

Hokuto City Historical Road

In Hokuto City, you can find the remnants of the Koshu-kaido Road, one of the five highways leading to Edo (present-day Tokyo), as well as the post town Daigahara-shuku, and Bomichi, a military road constructed by the powerful warlord Takeda Shingen during the Warring States Period (late 15th century to late 16th century).

By following this sample walking route, you can enjoy spectacular views of Mt. Fuji, Mt. Yatsugatake, and the Minami Alps while walking along the same roads, staying in the same post towns, and enjoying the same local lifestyle and culture as travelers from long ago.

Koshu-kaido Road: Daigahara-shuku to Nirasaki-shuku

The Koshu-kaido Road was a major military and commerce route running east to west across Yamanashi Prefecture (formerly called Koshu) during the Edo Period (1603-1868). It connected Nihonbashi in Tokyo with Shimosuwai in Nagano Prefecture, a distance of 208 km.

Follow this 17 km walking route (a gentle ascent with a change in elevation of 370 m) along the Old Koshu-kaido Road from Nirasaki Sta. on the JR Chuo Line to Daigahara Shuku, following the current National Route 20. Along the way, you'll find landmarks and stunning views of mountains like Mt. Yatsugatake, Mt. Fuji, and Mt. Kaikomagatake, plus quaint village streets and other scenic locations.

Daigahara-shuku

This was the 24th post town on the Koshu-kaido Road, located in Kai Province (present-day Yamanashi Prefecture). The town retains the look of an Edo-era post town, with many historical buildings still intact, such as the Arai-jinja Shrine and the Tanaka-jinja Shrine, which were once used as inns for the "Ochatsubo-Dochu," a procession carrying tea for the Tokugawa shoguns from Kyoto to Edo along the Nakasen trail and Koshu-kaido Road. Other historical buildings include the Kitahara Family Residence, where Emperor Meiji (1852-1912) once stayed.



Hakusazan jigenji Temple

This temple was founded in 1570 by Baba Mino-no-Kami Nobuharu, who served three generations of the Takeda family (Nobutora, Shingen, and Katsuyori). The name of the temple, Hakusazan, means white sand mountain and is derived from the white granite mountain face of Mt. Kaikomagatake. Experience a Zen meditation service (reservations are required in advance). (TEL: 0551-35-2245)

Daihara Family Residence

An old Japanese-style home built in 1700. The Daihara family served as the shrine family (priests) of the Tanaka-jinja Shrine. The home is a wooden one-story building with a gable roof and metal shingles (originally wood shingles). One of the few remaining shrine family homes from the middle Edo period. A Hokuto City designated cultural property.



Kitahara Family Residence

A wooden gable-roof townhouse from the late Edo period. The inner rooms were used as accommodation for Emperor Meiji during his imperial tour across Japan. The Kitahara family branched off from a sake brewer based in the Takato area of Nagano in 1750. They continue to brew sake under the name Shichiken to this day. The water used for sake brewing flows from under Mt. Kaikomagatake. Visitors can enjoy a tour of the sake brewery and a tasting. (TEL: 0551-35-2236)



Daigahara Kinseiken

This building was originally a hatago, a type of Edo-era inn, and it retains traces of that past. The shop was founded in 1902 as a Japanese-style confectioner making shingen mochi (rice cakes) and other popular sweets using locally-grown rice and soybeans. (Tel: 0551-35-2246)



Arai-jinja Shrine and Tanaka-jinja Shrine

The Arai-jinja Shrine and the Tanaka-jinja Shrine were originally separate shrines that were moved to the present location. Each shrine has its own main hall and torii gate within its precincts. The worship halls were once used as lodgings for those transporting tea for the shogunate from Uji City in Kyoto Prefecture to Edo. At the shrine's autumn festival, the prefecture's only Toragashira no Mai (tiger dance) is held here.

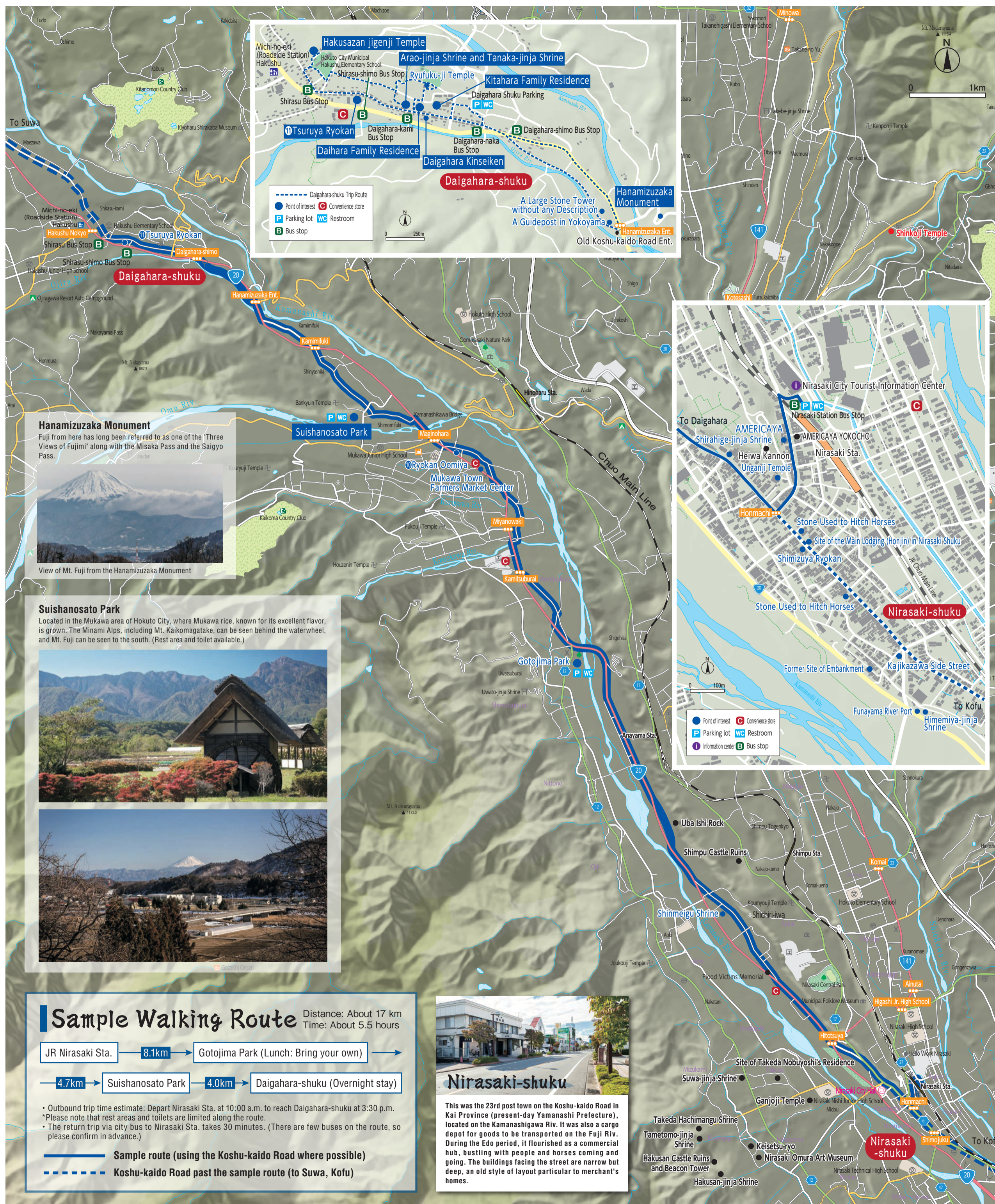


Tsuruya Ryokan

Founded in the Meiji Era (1868-1912). The only ryokan inn in the Daigahara area. It was once lodgings for members of the Mt. Kaikomagatake religious association, and the building adjacent to the present-day ryokan inn still retains its old kochu fuda (wooden signs placed by members of a religious association at their lodgings). (TEL: 0551-35-2028)

Shichiri-iwa

This bluff, which totals about 30 km in length, was formed by erosion from the Kamanashi Riv. and Shioikawa Riv. flowing through a plateau created 200,000 years ago by the collapse of Mt. Yatsugatake. The bluff, popularly known as Shichiri-iwa, is a registered national monument. At the southern end of the cliffs are the ruins of Shimpu Castle, a national historic site built in 1582 by Katsuyori, the last head of the Takeda family.



Hokuto city , Yamanashi , Japan Historical Road Guide Map

Samurai Road
in Hokuto, Yamanashi



Yatsugatake Tourism Management
(Central Incorporated Association)
2239 Nakamura-cho, Hokuto City, Yamanashi, Japan
TEL: 0551-45-2386 FAX: 0551-45-9868
SITE: <http://yatsugatake-tm.com>



Samurai Road
in Hokuto, Yamanashi

Bomichi Road

Bomichi was a military road built by Takeda Shingen, said to be the strongest military commander of the Warring States period. This road runs from the southern foothills of Mt. Yatsugatake through the western foothills, then continues straight to Suwa in Nagano Prefecture. "Bo" means "rod", and while many theories about the road's name exist, some think it is named for its straight path, which resembles a rod.

Enjoy this 22 km walking route (about 4 km uphill with a change in elevation of 254 m. After the remains of the fire watchtower, the route is about 17 km downhill with a change in elevation of 555 m) from Kobuchizawa Sta. on the JR Chuo Main Line to the remains of the fire watchtower, Sanbuichi Spring, Yato-jo Castle Ruins, and Wakamiko-jo Castle Ruins in Hokuto City. You'll encounter points of interest along the way, like viewpoints of Mt. Yatsugatake, Mt. Fuji, and Mt. Kaikomagatake, among others, plus quaint village streets and other scenic locations.

Buddhist Statues along the Bomichi

At the end of the Edo Period, various statues of Kannon (Buddhist bodhisattva of mercy) were placed along the route as guideposts for travelers walking the road, in imitation of the Saigoku Sanjusankasho and Bando Sanjusankasho pilgrimages. Types of Kannon include Bato Kannon, Senju Kannon, Sho Kannon, Nyoi Rinkannon, and Eleven-faced Kannon. 39 of these statues still exist today. Walking this path and viewing these simple but unique stone statues, you can almost feel the calming presence of travelers from long ago who prayed to these same statues for safe travels.



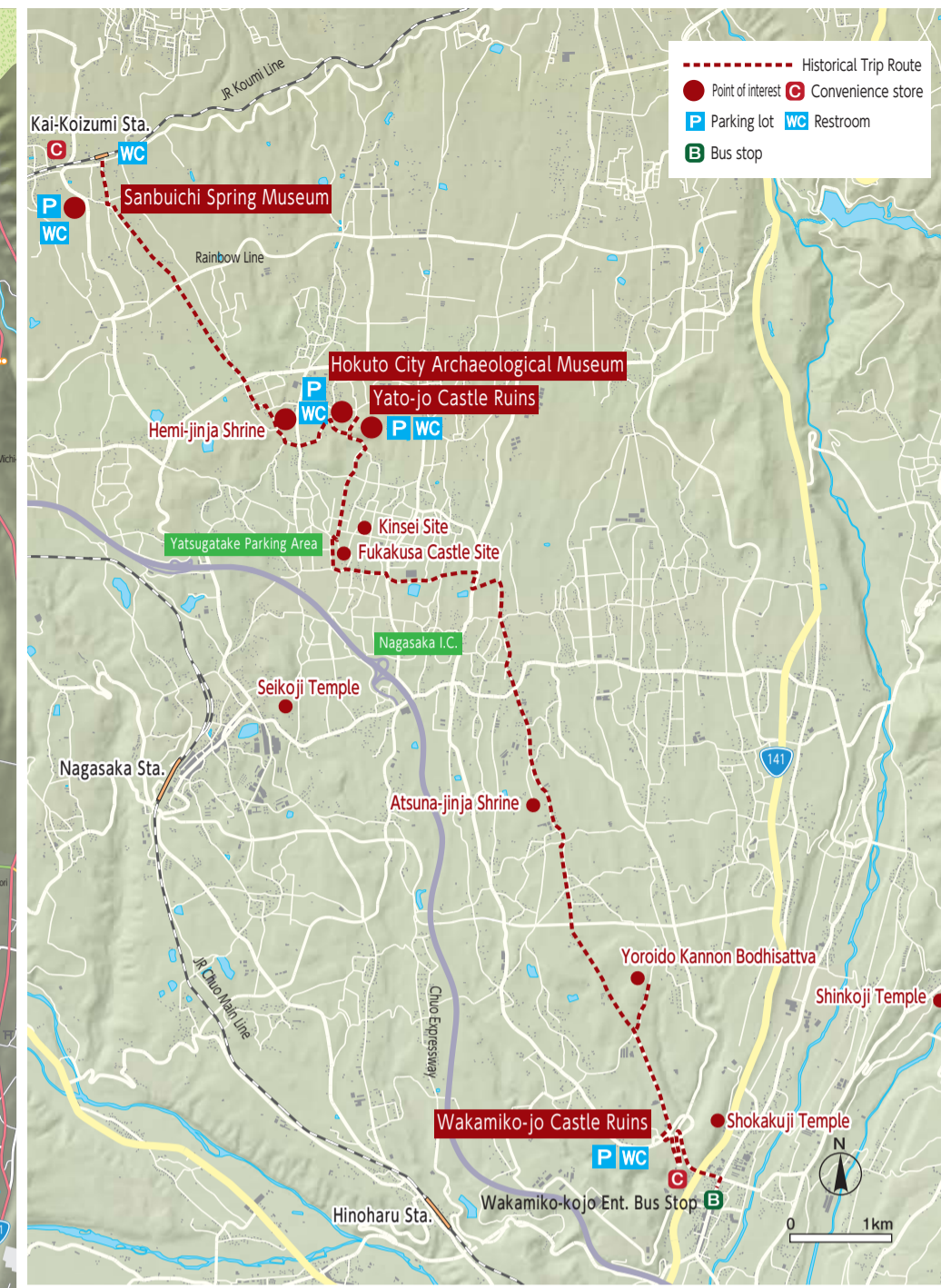
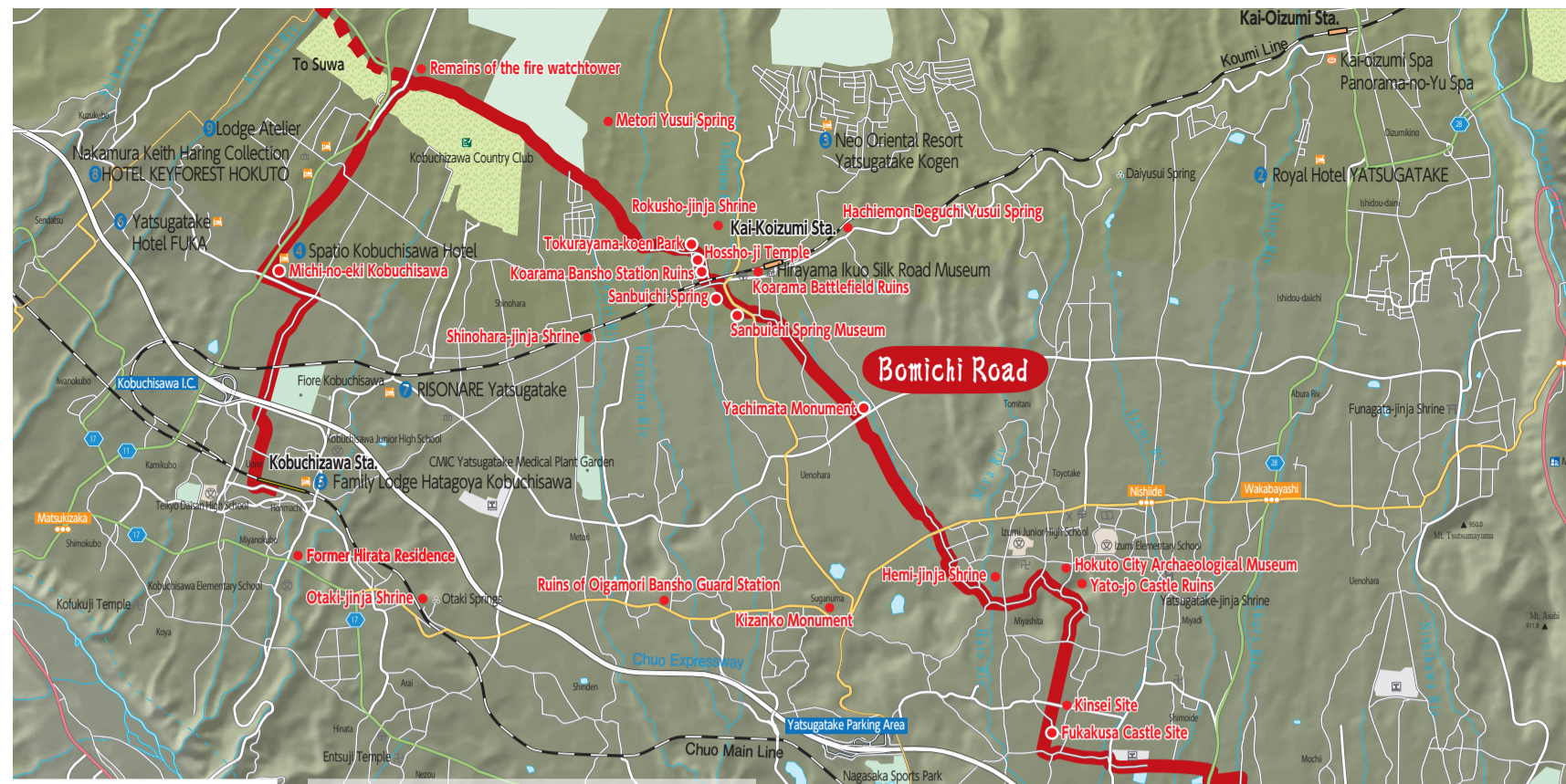
Bando No. 4 (Eleven-faced Kannon)



Saigoku No. 32 (Senju Kannon)



Bando No. 1 (Eleven-faced Kannon)



Hokuto Archaeological Museum

A museum adjacent to the ruins of Yato-jo Castle. Artifacts from the Paleolithic Period to the Middle Ages that were excavated in Hokuto City are on display. The museum has extensive information on the Bomichi and other transportation networks within the Yatsugatake plateau, as well as the Yato-jo Castle Ruins. (TEL: 0551-20-5505 Closed: Tuesdays and Wednesdays *If a holiday falls on a Tuesday or Wednesday, the next non-holiday day immediately following.)



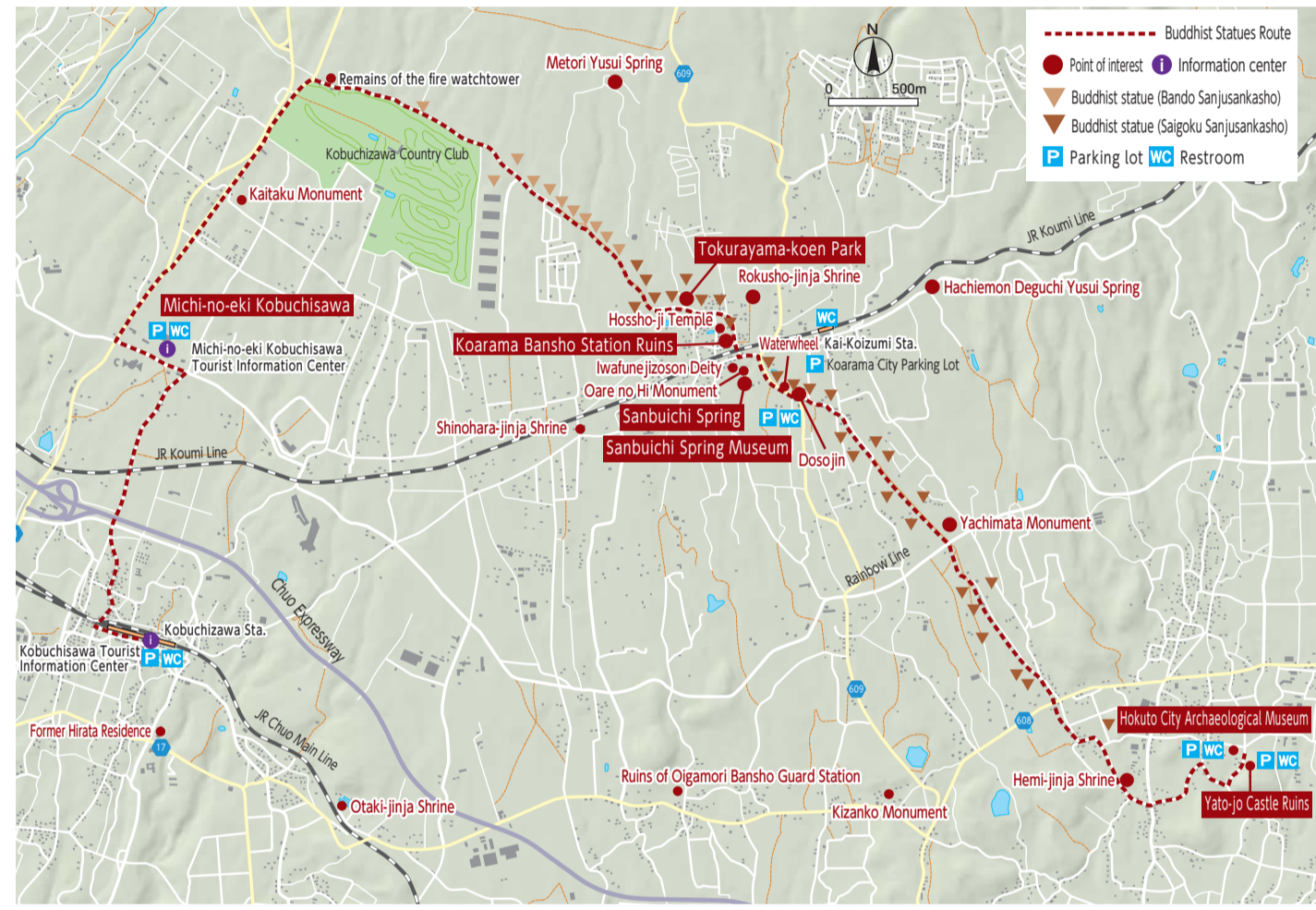
Yato-jo Castle Ruins

The area around the Bomichi is dotted with the ruins of castles, shrines, and temples associated with the Kaigenji (or Kai Genji Clan), the ancestors of the Takeda clan. As you descend with Mt. Yatsugatake behind you, you can see Mt. Fuji ahead and the Minami Alps on your right. The Yato-jo Castle Ruins are a National Historic Site. The former mountain castle is believed to have been built by Minamoto-no Kiyomitsu (1110-1168).

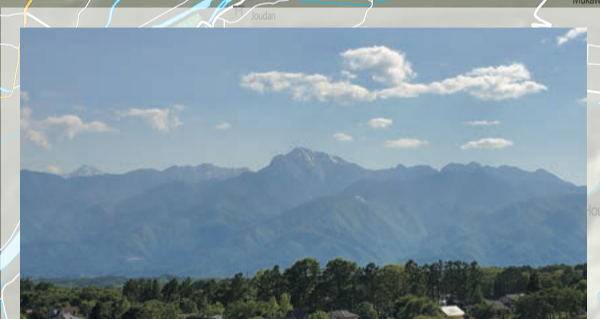


Wakamiko-jo Castle Ruins

Wakamiko was a strategic point for transportation to Suwa and Saku in Nagano Prefecture, where the Bomichi branches off from the Saku Okan road. Wakamiko-jo Castle was an important military base for the Takeda clan during the Warring States period, as well as a relay point for beacon fires. Currently, the area is maintained as a park and offers views of Mt. Kayagatake and Mt. Fuji. (Rest area and toilets available.)



Mt. Fuji and buckwheat fields as seen from southeast Sanbuichi Spring.



The Minami Alps (Mt. Kaikomagatake) as seen from the Sanbuichi Spring Museum observation hall.

Sanbuichi Spring

One of a group of springs in the southern foothills of Mt. Yatsugatake. Since there are no major rivers in the southern foothills of Mt. Yatsugatake, the region had to rely on spring water for agricultural use, causing constant conflicts over water. But at Sanbuichi Spring, you can witness an ingenious solution to this shortage, as the waters were diverted to flow equally in three directions. The Sanbuichi Spring Museum has exhibits on the history and folklore of the area, including the history of the spring and an explanation of the Bomichi. Mt. Fuji and Mt. Kaikomagatake can be seen from the exhibition hall on the third floor. There is also a shop selling local products and soba noodles made from locally grown buckwheat and the famous spring water. (TEL: 0551-32-0058)



Michi-no-eki (Roadside Station) Kobuchisawa
This is the halfway point between Kobuchizawa Sta. on the JR Chuo Main Line and the remains of the fire watchtower. It is a popular landmark with restaurants, shops, and markets selling locally produced goods. A rest area and toilets are also available. (TEL: 0551-36-3280)



Tokurayama-koen Park
This is a site of worship for Mt. Tokura, a god of cattle and horses. Various Bato Kannon are enshrined here. A dirt path connects the park to the remains of the fire watchtower, and from time to time a group will pass by on horseback, bringing to mind the mounted warriors of the Warring States period. On clear days, Mt. Fuji can be seen to the south.



Koarama Bansho Station Ruins
Guardhouses were established at the borders between provinces for security and surveillance. This one is said to have been established in the mid-16th century by Takeda Nobutora, who unified Kai Province and defended it from Shinshu (present-day Nagano). During the Edo period, local farmers took turns guarding the area, and in the late Edo period, villagers carried goods by horseback and traded with people from the Suwa area at the guardhouse.

Sample Walking Route

Distance: About 22 km
Time: About 7 hours

JR Kobuchizawa Sta. — 2.5km —> Michi-no-eki (Roadside Station) Kobuchisawa

— 1.8km —> Remains of the fire watchtower — 3.6km —> Sanbuichi Spring Museum

— 3.8km —> Yato-jo Castle Ruins/Hokuto Archaeological Museum — 9.2km —>

Wakamiko-jo Castle Ruins — 1.1km —> Wakamiko-kojo Ent. (Bus Stop)

— 9.9 km, 25 minutes by bus —> JR Nirasaki Sta.

- Outbound trip time estimate: Depart Kobuchizawa Sta. at 10:00 a.m. to reach the Wakamiko-jo Castle Ruins at about 5:00 p.m.
- Please note that rest areas and toilets are limited along the route.
- The return trip via city bus to Nirasaki Sta. takes 30 minutes. (There are few buses on the route, so please confirm in advance.)
- Despite being downhill, this is a fairly difficult route. It's recommended that you stay near Kobuchizawa Sta. and leave late in the morning, or stay overnight midway through the trip near Kai-Koizumi Sta. or Kai-Oizumi Sta. (JR Koumi Line). You can also use the lodgings at the route's goal near Wakamiko.

— Sample route (along Bomichi when possible)

--- Bomichi past the sample route (to Suwa)



Yato-jo Castle Ruins (middle hills) and Mt. Yatsugatake

accommodation Information

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Minami-Yatsugatake Hot Spring Resort: TEL 0551-42-3378 | 4 Yatsugatake Hotel FUKA: TEL 0551-36-6144 |
| 2 Hotel Wakamiro: TEL 0551-38-4455 | 5 RISONARE Yatsugatake: TEL 0551-36-5111 |
| 3 Neo Oriental Resort Yatsugatake Kogen: TEL 0551-38-2336 | 6 HOTEL KEYFOREST HOKUTO: TEL 0551-36-8755 |
| 7 Spatio Kobuchisawa Hotel: TEL 0551-36-6111 | 8 Lodge Atelier: TEL 0551-36-2011 |
| 8 Family Lodge Hatagoya Kobuchisawa: TEL 0551-36-5999 | 9 Ryokan Oomiya: TEL 0551-26-2036 |
| | 10 Tsuruya Ryokan: TEL 0551-35-2028 |

Transport Information

Yamanashi Kotsu Bus
 ■ JR Nirasaki Sta. to Daigahara-Naka to Shimokoyorai-shimo
 ■ JR Nirasaki Sta. to Wakamiko-kojo Ent. to Masutomionsenkyo
 Inquiries: Yamanashi Kotsu Co.,Ltd. Nirasaki Office TEL 0551-22-2511

Taxis
 Sankyo Taxi TEL 0551-42-2328 Hokuto Taxi TEL 0551-32-2055
 Takane Taxi TEL 0551-48-2211 Oizumi Taxi TEL 0551-38-2311
 Yatsugatake Sightseeing Taxi TEL 0551-48-2025 Kobuchisawa Taxi TEL 0551-36-2525

Inquiries

Yatsugatake Tourism Zone (General Incorporated Association) Yatsugatake Tourism Management
 TEL 0551-45-9822 URL https://yatsugatake-ga.com/en/ info@yatsugatake-tm.com

Hokuto City Hall Tourism Department 961-1 Mamyoda, Sutama-cho, Hokuto City, Yamanashi Prefecture, 408-0188, Japan
 TEL 0551-42-1351 FAX 0551-42-5216 URL https://www.city.hokuto.yamanashi.jp

Inquiries about Tourism
 Michi-no-eki Kobuchisawa Tourist Information Center TEL 0551-45-9845
 Kobuchisawa Tourist Information Center TEL 0551-45-9353
 Nirasaki City Tourist Information Center TEL 0551-23-6886

