



Ishikawa Tourism Newsletter

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FEATURE

ENCOUNTERS WITH TEA CEREMONY CULTURE IN ISHIKAWA

Take a tea-themed trip around Ishikawa and discover tea traditions!

ISHIKAWA, JAPAN

Why Is Tea So Big in Ishikawa?

More of Ishikawa's population practices tea ceremony than almost anywhere else in Japan! The reason for this dates back to the day of the samurai, when the lords of the Kaga Domain would invite tea masters to Kanazawa. These feudal lords also invited the artisans who produced the items used in tea ceremony to come live in Kanazawa, creating an environment where these items became traditional crafts, both supporting and being supported by this cultural endeavor. Even today, the local culture of Ishikawa has deep ties to the tea ceremony, with both casual and in-depth opportunities to experience it yourself.



Sip on Matcha with a View of a Beautiful Japanese Garden



● Shigure-tei >MAP (Kanazawa)

This teahouse, located on the grounds of Kenrokuen Garden, is a reconstruction of what was once a villa for the feudal lords who ruled the area. Enjoy freshly made matcha green tea and sweets while gazing at the garden's winding stream and pond, as well as its lovingly tended trees and flowers, for the perfect accompaniment to a visit to Kanazawa's most famous garden. Escape the noise of everyday life in the city for just a little longer, and savor a traditional pick-me-up.

<https://www.pref.ishikawa.jp/siro-niwa/kenrokuen/sigure.html>



● Gyokusen'an >MAP (Kanazawa)

Gyoken'inmaru Garden was built on the grounds of Kanazawa Castle, as a private garden for the feudal lords, and it is here where you'll find this charming teahouse. The view is entirely unlike what you might see at Shigure-tei, making them both excellent destinations for a day's outing: look out over the water, and see the carefully built stone walls far beyond the rolling hills of Gyokusen'inmaru Garden, all alongside delicious matcha green tea and seasonal sweets.

<https://www.pref.ishikawa.jp/siro-niwa/kanazawajou/gyokusen-an/index.html>



Go Deeper with Hands-On Matcha Experiences



● Kitajima-ya Tea >MAP (Nanao)

A rare opportunity for matcha fans to grind their own tea with a stone mill, for the ultimate in freshness! There are only a handful of places anywhere in Japan that offer the chance to go this hands-on. Enjoy the rich aroma of freshly ground matcha green tea, served with Nanao's iconic Mame-ame sweets. The friendly owner loves to chat about tea and local history, too.

https://www.facebook.com/kkitajimaya078/?locale=ja_JP (in Japanese only)



● Ohi Museum >MAP (Kanazawa)

Discover the traditions of the tea ceremony through beautiful tea bowls, made by the master artisans who have earned the name Ohi Chozemon from generation to generation. The style they practice dates back 350 years, and is known for its rustic, hand-formed process and a rich brown glaze. At the museum's tearooms, visitors can enjoy matcha from their choice of Ohi Chozemon tea bowls.

<http://www.ohimuseum.com/index.html>



ISHIKAWA TRAVEL



● Café Kan (Kanazawa) ▶MAP

Since 1888, this café has been a local favorite for its Japanese-style sweets. In recent years, its location in a *machiya* townhouse has been renovated to modernize it without losing its endearing atmosphere that dates back to the day of the samurai. Their menu has likewise been refreshed, to include drinks, sweets, parfaits, and even baked goods all made with a Japanese flair. The shop's seventh-generation owner is a matcha lover, who has put a great deal of work into developing the shop's pistachio-matcha parfait and matcha *kaki-gori* shaved ice.

https://www.koshiyamakanseido.jp/information/cafe-kan_open.html

Relax at Stylish Cafés

● Mugen-an Uruhashi Café (Kaga) ▶MAP

Uruhashi is a new café that opened this past April at Mugen-an, a samurai house now designated a Cultural Property by the prefecture. Visitors can enjoy tea or lunch served in Yamanaka lacquerware, a traditional local craft, all while surrounded by the natural beauty of the trees and the nearby river. Mugen-an also offers *cha-kaiseki* meals, served in private rooms and made with beloved local ingredients, for the full old-fashioned Japanese-style tea experience.

<https://mugenan.com/ocha-cafe/>
(in Japanese only)

There's More to Try than Just Matcha!

For a lot of people, matcha is their go-to notion of Japanese tea, but Ishikawa has plenty more for tea connoisseurs to discover!



KAGA BOCHA

Where to Buy:

Maruhachi Misho (Kaga) ▶MAP

<https://misho.kagaboucha.com/> (in Japanese only)

Maruhachi Store at Kanazawa Hyakubangai (in Kanazawa Sta.) ▶MAP

Bocha is a type of roasted tea made primarily not from tea leaves, but from their stems, for a rich toasty aroma and a distinctively mellow flavor with a hint of natural sweetness. Here in Ishikawa, it's so beloved that if you ask for "tea," you might have to clarify if you *don't* want Kaga Bocha! At Maruhachi Misho, visitors can watch tea stems being roasted at the factory, and experience the sort of premium Kaga Bocha tea that was once offered to the emperor.



JAPANESE BLACK TEA

Where to Buy:

Kanbayashi Kanazawa Chaho ▶MAP
(Nanao Misogigawa-odori Store)

<https://kanbayashi-chaho.com/en/>

It may come as a surprise to learn not only that Japan produces black tea, but that it is even grown in Ishikawa! There are two particularly famous brands of black tea grown here: Kagayaki, from the Uchikoshi neighborhood of Kaga, and Iyahime, grown on Notojima Island. Both are known for their clean flavor, sweet fragrance, and refreshing aftertaste — and both are new to the market, having debuted less than a decade ago. Each year brings larger harvests of these teas, and with them, greater brand recognition and more fans.



RED WINE LEAF TEA

Where to Buy:

Create ▶MAP

<https://create.shop-pro.jp/?pid=157882207>

A fascinatingly unique tea, made from the leaves of wine grapes. Each November, the grape leaves turn bright red, and are ready for harvest for only a week out of each year. It is during these seven days that the leaves are carefully picked, one by one, for use as a caffeine-free herb tea. Savor notes of fruity berry aroma alongside hints of rich caramel, and discover just how apt the name "red wine leaf tea" truly is. An excellent gift for the wine lover in your life — even if that's yourself.



ISHIKAWA TRAVEL

Now Open!

● Lake Kiba Park East Park (Komatsu, Apr. 23)

▶MAP

An exciting opportunity to rediscover traditional ways of living in harmony with nature! Lake Kiba Park recently celebrated the grand opening of the East Park area, which aims to make the park an even more appealing destination ahead of the March 2024 extension of the Hokuriku Shinkansen line. The East Park features an event space, as well as a facility where visitors can watch unused wood from forest thinning being recycled into a usable resource. Visitors can stroll through the *sato-yama* (human-tended natural forests), have fun at the playground, or even learn about the natural environment and renewable energy sources.

<https://kibagata-eastpark.com/>



● Sarai Wellness House (Nomi, June 1)

▶MAP

Sarai Wellness House is a new complex in Nomi, featuring a hotel and more. Guests are greeted by the world of Kutani Ware, with its beautiful flowers, birds, animals, landscapes, and vessels, and the guest rooms' designs were each supervised by one of eight different popular Kutani Ware artisans. Sarai is conveniently located near sightseeing destinations, restaurants, and shopping. There's plenty of natural beauty nearby, too, including *sato-yama*, the beautiful cherry-tree-lined Health Road, and beaches, for lots of fun ways to keep active.

<https://www.nomi-sarai.com/>



EVENTS

● Oku-Noto Triennale (Suzu)

▶MAP

The Oku-Noto Triennale is held in Suzu, at the tip of the Noto Peninsula. For this unique art festival, artists from around the world come and produce works of art and installations deeply rooted in the natural grandeur, festivals, food, and other aspects of the local culture of the tip of the Noto Peninsula. Works are on display at various sites in Suzu, and the permanent outdoor installations can still be seen even after the Triennale is over.

Event Period: Sat., Sep. 23 to Sun., Nov. 12, 2023

<https://oku-noto.jp/ja/index.html>



NEWS

● Hakusan Tedorigawa Geopark Selected as a UNESCO Global Geopark

▶MAP

On May 24, 2023, Hakusan Tedorigawa Geopark was officially certified as a UNESCO Global Geopark, in recognition of the global importance of the "treasures of the region": geological heritage, natural resources, culture, history, and industry all rooted in the local area. The Geopark features the Hakusan White Road — a popular drive for enjoying the autumn colors — as well as highlands that rise some 650 m above sea level, offering incredible views of the Kaga Plain and the Sea of Japan beyond. And if the view from there isn't spectacular enough, there's paragliding to take you even higher!

<https://hakusan-geo.jp/>



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