



Coexistence And Co-Prosperity: Toyooka's Preservation Efforts From 1925 To 2021

Reconstructing A Town Of Tradition



As a city famous for **living in harmony with the surrounding natural landscape**, Toyooka's [Kinoshiki Onsen](#) is lined with buildings that were built with [environmental sustainability and historical preservation](#) in mind. In the late morning on May 23, 1925, a 6.8 magnitude earthquake hit modern-day Toyooka City, including Kinoshiki. The outcome was disastrous—since the earthquake struck during a time when most households were preparing for lunchtime, many residents were busy cooking. A fire quickly spread throughout the town, resulting in 283 deaths and most buildings in ruin.

With the area's residences and hot springs devastated by the fire and earthquake, the citizens of Kinoshiki were determined to do anything in their power to **rebuild their beloved hot spring town**. Over 100 meetings were held to discuss reconstruction strategies, and it was eventually decided that in addition to re-erecting many buildings with their original wooden architecture, a handful of buildings (including the public bathhouses, town hall, and police station) would be reconstructed with reinforced concrete for the purpose of future fire prevention. In the midst of the town's reconstruction efforts, a new law requiring that **building heights not exceed three stories** was born out of the **desire to preserve Kinoshiki's traditional atmosphere**. As a protective measure against flooding, rocks from the nearby Genbudo Caves were also used to fortify the banks of the Otani River, a river that runs through Kinoshiki which often overflowed due to heavy rainfall.

Additionally, the ideas of coexistence and co-prosperity (*kyozon-kyoei*) were set as the core values for the future of Kinoshiki's [development and success as a tourist attraction](#). Instead of competing against one's neighbor, local businesses sought to support one another through a joint effort to revitalize their town's hot spring industry. The town of Kinoshiki would be **viewed as one single inn**—the individual accommodations would act as the rooms of one giant inn, with the train station as the inn's entrance, the streets as the hallways, the public bathhouses as its hot springs, the stores as souvenir shops, and the restaurants as dining rooms. The ideology of “coexistence and co-prosperity” is still very much [present throughout Kinoshiki to this day](#), as visitors strolling “*Kyozon-Kyoei*” through the town can even come across a sign sporting the local slogan of “*kyozon-kyoei*.”

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Onsen-Hop In Style

As a modern-day celebration of Kinosaki Onsen's 1300 years of history, [master-piece](#), a Japanese bag company with facilities in Toyooka, has started selling commemorative bags created specifically for Kinosaki's local pastime—going to multiple public hot springs in one day, otherwise known as “*onsen*-hopping.”

While paying homage to **Toyooka’s historical bag-making industry**, these bags were crafted with the **ideal hot spring experience** in mind, with every detail from their water-proof fabric to comfortable over-the-shoulder straps providing *onsen*-hoppers a stylish and



ideal way to tote their towels and other essentials from one peaceful hot spring to the next. Available in two sizes and five distinct colorways, the [YUMEGURI BAG](#) holds true to **Kinosaki's pledge to “coexistence and co-prosperity.”** Each purchase of a YUMEGURI BAG comes with **one free day pass** to all of Kinosaki's Seven Mystic *Onsen*. The pass is valid until 2026 and can be exchanged at [SOZORO Tourist Information Center](#) right in front of Kinosaki Onsen's train station.

Available in select shops both in Japan and abroad, the YUMEGURI BAG is also available for purchase online for those across the world who would like to own a special celebratory piece of Kinosaki!



One free hot spring day pass is given with every YUMEGURI BAG.



An exclusive to Kinosaki Onsen, the YUMEGURI BAG white colorway is an ode to Toyooka’s Oriental White Stork.

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[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 over 260 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.

