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.

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.

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

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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 Town
Takasaki

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

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The Lucky Daruma

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

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.

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 aru” shot in 1952 is the story of the early years of the orchestra. Director Masaaki 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.
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

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

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

Intricate patterns dyed by the Master Craftsman using traditional techniques

Edo-Komon Textile Dying at the Aida Dye House

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 dying from its atelier at the foot of Mt. Haruna in the Ashikado suburb of Takasaki. Here, the process of dying 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-ural" 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

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.

The Development of Kusaki-zome in Takasaki

The Legacy of Seiju Yamazaki

The Takasaki Brand

The Takasaki City Dye Plant Botanical Garden

See page 25

Takasaki City Dye Plant Botanical Garden
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

Clear and Pure Simplicity
Manipulating Color and Shape

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.

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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 Glass Maker, Akira Kimura

高崎のグラスメーカー 木村 明

One of a Kind
The Oldest Sake Brewery in Gunma

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One of a Kind
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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, 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.

Bic Camera Takasaki and Taiyo Yuden Women’s Softball Teams

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.
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.

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

The Yamanoue Stela

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, Kuromotoji, 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

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

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.
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

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.


- 027-330-3773 30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

- 027-322-4527 2 min. walk from Gumma Music Center
- 027-322-8800 25 min. walk from Gumma Music Center

- 027-343-2256 Mondays 70 min.
- 027-374-9050 Tuesdays 10:00-
- 027-395-0483 Tuesdays 10:00-

Feel Culture

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 originality and a rich sense of color.

- 027-395-1164 Tuesdays 10:00-

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.

- 027-343-2256 Tuesdays 10:00-

Yamanouchi Stela and Takino Stela

- 027-395-0483 Tuesdays 10:00-

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!

- 027-395-0483 Tuesdays 10:00-

Gunma Symphony Orchestra

Guinma Prefectural Museum of History

A vast green park with an art gallery and museum.

- 027-346-5522 Tuesdays 10:00-

The Museum of Modern Art, Gunma

- 027-330-4277 Tuesdays 10:00-

The Footprints of History

Hodotsu Tumuli

Comprises the keyhole-shaped Futaoyama, Hachimanzuka and Yashimazuka 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, 9:30-18.30).

- 027-374-9050 Tuesdays 10:00-

Kamitsuke no Sato Museum of Archaeology

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

- 027-374-9050 Tuesdays 10:00-

Minowa Castle Ruins

Minowa Castle was constructed under Nagano Ichisaburo about five hundred years ago. The ruins are from the time when I 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.

- 027-374-9050 Tuesdays 10:00-

Kuragano Old Merchant House

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.

- 027-395-0483 Tuesdays 10:00-

The Oguri Monument

Once holding a high ranking post in the Tokugawa Shogunate, Oguri Kozukenosuke went into exile in Kurubuchi 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.

- 027-374-9050 Tuesdays 10:00-

Tazoe-ji Temple

Established in 1460, Tazoe-ji Temple has been designated a National Historic Site since 1971. The temple is open to the public on national holidays.

- 027-374-9050 Tuesdays 10:00-

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.

- 027-395-0483 Tuesdays 10:00-

Spiritual Serenity

Shorinzan Daruma-ji Temple

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**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 roadsides. At the top is a replica of an old Japanese castle that acts as an observation tower and rest point, overlooking the city.

- **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.
  - Mts. Yoshii & Mt. Haruna
  - Tel: 027-371-1700
  - Open: 9AM-5PM

- **Warabi-daïrara Forest Park Camp Site**
  - This well-equipped camp site is perfect for enjoying camping in the outdoors or a leisurely afternoon surrounded by nature. There are hiking courses to nearby Mt. Tsuno-ōchi, Mt. Asama-kakushi and Mt. Haramegaeru.

- **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.

- **Mitsumori no mi (Professor of Stone Monument) Road**
  - 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.

- **Kan-myōjō**
  - 20 min. by car from Takasaki IC
  - 30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

**Mt. Haruna and Lake Haruna**

- **Klein Garten**
  - 30 min. by car from Takasaki/Maebashi/Shibukawa-Ikaho IC
  - 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.
  - 90 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

- **Smelt Fishing on Lake Haruna**
  - 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

**Mt. Haruna yoga Olympic Park**

- **Klein Garten**
  - 20 min. by car from Takasaki/Maebashi/Shibukawa-Ikaho IC
  - 30 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

- **Smelt Fishing on Lake Haruna**
  - 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

**The Kannoyama Hills**

- **Mt. Haruna Lake Haruna**
  - A 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.

**Mt. Haruna Lake Haruna**

- **The Kohan-no-Yado Memorial Park**
  - This park was made in remembrance of an old song called “Kohan-no-Yado” (A Lakeisde Inn).

- **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.

- **Lake Haruna Melody Line**
  - Along the road running toward Mt. Haruna from Rhins 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, “Shinza-ni-kaen” (The Tranquil Lakeside).

**Smelt Fishing on Lake Haruna**

- **Mt. Haruna**
  - 30 min. by car from Takasaki/Maebashi/Shibukawa-Ikaho IC
  - 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

**Mt. Ushibuse Nature Park**

- **Klein Garten**
  - 30 min. by car from Takasaki IC
  - 20 min. walk from Maniwa Sta.

- **Smelt Fishing on Lake Narusawa**
  - 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

**Mt. Haruna Lake Haruna**

- **Klein Garten**
  - 30 min. by car from Takasaki/Maebashi/Shibukawa-Ikaho IC
  - 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

- **Smelt Fishing on Lake Haruna**
  - 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

**Mt. Ushibuse Nature Park**

- **Klein Garten**
  - 30 min. by car from Takasaki IC
  - 20 min. walk from Maniwa Sta.

- **Smelt Fishing on Lake Narusawa**
  - 20 min. by bus from Takasaki Sta.

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**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.

**Shimnachi Sauce Katsudon**

Shimnachi’s popular katsudon is a bowl of rice topped with crisp deep-fried pork cutlets on shredded cabbage and drizzled with a rich, oriental barbecue sauce. It’s sure to tempt your taste buds!

**Kokufu Chinese Cabbage**

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.

**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.

**More Hot Springs for Daytrippers**

- **Yutonot Natural Hot Spring**
  - 027-358-8111
- **Takatsuki Hot Spring**
  - 027-340-4126
- **Yasuragi-no-Yu Hot Spring**
  - 027-370-4342

**Takasaki Calendar of Events**

**Jan**

- Bear Festival: Matsusaka New Year’s Concert at Ehime Music Center (Matsusaka City) ■
- New Year’s Day drive-up music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Young people’s drive-up music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Last Sun in Jan: Takasago’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Last Mon in Jan: Takasaki’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Last Wed in Jan: Takasaki’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Last Thu in Jan: Takasaki’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Last Fri in Jan: Takasaki’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Last Sat in Jan: Takasaki’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Last Sun in Jan: Takasaki’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Feb**

- First Sun in Feb: Takasaki City Hot Spring Festival (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sun in Feb; Takasaki City Hot Spring Festival (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Third Sun in Feb: Takasaki City Hot Spring Festival (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Feb: Takasaki City Hot Spring Festival (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Mar**

- First Fri in Mar: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Mar: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sat in Mar; Takasaki’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Mar: Takasaki City Hot Spring Festival (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Apr**

- First Fri in Apr: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Apr: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sun in Apr: Takasaki City Hot Spring Festival (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Apr: Takasaki City Hot Spring Festival (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**May**

- First Fri in May: Oguri Festival at Tozen-ji Temple ■
- Second Sat in May: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Third Sun in May: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in May: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Jun**

- First Fri in Jun: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Jun: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sun in Jun: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Jun: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Jul**

- First Fri in Jul: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Jul: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sun in Jul: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Jul: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Aug**

- First Fri in Aug: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Aug: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sun in Aug: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Aug: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Sep**

- First Fri in Sep: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Sep: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sun in Sep: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Sep: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Oct**

- First Fri in Oct: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Oct: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sun in Oct: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Oct: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Nov**

- First Fri in Nov: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Nov: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sun in Nov: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Nov: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■

**Dec**

- First Fri in Dec: Takasaki Haru Matsuri (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Second Sat in Dec: Haruna Plum Festival in March near Haruna Culture Hall ■
- Third Sun in Dec: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
- Fourth Sun in Dec: Takasaki City’s Drive-up Music (Himeji, Matsusaka City) ■
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-kankouyoukai.or.jp/  Email: kankouyoukai@city.takasaki.gunma.jp