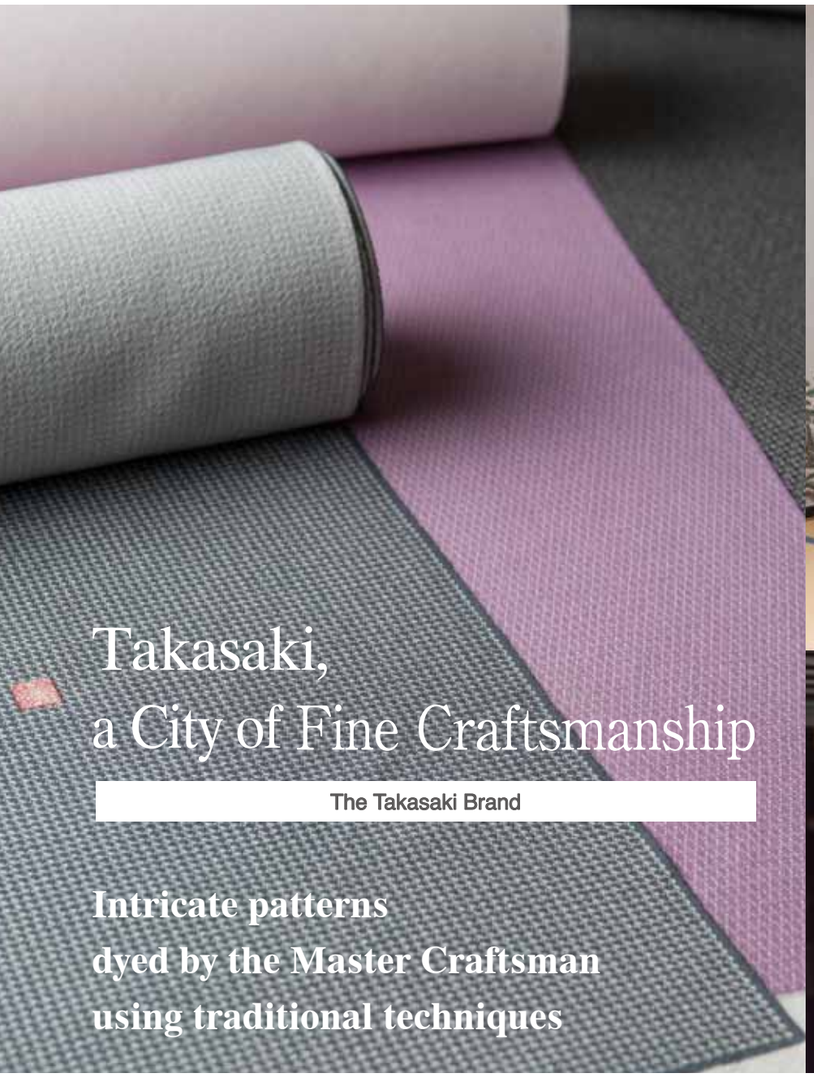
シネマテークたかさき

Cinematheque Takasaki is a community cinema that opened in December 2004 with the aim of giving locals the opportunity to watch high quality films on a regular basis. The NPO Takasaki Community Cinema is responsible for the cinema's day-to-day operation and is staffed mostly by volunteers of the Takasaki Film Festival.

Takasaki Denkikan

高崎電気館

Denkikan opened in 1913 as the first permanent cinema screen in Takasaki. It closed in 2001 but the building was donated to the City of Takasaki, and it was reborn as the Takasaki Regional Revitalization Center in October 2014. It is now used as a base for cultural activities in the central city area. Meeting and training rooms in the Center are available for use by the public.

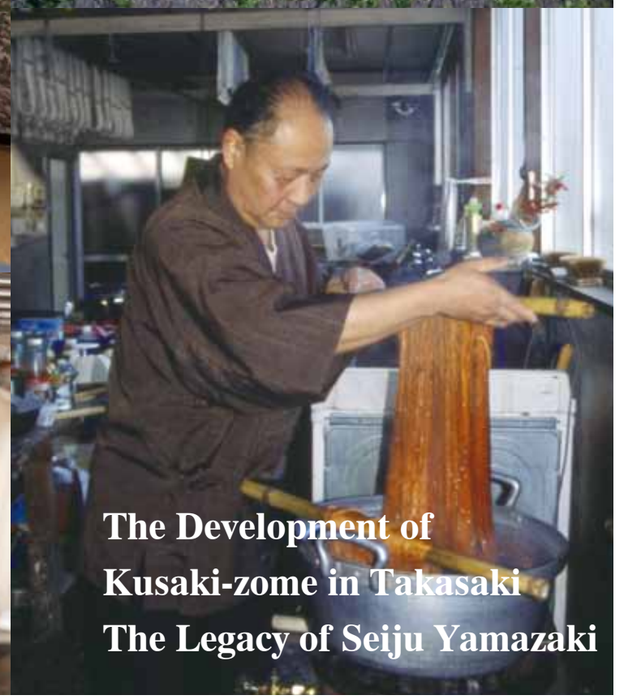


Takasaki, a City of Fine Craftsmanship

The Takasaki Brand

Intricate patterns dyed by the Master Craftsman using traditional techniques

Takasaki City Dye Plant Botanical Garden



The Development of Kusaki-zome in Takasaki The Legacy of Seiju Yamazaki

Edo-Komon Textile Dying at the Aida Dye House

藍田染工の江戸小紋

Traditional clothes from the Kamakura and Muromachi Periods (1185-1573) dyed evenly with small motifs are called Komon. Using a paper-cut pattern, the intricate design is dyed evenly over one side of a single-color fabric. This effect is only possible thanks to the fine combination of skills of the two craftsmen; one who cuts the paper pattern and one who applies the dye.

The Aida Dye House carries on the tradition of Edo-Komon fabric dyeing from its atelier at the foot of Mt. Haruna in the Ashikado suburb of Takasaki. Here, the process of dyeing is done exclusively by hand using a traditional method. “Kata-zuke” is the first step, when the white base fabric is stretched over a wooden board and the paper pattern is spread over it. A dye-proof paste is applied to prevent the dye from taking to the cutout area. Next, “ji-zome” is when the dye in paste form is rubbed into the fabric using a spatula, followed by “mushi” when the fabric is steamed to ensure the dye fixes, and finally “mizu-arai” when the excess dye and paste is washed off to reveal the pattern. The master craftsman Masao Aida is highly respected for his ability to produce the difficult striped pattern of the Edo-Komon technique, especially his fabrics with 31 or 33 stripes within just a 3 centimeter width. Aida is also contributing to the preservation and further development of Edo-Komon through his own “itabikimoku” (wood-grain pattern) and “miyama-some” techniques, while ensuring that his craftsmanship and knowledge are passed on to the next generation.

Kusaki-zome Natural Dyeing Techniques

草木染

Seiju Yamazaki (1923-2010) devoted his life to textile dyeing using natural dyes derived from plants and grasses (kusaki-zome) to such an extent that he referred to himself as the “man possessed by color”. Together with his father Akira, the novelist and father of kusaki-zome, Seiju established a research center for natural dyeing in Saku, Nagano Prefecture. At age 33 he moved to Takasaki, a city with a long tradition of textile dyeing, where he spent his time experimenting with the plants he found in the city’s natural surrounds and open spaces, contributing greatly to the development of kusaki-zome techniques. Seiju Yamazaki meticulously searched for natural colors. He recreated the ancient colors he had seen stored in the Shosoin Repository, traveled to tropical countries in pursuit of dye plants, and changed established ways of thinking in regard to fresh-leaf green dyes. Yamazaki was instrumental in the founding of the Takasaki City Dye Plant Botanical Garden, helping to select plants, hand-dyeing himself the textiles for display, and giving lectures on kusaki-zome within the facility. His decision not to apply for an extension on the registered trademark “Kusaki” that was first registered in 1932 was due to his desire for “those who love kusaki-zome to be able to freely use the technique”, and thus Yamazaki’s legacy lives on through today’s artists and devotees who are able to continue to freely use the name.

Takasaki City Dye Plant Botanical Garden See page 25

One of a Kind
The Oldest Sake Brewery in Gunma

Clear and Pure Simplicity
Manipulating Color and Shape

Makino Brewery Inc.

牧野酒造

In the Kurabuchi-machi area of Takasaki on the western slopes of Mt. Haruna, the winter temperatures drop to minus 5 degrees Celsius. The area is blessed by clean air and naturally-filtered underground spring water. Route 406 that runs north to south of here was once the Kusatsu Kaido, an olden-day road providing access to the ancient inland route from Tokyo to Kyoto, the Nakasendo. It was on the Kusatsu Kaido, a road bustling with feudal lords making the compulsory periodic journey to Edo, pilgrims on their way to pray at Zenkoji Temple in Nagano, and travelers to the hot spring town of Kusatsu that in 1690, a small sake brewery was founded. Throughout its 325-year history from the time of founding President Chobee to the current 17th President Shigemi Makino and future president Kenjiro, the brewery has continued taking advantage of Kurabuchi's climate and natural features to brew its finest quality sake. At the Kanto Shin-etsu Sake Awards 2006, Makino's "Osakazuki Daiginjo" was selected from sakes from 249 breweries to become the first in Gunma to be awarded the Grand Prize. The Makino Brewery has also been awarded an excellence prize at the same awards in the Junmai-shu (pure sake) section every year for the past six years.

Makino Brewery Inc.
Founded: 1690
17th President: Shigemi Makino
2625-1 Gonda, Kurabuchi-machi, Takasaki TEL: 027-378-2011

Takasaki Glass Maker, Akira Kimura

高崎のグラスメーカー 木村 明

Delicate balance between the soft changes of sunshine, and the air between. Glass is the perfect vessel for capturing the transition of the seasons. Glass is the image of summer in Japan as a cocktail glass under a beach parasol or a glass bottle of barley tea on a verandah, yet in northern Europe a glass object placed by the window to capture the sun's rays bringing warmth to the room is associated with winter. Fascinated by the multi-facets of glass, Akira Kimura continues to create glass products. He was one of the very first glass craftsmen in Japan and has been around since small glass ateliers first started to appear. He is also known for his creation of the glass trophy in the shape of a woman presented to winners at the Takasaki Film Festival.

Takasaki, the City of Softball

Unbeatable in Asia and a strong performer on the world stage, the leading players of the Japanese Women's Softball Team are based in Takasaki, playing in the first division of the Japan Softball League for Bic Camera Takasaki and Taiyo Yuden Women's Softball Teams. During her time as coach of the Japanese Women's Softball Team, Bic Camera Takasaki Senior Adviser Taeko Utsugi led top players Noriko Yamaji and Reika Utsugi to medals at the Sydney and Athens Olympics. Noriko Yamaji is now Head Coach at Taiyo Yuden, and Reika Utsugi at Bic Camera Takasaki. The pair now also holds the roles of Head Coach and Assistant Coach of the Japanese Women's Softball Team.

Bic Camera Takasaki and Taiyo Yuden Women's Softball Teams

ビックカメラ高崎と太陽誘電女子ソフトボール部

Seven of the 17 members of the Japan Women's Softball Team play for Takasaki teams; 4 from Bic Camera Takasaki and 3 from Taiyo Yuden. Carrying the success of the national team is the dynamic duo of star players Yukiko Ueno, widely recognized as the fastest pitcher in women's softball, and Yamato Fujita, a superb pitcher and hitter.

Head Coach of Bic Camera Takasaki Reika Utsugi, and Head Coach of Taiyo Yuden Noriko Yamaji are also Head Coach and Assistant Coach of the TAP-A (U24) Japan Women's Softball Team, focusing their energy on the development of players in preparation for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

A popular figure in world softball, Bic Camera Takasaki Senior Adviser Taeko Utsugi led the Japanese Olympic team to silver in Sydney and bronze in Athens, paving the way for a gold medal-winning performance in Beijing. Bic Camera Takasaki and Taiyo Yuden Women's Softball Teams are rivals in the Japan Softball League and through them Takasaki is inspiring children everywhere as it makes a name for itself as the world's best city of softball.

Yukiko Ueno, Player-Coach
(Bic Camera Takasaki)

Yamato Fujita, Player
(Taiyo Yuden)

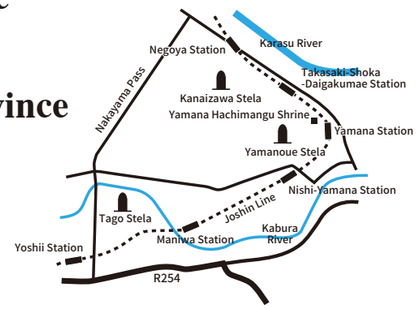
Takasaki, a City of Ancient Eastern Culture

The Three Stelae of Kozuke Province, the Yamanoue, Tago and Kanaizawa Stelae, so called because of the ancient name for Gunma is Kozuke-no-Kuni, were erected between the 7th and 8th century and are among the oldest remaining stone monuments in Japan. There are only eighteen ancient stelae still standing, and the fact that these three exist within a 5 kilometer radius in the south west of Takasaki, proves the rich culture that has existed here.

In honor of their outstanding international value and to increase awareness worldwide of the existence of this historical culture, the Three Stelae of Kozuke Province have been nominated for inscription on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.

上野三碑
KOZUKESANPI

Nominated for Inscription on the Memory of the World Register The Three Stelae of Kozuke Province



The Yamanoue Stela

山上碑

The Yamanoue Stela, erected in 681, is the oldest still-standing stone monument in Japan. Priest Chori erected the stela in honor of his mother, Kurometoji, right next to her burial mound. The existence of the burial mound along with its epitaph from the seventh century makes it a very precious historic site. From the stela's inscription it is apparent that Chori's mother although having married Ogo-no-Omi, had remained at her family home in Sano, providing an insight to the marriage customs of the time.

The Tago Stela

多胡碑

The Tago Stela is one of three ancient stone monuments in Japan recognized for its fine calligraphy. The Tago Stela records the establishment of the new county of Tago in 711. The inscription uses a mix of Japanese and Chinese character readings and grammar. The quality of the calligraphy on the stela is highly regarded for its bold, cursive shape in the rikucho style from China. In the inscription is mention of "Hitsuji", thought to be a person's name, and to this day there remains local tales about this legendary person who was referred to on the Tago Stela.

The Kanaizawa Stela

金井沢碑

The Kanaizawa Stela was erected in 726. The stela is dedicated to the memory of family ancestors, demonstrating the influence of newly-arrived Buddhist ideology on Japanese culture at the time. The content of the inscription indicates that orders of the imperial court were strictly adhered to in the provinces, and notably four of the nine people listed on the stela are women, suggesting their high social standing in ancient times. The Kanaizawa Stela is also the oldest written document in Gunma Prefecture that uses the name "Gunma" to refer to the region.

Takasaki, a City of Tempting Tastes

Blessed with a plentiful water supply and many sunlight hours, the natural environment of Takasaki is perfect for producing high quality vegetables, fruit and livestock, as well as growing wheat, and flour-based foods have been a regular part of the daily life of residents for a very long time.
Takasaki boasts one of the highest numbers of Italian restaurants per capita in Japan and has gained attention as a city of pasta, and a city of many tempting tastes.

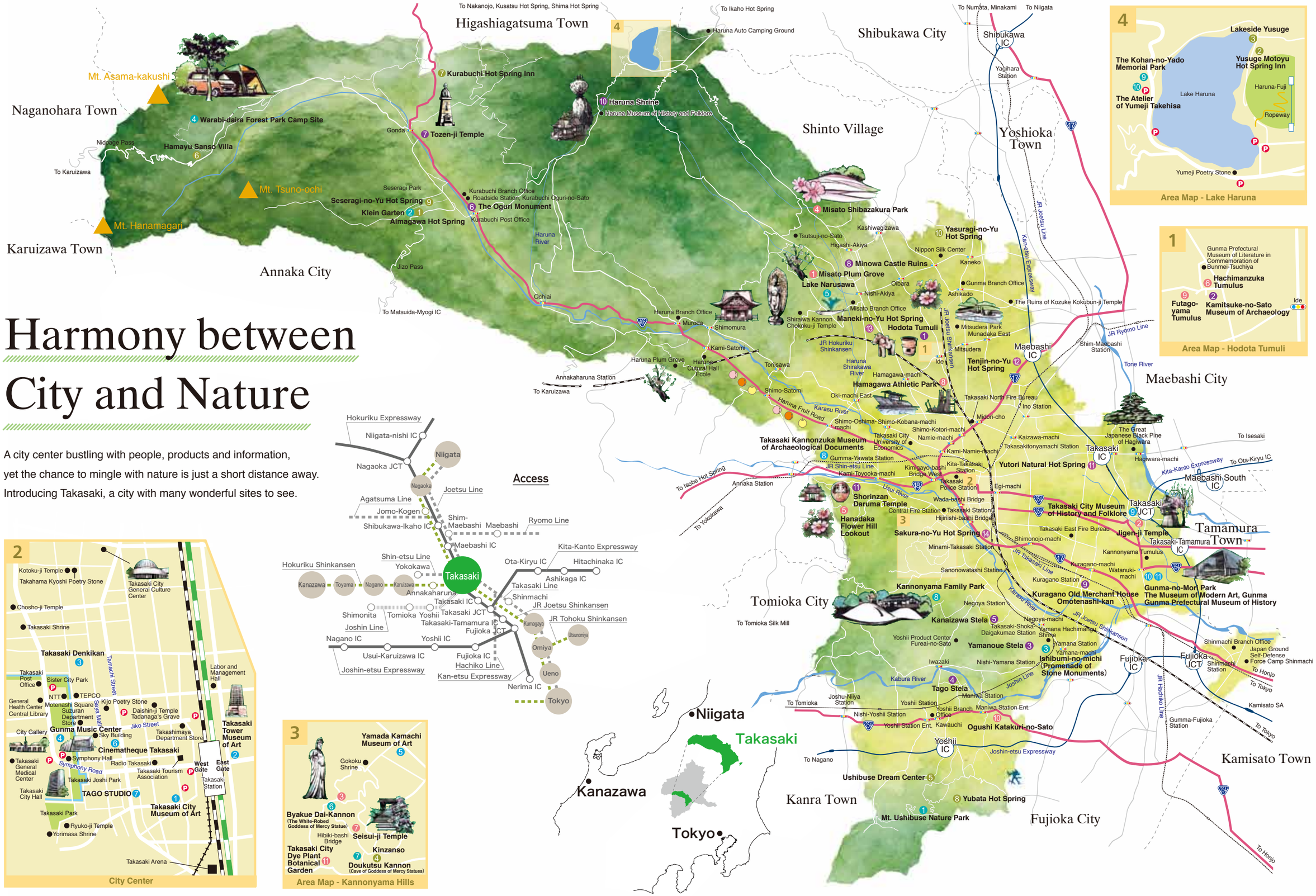
Traditionally the people of Takasaki have enjoyed eating regional specialties prepared from locally-produced flour like udon noodles, Japanese sweet buns, and suiton（dumplings in soup）. Yakimanju, the sticky sweet flour bun grilled on a stick is particularly popular, with tourists from all around flocking to local shops to taste it.
The largest meat processing plant in the Kanto region is in Takasaki, producing pork intestines called horumon, that are a favorite served in local eateries.
The Daruma Bento（boxed lunch）, Takasaki Ham, and the rusks of Gateau Festa Harada are other popular Takasaki-brand food products making up the many tastes of Takasaki.

1	2
3	4
5	6

1. Daruma Bento
2. Takasaki Ham
3. Pasta dish at Takasaki restaurant "Shango"
4. Takasaki Horumon
5. Yakimanju
6. Rusks of Gateau Festa Harada

Harmony between City and Nature

A city center bustling with people, products and information, yet the chance to mingle with nature is just a short distance away. Introducing Takasaki, a city with many wonderful sites to see.



Enjoy Art

❶ Takasaki City Museum of Art and the Former Inoue Residence

Conveniently located near Takasaki Station, the museum also encompasses the Former Inoue Residence, designed in the style of the house that architect and designer of the Gunma Music Center, Antonin Raymond designed for himself.

110-27 Yashima-cho 027-324-6125 10:00-18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays) *Last entry 30 minutes before closing ¥ Entrance to permanent exhibit: Adults ¥100, university/high school students ¥80, free for jr. high students and younger and people 65 and older *Extra charge for special exhibitions ✕ Mondays (open national holidays), day after national holidays, end-of-year period 3 min. walk from Takasaki Sta.

❷ Takasaki Tower Museum of Art

Houses a permanent collection of thematically-classified Japanese modern and contemporary paintings.

3-23 Sakae-cho Takasaki Tower 21 027-330-3773 10:00-18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays) *Last entry 30 minutes before closing ¥ Entrance to permanent exhibit: Adults ¥200, university/high school students ¥160, free for jr. high students and younger and people 65 and older *Extra charge for special exhibitions ✕ Mondays (open national holidays), day after national holidays, end-of-year period 2 min. walk from Takasaki Sta.

See page 09

❸ Takasaki Denkikan

31 Yanagawa-cho
027-395-0483
10:00-22:00
15 min. walk from Takasaki Sta.

❹ Gunma Music Center

28-2 Takamatsu-cho 027-322-4527
10 min. walk from Takasaki Sta.

See page 06

Gunma Symphony Orchestra

❺ Yamada Kamachi Museum of Art

His life cut short at just 17, Kamachi showed an extraordinary talent for painting from a very young age. His works demonstrate sensitivity and a rich sense of color.

3-23-5 Kataoka-machi 027-321-0077
10:00-18:00 (last entry 17:30) ¥ Adults ¥200, university/high school students ¥160
✕ Mondays (open national holidays), end-of-year period 15 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

See page 09

❻ Cinematheque Takasaki

202 Ara-machi 027-325-1744 ¥ Tickets at the door: Adults ¥1,700, students ¥1,400, seniors/jr. high school students and younger ¥1,000, discount for members 6 min. walk from Takasaki Sta.

❼ Tago Studio

A top-class recording studio created to give citizens the chance to mix with professional and amateur musicians. Bringing the Takasaki Sound to the world!

5-3 Ara-machi 027-395-0044 5 min. walk from Takasaki Sta.

Feel Culture

❽ Takasaki Kannonzuka Museum of Archaeological Documents

Houses artifacts designated as Important Cultural Properties excavated from the Kannonzuka Tumulus. One of the biggest in the country, the inside of the stone chamber is open for viewing.

800-144 Yawata-machi 027-343-2256 9:00-16:00
¥ Adults ¥100, university/high school students ¥80, free for jr. high school students and younger and people 65 and older
✕ Mondays (open national holidays), day after national holidays, end-of-year period 25 min. walk from Gumma-Yawata Sta.

❾ Takasaki City Museum of History and Folklore

Collects, preserves, researches and exhibits Takasaki's folk materials.

1058 Kami-Taki-machi 027-352-1261 9:00-16:00
¥ Free ✕ Mondays (open national holidays), day after national holidays, end-of-year period 30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

Gunma-no-Mori-Park

A vast green park with an art gallery and museum.

992-1 Watanuki-machi Approx. 30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

❿ The Museum of Modern Art, Gunma

027-346-5560

⓫ Gunma Prefectural Museum of History

027-346-5522

The Footprints of History

❶ Hodota Tumuli

Comprises the keyhole-shaped Futagoyama, Hachimanzuka and Yakushizuka Burial Mounds. Hachimanzuka is presently being restored to its original state 1500 years ago when it was first constructed, and visitors are able to view the original stone coffin inside (on days the Museum of Archaeology is open, 9:30-16:30).

❷ Kamitsuke-no-Sato Museum of Archaeology

This museum adjacent to the Hodota Tumuli houses a replica of the first mansion of an ancient powerful clan to be discovered in Japan, many ancient clay figurines called "haniwa" and the oldest existing finely-ornamented shoes.

1514 Ide-machi 027-373-8880 9:30-17:00 (last entry 16:30) ¥ Adults ¥200, university/high school students ¥100, free for jr. high school students and younger and people 65 and over *Extra charge for special exhibitions ✕ Tuesdays (open if Tuesday is a national holiday, but closed the following day), end-of-year period 30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

The Three Stelae of Kozuke Province

❸ Yamanoue Stela ❹ Tago Stela ❺ Kanaizawa Stela

See page 17

【Tago Stela】
1085 Ike, Yoshii-machi 027-387-4928
9:30-17:00 (last entry 16:30) ¥ Adults ¥200, university students ¥100, free for high school students and younger and people 65 and over ✕ Mondays (open if Monday is a national holiday but closed the following day), end-of-year period 25 min. walk from Yoshii Sta.

Great contributor to modern Japan

❻ The Oguri Monument

Once holding a high ranking post in the Tokugawa Shogunate, Oguri Kozukenosuke went into exile in Kurabuchi Village after the collapse of the government. This monument in his honor stands on the banks of the Mizunuma River where he was arrested and consequently executed in 1868.

❼ Tozen-ji Temple

169 Gonda, Kurabuchi-machi 027-378-2230 70 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

❽ Minowa Castle Ruins

Minowa Castle was constructed under Nagano Narihisa about five hundred years ago. The ruins are from the time when Ii Naomasa ruled the castle and it was designated a National Historic Site in 1987. There are five walking trails nearby where visitors can enjoy the natural beauty of the four seasons.

Nishi-Akiya, Misato-machi
30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta. + 20 min. walk

❾ Kuragano Old Merchant House Omotenashi-kan

Along the Nakasendo stands an old merchant house restored to its original state. It serves as a free rest spot for visitors walking around the town. Refreshments on sale.

2010-6 Kuragano-machi
027-381-5311 10:00-16:00 ✕ Mondays (open if Monday is a national holiday, but closed the following day)
10 min. walk from Kuragano Sta.

Spiritual Serenity

❿ Haruna Shrine

This historic shrine has attracted worshippers since ancient times. Its spectacular main hall appears to be joined to the massive rock under which it sits. Specialty dish of the area is monzen soba (buckwheat noodles).

849 Harunasan-machi 027-374-9050 70 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

⓫ Shorinzan Daruma-ji Temple

The birthplace of the Daruma Doll, this temple has a hall displaying many kinds of Daruma from all over Japan. The Daruma Market is held on the 6th and 7th January, and thousands of people visit to buy Daruma Dolls.

296 Hanadaka-machi 027-322-8800 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

A Breath of Fresh Air

❶ Mt. Ushibuse Nature Park

This park is 491 meters above sea level, and has trails to the top that will please climbers. Enjoy the beauty of seasonal flowers such as cherry blossoms and hydrangeas along the roadside. At the top is a replica of an old Japanese castle that acts as an observation tower and rest point, overlooking the city.

Taira, Yoshii-machi　7 min. by car or 60 min. walk from Yoshii Sta.

❷ Klein Garten

Klein Garten meaning "small garden" in German is a place where people who live in the city can grow their own vegetables and flowers. Basic know-how and training programs are available.

27 Mizunuma, Kurabuchi-machi　027-378-3834
90 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

❸ Ishibumi-no-michi (Promenade of Stone Monuments)

Enjoy nature while learning about history by following this historical promenade close to central Takasaki. The tales of ancient history will unfold before your eyes.

Starting point: Yamana Sta.　Right near Yamana Sta.

❹ Warabi-daira Forest Park Camp Site

This well-equipped camp site is perfect for enjoying camping and the outdoors or a leisurely afternoon surrounded by nature. There are hiking courses to nearby Mt. Tsuno-ochi, Mt. Asama-kakushi and Mt. Hanamagari .

27-9 Kawaura, Kurabuchi-machi　027-378-3761
80 min. by car from Takasaki IC

❺ Smelt Fishing on Lake Narusawa

Lake Narusawa doesn't freeze over in the winter and smelt fishing from a boat or from the pier can be enjoyed from October to late February.

1639 Tomioka, Misato-machi　027-371-1124　20-30 min. by car from Takasaki/Maebashi/Shibukawa-Ikaho IC

The Kannonyama Hills

Beautiful natural surroundings close to the city center

❻ Byakue Dai-Kannon (White-Robed Goddess of Mercy Statue)

2710-1 Ishihara-machi (Jigen-in Temple)　027-322-2269　Mar-Oct 9:00-17:00,Nov-Feb 9:00-16:30　Entrance to inside the statue: Adults ¥300, children ¥100　20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

See page 04

❼ Doukutsu Kannon (Cave of Goddess of Mercy Statues)

Step into the cave and find yourself in a fantastical world where 33 stone statues of the Goddess of Mercy are housed.

2857 Ishihara-machi
027-323-3766
Weekdays 10:00-16:00, Weekends/national holidays 10:00-17:00 *May change depending on the season　Adults ¥800, children ¥400　26th -30th Dec　20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

❽ Kannonyama Family Park

Families are sure to enjoy the wide open sky and vast stretches of green grass in this park, perfect for a barbecue surrounded by nature, or try your hand at ceramic art in the craft studio.

1064-30 Terao-machi　027-328-8389　35 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

Mt. Haruna and Lake Haruna

Harunako-machi　90 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

Mt. Haruna is 1,449 meters above sea level and Lake Haruna is located near the top at 1,100 meters. The view is spectacular throughout the year and is popular with sightseers.

❾ The Kohan-no-Yado Memorial Park

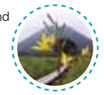
This park was made in remembrance of an old song called "Kohan-no-Yado" (A Lakeside Inn).

❿ The Atelier of Yumeji Takehisa

Yumeji Takehisa painted many pictures of beautiful women. He loved Haruna and visited the area often. His restored atelier is located at Lake Haruna.

9:00-16:00　Free　Open all year round

Smelt Fishing on Lake Haruna



Autumn: 1st September-30th November
Winter: Ice fishing is possible from late January to late February depending on the thickness of the ice.

Lake Haruna Melody Line

Along the road running toward Mt. Haruna from Ikaho Hot Spring just before the lake is a stretch of road which produces music when car tires drive over strategically placed grooves in its surface. Here, motorists will enjoy the melody of a Japanese song, "Shizuka-na-kohan" (The Tranquil Lakeside).

Tempted by the Fragrance of Flowers

Early to late March

❶ Misato Plum Grove

This beautiful plum grove covering 300 hectares sits on a hill looking out over the Kanto Plain, with the blossoms of its 100,000 plum trees forming a white carpet. During the Plum Festival the area bustles with many visitors who come to enjoy the plum blossoms.

Zenji/Kanisawa, Misato-machi　20-30 min. by car from Takasaki/Maebashi/Shibukawa-Ikaho IC

Canola flowers: Mid-April to early May, Cosmos flowers: Mid-September to mid-October

❺ Hanadaka Flower Hill Lookout

Enjoy more than fifteen kinds of flowers including canola flowers and cosmos, and a wonderful panoramic view of the mountains of the Kanto Plain throughout the year

Hanadaka-machi　30 min. by car from Takasaki IC

Late March

❷ Jigen-ji Temple and its Weeping Cherry Trees

The weeping cherry trees in the temple grounds were planted in the 14th century. Other kinds of cherry trees adorn the west side of the temple.

19 Shimo-Taki-machi　20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

Early to late April

❸ Cherry Blossoms on Mt. Kannonyama

As many as 3,000 cherry trees of various species in full bloom will feast your eyes in April.

20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

Mid to late August

❻ Hachimanzuka Tumulus and Maze of Sunflowers

On the western side of the tumulus is a field of sunflowers, planted in a maze.

Hodota-machi　30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

Beautiful cherry blossoms decorate Takasaki throughout the spring

Early April to early May

❹ Misato Shibazakura Park

This park was created from the image of the Japanese folktale "Princess Orihime's Pink Robe of Feathers". Thousands of tiny red, pink and white moss phlox create patterns of waves and swirls on the side of the hill.

Matsunosawa, Misato-machi　8:00-17-00 (last entry 16:30)　Adults ¥300, elementary school students ¥100, free for younger children *Entrance charged only during Shibazakura Festival　20-30 min. by car from Takasaki/Maebashi/Shibukawa-Ikaho IC

Mid-June to early July

❼ Seisui-ji Temple and its Hydrangeas

Pretty hydrangeas welcome you on both sides of the stone stairway leading to the gate of Seisui-ji Temple.

2401 Ishihara-machi　027-323-3214　15 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

Early to mid-June

❽ Ofuro-ga-Ike Pond and its Irises

More than 2,000 irises bloom at the start of summer.

208 Hamagawa-machi (inside Hamagawa Athletic Park)
30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

Late September to early November

❾ Futagoyama Tumulus and its Cosmos

The Futagoyama Tumulus area is lively in autumn with visitors coming to see more than 20,000 cosmos in bloom.

Hodota-machi　30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

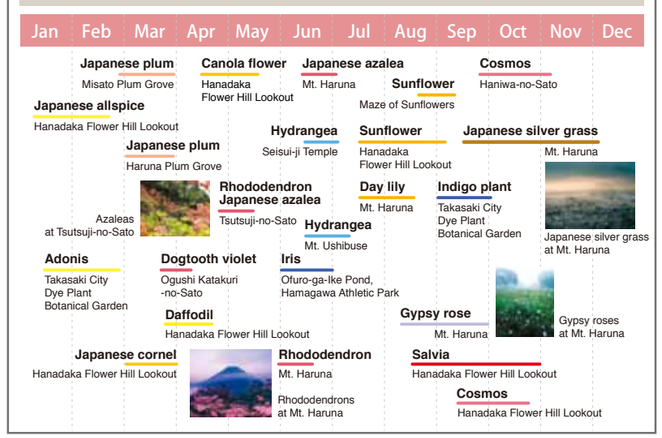
Late March to early April

❿ Ogushi Katakuri-no-Sato

This parkland beside the highway is covered with dogtooth violets that can be enjoyed up close from the wooden pathway.

Ogushi, Yoshii-machi　20 min. walk from Maniwa Sta.

TAKASAKI・Seasonal Flowers



Enjoying Greenery

The first botanical garden in Japan dedicated to natural dyeing

⓫ Takasaki City Dye Plant Botanical Garden

This is the first botanical garden in Japan where a wide variety of dye plants are collected and preserved. View the dye plants growing wild in the subtropical zone or try your hand at indigo dyeing or other plant-based natural dyeing techniques. Please inquire for workshop schedules. Booking required.

2302-11 Terao-machi　027-328-6808　9:00-16:30 (last entry 16:00), weekends/national holidays during Apr-Aug 9:00-18:00 (last entry 17:30)　Entrance to gardens: Free, entrance to museum: Adults ¥100, university/high school students ¥80, free for jr. high school students and younger and people 65 and older *Extra charge for entrance to special exhibitions　Mondays (open national holidays), day after national holidays, end-of-year period　30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

The Tastes of Takasaki

◆Daruma Bento (boxed lunch)
The unforgettable face of the Daruma has made Takasaki famous to the point where most people are reminded of Takasaki when they see the Daruma Bento boxed lunch or other souvenirs featuring the Daruma design.

Enjoy Takasaki Pasta!

Takasaki people really love their pasta, and there are so many restaurants serving pasta made with top-quality Takasaki Wheat that it is called the City of Pasta. There is even a pasta map that guides visitors to the best of Takasaki's pasta restaurants as chosen by our citizens.

◆Takasaki Udon Noodles
These noodles are made from Takasaki-grown wheat "Kinu-no-Nami". Takasaki Udon is slightly chewy but very tasty.

◆Takasaki Soy Sauce
Takasaki Soy Sauce is wholesome and flavorful, made the traditional way from locally-grown soybeans and wheat, and aged in cedar barrels for a whole year.

◆Takasaki Plums
Japanese plums (ume) grown in Takasaki are used to make pickled plums, plum wine, and plum juice and the extract is a popular health tonic. One of the largest plum groves in eastern Japan is in Takasaki, and it's a popular tourist destination in March when the air is filled with the delicate fragrance of the plum blossoms.

Haruna Fruit Road

More than 100 roadside fruit stalls selling pears and peaches line the Haruna Fruit Road (Route 406), a popular place for tourists to buy a tasty treat to take home.

◆Takasaki Brand Sake
This special brand of sake is brewed at one exclusive brewery in Takasaki using the pure water of Mt. Haruna. First released in 2006 in commemoration of the municipal mergers of the city of Takasaki, this top grade sake is enjoyed for its full-bodied flavor.

◆Shinmachi Sauce Katsudon
Shinmachi's popular katsudon is a bowl of rice topped with crisply deep-fried pork cultlets on shredded cabbage and drizzled with a rich, oriental barbecue sauce. It's sure to tempt your taste buds!

HARUNA KOKEKKOh! Cock-a-doodle-Good

ウメェ〜

はるなコケッコー
HARUNA KOKEKKOH!

A specialty served in unique styles at 20 restaurants around Lake Haruna using the finest Haruna Chicken raised in the rich natural environment in the foothills of Mt. Haruna. It's tender and delicious so be sure to try it!

◆Kokufu Chinese Cabbages
Fleshy, sweet and tender, these cabbages are readily available from November to March. The perfect ingredient in a hot pot, they are also delicious pickled.

Hot Springs and Relaxation

Take a Break

Hot spring Stay Daytrip

1 Aimagawa Hot Spring Inn, Fureai-kan
027-378-3834
This popular copper-colored hot spring with a temperature of 62˚C is said to have many health benefits. The facility is a single floor wooden inn with a dining hall.

Hot spring Stay Daytrip

2 Lake Haruna Hot Spring Inn, Yusuge-Motoyu
027-374-9211

3 Lakeside Yusuge
027-374-9131
Both located on the shore of Lake Haruna, they feature natural hot spring baths. The water is milky and rich, gentle to the skin and said to have many health benefits.

Hot spring Stay Daytrip

4 Takasaki Kannonyama Hot Spring Inn, Kinzanso
027-322-2916
After refreshing in the inn's natural hot spring bath, enjoy the popular noodle dish Okkirikomi.

Stay Daytrip

5 Ushibuse Dream Center
027-387-9111
Accommodation surrounded by nature at the foot of Mt. Ushibuse. Come relax in the hot bath. Daytrippers welcome.

Hot spring Stay Daytrip

6 Kurabuchi Kawaura Hot Spring, Hamayu Sanso Villa
027-378-2333
Surrounded by natural beauty, the villa offers a full range of accommodation and is a perfect starting point for hiking in the nearby mountains. The dining hall serves their specialty, Yokosuka Navy Curry.

Hot spring Stay Daytrip

7 Kurabuchi Hot Spring Inn
027-378-2311
Referred to as the bath of longevity, this hot spring has been around since the 18th century. Indoor and open air baths have different water types enabling guests to enjoy two different bathing experiences.

Hot spring Stay Daytrip

8 Yubata Hot Spring
027-384-8602
This inn at the base of Mt. Ushibuse has a hot bath using water from a natural mineral spring. It's a secluded spot where visitors will also enjoy viewing fireflies.

Hot spring Daytrip

9 Takasaki City Kurabuchi Welfare Center, Seseragi-no-Yu
027-378-3440
Located in the welfare center, this is the perfect place to refresh and relax after a day spent at the nearby park. Non-citizens only able to enter Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays.

Hot spring Daytrip

10 Gunma Hot Spring, Yasuragi-no-Yu
027-372-4126
Features baths with a plentiful supply of natural hot water, a dining hall serving delicious meals and a souvenir shop.

More Hot Springs for Daytrippers

11 Yutori Natural Hot Spring
027-350-8811

12 Tenjin-no-Yu Hot Spring
027-362-1726

13 Misato Hot Spring, Maneki-no-Yu
027-340-4126

14 Takasaki Hot Spring, Iyashi-no-Sato Sakura-no-Yu
027-386-4321

Takasaki Calendar of Events

Jan	1st January	Takasaki New Year Concert at Gunma Music Center (Takamatsu-cho)
		New Year visit to shrines at Haruna Shrine (Harunasan-machi) and others in the city
		Sunrise from the top of Mt. Ushibuse from the observation tower (Taira, Yoshii-machi)
	6th & 7th January	Shorinzan Daruma Market at Shorinzan Daruma-ji Temple (Hanadaka-machi)
Mar	Early to late March	Misato Plum Festival at Misato Plum Grove (Misato-machi Zenji & Kanisawa)
	Around the 9th	Tago Stela open to the public at Tago Stela Memorial Museum (Ike, Yoshii-machi)
	Second Sunday of March	Haruna Plum Marathon near Haruna Culture Hall (Kami-Satomi-machi)
	Third Sunday of March	Haruna Plum Festival at Haruna Culture Hall (Kami-Satomi-machi)
	Late March	Dogtooth Violet Festival at Ogushi Katakuri-no-Sato (Ogushi, Yoshii-machi)
	Late March to early April	Takasaki Film Festival at Takasaki Culture Hall (Suehiro-cho) and other city cinemas
Apr	Early April	Takasaki Haru Matsuri (spring festival) at Motenashi Square, Kannonyama & central city area
		Shinmachi Cherry Blossom Festival at SDF Camp Shinmachi (Shinmachi)
	Early April to early May	Misato Shibazakura (moss phlox) Festival at Misato Shibazakura Park (Matsunosawa, Misato-machi)
	29th April	Takasaki Spring Festival near City Hall and Gunma Music Center
May	Third Saturday of May	Mt. Haruna Hill Climb in Takasaki starting from Haruna Gymnasium (Kami-Satomi-machi)
	Late May	Oguri Festival at Tozen-ji Temple (Gonda, Kurabuchi-machi)
		Classical music concert at Haruna Shrine (Harunasan-machi)
Jun	Early June	Yoshii Mud Festival
Jul	First Sunday of July	Misato Firefly Festival at Keihoen near Minowa Elementary School (Nishi-Akiya, Misato-machi)
	Last Sunday of July	Misato Summer Festival at Fureai Park (Nishi-Akiya, Misato-machi)
	Late July	Yoshii Gion Festival near Yoshii Culture Hall (Yoshii, Yoshii-machi)
Aug	First Friday of August	Haruna Festival & Fireworks Display at Lake Haruna (Harunako-machi)
	First weekend of August	Takasaki Festival at Motenashi Square (Takamatsu-cho) and the central city area
	Early August	Gunma Haniwa-no-Sato Summer Festival at Haniwa-no-Sato Park (Ide-machi)
		Shinmachi Float/Portable Shrine Festival near Shinmachi Station *alternating each year
	15th August	Haruna Furusato Festival & Fireworks Display at Karasugawa Park (Shimo-Muroda-machi)
	16th August	Shinmachi Furusato Festival with fireworks, lantern launch & Bon-odori dancing at Karasugawa Sogo Ground (Shinmachi)
	Mid-August	Kurabuchi Summer Festival near Kurabuchi Branch Office (Sannokura, Kurabuchi-machi)
	Late August	Mandoe Candle Festival at Jigen-in Temple (Ishihara-machi)
	Fourth Saturday of August	Haruna Nashi-Pear Festival at Kohan-no-Yado Memorial Park and Haruna Lodge at Lake Haruna (Harunako-machi)
Sep	Mid-September to mid-October	Takasaki Music Festival in the central city area
Oct	1st October to end of February	Smelt fishing season at Lake Narusawa (Tomioka, Misato-machi)
	Early October	Takasaki Kannon Daruma March starting from Takasaki Joshi Park (Takamatsu-cho)
		Takasaki Raibu Dance Festival at Motenashi Square (Takamatsu-cho)
	First Sunday of October	Minowa-no-Sato Kitsune-no-Yomeiri near Misato Branch Office (Nishi-Akiya, Misato-machi)
	Sports Day National Holiday	Samurai Parade in central city area
	Mid- to late October	Takasaki Marching Festival at Jonan Ball Park (Shimo-Wada-machi)
	Third Saturday of October	Haruna Furusato Festival at Haruna Branch Office (Shimo-Muroda-machi)
	Last Sunday of October	Minowa Castle Festival at the Minowa Castle Ruins (Higashi-Akiya, Misato-machi) and Branch Office areas
Nov	Second weekend of November	Yoshii Autumn Festival at Yoshii Culture Hall (Yoshii, Yoshii-machi)
	Early November	Shinmachi Street Performer Festival along Ichonamiki Street (Shinmachi)
	16th November	Shinmachi Furusato Festival along Ichonamiki Street (Shinmachi)
	Early to mid-November	Kamitsuke-no-Sato Haniwa Festival at Kamitsuke-no-Sato Museum of Archaeology (Ide-machi)
	Mid-November	King of Pasta at Motenashi Square (Takamatsu-cho)
	Late November	Takasaki Ebisu-ko Market in the central city area
		Miho-Okuni Shrine Festival at Takasaki Shrine (Akasaka-machi)
	Late November to early December	Takasaki Pageant of Starlight in the central city area
Dec	Mid- to late December	Lake Haruna Illumination Festa at Lake Haruna (Harunako-machi)

Takasaki Festival

Takasaki Festival brings the city to life with its portable shrines, floats, cheerful festival music and performances. The festival fireworks display is the biggest in the northern Kanto area, always impressing the crowds.

縁起のいいまち
高崎
The lucky town Takasaki

More Information

Takasaki Tourism Association

2nd Floor Iwasaki Bldg. 32-2 Yashima-cho, Takasaki, Gunma 370-0849
TEL: 027-330-5333　FAX: 027-330-5334
http://www.takasaki-kankoukyoukai.or.jp/　Email: kankoukyoukai@city.takasaki.gunma.jp

Cover picture : View of Takasaki Arena from Ohara Gakuen