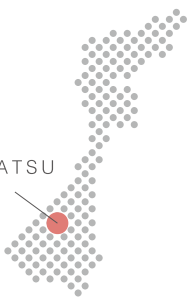


KOMATSU
CITY



KOMATSU CITY GUIDE BOOK

EXPLORE KOMATSU



Natadera Temple

Why Komatsu

From Traditional

Kabuki

Komatsu is one of few places where kabuki theater, a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Japan, continues to be performed as living tradition!

Otabi Festival

At the city's largest festival, catch the rare sight of children's kabuki performed upon festival floats, by an all-girl cast (pg 4).



Ataka-no-Seki: Setting of a Famous Legend

Komatsu is also the setting of a famous legend adapted into one of the most well-known kabuki acts.

The very site lies along the coast at the Ataka Sumiyoshi Shrine (pg 5).



Kutani Ware

This Ishikawa-unique craft born over 300 years ago was revived in Komatsu, and continues to be evolved in the hands of aspiring artisans (pg 6).

to Modern

Birthplace of KOMATSU LTD.

Yes, the manufacturer of those yellow construction machines found all over the world had its beginnings right here in Komatsu!



Komatsu no Mori

At the former site of the KOMATSU headquarters, learn their story and admire the world's largest dump truck (pg 8).



Yusenji Copper Mine Memorial Park

The origins of KOMATSU can in fact be traced back to this former mining town, now a memorial park where mine ruins can be contemplated amidst seasonal beauty (pg 13).

From Mountain

Both Komatsu's Heritage of Stone in the mountains, and history as a major port by the sea, are national treasures recognized as Japan Heritage.

Natadera Temple

A 1300-year-old ancient sanctuary of nature worship, uniquely built to blend into the mountainous surroundings. Known as an autumn spot (pg 15).



Awazu Onsen

One of the oldest onsen towns in Japan, established at the same time as nearby Natadera Temple. Where you can stay at one of the oldest hotels in the world (pg 22).



Quarry Towns of Takigahara & Kanagaso

Step right into the sites that supplied some of the top stone in the nation, and immerse in the local farming community through healing food and stay (pg 11, 21-23).



to Sea

Ataka Coast

A former port town sitting along the coast of Komatsu, where you can savor sunset over the ocean, and meals of fresh catch, while soaking in the historic air of the shrine and streets (pg 15, 21).

Beauty through the seasons...

Spring



Summer



Autumn



Winter



To page 12



KABUKI

歌舞伎



Otabi Festival

Komatsu's biggest event, with a history of over 250 years. The star attraction is one rarely found elsewhere: all-girls kabuki plays staged on festival floats! While kabuki has historically been limited to men, Komatsu's unique tradition has been defying that norm for centuries.

The second highlight comes at night: the spectacular illumination of the assembled floats. A work of art in themselves, these floats are lavishly decorated in local crafts such as gold leaf and Kutani paintings.

Held over the second weekend of May, it is the best time to catch Komatsu at its liveliest.



Hikiyama Gallery MIYOSSA

Even if you can't make Otabi Festival, you can get a taste at MIYOSSA: a gallery that conveys scenes of the festival, including year-long display of two of the actual festival floats.

A variety of kabuki experiences are also offered, including the chance to transform into a kabuki performer through costume and makeup.



Kabuki Makeup



Shamisen



Credits: @cheeserland

Ataka Sumiyoshi Shrine

The only shrine in Japan enshrining the deity of "breakthroughs", as befitting of the site where some historical legends overcame all odds.

Specifically, this was the setting for the kabuki classic, "Kanjincho", based off the legendary escape of warriors Yoshitsune and Benkei through a heavily-guarded barrier.

As the shrine of a former port town, it is also where sailors of the past prayed for safe voyage, and present visitors pray to overcome the rough waves of life.



Kanjincho Museum

A museum just by Ataka Sumiyoshi Shrine, dedicated to telling the story of Kanjincho.

Not only can you read about the play and Komatsu's kabuki tradition (in English), but also admire the actual costumes, attend a virtual theater, and have fun at the AR corner "trying" on virtual costumes, makeup and kabuki poses.

Do pick up a free copy of the Kanjincho manga available in English, for a fun overview of the story.





Kutani are a brand of ceramics unique to the Ishikawa region, originating over 300 years ago. Remaining a key production center today, many studios in Komatsu open their doors for you to witness the modern evolution of Kutani up close, and even try your hand at crafting your own work.

工芸



CERABO KUTANI

A one-stop Kutani hub where you can peek into a clay factory, admire the creations of up-and-coming Kutani artisans (perhaps supporting them with a purchase), and join a workshop to paint or shape your own masterpiece.

The building itself is a futuristic work of art, designed by renowned architect Kuma Kengo.



MIYAYOSHI Kutani Porcelain Maker

Through guided tours led by their own artisans, observe the intricate process of shaping Kutani ware up close, and even peek into the kilns where the pieces are fired! Painting and shaping workshops are also offered.

*Appointment required for both tours and workshops.

Other than their modern line of products, consider supporting their environmental efforts by picking up a B-grade piece offered at a steal.



Kinzangama Kiln

The home studio of Living National Treasure Yoshita Minori, known for his breakthroughs in mastering the use of gold leaf for elaborate Kutani decorations.

With prior appointment, you can not only observe the delicate application of gold leaf by the current generation of artisans, but also admire the kiln's works of gold in the sophisticated MUTAN gallery. A work of art in itself, constructed from local Kanagaso stone, and using natural lighting filtered in from above.



Small private workshops and dining events can also be arranged in this unique gallery space.

Nishikigama Gallery

The childhood home and studio of Living National Treasure Tokuda Yasokichi III, given new life as a gallery displaying the works of him and his predecessors.

The preserved machiya townhouse itself makes for a unique space, conveying the living atmosphere of the past.



Yunokuni no Mori Traditional Handicrafts Village

A crafts theme park where you can experience local crafts from across the Hokuriku region, including gold leaf, lacquer, yuzen dye and of course, Komatsu's Kutani ceramics.



As befitting of a "village", each craft studio is housed in a traditional gassho-zukuri farmhouse, and the entire park grounds recreates the rural landscape of olden times, including seasonal scenery from summer flowers to autumn foliage.





TOUR

Big Sights

From the towering vehicles of KOMATSU LTD. to sprawling arrays of aircraft and cars, to a giant Buddha head, be wowed by big sights around the city!

見学



Komatsu no Mori

An educational park reborn from the former headquarters of global machine-maker KOMATSU LTD. Easily identified by the pair of towering vehicles displayed: the world's largest dump truck, and a giant excavator to match. At designated times, visitors are allowed on board, for an experience of how it may feel like operating one of these giants.

Adjacent are a museum telling the corporation's story, a kids area with mini rides, as well as a goods shop, making it a perfect spot for family fun.



Ishikawa Aviation Plaza

Located right next to Komatsu Airport, a plane museum where you can surround yourself with arrays of planes that once took to the skies, or have fun with flight simulators.

Plane enthusiasts can also get their hands on exclusive plane-related goods at the shop, including those of well-known aerobatic team Blue Impulse.



Motorcar Museum of Japan

Japan's largest and oldest car museum can be found right here!

The over 500 cars displayed range from classic Japanese cars to world-famous brands. Not to mention cars that once escorted royalty and celebrities, and those that appeared in films and anime, such as the 2000GT Bond car or Doraemon Solar Car.



Hanibe Caves

While you'll find many giant Buddhas around Japan, rarely would you find one of just the Buddha head, much less one hidden amidst the countryside forests.

Constructed in the post-war period to express a local sculptor's desire for peace, resource limitations prevented completion of the body, but resulted in this one-of-a-kind sight that allows visitors to contemplate the Buddha's face at close proximity.

In the actual "caves" a short climb behind the Buddha, works of the sculptor and his descendents are uniquely displayed in a former quarry, covering diverse themes including a tour of "hell" depicted by demons.





With a long history as a hub of production and innovation, Komatsu is where you can get an intimate experience of "Made in Japan". You can even hear the stories of the producers directly on site, through the GEMBA Project offering open factory tours and workshops.



Noguchi Naohiko Sake Institute

A brewery established by Komatsu-born Noguchi Naohiko, a legend recognized as the "God of Sake Brewing" after over 70 years of brewing.

Small tours of no more than 8 people allow not only a peek into the brewing facility, but also a tasting session, where pairings of sake and small delicacies are enjoyed in a scenic room overlooking the surrounding fields.



Higashi Sake Brewing Company

A long-time brewery that has retained its humble roots as a small locally-dedicated business, despite earning a string of international awards.

The building itself is a unique treasure, built up from local Kanagaso stone, and conserved as a national cultural property.

Brewery tours can be booked from April to November, including a tasting session in a preserved stone cellar.



Takigahara Quarry

While Komatsu's legacy as one of Japan's top stone producers has been recognized as Japan Heritage, the rural hamlet of Takigahara is where you'll find the city's last active quarry.

Determined to convey this precious piece of Komatsu's stone heritage, the quarry's 5th-generation owner has opened his working site to the public.

Tours take you deep into the caverns, where you may get a live demonstration of quarrying techniques developed over generations, and even try your hand at chipping stone.



Ogura Fabrics

The only silk jacquard factory remaining in Japan, with over a century of history.

*Jacquard is a technique in which designs are weaved directly into the fabric.

While the factory retains its retro atmosphere and analogue looms, the fabrics churned out are anything but dated: used by global designer brands, and making appearances at the Paris Collection and recent Tokyo Olympics.

Join their scheduled tours to observe the veteran staff operate these antique machines with dexterity, as well as scour through their archive of designer commissions, each with their own rich story.





SCENERY

風景

Lake Kiba Park

Catch one of the best views of Mt. Hakusan, from across this lake.

While most popular in spring when you can enjoy the sakura tunnels, it is a worthy visit through the year with views of the fiery mountain range in autumn, and snow-capped Hakusan in winter.

Join the locals on a stroll or cycle around the 6.4km lakeside trail (e-bikes can be rented from the central zone share cycle port), or hop on a scenic boat ride.



Rojo Park

A local sakura spot right in the city center, where you can enjoy a picnic surrounded by over a hundred blooming trees, till night when lanterns illuminate the blossoms.

But as a Japanese-style garden designed to bring out the beauty of the seasons, it is a lovely sight any time of year.



Junigataki Falls

Meaning "12 waterfalls", for the 12 streams that compose it! Most beautiful in spring, when framed by a flurry of cherry blossom trees.



Yusenji Copper Mine Memorial Park

A memorial park where the roots of global machine-maker Komatsu Ltd. can be found. That is, the former mining town here had been run by the corporation's founder, before venturing into making his own mining machines.

Seasonal flowers from plums (Mar) and sakura (Apr), to carpets of irises under towering cedar (May) can be enjoyed, to the backdrop of relics from the old mining days.



Hiyo Moss Garden

A little hamlet where residents have opened up their gardens to the public, in an effort to convey the wisdom of nature.

Winding paths lead you through rolling hills of moss, hidden amidst a cedar grove. The ultimate hidden sanctuary for those seeking solitude in nature! Across the street is also the moss-covered Hiyo Shrine.

*Closed Dec-Mar. For large group visits, please contact them beforehand as capacity is limited and there may be unforeseen entry restrictions.



Natadera Temple

An ancient temple with over 1300 years of history. Built into the mountainous surroundings as a sanctuary of nature worship, its unique rocky landscape and greenery has been awarded a star in the Michelin Green Guide.

While well-known as an autumn spot, it is also breathtaking in winter when blanketed in snow.



Hanibe Caves

The iconic giant Buddha head (pg 9) makes for especially unique scenery in winter, when both the Buddha and surrounding forest are shrouded in white. Or in spring when you can capture a sakura-framed Buddha.



Ataka Beach

The go-to spot for ocean views in Komatsu, where you can catch sunset over the sea. Enjoy it in comfort at Ataka Café, alongside meals of fresh catch (pg 21).



KOMATSU SPECIALTIES

[CUISINE]

Shio Yakisoba

The soul food of Komatsu, with a humble backstory.

Seeking to introduce a new taste to locals, the pioneer of this local yakisoba found inspiration in Chinese fried noodles while journeying in China. After training under a master without pay, he returned home and adapted it into Komatsu's own style of yakisoba, which quickly became a household favorite!

Today, you can savor this beloved local dish at the many Chinese restaurants helmed by the pioneer's disciples, including younger brother Katchan.

Unlike the more commonly-known "sauce yakisoba", Komatsu Shio Yakisoba is lightly flavored with salt instead of dark sauce, and features a generous serving of local vegetables.



Udon

Komatsu's unique style of udon has been enjoyed by locals for over 300 years. Characterised by a balance of both spring and smoothness, and traditionally enjoyed in a fish and kombu broth.

While you can sample diverse variations across over 70 Komatsu Udon-certified stores (displaying red 小松うどん banners), all are guaranteed to be made-by-hand, and use Komatsu-grown ingredients.



Kani Kora-age

A Komatsu-unique crab delicacy, in which crab shells are stuffed with crab meat, then deep fried! Using the premium Kano crabs Ishikawa is known for.

Savor it as part of a kaiseki course at ryotei restaurants, or take home a pack from Komatsu Airport.

For the original version invented 50 years ago, head to seafood ryotei Nagaoki by the sea.



Komatsu Black Curry: Alba Curry

Black curry, featuring a thicker and richer sauce than most Japanese curries, is one of Ishikawa's soul foods.

Heed the local recommendation and try it at Alba Curry, Komatsu's homegrown black curry chain.

Those with an appetite are invited to challenge their signature "Home Run Curry", loaded with the "four bases" of pork cutlet, hamburger, sausage and croquette.



TRADITIONAL RYOTEI

What distinguishes the traditional ryotei of Komatsu and their kaiseki feasts, is the pride poured into using local crafts such as Kutani ware. The wares are carefully chosen for each dish, to ensure you the fullest appreciation of both taste and aesthetic.

*All ryotei require advance reservations.



Kajisuke



Matsuya

KOMATSU SPECIALTIES

[SOUVENIRS]

Tomatoes

As the largest producer in Hokuriku, Komatsu is the place to savor tomatoes at their freshest, or as part of creative dishes and snacks.

Find tomato curry or soba at local eateries, snack on tomato-jam taiyaki and daifuku, or pick up some tomato rice crackers as souvenirs!



Tomato Daifuku
Cherry tomato encased in
bean paste and mochi (Koda Futaba)



Tomato Jam Taiyaki
(Mari-chan)



Tomato Rice Crackers

Sake

Look out for Komatsu-grown sake brands, all using the fresh spring waters of Mt. Hakusan.



Kaetsu Sake Brewery's taster set



Higashi Sake Brewery's Hotarumai using Komatsu-grown rice, also available as a jelly made in collaboration with wagashi shop Goshuin.



Nishide Brewery's sake combines local rice cultivated in the surrounding fields with spring water from their own well, for flavors that uniquely evolve with the seasons.

Wagashi

With a deep-rooted tea culture, Komatsu is home to many wagashi shops that have supplied sweets for tea ceremonies over generations. The artistic creations you'll find at each shop are anything but dated, constantly evolved to suit the seasons and times.



Crystal-like jelly symbolizing
Komatsu's stone heritage
(Nagaike Saikado)



Powdered sweet made from
Komatsu-grown barley,
with proceeds donated to
Tohoku disaster recovery (Yukimatsu)



Manju coated in
seasonally-flavored chocolate
(Goshuin)



Tea

A little-known fact about Komatsu is its history as a center of tea culture. It was one of the earliest centers for the Urasenke school of tea ceremony, and also where tea was first cultivated in the whole of Hokuriku!

That pioneering 370-year-old tea shop, Choboya, still stands today, where you can find the Ishikawa-unique "Kaga Bocha" made from roasted tea stems.



Kaga Bocha (Choboya)



Kaga Bocha Jam
(Café Machiya Bunko)



MAJOR SOUVENIR STORES



1 Komatsu Souvenir Store
(Komatsu Station)



2 Sora no Eki
(Komatsu Airport)



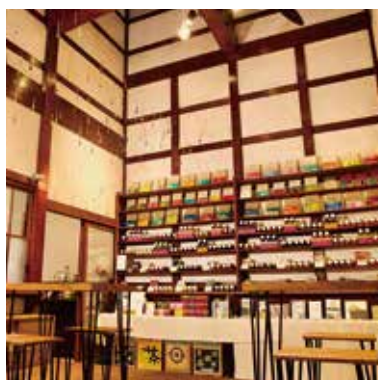
3 Roadside Station Komatsu Kibagata

C A F É



Machiya Bunko

A cozy café hidden within a traditional machiya townhouse. Apart from homemade cakes and drinks, a lunch menu is also available on Saturdays, with an option of the "Ryusuke Don" featuring roast Noto pork from the neighborhood butcher, or homemade soba. With prior reservation, a colorful lunch plate can also be enjoyed on weekdays.



LAGO BIANCO

A waterfront café by Lake Kiba, where you can enjoy "one-plate lunches" stylishly arranged on wooden boards, to the backdrop of crisp views of Mt. Hakusan.



HO GA

A café restaurant right by Natadera Temple (pg 15), giving new life to a century-old farmhouse. Diners get to choose the local ware on which their meal is plated, as well as brand of Ishikawa-grown rice, for a uniquely-personalized meal.



ATAKA CAFÉ

A seaside café where the fresh catch (or wild game) of the day are spun into innovative dishes you'll find nowhere else, such as their signature omurice with sashimi! Accented with views of sunset over the sea.



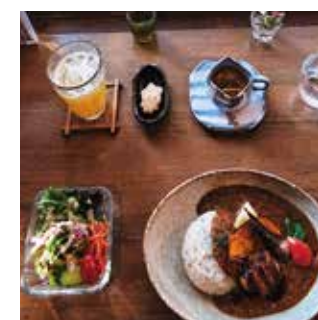
TAKIGAHARA CAFÉ

Found at the mountainside hamlet of Takigahara, with their signature dish being homemade soba-flour galettes topped with vegetables from their backyard. Events like farmers markets are also often held (updates on Instagram @takigaharafarm). Those seeking to immerse in the countryside can also consider a farmstay (pg 22).



La Petite Porte

A vegetarian café tucked within a cedar wood by the river, with a nourishing menu from curry to homemade cakes. As an onsen cafe, guests can also book a session in their private bath, or take a dip in the footbath. Or even stay the night at the adjacent inn, Etoile et fees (pg 23).



ACCOMMODATIONS



Awazu Onsen

The oldest hot spring in the Hokuriku region, with a history of over 1300 years. Apart from the rustic public bathhouse, many old-time ryokan inns dot the onsen town, including Houshi Ryokan, registered in the Guinness World Records as one of the oldest hotels in the world.



Ikumo

A mountaintop inn marking the former site of a training dojo for pilgrims, where you can copy sutras in the glow of sunrise over the mountains, and soak in the open-air bath beneath the stars. Guests are also provided a private prayer session at Natadera Temple, connected to the inn by a former pilgrimage route (pg 15).



True to its nature-centered philosophy, renewable energy sources are used and carbon emissions kept at minimum, while meals are prepared from organic local produce of the season!

TAKIGAHARA CRAFT&STAY / HOUSE

Stay at the mountainside hamlet of Takigahara to experience a modern way of farm life, and nourish yourself with organic farm-to-table meals. Two options are offered: a cozy private inn, or a craft-themed hostel where you can mingle with local artisans and join a crafting workshop.



Auberge eaufeu

A countryside school-turned-hotel, where artisan fine dining is the highlight.

Guests are treated to gastronomical creations weaved from local ingredients, by a culinary prodigy who won Japan's biggest competition for young chefs.

*Restaurant also open to non-staying visitors.

Rooms creatively retain retro classroom vibes of the former school, while affording views of the rural scenery.

Complete the experience with a visit to the Noguchi Naohiko Sake Institute next door! (pg 10)



Ryusuke 25

A guesthouse giving new life to a 90-year-old machiya townhouse, where you can experience the nostalgia of olden Japan in comfort. While retaining its traditional architecture, guests are assured a luxurious stay with spacious beds, and even a private bath built into a stone cellar!



Conveniently located near Komatsu Station, and providing privacy with only two groups (each occupying a floor) accepted at a time.

Etoile et fees

A riverside inn in the woods, where you can bask in tranquility under the stars.

First-floor rooms include a terrace bathtub, allowing a soak in greenery, to the music of the trickling river.

Guests are also offered private use of the in-house onsen, and a sumptuous vegetarian dinner course, assembling local vegetables into creative dishes such as vegetable sushi and soy hamburg.



MODEL COURSE

(Share Cycle / Rental Car)

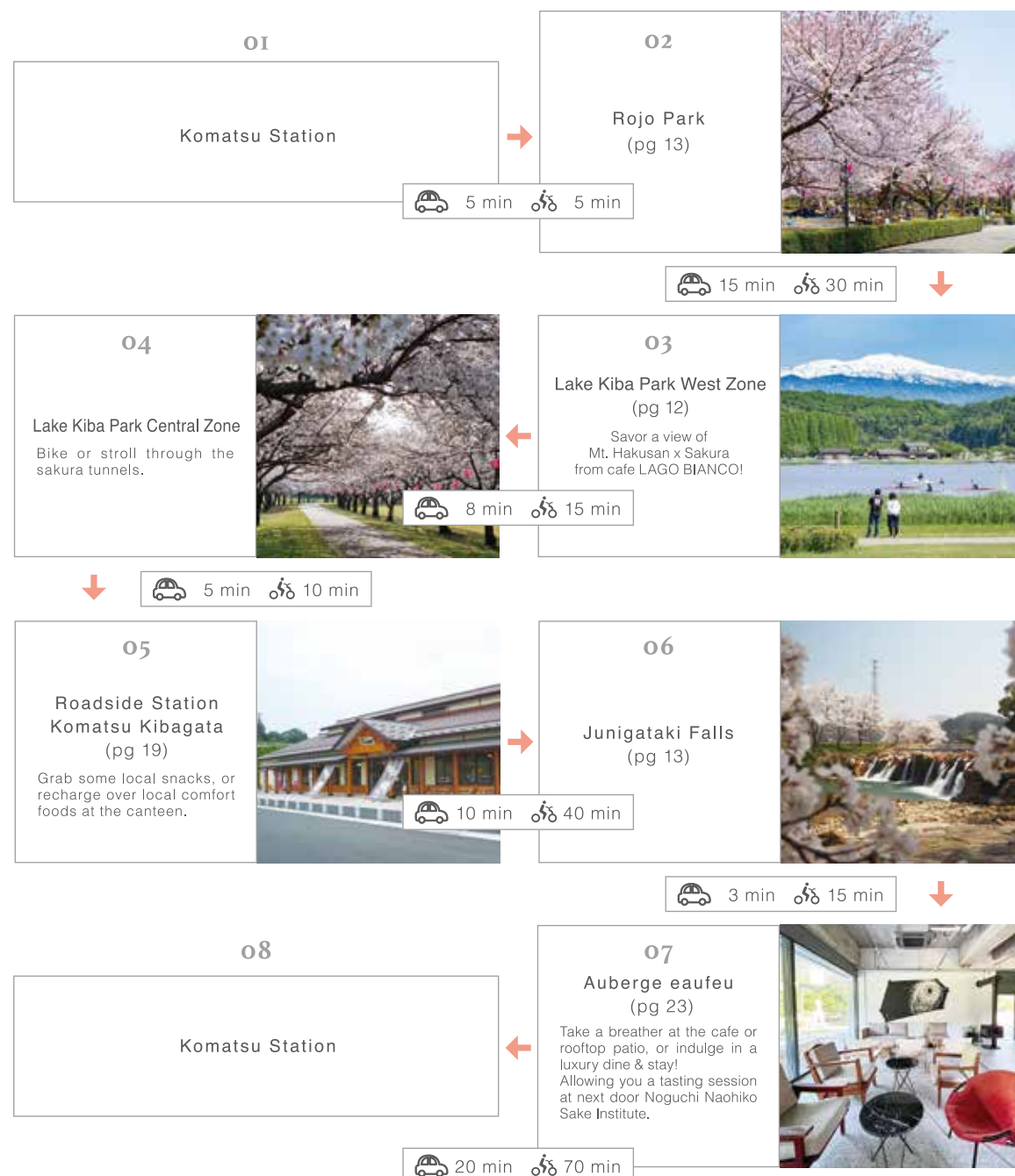


Route1

Spring Edition

Total : 32 km / 20 miles
By bike : ~3h
By car : ~1h
Stays : Auberge eaufeu (pg 23)
Eats : LAGO BIANCO (pg 20) / Roadside Station Komatsu Kibagata (pg 19) / Auberge eaufeu

Route1

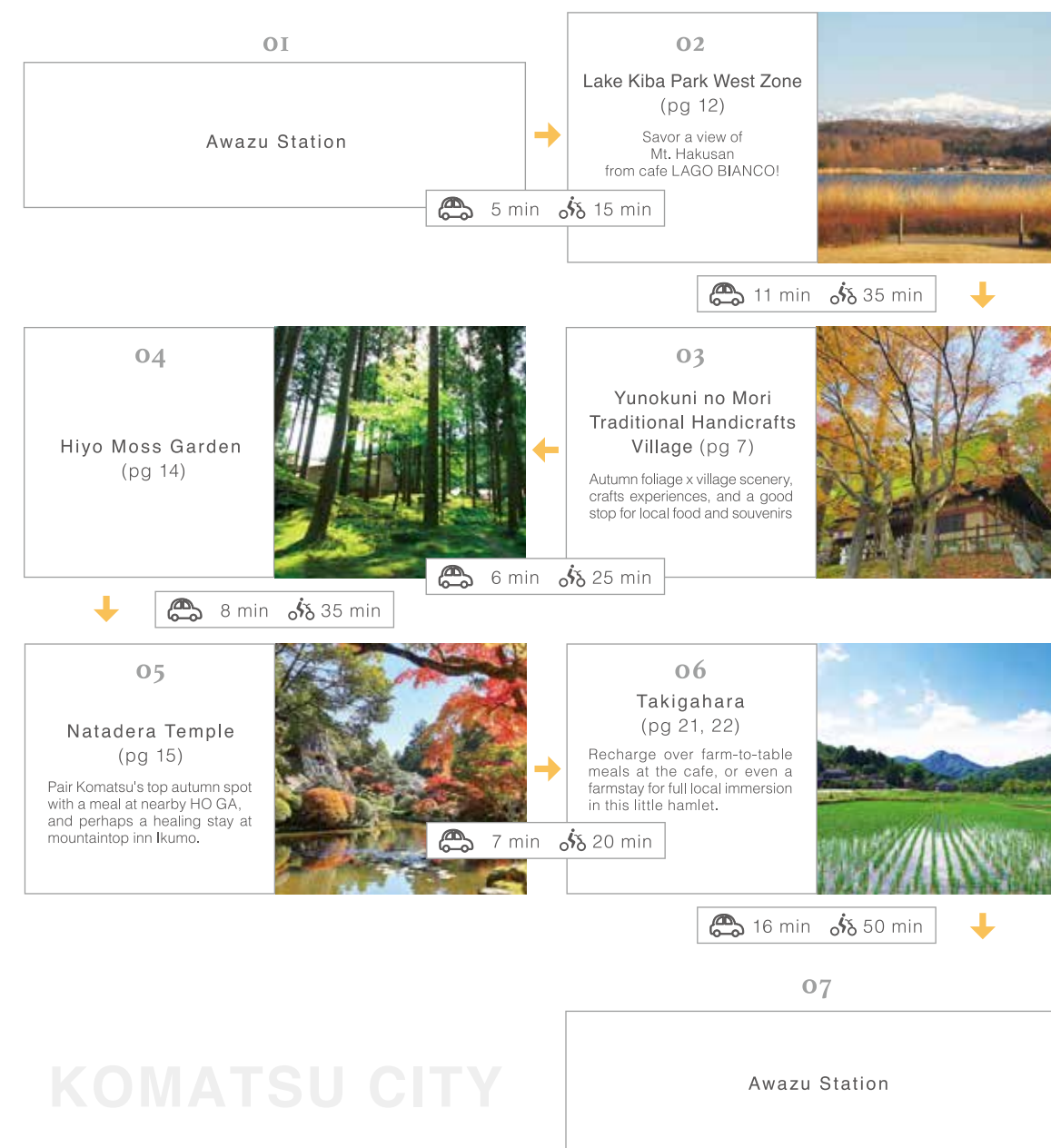


Route2

Autumn Edition

Total : 31 km / 19 miles
By bike : ~3h
By car : ~50min
Stays : Ikumo / Awazu Onsen / TAKIGAHARA (pg 22-23)
Eats : LAGO BIANCO (pg 20) / Yunokuni no Mori (pg 7) / HO GA (pg 20) / Takigahara Café (pg 21)

Route2



KOMATSU CITY

STATION AREA MAP

- 1 **Yukimatsu**
Komatsu's oldest wagashi sweets shop.
- 2 **Nakade Butcher**
Takeaway freshly-fried karaage chicken (Fri-Sun), or their signature charcoal-roast pork in ready-to-eat vacuum packs!
- 3 **Choboya Tea Shop**
The first tea cultivators of Hokuriku (pg 19).
- 4 **Café Machiya Bunko**
pg 20
- 5 **Toraya Ceramics**
Studio and shop of a local ceramist, in the traditional living space of an old townhouse.
- 6 **Katchan**
Old-time restaurant known for the locally-beloved dish of Shio Yakisoba (pg 16).
- 7 **Nishikigama Gallery**
pg 7
- 8 **Ryusuke 25**
Guest inn in a preserved townhouse (pg 23).
- 9 **Takimoto Gozaten**
Make your own tatami coaster with the 26th-gen owner of this old-time tatami shop.
- 10 **Goshuin**
Wagashi shop known for their colorful chocolate manju (pg 19).
- 11 **Hikiyama Gallery MIYOSSA**
pg 5
- 12 **Sumigen**
Specialty food store and soba eatery (Fri-Tue lunch).
- 13 **Kajisuke**
Ryotei restaurant featuring seafood dishes on Kutani ware.
- 14 **Tsurutto**
Station canteen specializing in Komatsu Udon (pg 16).
- 15 **Alba Curry**
Komatsu's own black curry chain (pg 17).



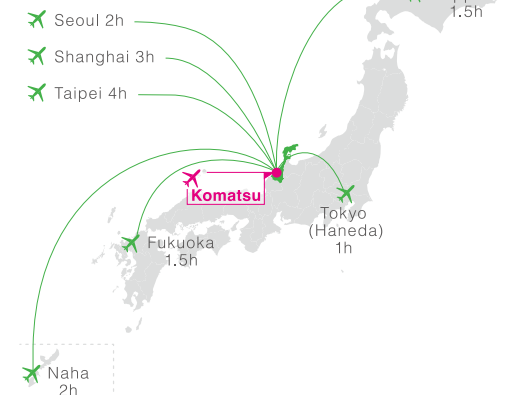
TRANSPORT

Komatsu City is the gateway to the Hokuriku region, with both an international airport and Shinkansen station!

Access



By Air



By Train
(Shinkansen/Limited Express)

Tokyo	2h 40min
Osaka	2h 15min
Nagoya	2h



By Highway Bus

Tokyo	8h
Osaka	4h

Komatsu Share Cycle

With Komatsu's bike-sharing service, you can:

- Get around effortlessly on e-bikes.
- Drop off your bike at any other port around the city, saving the fuss of returning to your starting point.

Price:

Day Pass: 1650 yen (at counter) / 1430 yen (online)

Per 30 mins: 165 yen (+110 yen per additional 30 mins)

*App registration with credit card and Japanese phone no. required.

Day Pass Counters:

Komatsu Station (souvenir store)

Komatsu Airport (1F Sora-no-eki souvenir store)

Information subject to changes, scan for updated details on homepage.

Komatsu
Share Cycle



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