

Ishikawa Tourism Newsletter

Feature

Get into the winter spirit of Japan in Ishikawa Prefecture!

Winter is the best time of the year to feast on delicious food in Ishikawa. There is no better way to end a sight-seeing trip in the prefecture than by devouring delectable fish and relaxing in an onsen hot spring. Why not come to Ishikawa and enjoy the Japanese winter?

Ishikawa is blessed with great seas and mountains and has a plethora of sweet and fresh ingredients that are preserved in the natural environment. Fresh seafood from the Japan Sea, water from the sacred Mt. Hakusan, harvested produce from the mountains and vegetables grown in the fields of the Kaga plains. All of this gives the region a wealth of ingredients. You can further add to the dining experience with beautiful and elaborate crafted gold etched lacquerware or with elegant and highly valuable Kutaniyaki pottery.

Food



Sake

Ishikawa has the luxuries of pure underflow water from Hakusan and a large area with an abundant crop. Because of this, the land is able to produce rice of great quality which is used for making many of the local sake. As Japanese sake is prepared in winter you can find many new brews of sake. During the winter period visitors can go the breweries to see what the process is like and have a taste.

[Sake Brewery Tours]

MAP-1

SAKE SHOP Fukumitsuya



Fukumasamune and Kagatobi are well known in Kanazawa for having the longest history at the brewery. After watching the DVD on how sake is made, you will be shown the Hyakunensui (one hundred years old water) and the cellars. You will also be given the chance to try some freshly produced sake and seasonal sake.

<http://www.fukumitsuya.co.jp/english/index.html>



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Onsen Hot Springs

Ishikawa is scattered with onsen hot springs with history including the Kaga Onsen Hot Spring Village which has some of the Hokuriku region's best, and open air baths such as the Wakura Onsen that has been around since the Heian period. With so many hot springs in different locations you can relax in onsens with views of the sea, rivers, trees and more. Ishikawa Prefecture has a lot hot spring lodges and in this issue we'll be giving a brief insight into some of the ones that have particular features. For further details please check the links provided.



Kagaya
(Wakura Onsen)

MAP-2

This hot spring lodge is well known across Japan and provides hospitality of the highest level. It has been ranked number 1 for 33 years running in the category for the top 100 hotels and lodges in Japan.

◆ **ACCESS:** 1 hour 20 minutes by train from Kanazawa Station → alight at Wakura Onsen Station

※ There is a mini-bus service for the lodge from Wakura Onsen Station from 12:00 – 18:30

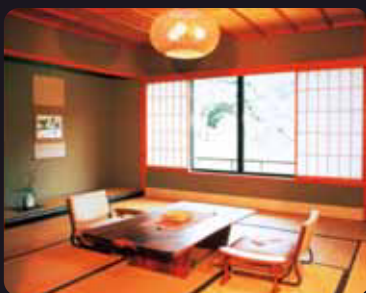
<http://www.kagaya.co.jp/en/>



Beniya Mukayu (Yamashiro Onsen) **MAP-3**

This is the only place in the Hokuriku region that is a part of the Relais & Châteaux. (※1) This resort home like inn is surrounded by mountains sprawling with greenery. It is built in a way that creates a sense of openness with the blending scenery outside.

◆ **ACCESS:** Free shuttle bus from Kaga Onsen Station (※ Operates between 14:00 – 18:00 only. Reservation required) <http://mukayu.com/english/>



Kayotei (Yamanaka Onsen) **MAP-4**

This lodge only has 10 rooms and is located in an area surrounded by great natural beauty. The world's most popular guidebook Lonely Planet lists Kayotei as one of the "Best Ryokan in Japan".

◆ **ACCESS:** 20 minutes by taxi from JR Hokuriku Main Line Kaga Onsen Station
30 minutes by taxi from Komatsu Airport

http://www.ryokancollection.com/eng/kayotei/ryokan_story.htm?ryokan=kayotei



Houshi (Awazu Onsen) **MAP-5**

This is Japan's oldest hot spring lodge that boasts a 1300 year old history. Within the grounds you will find a beautiful outstretching garden of great elegance. It is also a part of the French economic organisation "Les Hénokiens". (※2)

◆ **ACCESS:** Pickup service available from Awazu Station, Kaga Onsen Station and Komatsu Airport. (※ 14:00 – 17:00)

http://www.ho-shi.co.jp/jiten/Houshi_E/index.htm

(※1) What is Relais & Châteaux?

This is a global fellowship of individually owned and operated luxury hotels and restaurants. Only hotels and restaurants that display unique individuality and offer a unique experience are accepted into the group. After joining the fellowship a hidden evaluation is carried out every three years and may lead to expulsion from the group depending on the result, so members are constantly keeping high standards. Japan only has twelve members.

(※2) What is Les Hénokiens?

This international organization was set up in France in 1981 as an economic association and only accepts long standing family businesses that have at least 200 years of history.

Recent Topics

The Hokuriku Region along with Ishikawa Prefecture has been named in the top 10 for the "Best in Travel 2014" in the Lonely Planet awards!

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel-tips-and-articles/lonely-planets-best-in-travel-2014-top-10-regions>



Only 1 year to go until the Hokuriku Shinkansen bullet trains are running! The trains have been named!

- "Kagayaki" – The fastest type of train which can get you from Tokyo to Kanazawa in 2 hours 30 minutes.
- "Hakutaka" – This type of train stops will make stops at many stations.
- "Tsurugi" – A shuttle type train that goes to and from Toyama and Kanazawa.
- "Asama" – A Nagano Shinkansen bullet train that goes to and from Nagano and Tokyo.

"Hyakuman-san" has been chosen as the mascot for the Hokuriku Shinkansen!

The mascot is a "Kaga Hachiman Okiagari" folk toy with an extravagant design combining elements of traditional arts from the region including Kaga-Yuzen, gold leaf and Wajima lacquer.



Kenrokuen winter light-up information!

MAP-6

Kenrokuen garden will be having a free period and light up event for this year's winter. Ishikawa is the only place where you will be able to see the marvelous sight of a 16 meter high (4 storied building) "Yuki-Tsuri" pine tree snow cover. This will only be around for a limited time so come to Kenrokuen before it is too late!

◆ **ACCESS:** 15 minutes by bus from Kanazawa Station → Alight at "Kenrokuen-shita" bus stop

➔ **Free Entry** Date and Time: Tuesday 31 December 2013 – Friday 3 January 2014 08:00~17:00
※ The garden will be opened at night from 31 Dec 17:00 to 1 Jan 08:00!

NOTE: No light-up!

➔ **Winter Light-Up** Date and Time: Friday 31 January 2014 – Sunday 9 February 2014 17:30~21:00



What springs to mind when you think of “Japanese-ness”? Rice? Nature? Kimono? Japanese food? Japan is an island country with various unique cultures crammed into 38km² and

you can find all of the “Japanese-ness” here in Ishikawa Prefecture!

Sweet shrimp

The sweet shrimp season lasts from Sep-Feb and the grey coloured ggs that the female shrimps cling onto have an exquisite taste. The fresh ones are best eaten as sashimi raw fish.

Snow crab

The “Kanogani” branded crabs from Ishikawa have been put on the market since 2006. These are a common sight for Hokuriku’s food culture in winter.



Yellowtail

There isn’t a part of this fish that goes to waste, whether you grill the head and gills or boil it with daikon it has a great taste. They also say that this fish has an air of luck as it has a different name depending on the stage of growth.

A wide variety of seafood can be fished in Ishikawa due to the Noto peninsular being surrounded by the ocean on all sides that has both warm and cold flowing currents. Ishikawa is blessed with fresh fish and fruits of the sea so you can enjoy great tasting food wherever you go.

Food

Winter in Ishikawa is not just about sushi, sake and other Japanese cuisine. You can enjoy the Japanese winter in so many ways such as with the wonderful snow and the onsen hot springs to rest the mind and body.

Nature



Mt. Hakusan is one of the three great mountains of Japan. Even when the snow on the mountain tops in other prefectures have melted you can get a glimpse of the “White Mountain” (literally meaning of Hakusan) from a distance as this is the largest mountain in the Hokuriku region. Also it is a clear sign that it is late autumn when Mt. Hakusan turns white.



Chirihama Beach Driveway

MAP-7

You can ride your car, bus or even your horse on this 8km stretch of sand. The only two other places in the world where you can find beaches like this are the Daytona beach in America and Waitarere beach in New Zealand. On a clear day why not take your wheels for a spin!

? Why don’t the tires get stuck?

Each grain of sand is finer than regular sand. When the seawater permeates this fine sand it compresses and hardens allowing cars, bicycles and other vehicles to ride on it just like a normal road.

History & Culture



When we think of castles in Ishikawa, Kanzawa Castle springs to mind. However, the castle once had a tower which unfortunately got burnt down in a lightning strike long ago. However the Ishikawa gate and the great Kenrokuen garden still remain which makes you think about how much of an impact the Maeda family had when they were in power.

Traditional Crafts

Ishikawa has 9 living national treasures which alongside Kyoto is the highest in the whole country. The prefecture offers cultural experiences that foreigners can enjoy and creates a close connection with the traditional crafts.



Kutani ceramics



Wajima lacquerware



Kaga Yuzen



Gold leaf