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# Matsumoto \*\*

Centered around the national treasure Matsumoto Castle, Matsumoto has thrived as a castle town for over 400 years. Located in Nagano Prefecture, the central part of Japan, the history and culture of Matsumoto have been nurtured in the area's beautiful natural environment. It commands a spectacular view of the Japan Alps, which are over 3,000 meters in altitude to the west, and the Utsukushigahara Plateau, which is 2,000 meters in altitude, to the east. Visitors to Matsumoto can enjoy nature during all four seasons such as special events for cherry blossom and moon viewing at Matsumoto Castle and Japanese culture such as traditional festivals and music. It is also intriguing to see the contrast between the Japan Ukiyo-e Museum and the modern art museum featuring Yayoi Kusama, the old streets with modern cafes, the old buildings and the modern architecture of Matsumoto Performing Arts Centre.

Nagano Pref.



**Matsumoto Tourism & Convention Association** 





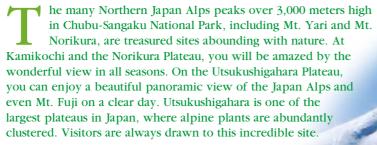


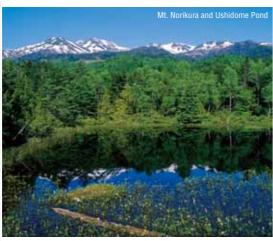
### Utsukushigahara Kogen (plateau)

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 azaleas and willowherbs in Jun & Jul, and cows and horses are put out to pasture from Jun through Oct.





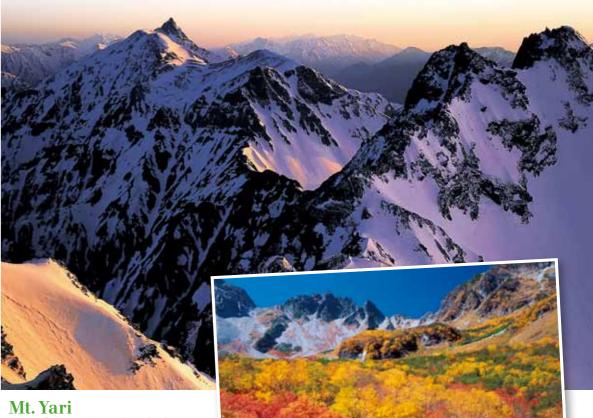






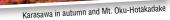
## Norikura Kogen (plateau)

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.





Surrounded by beautiful mountains, Matsumoto is a mecca for mountain climbers. Mt. Yarigatake, 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.





# Cultural Facilities

#### Matsumoto City Museum of Art

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







#### **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.





# 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.







#### 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.





ot 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

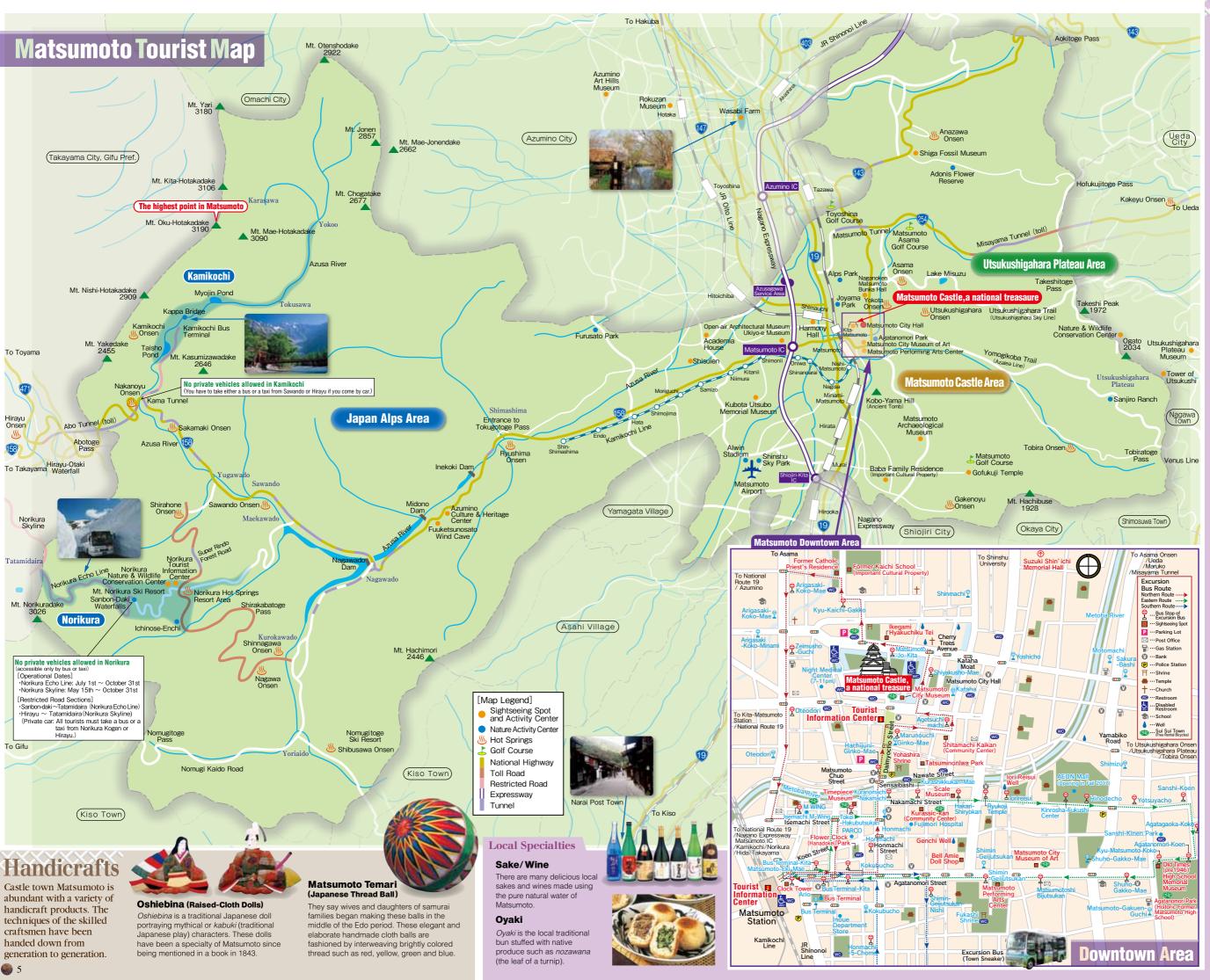






#### Bicycle rental (Suisui town, Rikisha)

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.



# **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 toii 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 productin 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.