








Nearby Sightseeing Spots



A New Convenient Travel Pass for Transport Within the Matsumoto, Kamikochi, Norikura and Hida Takayama Area!

This pass allows you to get on a bus at any time and travel anywhere within the area for 4 days. Go hiking in Kamikochi or trekking on Mt. Norikura after visiting the national treasure, Matsumoto Castle. Bathe in the milky waters of Shirahone Onsen, then enjoy Takayama's old town and morning market. Finally, pay a visit to Shirakawago, which is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The Four Seasons in Matsumoto														
	Average Temperature (Celsius)	highest	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
		lowest	4.9	5.6	10.0	17.5	22.6	25.5	29.0	30.5	25.0	19.0	13.3	7.9
	Precipitation	ml	31.1	42.5	73.5	86.8	92.5	135.9	132.6	95.8	162.3	89.4	52.9	23.3
	Events in Matsumoto & Environs					CHERRY BLOOM			RAINY SEASON		GRAPE PICKING			
		SWANS WINTER				PEACH BLOOM				BLUEBERRY PICKING		FALL FOLIAGE		
										WATERMELON		APPLE PICKING		
	Kamikochi	4/27-11/15		ROAD CLOSED				FRESH GREEN	ALPINE FLOWERS			FALL FOLIAGE	ROAD CLOSED	
	Mt. Norikura	7/1-10/31		ROAD CLOSED				SNOW CORRIDOR BUS	SUNRISE SHUTTLE BUS			FALL FOLIAGE	ROAD CLOSED	
	Norikura Plateau & Nagawa			SKI SEASON				AZALEA	ALPINE FLOWERS			FALL FOLIAGE		SKI
														
								</						



Kamikochi

Kamikochi is a perfect example of the beauty of the Japanese mountains. In order to reduce emissions and keep the park pristine, private cars are not allowed in the park. Enjoy the natural splendor of the area as the main path takes you near 3000-meter-high peaks. This hiking mecca is home to the trailheads for mountain climbs such as Mt. Yari, and has several campsites. Mt. Yakedake, an active volcano, the Hotaka mountain range, as well as the Taisho and Myojin ponds are some of the breathtaking views you can see from the Kappa Bridge. You can also see such wildlife as fish, ducks, and monkeys.



Kappa Bridge and the Hotaka Mountain Range



Utsukushi Tower



Japanese Azaleas

Utsukushigahara Kogen (plateau)

Located in the northernmost part of Yatsugatake Chushin National Park and the eastern part of Matsumoto, Utsukushigahara Kogen is 2,000 meters high and one of the largest tablelands in Japan. Utsukushi Tower, the symbol of Utsukushigahara, was built as a shelter for climbers. The bell inside the tower serves to help climbers find their way in foggy weather as azaleas and willowherbs in Jun & Jul, and cows and horses are put out to pasture from Jun through Oct.



A grazing scene on the Utsukushigahara Kogen and Mt. Fuji in the back

Nature

The many Northern Japan Alps peaks over 3,000 meters high in Chubu-Sangaku National Park, including Mt. Yari and Mt. Norikura, are treasured sites abounding with nature. At Kamikochi and the Norikura Plateau, you will be amazed by the wonderful view in all seasons. On the Utsukushigahara Plateau, you can enjoy a beautiful panoramic view of the Japan Alps and even Mt. Fuji on a clear day. Utsukushigahara is one of the largest plateaus in Japan, where alpine plants are abundantly clustered. Visitors are always drawn to this incredible site.



Mt. Norikura and Ushidome Pond



Norikura Kogen (plateau)

Norikura Kogen is an immense plateau, which lies to the east of Mt. Norikura (3,026 m). You can enjoy magnificent views from Japan's highest road (2,700 m), the "Norikura Skyline," by shuttle bus. The plateau also offers various seasonal activities all year round, such as walking between snow walls in spring, enjoying huge fields of tiny alpine flora, trekking and camping in summer, and viewing fall foliage in autumn. There are a lot of great winter activities including not only skiing, but also snowshoeing, sledding, etc. The snow remains even in August so that you experience sledding or making a snowman in May to August. There are also numerous hot springs, some of which are famous for their milky water.



Mt. Yari Mt. Oku-Hotakadake

Surrounded by beautiful mountains, Matsumoto is a mecca for mountain climbers. Mt. Yari, an icon of the Japan Alps (Hida Range), and Mt. Oku-Hotakadake, which is the third tallest mountain in Japan, can be climbed from within Kamikochi.



Karasawa in autumn and Mt. Oku-Hotakadake



History

Matsumoto has many famous historical sites such as the Matsumoto Castle, a national treasure, was constructed more than 400 years ago. Also, there is the Former Kaichi School, which was designated as the first important cultural property in Japan and gives visitors a taste of the passion for education that once was inside this building. Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival which is directed by Mr. Seiji Ozawa, a world famous conductor has been held from mid-August through early September every year for over 20 years, earning Matsumoto the nickname "The City of Music". The worldwide violin school Suzuki method's headquarter and museum (Suzuki's former residence) are also in Matsumoto. By visiting these places and more you can experience the history and culture of Matsumoto.

Matsumoto Castle

Nakamachi Street

Matsumoto Castle Town

Matsumoto, as a Castle Town has thrived around the castle for centuries. There are many old buildings and rows of houses which show us what Japan was like years ago. You can enjoy walking on Nawate Street, which was a border between the samurai residences and the commoner residences in the Edo era. Also there is Nakamachi, where you can find many buildings with white and black walls known as *kura* (earthen-walled storehouses). Many of them are used as classical and modern cafés, *izakayas* (Japanese-style pubs), and shops.



Kurassic-kan (Community Center)



Nawate Street

Visiting Local Springs

The mountains surrounding Matsumoto are the source of the excellent water that bubbles from the many natural springs around the city. Walking around to the various springs is a pleasant way to become familiar with the city.



Genchi Well



Hot Springs

Shirahone Onsen

Hot springs offering various health benefits are everywhere in Matsumoto. On your trip, you can enjoy the pleasant surroundings inside the hot springs, and relax in the comfortable and renowned baths. This wonderful experience will refresh your mind, body and soul.

Norikura Hot Springs Resort Area



Asama Onsen



Foot Bath in Sawando



Utsukushigahara Onsen

Cultural Facilities

Matsumoto City Museum of Art

This is a municipal museum with a huge outdoor exhibit by Yayoi Kusama, an artist from Matsumoto, welcoming visitors at the entrance.



Timepiece Museum

The Japan Ukiyo-e Woodblock Print Museum



Kasamori Inari Shrine



Historic Former Matsumoto High School



Former Kaichi School



One of the buses, designed by Yayoi Kusama

Excursion Bus (Town Sneaker)

You can take the bus called "Town Sneaker" for ¥200. The buses operate every 30 minutes on 4 routes for north, south, east and west Matsumoto all starting at Matsumoto Station. You can easily travel between the famous sights in Matsumoto such as Matsumoto Castle, and Nakamachi Street.



Bicycle rental (Suisui town, Rikisha)

You can rent bicycles free of cost at several places in the city including Matsumoto Castle, Nakamachi, at most hotels, and at shops on the street in front of Matsumoto Castle.

Matsumoto Tourist Map



Handicrafts

Castle town Matsumoto is abundant with a variety of handicraft products. The techniques of the skilled craftsmen have been handed down from generation to generation.



Oshiebina (Raised-Cloth Dolls)
Oshiebina is a traditional Japanese doll portraying mythical or kabuki (traditional Japanese play) characters. These dolls have been a specialty of Matsumoto since being mentioned in a book in 1843.

Matsumoto Temari (Japanese Thread Ball)

They say wives and daughters of samurai families began making these balls in the middle of the Edo period. These elegant and elaborate handmade cloth balls are fashioned by interweaving brightly colored thread such as red, yellow, green and blue.

Local Specialties

Sake/ Wine

There are many delicious local sakes and wines made using the pure natural water of Matsumoto.

Oyaki

Oyaki is the local traditional bun stuffed with native produce such as nozawana (the leaf of a turnip).



Local Specialties

The climate of Matsumoto, including the fresh air and clean water, provides ingredients and cuisine that is both delicious and unique to the region.



Handmade Soba/ Toji Soba (Buckwheat Noodles)

When all Japanese think of the Nagano region they are immediately reminded of these delicious noodles. Soba is produced from cold and pure water. There is special cuisine called *toji soba* that you can find only in Matsumoto. It is like noodle *shabu-shabu* in mushroom soup, which you must try.



Shinshu Miso

Shinshu Miso is a famous brand of miso (Japanese salty bean paste seasoning). The Matsumoto area is one of the major production centers of it. The cool climate and pure air is ideal for aging miso. Shinshu miso has the largest share of the Japanese miso market nowadays. Miso is known as a health food, as the ingredients have preventative effects against life-style related diseases. You can enjoy the marvelous flavor in various ways, not only in miso soup, but also miso-mayonnaise, dressing and so on.



Apples/ Grapes

The big difference in temperature between day and night coupled with a lot of sunlight produces the splendid sweet and juicy Matsumoto apples and grapes.



Watermelons

The leading agricultural product of the Hata area. Volcanic soil, wide day-and-night temperature differences, and long hours of sunlight combine to produce tasty, high-quality watermelons with high sugar content and a crispy texture in the mouth.