

## Cycling and Rowing by the Maruyama River

The Maruyama River is the main river in the northern Hyogo region, 68 kilometers running up through Toyooka, cutting through mountains, and emptying into the Sea of Japan. In 2012, the Lower Maruyama River and the surrounding rice paddies became registered with the Ramsar Convention, an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. The Maruyama River serves as an important part of Toyooka's nature, wildlife, and tourism. It feeds into the Otani River, which is the canal that runs through Kinosaki Onsen. The canal provides a picturesque atmosphere as guests stroll through town in their yukata.



Visitors to Kinosaki Onsen can easily bike north along the Maruyama River and reach Kehi Beach and the Tsuiyama Fishing Port before heading up the hill to Marine World. They can also bike in the other direction towards the Hachigoro Wetlands and Genbudo Caves. They consist of 5 caves made of columnar joints that formed over 1.6 million

years ago after the magma from a volcanic eruption cooled, contracted, and formed vertical cracks. These curvaceous columns have a distinctive polygonal shape and a honeycomb pattern. The river also helps maintain the lives of the wild Oriental White Storks, the symbolic bird of Toyooka City. Since they feed on many small animals, their ideal habitat is rice paddies and rivers. With the help of the Lower Maruyama River and surrounding rice paddies, work has

been done to preserve and create this type of optimal wetland environment.



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The Maruyama River also provides a great location for boating, rowing, and watching boating regattas. Every year in July or August there is a Maruyama River Kinosaki Boat Festival & Regatta.

Next year, two rowing teams will train for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics in Toyooka on the Maruyama River! One is a team from Germany called Sxulls, and is currently the world's top-ranked boat team.



They will stay in Kinosaki from July 3<sup>rd</sup> to July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and have a final camp training on the Maruyama River in Toyooka just before participating in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics! You can see KINOSAKI ONSEN printed on the German team's uniforms as well as on their boat and oars. A team from Switzerland has also just decided to train there, from July 9<sup>th</sup> to July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

They have chosen to stay here because of the relaxing and traditional onsen town Kinosaki, as well as the wonderful Maruyama River. The river which runs through the middle of the city is very suitable for rowing training because the gradient of the river is very gentle, with an incline of only 1 meter per 10 kilometers. Due to this, Japan's national rowing team will come here for their camp training as well. All three teams will be great representatives for Toyooka City, Kinosaki Onsen, and the Maruyama River.

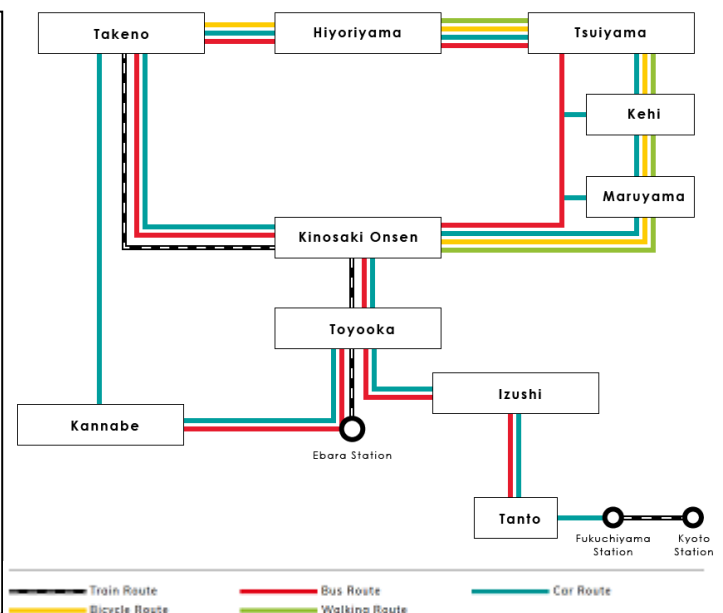


Rental bike information (to bike along river):

<https://visitkinosaki.com/plan/visitor-info/getting-around-locally/>

**Ideal visit plan: 2-3 days in Kinosaki Onsen and its surrounding areas**

- Day 1: Leave Kyoto/Osaka by train to Kinosaki Onsen, explore the town
- Day 2: Get a rental bicycle from SOZORO Kinosaki Onsen Tourist Information Center and bike north to the sea or south to the Hachigoro Toshima Wetlands and/or the Genbudo Caves
- Day 3: Have breakfast in your ryokan and then check out of Kinosaki Onsen Return to Kyoto/Osaka







[Kinosaki Onsen](#) is a town of time-honored hot springs dating back 1300 years ago. It is home to seven public bathhouses, all located within walking distance of each other and the train station. Guests are encouraged to wear yukata and geta, stroll through the town, and go onsen-hopping.

[Toyooka](#) is a downtown area home to the Oriental White Stork, a bird that was revived from extinction in this very town. The city's efforts restored the Oriental White Stork population, and now about 140 fly the skies of Japan. Toyooka is also known for the Genbudo Caves.



[Izushi](#) is the resident castle town, popular for its nostalgic atmosphere of Edo-era Japan. It is home to many interesting attractions such as castle ruins, a samurai house, a kabuki theater, and a clock tower. The town's specialty is Izushi Sara Soba, buckwheat noodles served in small portions on small plates.

[Kannabe](#) is a mountainous area with fun activities year-round. In the winter, one can go skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, and sledding. In the warm months, one can go camping, paragliding, fishing, tree climbing, and more. Kannabe is the perfect destination for adventurers.



[Takeno](#) is a quaint fisherman town that is a hidden gem among the northern coast of Hyogo Prefecture. The beach has clear, blue waters while the mountains surrounding it offer great hiking opportunities. It is encouraged to stroll through the peaceful town, where one can find small shops and traditional landscapes.

[Tanto](#) is a quiet countryside town with magnificent nature—including a giant field of tulips in the spring and brilliant red-leaved trees in the fall.

