

The Gateway to Tohoku

Sendai, the gateway to Japan's Tohoku region, is located about 90 minutes from Tokyo by Shinkansen (bullet train).

While offering the full conveniences of an urban center, the city is uniquely positioned close to the sea, mountains, and rural landscapes—allowing easy access to a wide variety of natural environments within a short travel time.

With a rich selection of accommodations and dining options throughout the city, Sendai is a highly convenient and comfortable base for travelers.

For detailed information, please visit the website below.

Access Discover SENDAI

<https://discoversendai.travel/travel-info/getting-to-sendai/>



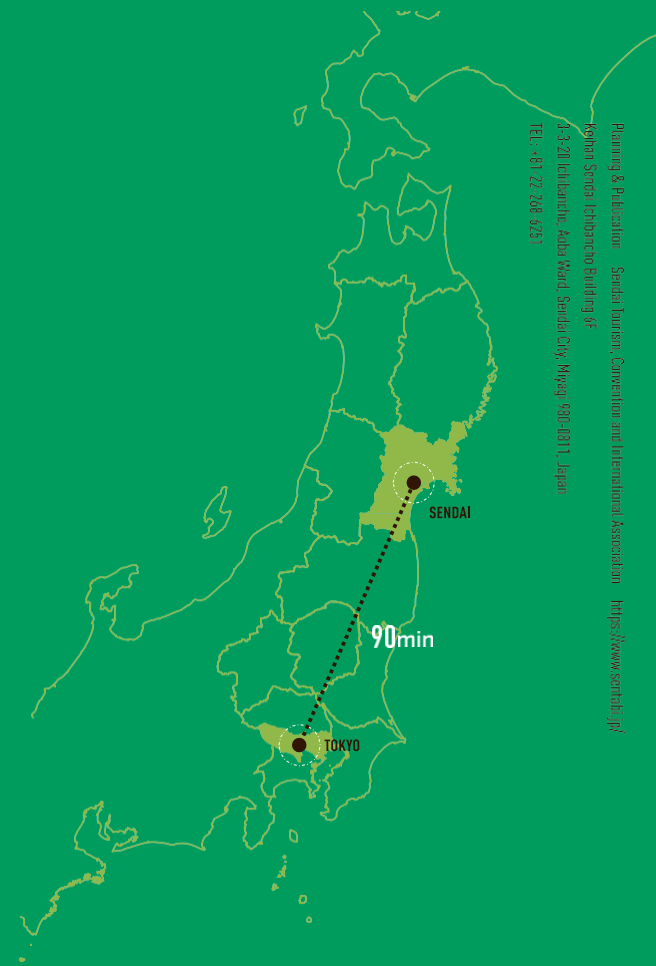
Accommodation SenTIA / Accommodation Information

<https://www.sendai.jp/guidebook/accommodations/>



Dining SenTIAs / Dining Information

<https://www.sendai.jp/guidebook/restaurants/>



Planning & Publication: Sendai Bureau, Convention and International Secretariat
Japan Sendai Inbound Office Building 4F
3-3-20 Ichibancho, Aoba Ward, Sendai City, Miyagi 980-0011, Japan
TEL: +81-22-308-4283

<https://www.sendai.jp/>

Base Stations for Mountain Travel / Supporting Sendai's adventure travelers.



IZUMI PEAK BASE (Izumigatake)

A state-of-the-art resort facility at the foot of Mount Izumigatake where you can consult about outdoor activities, request guides, stay overnight, camp, enjoy natural hot springs, and dine at restaurants and cafés. You can also purchase gear and outdoor supplies on site.

DATE	▶ Address	8-1 Dakeyama, Fukuoka, Izumi Ward, Sendai City
	▶ Phone	+81-22-347-3356
	▶ Hours	8:00 AM–6:00 PM
		(Closed on Wednesdays)

WEB SITE <https://peak-base.com/>



Akiu Visitor Center (Akiu)

An ideal place to gather information about Futakuchi Gorge, Mt. Daito, and the Futakuchi Forest Road, as well as to learn about the surrounding natural environment. The center offers nature interpretation, hiking information, consultation services, and arrangements for guides for hiking, trekking, and stream walking.

DATE	▶ Address	16-1 Honkoya, Baba, Akiu-machi, Taihaku Ward, Sendai City
	▶ Phone	+81-22-399-2324
	▶ Hours	9:00 AM–4:30 PM
		(April–November; Closed on Tuesdays)

WEB SITE <https://akiuvisitor.jp/>



ADVENTURE TOURISM IN SENDAI ROUTE GUIDE BOOK



ADVENTURE TOURISM IN SENDAI



Let's set out on an adventure in Sendai!

Beautiful nature, hidden wonders,
and a journey that will transform you.

This booklet has been produced as part of the 'Fiscal Year 2025 Subsidy for Projects to Promote Tourism Among Inbound Foreign Visitors' initiative.

A journey that changes you and elevates your soul.



Adventure tourism is not simply about outdoor activities. It is a style of travel that invites you to connect with the land itself — to engage in a quiet dialogue with nature and with the Ubusuna-gami, the guardian spirits believed to watch over each place. Through cultural experiences and heartfelt encounters with local communities, this journey nurtures a deeper understanding of the land and its people.

Since ancient times, Sendai area has been home to rich natural landscapes and cultural traditions shaped by the worship of Ubusuna-gami.

From Mt. Izumigatake, to Sakunami and Jogi, to Akiu, and along the Nanakita River as it flows gently toward the sea — each area continues to weave the living story of Sendai, even in the modern age.

As you sense the timeless spirit of this land, why not take that first step yourself?

In unknown, beautiful nature, find your true self.



10 Routes

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IZUMIGATAKE AREA

Izumigatake Area

**A mountain of life,
where water flows
and sustains all.**

Mt. Izumigatake rises in the northwest of Sendai City. Its name is said to come from the abundant natural springs — izumi, meaning “fountain” or “spring” — that have long sustained this land.

Melted snow and underground water emerge from the mountainside, forming clear streams that eventually flow into the Nanakita River. This northern region, once home to flourishing Jomon ancient culture, has for centuries been a mountain of life, continuing today to provide rich natural blessings to the people of Sendai. The water born from this mountain is used to nourish rice paddies and fields, to make sake, and as water for everyday life.

From the summit at 1,172 meters above sea level, the view stretches as far as the Pacific Ocean.


Fresh green buds in spring, refreshing highland breezes in summer, vibrant autumn foliage, and the serene stillness of a silver-white winter.

Throughout the seasons, Mt. Izumigatake is enjoyed by everyone—from children to elders—and cherished by local people.

ROUTE 01

Day 1

Through Tainai-iwa

ROUTE OUTLINE Hiking 

LEVEL 3

- ▶ Estimated Time Approx. 3 hours ascent / Approx. 2 hours descent
- ▶ Distance 8km
- ▶ Elevation Gap 638meters

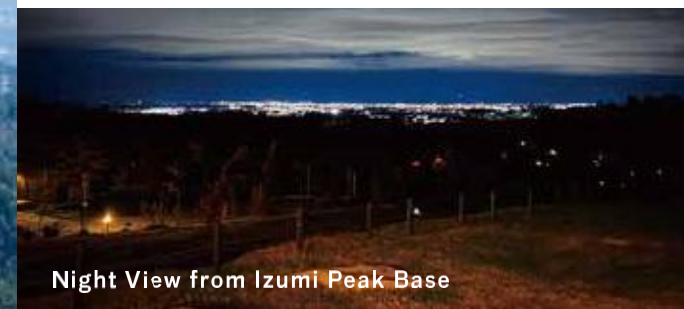
This route follows the main trail of Mt. Izumigatake, leading to Tainai-iwa — a massive rock formation with a narrow crevice located halfway up the mountain. Revered in mountain worship as a place symbolizing rebirth, Tainai-iwa was once passed through by practitioners as a way to prepare their minds and spirits. As you hike in the quiet embrace of the forest, the landscape gradually opens near the summit, revealing sweeping views of Sendai City and the distant Pacific Ocean. The sense of openness is deeply moving, filling you with both inspiration and a strong feeling of accomplishment. For the descent, follow the Suijin (Water Deity) Route. Here, you can experience the “water of life” born from this mountain — with your eyes, your ears, and even your hands. Along this route, time flows gently, offering space for personal retreat and reflection.



At the foot of Mt. Izumigatake is IZUMI PEAK BASE, a convenient hub offering accommodation, dining, rest areas, information on field activities, and equipment checks. After your hike, you can also relax and soothe your body in the facility's natural hot spring.



**A journey of rebirth
— through the mountain's womb**



Night View from Izumi Peak Base




Nanakita River Estuary

On Day 2, you will journey downstream by kayak along the Nanakita River, whose source springs from Mt. Izumigatake, all the way to its mouth at the Pacific Ocean. What begins as a small stream blessed by the Water Deity gradually becomes a river — and that river carries you forward by paddle. It is a simple yet powerful realization: the river truly flows to the sea. Experiencing this connection firsthand brings a deep sense of wonder and discovery. The downstream Gamo Tidal Flat is also known as a habitat for rare wild birds, including the Brent Goose, a nationally designated Natural Monument of Japan.



Hiyoriyama, known as Japan's lowest mountain at just 3 meters above sea level, is located within the Gamo Tidal Flat. With only six steps leading to the summit, it is a cherished and irreplaceable landmark for the local community.

ROUTE OUTLINE Kayaking 

LEVEL 3

- ▶ Estimated Time Approx. 2 hours
- ▶ Distance 4 km
- ▶ Elevation Gap None

Day 2

Nanakita River Adventure



**Kayaking the river born
of the Water Deity,
all the way to the Pacific Ocean**




Usagidaira - Okanuma

This route begins with a lift ride from the Izumigatake Ski Resort, followed by a hike along the Kamoshika (serow) Course toward Okanuma. From the lift's upper station to Okanuma, the walk takes just under an hour along a well-maintained, mostly level trail — ideal for forest bathing and unhurried exploration. One of the highlights of this route is one of the largest white birch forests in Miyagi Prefecture, spreading gracefully along the way. Wrapped in the stillness of the woods, this gentle hiking course offers a deeply calming and restorative experience.



Okanuma is rich in wetland plants and birdlife, making it an ideal place for nature observation throughout the year. In summer, refreshing highland breezes cool the air, while autumn welcomes visitors with brilliantly colored foliage and golden fields of silver grass shimmering in the light.

ROUTE OUTLINE



Hiking
LEVEL 2

- ▶ Estimated Time: Approx. 2.5 hours ascent
- ▶ Time: 1 hour 40 minutes descent
- ▶ Distance: 11km
- ▶ Elevation: 622meters
- ▶ Elevation Gap



Komyo Waterfall

This trail route leads through the rural satoyama landscapes of Hozawa, where scenes of Japan's timeless countryside still remain, heads toward Komyo Waterfall flowing from Mt. Izumigatake, and continues along forest roads to finish at Spring Valley Resort. Komyo Waterfall has long been revered as a sacred site dedicated to the Water Deity and is deeply rooted in Ubusuna beliefs. Known as a "waterfall that purifies both body and spirit," it is said that around the falls, one may even sense the quiet presence of forest spirits. This gentle rural trekking route unfolds through a landscape where farmers' lives and nature exist in close harmony, offering a calm and grounding journey through the countryside.



One of the great highlights of this area is how the fields and rice paddies change their expressions with each season. In summer, rice plants sway softly in the breeze, while in autumn, golden ears of rice shimmer across the landscape — a truly breathtaking sight.

ROUTE OUTLINE



Hiking Cycling
LEVEL 2

- ▶ Estimated Time: Approx. 4 hours
- ▶ Distance: 12km
- ▶ Elevation Gap: 530 meters





Kuwanuma Lakeside

This trekking route begins at Spring Valley Resort and follows forest roads through primeval beech woodlands, leading to Kuwanuma, a serene lake located at an elevation of 920 meters. The area surrounding Kuwanuma was once a place where Jomon ancient culture flourished. Upon reaching the lake, visitors are greeted by a scene of breathtaking stillness. On windless days, the lake's surface becomes like a mirror, reflecting the surrounding forest and sky — a moment of silence and mystery that takes one's breath away.



This primeval forest, where Jomon ancient culture once thrived, is home to some of the most impressive giant trees in the Sendai region, their presence both powerful and awe-inspiring. Along the lakeshore, a small pavilion offers a quiet place to rest and take in the view, making it an ideal spot for reflection. The lake changes color with the seasons — from soft pale greens in spring, to deep jade hues in summer, and striking contrasts with golden autumn forests — creating truly unforgettable scenery throughout the year.

ROUTE OUTLINE

Hiking, Kayaking

LEVEL 3

- Estimated Time: Approx. 2 hours and 15 minutes
- Time: A circuit around Kuwanuma: Approx. 1 hour and 30 minutes
- Distance: 5.7km
- Elevation Gain: 110 meters



Walking through a Jomon forest, toward a mystical lake.

Ancient Beech Forest

Spring Valley Resort

Kuwanuma Lakeside

GOAL

START



Sakunami & Jyogi Area

Where forest waters sustain life and faith.

Stretching across the western reaches of Sendai lies the Sakunami-Jogi area.

The Nikkawa River that flows through this land is fed by rain and melting snow, slowly stored over decades within primeval beech forests. These life-giving waters have long been revered as sacred, forming the foundation of local water-deity worship that has supported daily life for generations.

It is also this "one of Japan's finest waters" that led Nikka Whisky to choose Sakunami as the site of its distillery. Nurtured patiently by the forest over time, the water source continues to be carefully protected today by many devoted hands.

Further to the northwest stands Jogi Myorai Saihoji Temple, a sacred place that has received the prayers of people for over 800 years. Here, visitors can witness a remarkable harmony of pristine natural beauty and deeply rooted spiritual traditions—an experience unique to the inner landscapes of Sendai.



Five-Storeyed Pagoda of Jogi Nyorai Saiho-ji Temple

You will paddle by kayak from Okura Dam upstream along the Okura River to the Jogi Nyorai area. Seen from the ever-changing, beautiful surface of the lake, the surrounding nature can truly be called one of Sendai's treasures. As you progress into the gorge, some of Japan's most breathtaking scenery unfolds before you. Further upstream, the water becomes so clear that the riverbed is visible, creating the sensation of gliding through the air. After kayaking, visit Jogi Nyorai Saihoji Temple to offer prayers, then enjoy the famous local specialty—fried tofu so popular that over 10,000 pieces are sold each day—and take a leisurely walk along the mountain path. Let nature, culture, and food come together to nourish both body and soul.



The rural scenery of the upper Okura River evokes landscapes reminiscent of classic Japanese folktales, like those once depicted in the beloved animated series Japanese Folk Tales. At Jogi Nyorai, visitors can also take part in seated meditation (zazen) or enjoy a tea experience in a traditional tea room after their visit.

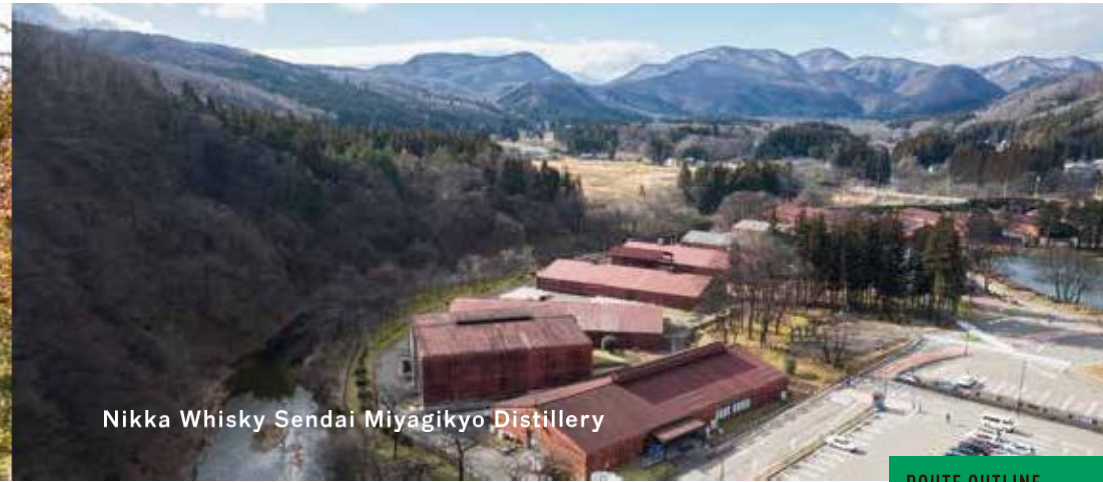
ROUTE OUTLINE



Kayaking

LEVEL 2

- ▶ Estimated Time: Approx. 3 hours (round trip)
- ▶ Distance: 3.7km
- ▶ Elevation Gap: None



Nikka Whisky Sendai Miyagikyo Distillery

Starting from Akiu Great Falls, one of Japan's three most celebrated waterfalls, this route leads to the Nikka Whisky Sendai Miyagikyo Distillery, renowned for producing some of the finest whisky in Japan. Crossing the headwaters of the Nikka River, whose pristine water is used in whisky making, the course allows you to experience firsthand the history of the water that shapes the character and flavor of the whisky.



Sakunami Onsen, which has been flowing for over a thousand years, is known for its gentle, skin-friendly waters and abundant supply. Often called "the hot spring of beauty," it offers a rich variety of bathing experiences at its inns, including open-air baths, rock baths, and standing baths, inviting visitors to enjoy a leisurely tour of its many unique hot springs.

ROUTE OUTLINE



Hiking

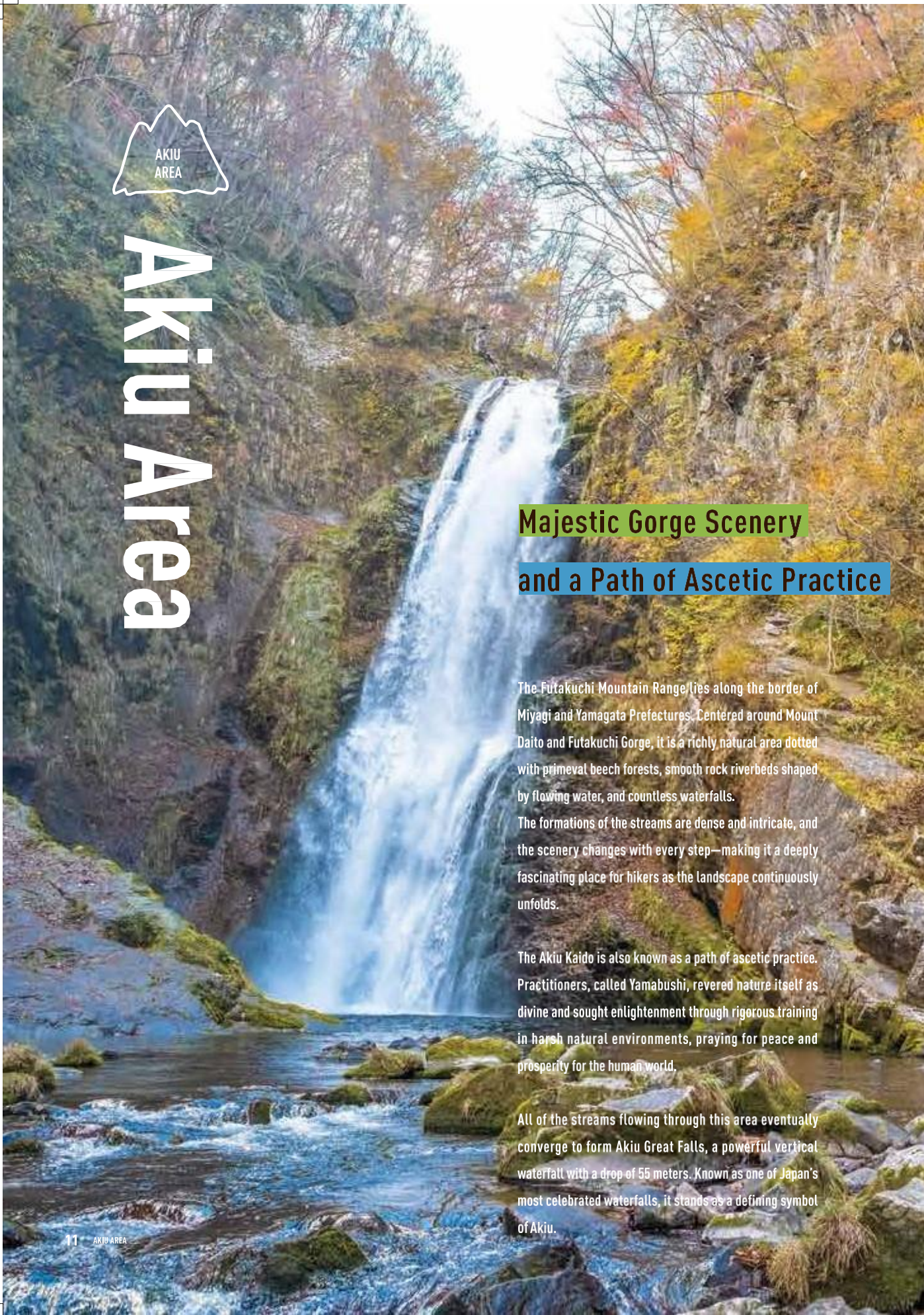
LEVEL 3

- ▶ Estimated Time: Approx. 4 hours
- ▶ Distance: 11km
- ▶ Elevation Gap: 190 meters





AKIU AREA



Majestic Gorge Scenery and a Path of Ascetic Practice

The Futakuchi Mountain Range lies along the border of Miyagi and Yamagata Prefectures. Centered around Mount Daito and Futakuchi Gorge, it is a richly natural area dotted with primeval beech forests, smooth rock riverbeds shaped by flowing water, and countless waterfalls.

The formations of the streams are dense and intricate, and the scenery changes with every step—making it a deeply fascinating place for hikers as the landscape continuously unfolds.

The Akiu Kaido is also known as a path of ascetic practice. Practitioners, called Yamabushi, revered nature itself as divine and sought enlightenment through rigorous training in harsh natural environments, praying for peace and prosperity for the human world.

All of the streams flowing through this area eventually converge to form Akiu Great Falls, a powerful vertical waterfall with a drop of 55 meters. Known as one of Japan's most celebrated waterfalls, it stands as a defining symbol of Akiu.



Fukujusan Jigen-ji Temple

This temple is led by a Dai-Ajari who accomplished two of the most extreme ascetic practices in Shugendo—feats achieved by only two people in the past 1,300 years: the Omine Sennichi Kaihogyo, a thousand-day mountain pilgrimage, and the Shimu-gyo, a nine-day ordeal of no food, no water, no sleep, and never lying down—an act that pushes the human body beyond its limits. While reflecting on this spiritual tradition, you walk through a tranquil cedar forest. Standing at the basin of Akiu Great Falls, you are enveloped by the overwhelming energy of cascading water, and you will feel your mind gently cleansed and renewed.



At the Nojiri hamlet's Bandokoro, visitors can interact with local residents and enjoy a hands-on soba-making experience using Akiu's native buckwheat, followed by a delicious lunch featuring freshly prepared soba dishes.

ROUTE 07

From Jigen-ji Temple to Akiu Great Falls

ROUTE OUTLINE



Hiking
Yamabushi Ascetic Experience

LEVEL 2

- Estimated Time: Approx. 2.5 hours
- Distance: 4km
- Elevation Gap: 30 meters



A Yamabushi pilgrimage to Akiu Great Falls

ROUTE 08
Mt. Daito



Mt. Daito

Departing from the Akiu Visitor Center, this route ascends to the summit of Mount Daito via the back trail, passing Komadome Falls and Amedaki Falls along the way. The descent follows the main route. Valleys carved by streams born on Mount Daito unfold in a continuous sequence of rock walls, primeval forest, and clear flowing water, where the powerful energy of nature and deep stillness alternate with every step. In the past, this area was deeply rooted in Matagi culture, and legends of Iwashi Iwaburo, regarded as the ancestor of the Tohoku Matagi, are still passed down today. It is said that above Amedaki Falls, prayers for bear hunting known as Otcho, as well as rain-invoking rituals, were once performed.



Primeval forests of beech and Japanese oak spread across the area, with waterfalls and mountain streams appearing throughout the landscape. Fresh spring greenery and vibrant autumn foliage create especially breathtaking scenery. This is also a protected area home to rare plants and wildlife, where visitors can truly feel the deep stillness of nature. Please note that mobile phone reception may be unavailable in some areas.

ROUTE OUTLINE

Light Mountaineering
LEVEL 3~4

- Estimated Time: Approx. 5.5 hours ascent
Approx. 3 hours descent
- Distance: 15km
- Elevation Gap: 1,012 meters

Mobile phone reception may be limited in some areas.

ROUTE 09
Futakuchi Gorge Waterfall Pilgrimage



Futakuchi Gorge Nature Trail

This route departs from the Akiu Visitor Center and follows the Futakuchi Forest Road to visit Ane Falls, Shiraito Falls, and Sanpogura Falls. The forests and streams formed by the beech and broadleaf trees of Mt. Daito are filled with a quiet, almost ethereal beauty. One of the highlights of this journey is the opportunity to experience takigyō—a waterfall purification ritual—at Sanpogura Falls, dressed in traditional white garments at the end of the route. The waterfalls and streams of Futakuchi Gorge remain largely untouched, making this a highly rewarding area to explore and one that is still little known outside Japan.



Futakuchi Campground is a nature-rich campsite surrounded by mountains such as Mt. Daito, Mt. Kodaito, and Mt. Minami-Omoshiroyama. It is used by a wide range of visitors as a base for activities including mountaineering, fishing, hiking, and river play.

ROUTE OUTLINE

Light Mountaineering
LEVEL 2

- Estimated Time: Approx. 7 hours
- Distance: 29km
- Elevation Gap: 122 meters

Please bring snowshoes when the area is covered with snow.





Eastern Coastal Area



A path to feel the sea breeze and trace the journey of renewal

From Natori to Sendai's Arahama, the story of a 1,000-kilometer trail is distilled along this coastline. In 2011, this town suffered devastating damage from the Great East Japan Earthquake. Today, carried by gentle sea breezes, it has begun to mark a new passage of time. As you feel the ocean wind, you walk through layers of landscapes—those that were lost and those now being reborn. The path leading toward the Earthquake Ruins of Arahama Elementary School becomes a precious journey of quiet dialogue with your own heart.



Teizan Canal



Michinoku Coastal Trail (Yuriage-Natori)

ROUTE OUTLINE

Hiking Cycling
LEVEL 2

- Estimated Time: Approx. 5 hours (round trip)
- Distance: 39km
- Elevation Cap: None

This route follows the Michinoku Coastal Trail from the mouth of the Natori River to the seaside, traveled by bicycle. Along the way, it traces both the memories of the disaster and the everyday lives of people living here today. Fishing ports, morning markets, memorial monuments, and parks appear throughout the route, quietly conveying the history of the area and the ongoing efforts to shape its future. It is a journey through landscapes of recovery, where nature and people are once again learning to live side by side.

Well-maintained cycling roads and walking paths line the route. Cyclists, walkers, and local residents each pass through the landscape with their own thoughts, intersecting naturally within the coastal environment. In the morning and at dusk, the sea surface is painted with especially beautiful light.

Memorial Exchange Center

Earthquake Memorial Park

Michinoku Coastal Trail-Natori Trail Center

Earthquake Ruins of Arahama Elementary School

Feeling the sea breeze, journeying through a land of renewal.

START

GOAL

Guidelines for Mountain Travel & Equipment

Seven Principles for Responsible Outdoor Travel #07



To enjoy the outdoors while minimizing your impact on the natural environment, please follow the seven principles of Leave No Trace.

- #01 **Plan Ahead and Prepare** Plan ahead and prepare
- #02 **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces** Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- #03 **Dispose of Waste Properly** Dispose of waste properly
- #04 **Leave What You Find** Leave what you find
- #05 **Minimize Campfire Impacts** Minimize campfire impacts
- #06 **Respect Wildlife** Respect wildlife
- #07 **Be Considerate of Other Visitors** Be considerate of other visitors

Six Rules for Safe Hiking and Mountaineering #06

- #01 Always submit a hiking or climbing plan and share it with your family or close contacts.
- #02 Start your trip only when you are in good physical condition.
- #03 Check the weather forecast in advance and avoid entering the mountains in severe conditions.
- #04 Carry appropriate equipment and emergency food in case of unexpected situations.
- #05 Aim to descend early and avoid pushing yourself too hard.
- #06 If you lose your way, do not force yourself forward. Stop, retrace your steps calmly, and never descend into a stream or ravine.

! Beware of bears!

! Watch out for ticks!

For a safe and enjoyable experience, we strongly recommend traveling with a professional guide.

! In case of emergency, call 110 (Police) or 119 (Fire & Emergency Services)

Essential Equipment

- Proper hiking or mountaineering footwear
- Rain jacket and pants
- Backpack cover
- Trekking poles

Items to Carry

- Energy snacks (for salt and sugar intake)
- Drinking water
- Headlamp
- Compass and topographic map
- Sunglasses
- hat
- insect net
- first-aid kit
- garbage bag

Emergency Equipment

- Emergency food
- Bivy sack (emergency shelter)
- Emergency sheet
- Whistle
- Lighter

Other Essentials

- Hiking plan
- Mobile phone and portable battery
- Portable toilet
- toilet paper
- Sun protection



are the essentials for trekking.

ADVENTURE TOURISM LEVEL GUIDE

In cooperation with Japan Adventure Tourism Association

LEVEL 1

Easiest

- Minimum physical fitness is okay
- Suitable for beginners and all ages
- Short-term, easy activities
- Daily walking level

LEVEL 2

Easy to Slightly Difficult

- Basic physical fitness required
- Suitable for those with daily exercise habits
- Medium distance/time activities
- 2-3 hours activities

LEVEL 3

Moderately Difficult

- Certain level of physical fitness and preparation required
- 3-6 hours physical activities
- 8-16km hiking
- Climbing approximately 3,000m mountains

LEVEL 4

Difficult to Severe

- Considerable physical fitness and prior training recommended
- Long-term physical activities
- Technical skills required
- High mountains, including steep slopes