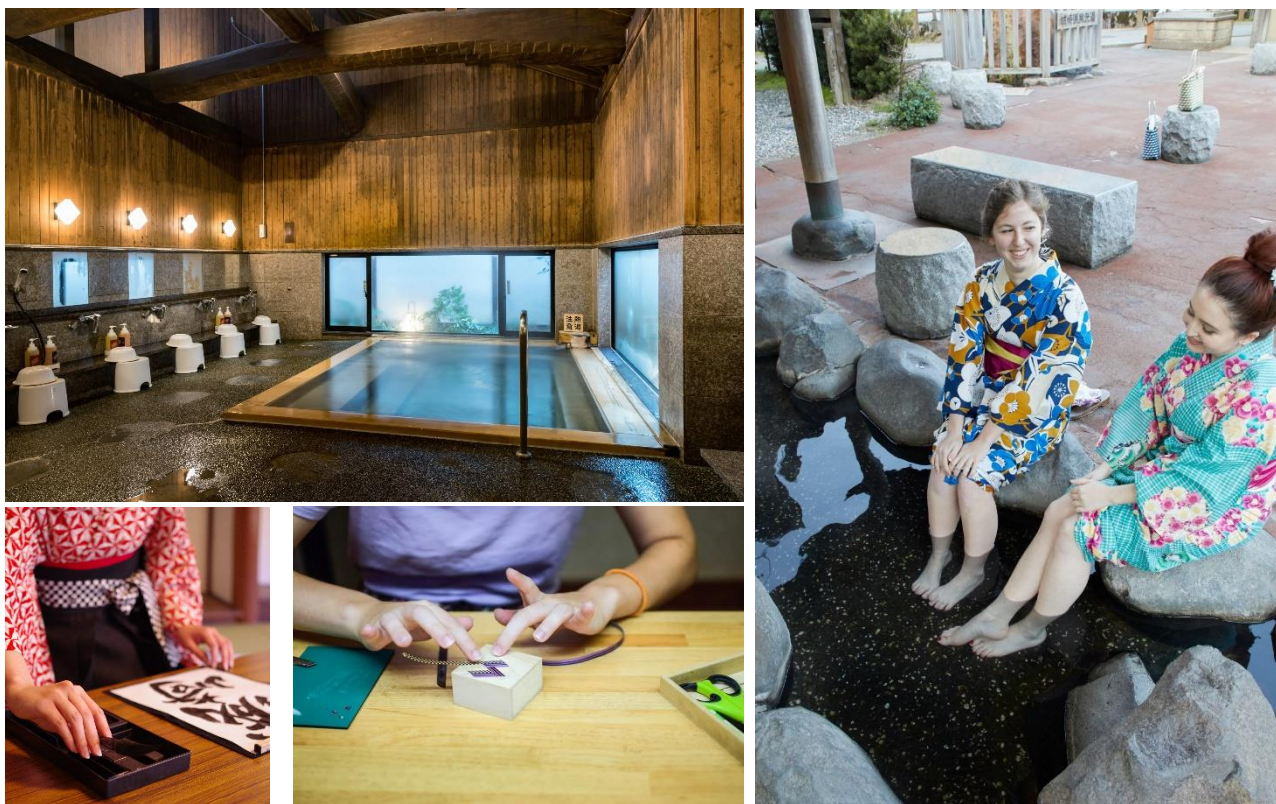


~Japan's Best Hot Spring Town, Kinosaki Onsen~

Hot Springs and Relaxation in Kinosaki Onsen



Beyond the mountains and high-rise buildings of Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe, nestled in a lush mountain valley along the Sea of Japan, there stands an age-old hot spring town shrouded in unforgettable charm. Kinosaki Onsen is a town known for its seven public hot spring baths. Visitors stay in a traditional ryokan, where they can enjoy beautiful kaiseki meals and relax in tatami rooms. They wear their ryokan's yukata and stroll along the willow and cherry blossom-lined river, visiting interesting shops and delicious cafes along the way. It is a town filled with the tradition and culture of old Japan.

However, Kinosaki Onsen is not just a town of hot spring baths. There are many ways for visitors to relax, rejuvenate their body, and heal their spirit while in town.

One way to do this is to try out and participate in a variety of traditional and cultural activities. At the straw craft shop Kamiya Mingei, observe the fascinating and complex straw craft process, learn about its history, and get a private tour of the craftsman's workshop. Make your own original straw craft design on a small box to keep as a lovely souvenir. With the help of the craftsman and your English-speaking guide, you will get to trim, position, and glue delicate pieces of straw into a beautifully intricate patterned design.

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Another way to maximize on relaxation in this onsen town is through seated Zen meditation at Gokurakuji Temple. Participants can experience seated Zen meditation in a local temple while gazing outside at the tranquil rock garden. The Buddhist monk shows guests how to meditate, and afterwards gives a brief sermon. You can also wear traditional monk's working clothes while you meditate! Afterwards, you will be served matcha and local Japanese sweets. Participants can try communicating with the chief Buddhist priest over tea, as it will make the experience all the more rewarding.



Yet another way to get that additional relaxation is through one of several cultural activities offered at IROHA Japanese Culture EX. Guests can choose between tea ceremony, flower arrangement, koto, and calligraphy for a therapeutic experience in a traditional tatami room. To further enhance your cultural experience, you can choose to wear yukata or hakama while participating in the activity. All of these activities include instruction (guidance) from an experienced staff member.

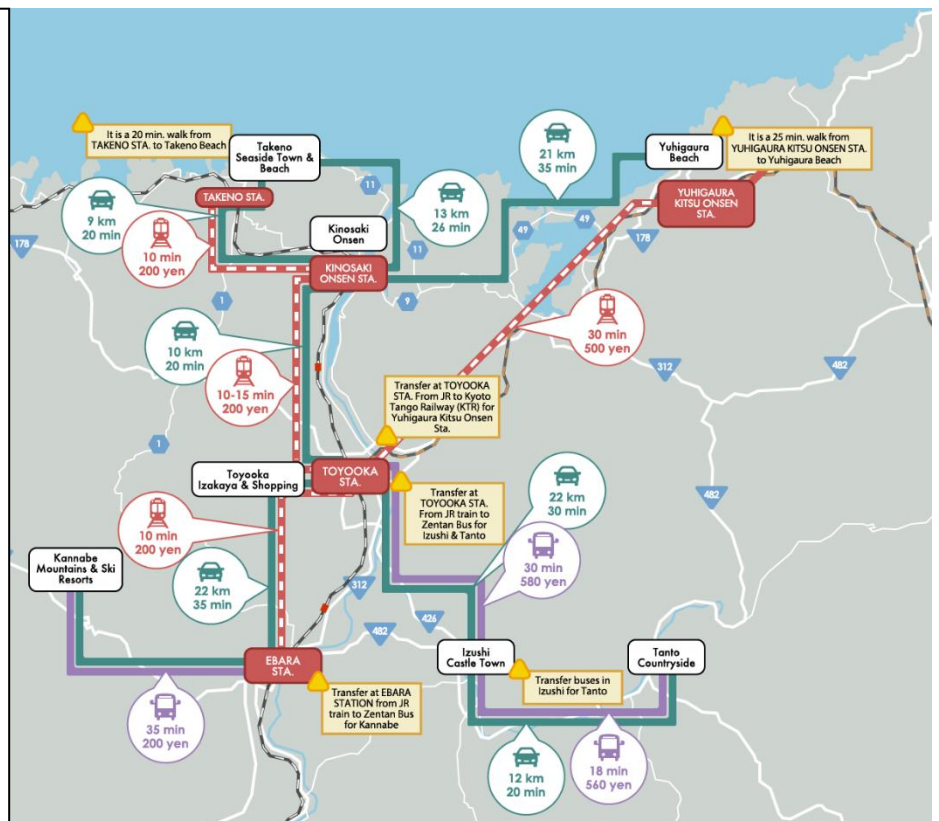
When you're finished soaking in the hot springs, be sure to try one of the many other forms of relaxation here in Kinosaki Onsen.

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: Participate in either seated Zen meditation at Gokurakuji Temple or a cultural activity at IROHA Japanese Culture EX
Go souvenir shopping, lunch, etc.
Participate in straw craft workshop

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.

