

TOKYO ↔ GUNMA **1h** by Shinkansen



GUNMA. So Close.





So close, so charming.



Gunma Prefecture is but an hour away from Tokyo by Shinkansen. It offers convenience as a straight shot from Tokyo without any transfers, and those with just a little time to spare in their travel itinerary can make it out easily.

If this is the first time you've heard of Gunma, it is a prefecture with some of Japan's most prominent hot springs, or onsen, including Kusatsu Onsen, and is home to several natural areas pleasing your five senses. Some other places to visit are the Tomioka Silk Mill, designated a World Heritage site in 2014, and shrines and temples, where you can enter into and experience the culture of Japan.

Fantastic cuisine awaits you too. Taste the fruit grown in the area's abundant nature or relish the Japanese ambience and local cuisine to your heart's content at the bistros in town. And should you find yourself in a dilemma during your travels, do not fear as the warmth and friendliness of Gunma's citizens will surely help you find your way. Come and feel a closeness to Japan's various cultural aspects hands-on. Feel the closeness between people through encounters with the many who call Japan home and their warm hearts.

Finding yourself a bit curious about Gunma? Even if just a bit, use that opening in your trip's plans to come out. Gunma is waiting to create a closeness with you.



**Get more
tourist information**

Tourist Guide of Gunma Prefecture
visit gunma



Onsen GUNMA



① Kusatsu Onsen

This onsen has been ranked number one for 17 years running from a list of Japan's top 100, selected by travel connoisseurs. Popular for its water quality and the outlying townscape, it beckons numbers of fans from all over Japan and abroad each year. Don't miss the mystical scene of steam rising from the symbol of Kusatsu Onsen: the Yubatake (a wooden system cooling down the extremely hot water to comfortable temperatures).

② Shima Onsen

This is a quiet onsen resort built along the beautiful Shima River. The name "Shima" means "40,000", and it is said that this onsen can heal 40,000 types of ailments. This resort was designated Japan's first People's Recreation Spa, and offers incredible healing properties. Come and enjoy the Old-fashioned atmosphere and wondrous allure of the town this onsen calls home.



③ Ikaho Onsen

This is one of the most famous and representative hot springs in Gunma as the townscape centered around 365-stepped stone pathway kindles an extraordinary charm. Enjoy two types of water straight from their sources: "golden water" and "silver water." The golden water gets its auburn color from the oxidized iron in it and has highly medicinal properties. The silvery water exhibits a clear and colorless quality and is full of metasilicic acid, which is an effective property in beauty and relief from fatigue.

④ Minakami 18 Onsen Areas

The Town of Minakami holds 18 onsen resorts—from hidden away onsen inns to an entire onsen district. Gaze upon the Tone River as it flows before you and become one with nature as you soak in the baths. Or, you can relax with onsen after enjoying nature-related activities for the day. The expressions of the area change with the seasons, making this an enjoyable hot spring area no matter the time.



Kusatsu Onsen
Enjoy not only hot springs
but also shopping and rickshaws

Shima Onsen
Sekizenkan, which is said to have become
a model of *Spirited Away* is worth seeing

Ikaho Onsen
Good access
by train!

Check here for more info on onsen in Gunma.



Nature GUNMA



Minakami



Lake Okushimako

05 Rafting and Canyoning

There are a number of water activities to be enjoyed in Gunma. Try rousing rafting down the rapids of the Tone River, the largest river basin in Japan. Shoot down streams and waterfalls, flying into plunge basins in extreme canyoning. Get drenched as you enjoy the great expanse of nature with your entire body.



06 Canoeing

The hue of Lake Okushimako's water changes due to the depth that light is able to permeate the water and the time of day, resulting in its "Shima blue" color. Boarding a canoe and drifting into the lake surrounded by forest allows you to come the closest you can to the vast nature of Gunma, and once you take your hands off the paddles for a rest, you find yourself in a relaxing space all your own.



Kusatsu



Minakami



Katashina

07 Skiing

There's no need to travel long distances to go skiing as Gunma is host to ski areas with good snow. And this area in particular is in the Kusatsu Onsen area. Enjoy a full day of skiing, and then rejuvenate yourself after a long soak in onsen—to get yourself ready for a great ski session the next day, of course.

08 Tanigawadake Ropeway

For the 15 minutes you ride this 2,400-meter-long ropeway, the scenery changes before your eyes. And you can enjoy it in any season with scenes of new greenery from spring to summer, the fall leaves during autumn, and the snowscape in winter. After getting off of the gondola, you can ride a ski lift up to an observation point for an even more stunning panoramic view.

09 Ozegahara

Oze is Japan's largest high-elevation wetland and is famous for its abundance of rare, precious flora. Lose track of time as you walk 2-3 hours on a boardwalk through the wetland, relishing in the release from everyday life and enjoying the daylilies and Asian skunk cabbage.



Canoeing
I couldn't believe how incredibly
and beautifully blue it was!

Tanigawadake Ropeway
Being able to see this view without
hiking up the mountain was just amazing!

Check here for more info on the nature of Gunma.



Culture GUNMA



⑩ Tomioka Silk Mill

This is a symbol of Gunma-or "Silk Country". Japan's industrial arts have some of the most sophisticated technology in the world. Japan's reputation as a country of high-quality manufactures has been recognized the world over since the Meiji period (1868-1912), when Tomioka's silk swept over the globe. Tomioka Silk Mill and its related sites were even added to the list of World Heritages in June of 2014.

⑪ Kiryu, the Town of Textiles

Kiryu is famous as having been prosperous since long ago thanks to its silk textiles. As the saying goes, "For western Japan, there's Kyoto and for eastern Japan, there's Kiryu." Kiryu textiles are known for their tradition and high quality, and are in a league of their own due to their characteristic seven weaving styles. Lustrous and soft to the touch, Kiryu silk isn't only for luxury kimonos, but is used regularly for scarves and other accessories.



⑫ Mt. Asama Magma Stone Park

A demon was said to have inhabited Mt. Asama-yama long ago and to be the cause of its eruption when angered. The park gets its name from a scene of the eruption described by onlooking villagers as resembling a demon violently tossing boulders around. Enjoy this panoramic spectacle created by Mother Nature.



⑬ Hotokuji Temple

Gaze upon this Yuka Momiji, or reflection of maple leaves from the temple floor, as it projects a fantastic view before you. This astounding view is available at Hotokuji Temple.



Tomioka Silk Mill
Japan's widely held reputation as a great power
in manufacturing started from right here.

Hotokuji Temple
The reflection of fall leaves on
from the floor was magical.

Check here for more info on the culture of Gunma.



Food GUNMA



Suki-yaki



Yakimanzu



Fruit Picking



Mizusawa Udon Noodles



Konnyaku

Suki-yaki

All of the meat, konnyaku, green onions, and other ingredients needed for sukiyaki in Gunma are produced from it. Suki-yaki made with fresh, locally grown ingredients is the ultimate treat. Be sure to taste it for yourself.

Yakimanzu

Yakimanzu is the soul food of Gunma. A soft bread is covered in a sweet and spicy miso sauce and then carefully grilled. Their sweet and fragrant aroma and almost soft texture will have you coming back for more.

Fruit Picking

Harvesting fruits like strawberries, grapes, cherries, pears, and blueberries is something you can enjoy year-round in Gunma. The flavor of these fresh fruits is extremely popular, and nothing's better than eating them freshly picked at the orchard.

Mizusawa Udon Noodles

Gunma is one of main producing area of wheat. Thus, you can enjoy delicious udon noodles wherever you go in Gunma. Mizusawa udon noodles are made with just pure water, quality flour, and carefully selected salt, and are famous as one of Japan's three major udon noodles.

Konnyaku

Dishes with konnyaku are popular in Gunma, and the prefecture boasts the largest production of it in all of Japan. It can be enjoyed as a very low-calorie health food with its nice bouncy texture.



Yakimanzu
Once you visit Gunma, you should try
this unique local taste!

Fruit Picking
Picking fresh seasonal fruits by
myself was a great fun!

Check here for more info on the food of Gunma.



Experience GUNMA



⑭ Kokeshi Doll Painting

Gunma is Japan's greatest producer of modern kokeshi dolls. This workshop lets you experience painting the dolls. Try making your kokeshi doll a memorable one resembling an animal, comic character, scenery, or whatever you'd like.



⑮ Daruma Painting

Gunma boasts a history and tradition of 200 years with Daruma dolls and is Japan's largest producer of them. These dolls have eyebrows drawn to resemble cranes and moustaches drawn to resemble turtles, symbols of longevity, and serve as a good luck charms. Here, you can create your own original Daruma doll by drawing the eyebrows and moustache.



⑯ Takumi no Sato

Scattered throughout a 330-hectare plot of land are hands-on workshops acting as "houses" where you can create over 20 types of various crafts, including wooden crafts, bamboo crafts, and textile.



⑰ Kiryu Yagibushi Festival

The Yagibushi dance is a traditional and lively dance of the Joshu region (Gunma's former name) with an upbeat tempo and rhythm. The charm of the Yagibushi dance lies in how casual it is, letting anyone jump in at anytime to join the dance. It's totally okay to look on and learn by watching others if it's your first time! People of any nationality can come together and enjoy themselves without question at this festival.



⑱ The Minowa no Sato Fox's Wedding Procession

This event reenacts the tradition and customs of the wedding processions conducted here until 1955 from a fox's perspective. Watch the performers wearing traditional Japanese clothing with makeup to look like foxes as they parade through a park in this creative outdoor pageant integrating wedding rituals and the story of The Fox's Wedding Procession.



⑲ Tsukiyono Firefly Village

Fireflies embody the summers of Japan. The spectacle of their flying upward while slowly, continuously blinking their lights really is just like a light show of the natural world. Here, you can walk down a path (about 1.9 kilometers) as you enjoy the firefly show.



Daruma Painting

Even though I'm a foreigner, I was easily able to join.

Takumi no Sato

The atmosphere is very good, and various experiences unique to Japan are possible.

Kiryu Yagibushi Festival

Favorite festival. I listen to Yagibushi's music and feel very relaxed.

Check here for more info on events in Gunma.



Spring GUNMA

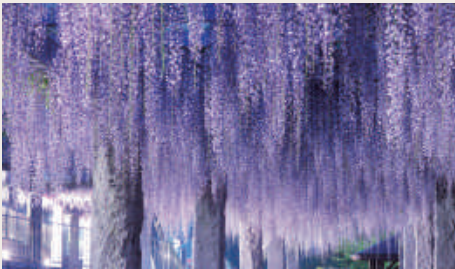


②① Akagi Nanmen Senbonzakura

This is one of Japan's 100 most famous cherry blossoms locations and is visited by numbers of tourists from around Japan and abroad. Akagi Nanmen Senbonzakura is made up of more than 1,000 trees lining the road as it runs through a park. When in full bloom, they create a dazzling cherry blossom tunnel which spans a total of 1.3 kilometers.

②① Maebashi Park

Almost 200 Yoshino cherry blossom trees are lined up and bloom for your viewing pleasure mainly around the pond to create a beautiful reflection on the water's surface. You can also enjoy a magical nighttime view of the trees as they are lit up at night while in bloom. There's no need to bring a thing as you can enjoy eating from an array of food stalls.



②② Fuji no Saku Oka

A 250-meter-long wisteria trellis as well as forty-five different varieties of wisterias with different colors and shapes grow in the park. Outdoor concerts and nighttime illumination events are also held for fun during the Wisteria Festival.

②③ Watarase Keikoku Railway

Watarase Keikoku Railway is a retro railway using diesel-run trains. One of its stations, Godo Station, holds the Peach Blossom Festival, where 300 flowering peach trees blossom together with cherry blossom trees to create a tunnel for trains to come through. Enjoy the contrast between the railway's retroness and the flowers.

②④ Tsutsujigaoka Park

Ten-thousand azaleas of nearly 100 different kinds come into bloom with a multitude of visitors from all over Japan coming to see them at this park. Over-800-year-old, 5-meter tall Kaempfer azalea is a must-see.

Check here for more info on events in Gunma.



Packed with tourist information, check out Gunma's SNS here!

JR East Takasaki
Branch official
Instagram



JR East Takasaki
Branch official
Facebook



JOYFUL TRAINS

Take a trip on a steam locomotive, which is fun to look at and even more fun to ride!



JR TOKYO Wide Pass

www.jreast.co.jp/e/tokyowidepass/



A budget railway pass that covers the whole Kanto region and offers unlimited rides within three consecutive days. You may use it for easy transit to Mount Fuji, Izu, Nikko, Karuizawa and other popular tourist spots.

