



# GIFU

The Heartland of Japan

Gifu Prefecture



# Welcome to GIFU: The Heartland of Japan

Discover the soul of Japan in Gifu Prefecture.

Gifu preserves a unique, traditional culture that thrives amongst the majestic landscapes of the Japanese Alps and many pristine rivers—offering a variety of outdoor activities that showcase each season's distinct beauty.

Surrounded by this wilderness are the beautifully preserved castle towns and old quarters, traditional crafts, and enchanting festivals that are guaranteed to make you think you are in a Japanese fairytale.

## Tradition



Nagara River *Ukai* Cormorant Fishing (Gifu City)

## World Heritage Site



Shirakawa-go (Shirakawa Village)



## Crafts



A Treasure Trove of  
Traditional Japanese Crafts

## Festivals



Takayama Festival (Takayama City)

## History



The Old Quarter of Hida Takayama  
(Takayama City)

## Food



Hida Beef

## Hot Springs



Okuhida Hot Spring Villages  
(Takayama City)

## Nature



Osaka Falls  
(Gero City)



### 13 Mino Washi Japanese Paper **Crafts**

Mino Washi Japanese paper has a proud tradition of more than 1,300 years and is made using a specialized *nagashiki* method that allows the beautiful paper to come out thin yet durable like cloth. Mino Washi paper is used in traditional craftwork such as Gifu Japanese umbrellas and Gifu lanterns, and is designated an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO.



### 14 Old Streets of Mino **History**

The flavor of the Edo Period (17th – 19th century) remains alive in these streets, with their traditional architecture and embellished *udatsu* firewalls. The Mino Washi "Akari" Art Exhibition of Japanese paper sculptures is held in October of each year. These works on display are contributed from all over the country, and their soft, delicate light illuminates the streets, creating a dream-like atmosphere.

### 15 Seki Traditional Swordsmith Museum **Crafts**

Blades have been produced in Seki City for nearly 700 years. The high quality products, which include katana (Japanese swords), kitchen knives, scissors, nail clippers and more, are famous even overseas. The methods used in making traditional katana are on display at the Seki Traditional Swordsmith Museum.



### 16 Gujo Odori Dance Festival **Tradition**

The Gujo Odori is counted as one of the three most famous folk dances in Japan. The *tetsuya-odori*, or "all-night dance," held each year from August 13th to the 16th sees tens of thousands of people gather from all around Japan to dance the whole night through.



### 17 Life-Like Food Replicas **Activities**

Enjoy the experience of making wax-based food replicas, such as tempura and lettuce, that look just like the real thing! Gujo City is the birthplace of these replicas often displayed in restaurant storefronts, and products made here are sold all over Japan.



### 18 Hill of Humanity park and Chiune Sugihara Memorial Hall **History**

Chiune Sugihara (1900-1986) was a Japanese diplomat who saved the lives of thousands of Jewish refugees by issuing them transit visas to Japan during the Second World War. These actions have received much praise and recognition from all over the world. The Hill of Humanity park and Chiune Sugihara Memorial Hall were built in Yaotsu to honor his achievements and preserve his memory for future generations.

### 4 Takayama Jinya **History**

This facility was used as a government office during the Edo Period (17th – 19th century). Today, it is the last remaining facility of its kind.



## Mino 美濃 Southern GIFU

### 1 World Heritage Site Shirakawa-go **World Heritage**

110 folk houses with roofs thatched in the *gassho*, or "praying hands," style stand in this quiet mountain village community. Shirakawa-go is a registered UNESCO World Heritage Site.



### 8 Artisan Woodcraft **Crafts**

Gifu is imbued with a great tradition in woodcraft artistry as 80% of its lands are covered in forests. Ancient techniques have been handed down through the generations leading to the wide range of wooden products that are manufactured here today.

### 21 Site of Reversible Destiny(Yoro Park) **Activities**

Designed by modern artist Shusaku Arakawa and his partner, the poet Madeline Gins, this work of art is designed to challenge your preconceived notions of balance and perspective.



### Ayu Sweetfish **Food**

Ayu, or sweetfish, are a freshwater fish native to the pristine waters of the Nagara River. Both Ayu and the Nagara River play an important part in the region's economy, history, and Culture. The fish are normally grilled simply with salt to accentuate the delicate flavor and texture of the meat. Ayu of the Nagara River system are designated as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System.

### 19 Mt. Kinka & Gifu Castle **History**

Mt. Kinka rises to an elevation of 329 m in the center of Gifu City. Gifu Castle stands at its peak with the beautiful waters of the Nagara River flowing at its base. The top floor of the castle keep features an incredible panoramic view of the surrounding area. Visitors can also ride a cable car up the mountain.

### 20 Cormorant Fishing on the Nagara River **Tradition**

This ancient fishing method known as *ukai*, in which cormorants are used to catch fish, has been a tradition in Gifu for 1,300 years. The six boats with their beacons of flame and the cormorant fishing masters directing their birds make for a fantastic sight.



### 22 Ogaki Festival **Festivals**

The Ogaki Festival, held every year in May, is over 360 years old and is one of Japan's Important Intangible Folk Cultural Assets. At this festival 13 parade floats make their way through Ogaki's castle town, creating a very beautiful and rare atmosphere that can be enjoyed by all. This festival was designated as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2016.



### 23 Historic Sekigahara Battlefields **History**

Sekigahara was the site of the largest samurai battle in Japanese history. The battle of Sekigahara saw around 160,000 samurai fighting for control of the realm. The battlegrounds today are far different from how they were on that fateful day in 1600, offering beautiful views of the tranquil Japanese countryside. Flags and stone monuments remain to indicate where the military encampments of the Eastern and Western Armies once stood. There is also a museum offering more in-depth information about the battle, and the *busho* generals that participated in it.



### 2 Shirakawa-go Winter Light Up **Festivals**

See the *gassho*-style farmhouses of Shirakawa-go Village lit up during the evening of six nights (not consecutive) in January and February. The rare beauty of the village during this event draws guests from all over the world (advanced reservation required).



### 3 Gassho-zukuri Thatched Roof Houses in Shirakawa-go **World Heritage**

A traditional Japanese fireplace called an *irori* graces the communal rooms of most of these majestic houses. Guests can even stay the night in an authentic *gassho* style folk house.





**Hida Beef** **Food**

Hida brand beef is a succulent meat that melts in your mouth. Try it as steak, sushi, Japanese hotpot, or a number of other ways in which it is guaranteed to satisfy your taste buds!



**7 Furukawa Festival** **Festivals**

The Furukawa Festival proclaims the arrival of spring to the Hida region and is one of the three largest festivals of its kind in Japan. A crowd of energetic, bare-chested men parade to the beat of large *taiko* drums. This festival was designated as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2016.



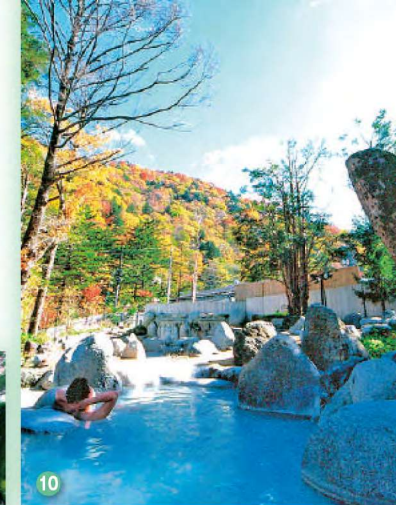
**6 Cycling-Related Activities**

Tour around the Japanese countryside and learn about the lifestyle of local residents with SATOYAMA EXPERIENCE, or cruise along the abandoned railway tracks of a historical mining town with Rail-MTB Gattan Go!!



**5 Takayama Festival** **Festivals**

The Takayama Festival is held in April and October every year and is counted among Japan's three most beautiful festivals. During this festival, which was designated as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2016, you can see the extravagant workmanship of the traditional floats up-close.



**11 Osaka Falls Guided Tours** **Nature**

There are over 200 pristine waterfalls at the base of Mt. Ontake. Explore the many falls and enjoy the natural beauty of the forest by taking one of the various hiking courses.

**12 Gero Hot Spring** **Hot Springs**

Counted as one of the three most famous hot springs in Japan, the luxurious waters of Gero are said to work wonders on the skin. The riverbed features a natural outdoor bath (pictured here) that can be used for free.



**10 Okuhida Hot Spring Villages** **Hot Springs**

This region's abundant natural hot springs make it number one in Japan in terms of the sheer number of open-air baths. Enjoy the feeling of freedom through the year's four seasons.

**9 Shinhotaka Ropeway** **Nature**

Shinhotaka boasts Japan's first and only two-tiered gondola. Visitors enjoy a panoramic view of the Northern Japan Alps from the observation deck, which stands at an altitude of 2,156 m.

## Mino 美濃 Southern GIFU

**24 Ji-kabuki and Playhouses** **Tradition**

Referring to a variety of kabuki that is performed not by professionals but by local amateurs, *ji-kabuki* is a tradition that has continued for hundreds of years. Many *ji-kabuki* playhouses remain in the eastern region of Gifu Prefecture, and the plays and choreography particular to this practice continue to be protected and passed down by the locals.



**25 Magome-juku (Nakasendo)** **History**

This post town once thrived along the Nakasendo, a road that connected Edo (Tokyo) and Kyoto during the Edo Period (17th—19th century). The area has been beautifully restored and the cobblestone streets, latticed storefronts, tea houses, and gift shops bring one back to a time long ago.

**26 Mosaic Tile Museum, Tajimi** **Crafts**

This mosaic tile museum, located in the region that leads Japan in mosaic-tile production, showcases the beauty of mosaic tiles. The wonderfully unorthodox outwards appearance of the museum was designed by world-acclaimed architect Terunobu Fujimori and was inspired by the clay quarries from which the raw materials for mosaic-tile production come from.



**27 Mino Yaki Ceramic Ware** **Crafts**

Mino's pottery has a history of over 400 years and was developed in this region, which includes the cities of Tajimi, Toki, and Mizunami. This area currently boasts over a 60% share of ceramic ware production nationally. Visit the many galleries and exhibitions and even create your own pottery piece.



**28 Naegi Castle Ruins** **History**

The well-preserved ruins of Naegi Castle are a Nationally Designated Historic Site and are not only pleasing to the eye, but allow one to appreciate the ingenuity of the mountain fortress' design as it utilizes enormous, naturally occurring boulders into its foundation. Located at an elevation of 429 meters, the lookout deck of the castle ruins provide a breathtaking panoramic view of the surrounding Ena Valley, Kiso River, and Mt. Ena.



**29 Ena Valley** **Nature**

Ena Valley is a man-made lake formed by the construction of the Oi Dam. Sightseeing boats cruise upon its waters, showing visitors the magnificent rock formations that line the valley's banks, as well as seasonal attractions such as cherry blossoms in spring and changing leaves in autumn.

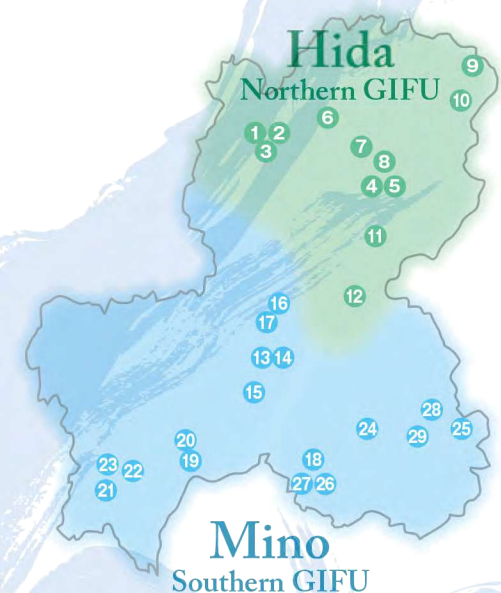


## Hida 飛騨 Northern GIFU

# GIFU Sightseeing Spots

Uncover, Rediscover – Experience Gifu

Gifu's central location means easy access from anywhere in the nation. As a central crossroads of east and west Japan, Gifu boasts a unique history and diverse culture, which has been fostered by the prefecture's rich yet diverse natural terrain. Gifu Prefecture is truly a place that brings together the greatness of Japan.

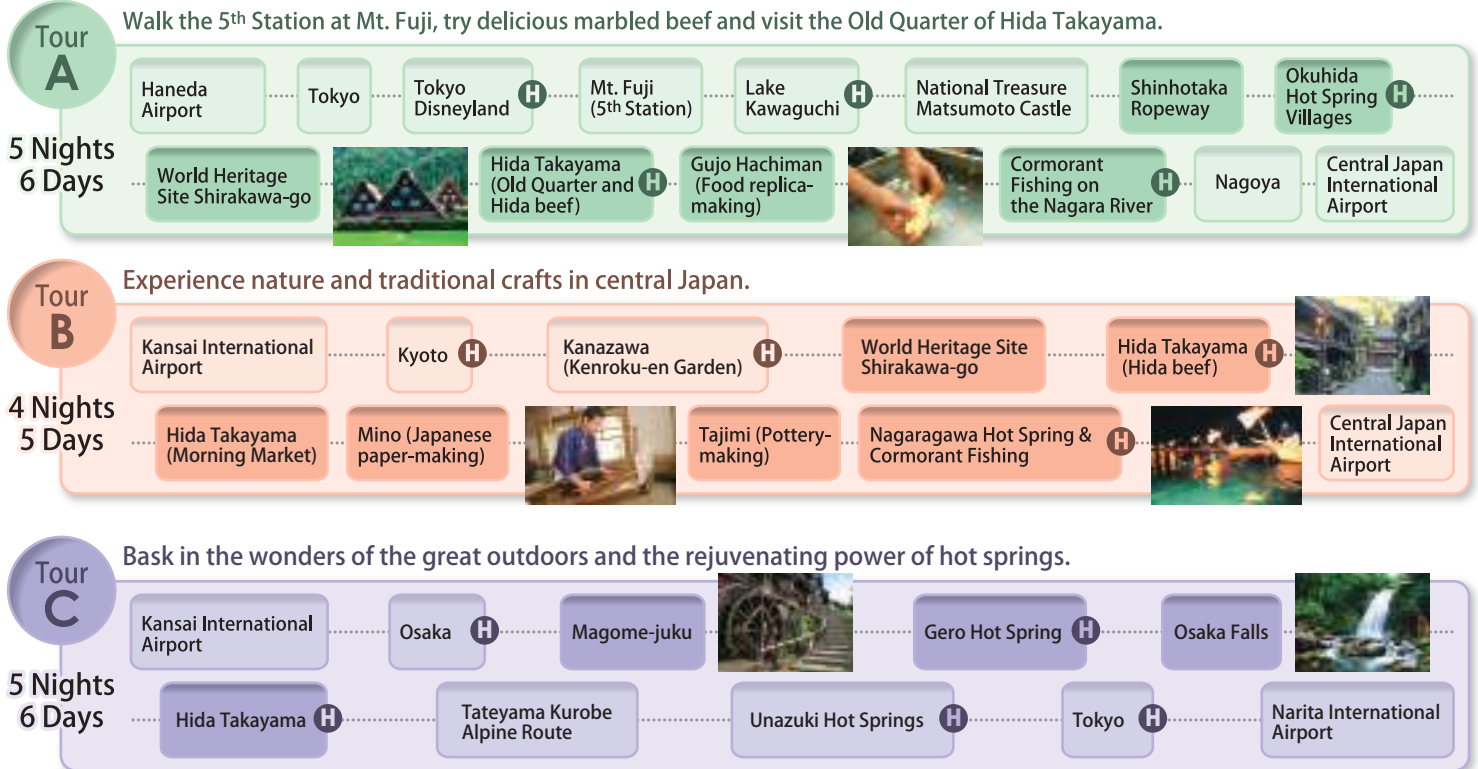




# Sample Itineraries

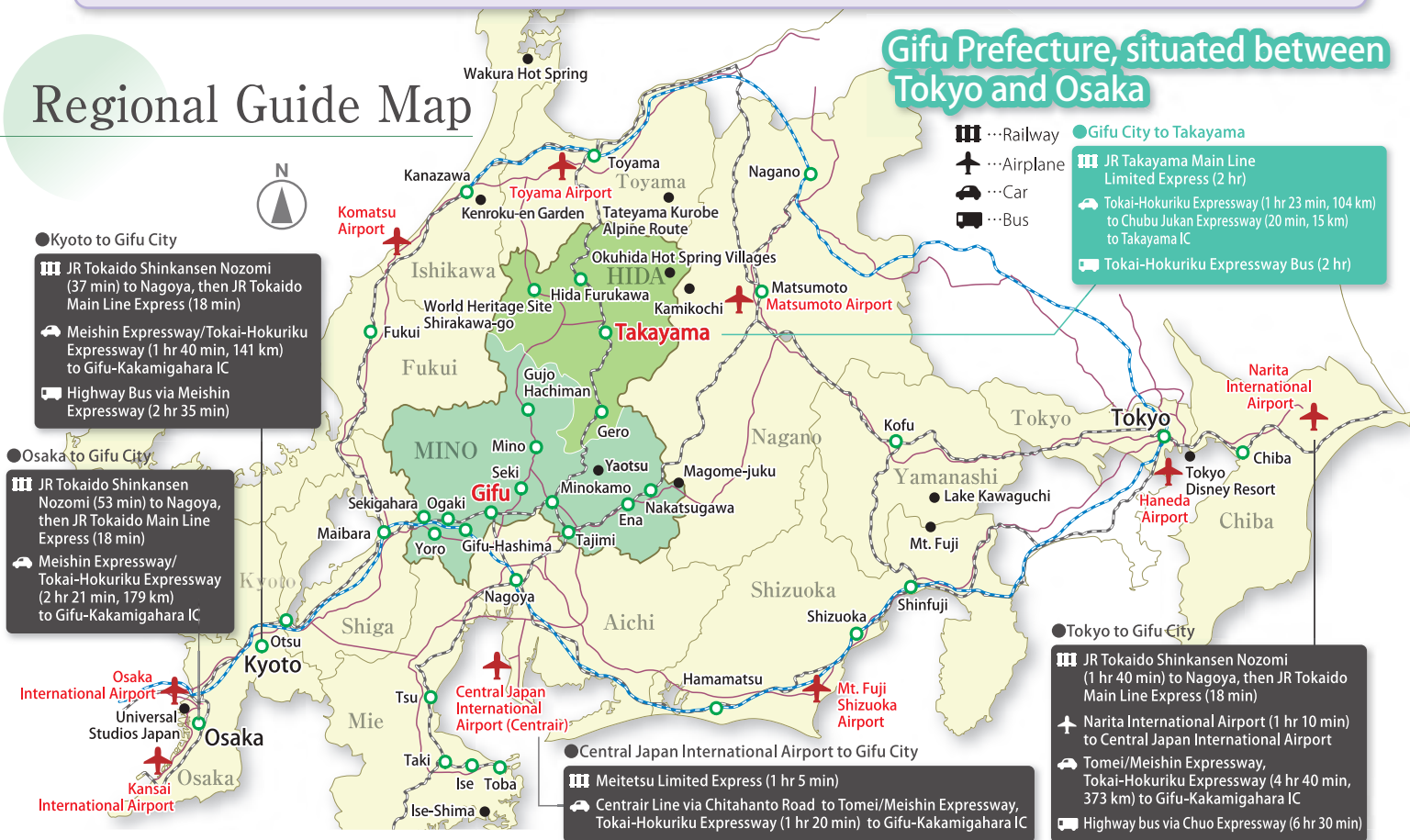
Located in the center of Japan between Tokyo and Osaka, Gifu Prefecture has an extensive transportation network including railroads and highways. The region boasts easy access to Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, surrounding prefectures and tourist areas.

**H** ... Overnight Stay



## Regional Guide Map

Gifu Prefecture, situated between Tokyo and Osaka



## Contact

### Gifu Prefecture Tourism Federation

Gifu Prefecture Shinkutanku-chosha 4F, 5-14-12 Yabutaminami, Gifu City, Gifu 500-8384 Japan Phone: 058-275-1480 (9 am ~ 5 pm)  
 Closed: Weekends, holidays, New Year's holiday season

### Gifu Prefectural Government, Tokyo Branch Office

Prefectural Center 14F, 2-6-3 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093 Japan  
 Phone: 03-5212-9020 (8:45 am ~ 5:30 pm)  
 Closed: Weekends, holidays, New Year's holiday season

### Tourism and International Affairs Bureau, Gifu Prefectural Government

2-1-1 Yabutaminami, Gifu City, Gifu 500-8570 Japan Phone: 058-272-1111 (8:30am~5:15pm)  
 E-mail: c11336@pref.gifu.lg.jp Closed: Weekends, holidays, New Year's holiday season

※The above telephone numbers are listed in the form appropriate for domestic dialing. To call from abroad, dial the International Direct Dialing Number of your country, then "81" (Japan's country code), and finally the telephone number excluding the initial "0".