

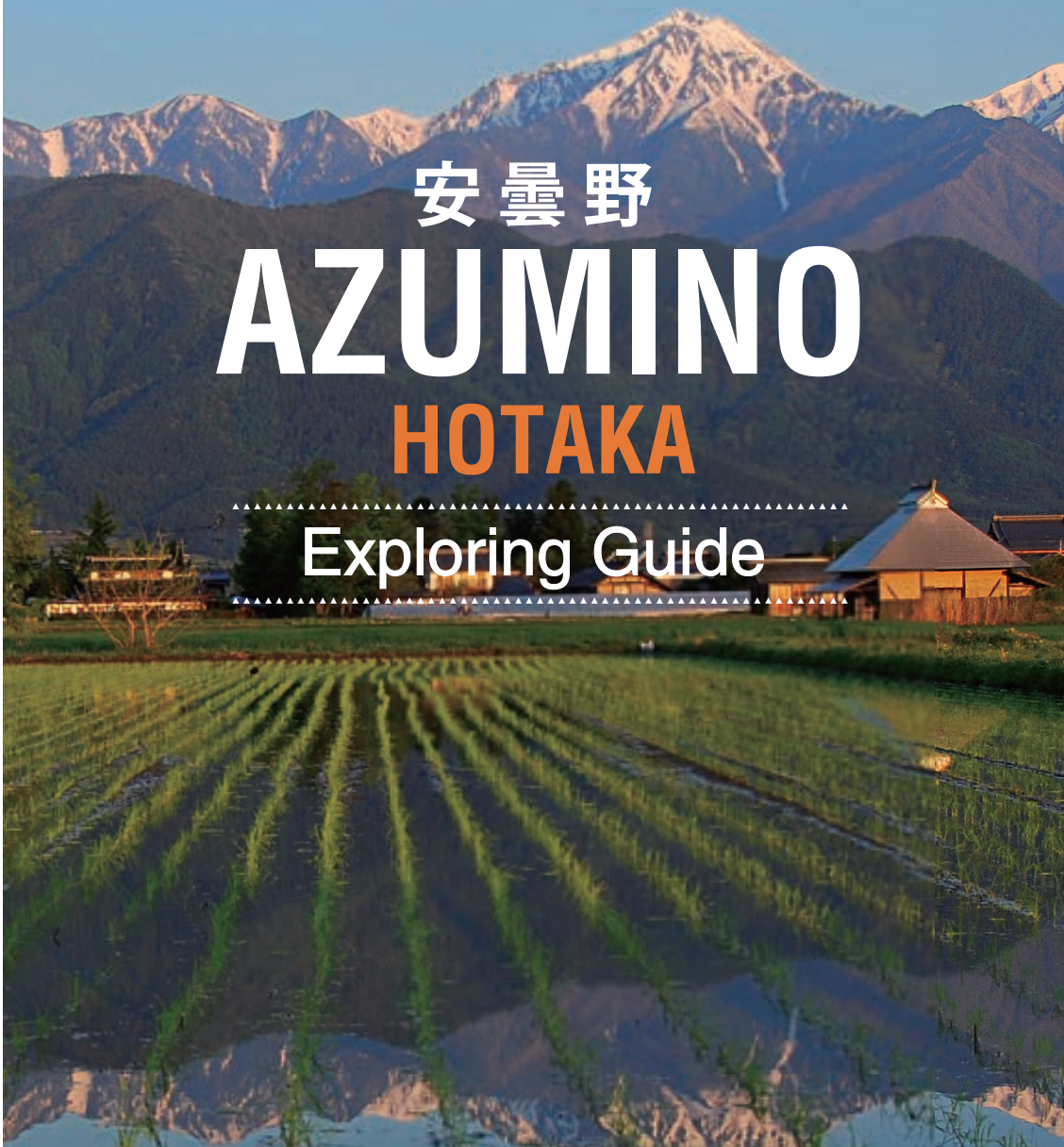
Local Recommendations

Activities / Food / Accommodation / Transportation

2020



安曇野 AZUMINO HOTAKA Exploring Guide




Situated amongst the picturesque valleys of central Japan's famous Alps region, Azumino boasts a unique blend of culture, history and natural beauty that has made it one of the country's most beloved destinations for Japanese and international visitors alike. A thriving gallery scene celebrates a myriad of contemporary artists, while a vast array of activities from glass-blowing to soba noodle-making await those wanting to experience Japanese culture firsthand. For the more intrepid, Azumino is a veritable alpine playground, offering spectacular hiking and biking trails as well as breathtaking paragliding and rafting trips. Whatever you are looking for, you will be sure to find it by exploring Azumino!



HOTAKA STATION



Hotaka Station is the main train station for sightseeing in the Azumino and Hotaka area. Trains normally run once per hour. There are coin lockers at the station. Also, there is a free luggage deposit service available in the bicycle rental shops for customers.  This page

TAXI



Some train stations on the Oito Line have taxi boarding areas. Catching a taxi in town can be difficult, but staff at your hotel or the places you visit will be happy to get one for you.

BUS



The "Azumino Excursion Bus" runs from Hotaka Station to Daio Wasabi Farm and Hotaka Hot Springs on weekends from late April to late November, and almost every day between July and September. You can get on at bus stops and get off the bus at any location along the route, but please check ahead for bus route operating times.

From late April to late November, buses also run between Hotaka Station and Nakabusa Hot Springs, six times per day from early morning till approx. 2 p.m.

Bus timetables (in English and Japanese) are available at the Tourist Information Office or on the website.



FOOD

Wasabi



Wasabi is a spicy root known as Japanese Horseradish and commonly found as a paste in sushi. As fresh wasabi is expensive and perishable, wasabi in root form is not often used at home. At Azumino Wasabi farm, visitors can taste "real fresh wasabi" and also get the rare opportunity to see how wasabi is grown in exceedingly clean water. You can even try wasabi ice cream and wasabi beer. In addition to the Wasabi Farm, wasabi products are also available at other souvenir shops around Azumino.

- Marusa Foods ☎0263-82-2151 [E-7]
- Kobayashi Wasabi ☎0263-82-2359 [F-5]

Soba



A specialty in Nagano prefecture, soba is a thin noodle made from buckwheat flour. Azumino's handmade soba can be found in many restaurants all over Azumino. Served either in hot broth or chilled with a dipping sauce, local soba noodles are fresh and abundant all year round. The best harvest season is autumn when many local Soba Festivals are held.

- Kobayashi Azuminoan ☎0263-73-5199 [C-8]
- Asakawa ☎0263-83-3637 [F-1]
- Kamijo ☎0263-82-4411 [G-4]
- Jonen ☎0263-82-5069 [C-3]
- Bandoko (Toyoshina) ☎0263-72-6767 [A-6]

Oyaki



Oyaki is a buckwheat or wheat bun specialty even more specific to Nagano prefecture than soba. There are rich varieties of stuffing including vegetables or Anko, a sweet bean paste. The bun is usually cooked by either steaming, roasting after steaming or broiling in ash. Oyaki is available in shops and select restaurants through Azumino.

- Azumido (Swan Garden near Azumino Interchange) ☎0263-71-1400 [A-8]

Sake

Sake is a fermented alcoholic beverage made from rice. Sake is served cold, at room temperature, or heated depending on the season, quality of the sake, and preference. It is said that good water and good rice make good sake. Azumino Sake, which has both elements, is available in local shops and is served in many restaurants.

- EH-shuzo ☎0263-72-3011 (a tour, tasting and shopping) [Map2]

Japanese Sweets

Wagashi refers to traditional Japanese confectionery. Like much of Japanese cuisine, Japanese sweets use uncommon flavors and natural ingredients which are unparalleled in presentation and often healthier than other cuisine's counterparts. Rice, varieties of beans, sugar, and fruits are most frequently used as ingredients. Many confectionery shops in Azumino offer their specialties.

- Kaiundo ☎0263-76-5060 [Map2]
- Maruyama ☎0263-82-2203 [G-6][F-3][H-7]
- Saika ☎0263-82-4498 [B-4]

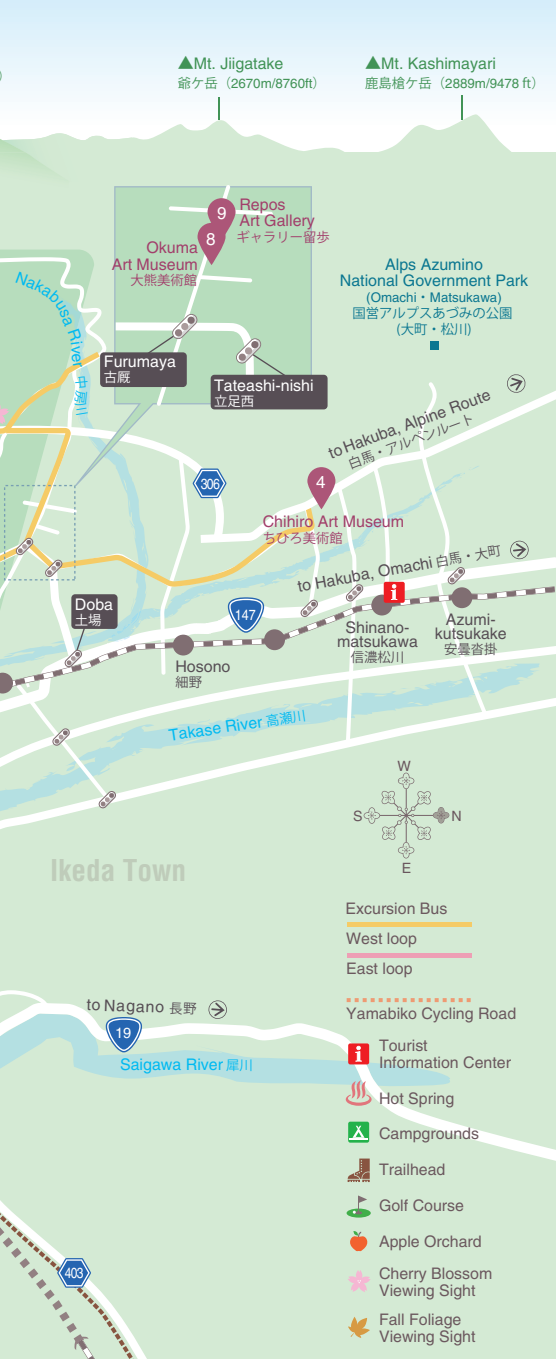
Shinshu Sake

Shinshu Sake is a fermented alcoholic beverage made from trout, Shinshu rice and daiginjo. It is said that Shinshu Sake is rich and delicious.

- Koshida

Other Restaurants





RENTAL BIKES

Two bicycle rental shops are located just outside Hotaka Station. Rental prices start from 200 yen per hour. They offer several types of bicycle; traditional style, mountain bikes or electric bicycles. They also provide various services such as luggage deposit, rain wear rental, and delivery or collection of rented bicycles for customers staying anywhere within the city. They also have a car rental service.

Wine

Japanese wine often has its own flavor, categorization process, and grape varieties. Two wineries offer tours, wine tastings, and a retail store for visitors interested in local Azumino wine. They also offer their apple and other fruit wine drawn from Nagano's orchards.

- **Swiss Village Winery** ☎0263-73-5532 [C-8]
- **Azumino Winery** ☎0263-77-7700 [Map2]

Shu Salmon

Shinshu Salmon is a treat which is hard to find in Azumino. A hybrid fish of brown trout and rainbow shu Salmon is a fish distinct to Nagano with a deeply savory flavor. Many restaurants serve salmon rice bowls.

aya (Ramen/Rice-bowl) ☎0263-72-2201

- **Katsumian** (Pork outlet) ☎0263-82-2169 [F-6]
- **Yamashita** (Sushi) ☎0263-82-7315 [G-6]
- **Nnohohon** (Café) ☎090-5829-1382 [E-5]
- **Shalom** (Organic) ☎0263-83-6245 [E-1]
- **Blé Noir** (Galette/French) ☎0263-31-6969 [G-1]

MUSEUMS & ART GALLERY

1 G-5
Rokuzan Museum
 ☎0263-82-2094 ¥700
 ⌚9:00-17:10 (Nov-Feb: -16:10)
 Closed: Mon, days after holidays (May-Oct: open every day), Dec 21-31

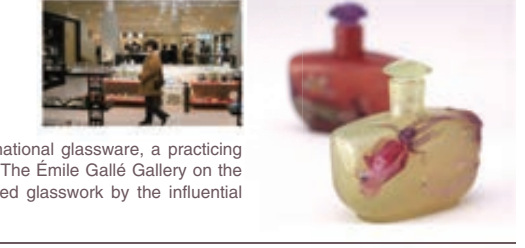
Built in 1958 with the help of 300,000 local volunteers, the museum is a memorial to one of the region's most prominent artists. It showcases works of Rokuzan Ogiwara, a pioneer of modern Japanese sculpture, as well as those of his respected friends and colleagues.

2 I-7
Takahashi Setsuro Art Museum of Azumino
 ☎0263-81-3030 ¥410
 ⌚9:00-17:00
 Closed: Mon (but open on Nat Hol-Mondays), days after holidays, Dec 28-Jan 4

Setsuro Takahashi was an artist who used traditional lacquer techniques to create an extensive portfolio of contemporary artwork. A number of Takahashi's works are exhibited within the museum building. The site also contains an old, Japanese-style house, which is open to the public, providing insight into old-fashioned lifestyles. Visitors can also experience traditional lacquer-ware techniques (reservations required).

3 F-2
Art Hills Glass Museum
 ☎0263-83-5100 ¥800 for Émile Gallé Gallery
 ⌚9:00-18:00 (Nov, Mar: -17:00/Dec-Feb: -16:00)

The complex boasts a large collection of local and international glassware, a practicing workshop, and a glass-blowing studio open to the public. The Émile Gallé Gallery on the upper floor is known for its collection of Japanese-inspired glasswork by the influential French art nouveau artist.



4 MAP 2
Chihiro Art Museum Azumino
 ☎0261-62-0772 ¥900 ⌚9:00-17:00 (GW & Obon holidays: -18:00)
 Closed: Dec-Feb, the 2nd and 4th Wed of every month (but open on Nat Hol-Wednesdays, closed next day instead; fully open during Aug and Apr 25-May 10)

The museum is filled with Chihiro Iwasaki's charming paintings and illustrations of flowers and children. Surrounded by 53,500-sq-meter park, it offers a place for visitors to relax and feel at home, providing a respite from the bustle of everyday life.

5 C-7
Yukio Tabuchi Memorial Hall
 ☎0263-72-9964 ¥310 ⌚9:00-17:00
 Closed: Mon (but open on Nat Hol-Mondays), days after holidays, Dec 28-Jan 4

An avid naturalist, photographer, author, and outdoor enthusiast, Yukio Tabuchi (1905-1989) climbed the mountains of Japan several hundred times during his lifetime. His passion for mountaineering laid in the study of alpine butterflies. The museum showcases many of the books he published, as well as a rotating collection of his photographs of the Japanese Alps. In addition to Tabuchi's pictures, there are also rotating displays from professional photographers.

6 I-2
Morinoouchi Picture Book Museum
 ☎0263-83-5670 ¥800
 ⌚9:30-17:00 (Jan-Feb: -16:30)
 Closed: Thurs and occasional holidays

The museum features wonderful rotating exhibitions in its second floor galleries, a full library of children's books, a book store featuring classic and obscure picture books in Japanese and English, a small restaurant, and an adjacent cabin for lodging.

7 B-6
Toyoshina Museum of Modern Art
 ☎0263-73-5638 ¥500
 ⌚9:00-17:00
 Closed: Mondays, days after holidays, Dec 28-Jan 4

Amongst the museum's main attractions are the works of Hiroatsu Takata and Yoshihei Miya, two of Japan's most prominent artists throughout the 20th century. Visitors can also enjoy the beautiful rose garden in the museum grounds.

8 MAP 2
Okuma Art Museum (Porcelain plates from Denmark)
 ☎0263-83-6993

9 MAP 2
Repos Art Gallery (Western paintings by Japanese)
 ☎0263-83-6785

10 H-1
Mountain (Sangaku) Art Museum
 ☎0263-83-4743

11 F-2
Nasan (Korean furniture shop)
 ☎0263-83-1006

12 MAP 2
Gimin Memorial Museum (peasant uprising in 17 c.)
 ☎0263-77-7550

ACCESS

BY TRAIN
By Express Train

Shinjuku → Matsumoto → Hotaka → Azumino → Hotaka → Takayama → Matsumoto → Nagoya

Shinjuku → Nagoya → Akashina → Matsumoto → Azumino → Hotaka → Takayama → Matsumoto → Nagoya

By Shinkansen (Bullet Train)

Tokyo → Nagano → Akashina → Matsumoto → Azumino → Hotaka → Takayama → Matsumoto → Nagoya

BY EXPRESSWAY BUS

Shinjuku → Swiss Village → Hotaka → Azumino → Hotaka → Takayama → Matsumoto → Nagoya

Osaka / Kyoto → Matsumoto → Hotaka → Azumino → Hotaka → Takayama → Matsumoto → Nagoya

Nagoya → Matsumoto → Hotaka → Azumino → Hotaka → Takayama → Matsumoto → Nagoya



NEARBY SIGHTSEEING SPOTS

Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route Open: mid-Apr–Nov 30

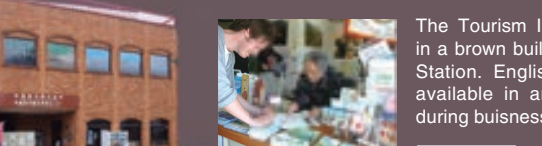
Kamikochi Open: Apr 27–Nov 15

Shirakawago Azumino–Shirakawago 3:00

Takayama Matsumoto–Takayama 2:20

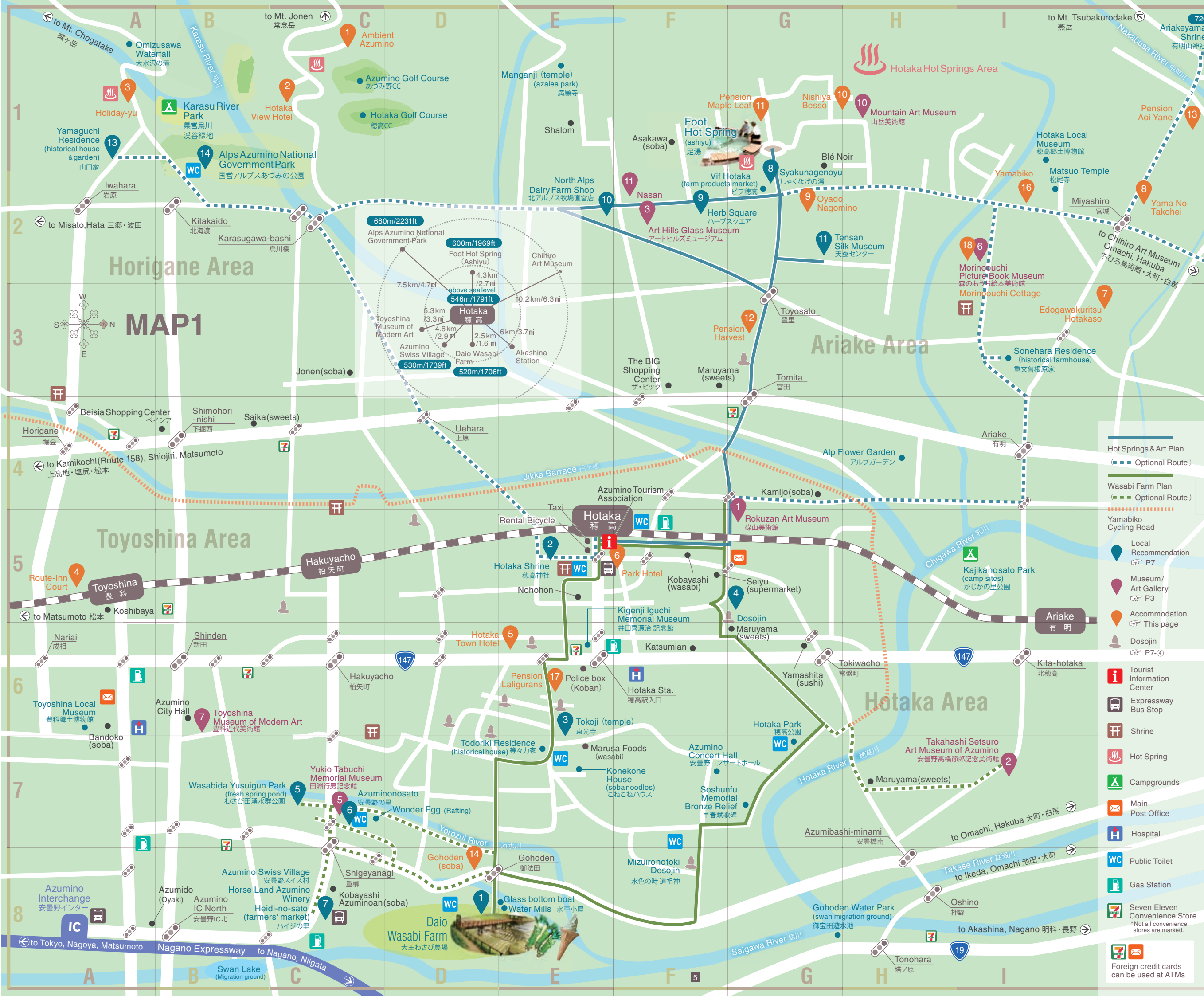
Matsumoto Castle Matsumoto Station → 0:15 ⌚8:30–16:30

Jigokudani Wild Monkey Park "Snow Monkey" Hotaka–Matsumoto–Nagano 1:40 Akashina–Nagano 1:00



The Tourism Information Center is located in a brown building just to the left of Hotaka Station. English is spoken. Free Wi-Fi is available in and around the tourist office during business hours.

AZUMINO TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER
 ☎0263-82-9363 hotaka@atlas.plala.or.jp
 Open: 9:00–17:30 (17:00 during Nov thru Mar) Closed: New Year holidays



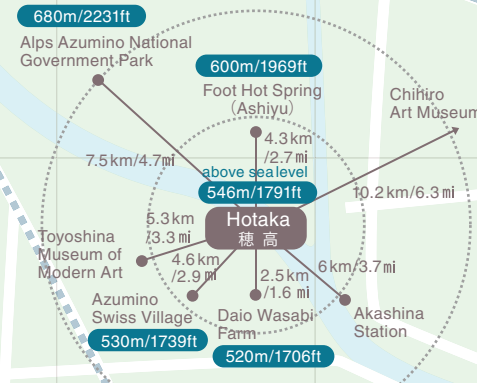
Horigane Area

MAP1

Toyoshina Area

Ariake Area

Hotaka Area



- Hot Springs & Art Plan
- Optional Route
- Wasabi Farm Plan
- Optional Route
- Yamabiko Cycling Road
- Local Recommendation
- Museum / Art Gallery
- Accommodation
- Dosojin
- Tourist Information Center
- Expressway Bus Stop
- Shrine
- Hot Spring
- Campgrounds
- Main Post Office
- Hospital
- Public Toilet
- Gas Station
- Seven Eleven Convenience Store
- Foreign credit cards can be used at ATMs

ACCOMMODATION

- H** Hotel **R** Ryokan **C** Cottage
- P** Pension / Family-run lodge
- B** Business (budget) Hotel
- OK** English Spoken **Hot Spring** **C/ Card Accepted**
- Wi-Fi is available at all accommodations with the exception of Hotakaso.

- 1** C-1 **H** **OK** **Hot Spring**
Ambient Azumino
☎0263-83-5550 ¥15,550-9,850
- 2** C-1 **H** **Hot Spring**
Hotaka View Hotel
☎0263-83-6200 ¥15,000-26,000
- 3** A-1 **H** **OK** **Hot Spring**
Holiday Yu
☎0263-73-8500 ¥11,000-22,000
- 4** A-5 **B**
Route-Inn Court
☎0263-73-0011 ¥6,600-7,850
- 5** E-6 **B**
Hotaka Town Hotel
☎0263-82-8888 ¥5,800
- 6** F-5 **B** **OK**
Park Hotel
☎0263-82-3282 ¥5,990
- 7** I-3 **R** **OK** **Hot Spring**
Edogawakuritu Hotakaso
☎0263-83-3041 ¥8,825-9,825
- 8** I-2 **R** **Hot Spring**
Yama No Takohei
☎0263-83-2802 ¥11,000-13,000
- 9** G-2 **R** **OK** **Hot Spring**
Oyado Nagomino
☎0263-81-5566 ¥17,850-24,150
- 10** G-1 **R** **OK** **Hot Spring**
Nishiya Besso
☎0263-81-5248 ¥17,850-26,250
- 11** G-1 **P** **OK** **Hot Spring**
Pension Maple Leaf
☎0263-83-3883 ¥8,400-9,200
- 12** G-3 **P** **OK**
Pension Harvest
☎0263-83-4317 ¥8,500-9,500
- 13** I-1 **P** **Hot Spring**
Pension Aoi Yane
☎0263-83-3943 ¥8,750-9,550
- 14** D-8 **P** **OK**
Family-run Lodge & Soba Gohoden
☎0263-82-6820 ¥6,480-8,900
- 15** Map2 **P** **OK**
Azumino Chikyu-yado
☎080-5486-6111 ¥5,000
- 16** I-2 **R** **Japanese-style inn Yamabiko** ☎0263-83-3885
- 17** E-6 **P** **Pension Laligurans** ☎0263-83-2795
- 18** I-2 **C** **Morinoouchi Cottage** ☎0263-83-5670



This will take you to the Daio Wasabi Farm, the largest wasabi farm in Japan. A popular option is to rent a bike and cycle through the rice fields, enjoying wonderful views of the Japanese Alps.

Half-Day Plan WASABI FARM



All-Day Plan HOT SPRINGS & ART

A free Foot Hot Spring (Ashiyu), with its statue of an eight-faced demon, is a symbol of Hotaka Hot Springs. The surrounding area is known as a resort; with public baths, accommodation, many museums and a glass-blowing studio.



Half-Day Plan WASABI FARM

1 D-8 Daio Wasabi Farm & Water Mills

☎0263-82-2118 ☎8:45-17:30(Apr1-Oct31), 9:00-16:30(Nov1-Mar31)
Founded in 1915 and known as the largest farm of Wasabi (horseradish) in Japan, the Daio Wasabi Farm is noted for its picturesque beauty and long history. The water mills next to the farm were also featured in the film "Dreams" by Akira Kurosawa, and are best viewed by taking one of the special raft-tours that are available throughout the spring and summer months. The farm is also notable for the wide-array of culinary delights offered by its restaurants and shops.



2 E-5 Hotaka Shrine

☎0263-82-2003
Hotakami-no-mikoto, the tutelary deity of the region and Japan Alps, is worshipped here as well as in Kamikochi and at the summit of Mt. Oku-Hotaka. Surrounded by old trees, this shrine is famed for its particular concentration of power and energy. The shrine's adjacent museum is the foremost local resource for Azumino history.

3 E-6 Tokoji (Temple)

☎0263-82-2056
A playful and traditional Buddhist temple near Hotaka station. It is a wonderful example of an intimate and historic local Nagano temple with a unique, contemporary twist. If you pray while wearing the giant orange geta sandals at the entrance, it is said your wish will come true.

4 G-5 Dosojin

Azumino is home to one of the largest concentrations of dosojin in Japan. About 600 of these roadside guardian statues are dotted around the area. Carved from stone, they were originally placed to keep evil spirits from entering villages and protect the travelers moving between them. Many of Azumino's dosojin feature happy couples and there are even some sharing a kiss. Perhaps you'll be lucky enough to find some on your travels.



Rokuzan Museum



5 C-7 Wasabida Yusuigun Park Ikoinoike fresh spring pond

These peaceful ponds are fed by an underground spring, filling them with exceptionally clear water. Air bubbles up from the bottom producing beautiful ripples on the surface and a variety of vibrant green plants grow in the pond, their leaves gently waving in the currents. Large fish cruise leisurely around, almost appearing in flight due to the crystal clear water. The ponds are surrounded by a variety of pretty plants and some very large weeping willows. You can't help being relaxed by the sedate atmosphere and sound running water. Benches are placed here and there making this an ideal place to stop for a picnic lunch while exploring Azumino.



6 C-7 Azuminonosato

This is an exceptional all in one stop for local Azumino culture. The grounds house a small glass works studio, the Yukio Tabuchi Museum, and a café. You can drink tasty cold water from a local spring's water well.



7 C-8 Swiss Village Horse Land, winery, souvenir shop & restaurant

Horse Land is a peaceful stable complex with accompanying riding center and café. You can take a short guided ride around the paddock with its mountain views, or just relax with a coffee as the friendly stable staff go about their work feeding and exercising a variety of beautiful horses. Children can ride smaller ponies and are sure to enjoy feeding the horses and some very friendly goats. The winery located beside the stable area serves mainly as a shop, selling a wide variety of award winning local wines and fruit juices, a selection of which are also available for tasting. There are also windows onto the bottling line. Finally, the largest building with the tower is a shop that houses a veritable cornucopia of local produce. The three attractions share a single large carpark.



All-Day Plan HOT SPRINGS & ART

8 G-1 Foot Hot Spring (Ashiyu) or Day Visitor Bathing Shakunagenoyu

☎0263-88-4126 ☎700 ☎9:30-21:30 Closed: 1st Wed

There is nothing like soaking your weary feet in steaming hot water and having eight giant demon's faces staring down upon you. Free to all, and open year round, this Foot Hot Spring is the perfect place to go and relax after a long hike or to warm your toes on a cold winter's day. Located just a stone's throw away from the Foot Hot Spring, Shakunagenoyu can be a good place to strike up a conversation with the locals while soaking in the bath.

9 F-2 Herb Square

☎0263-83-7782
¥ Free ☎9:30-17:00

Closed: Wed, 2nd and 4th Tues (but open on Nat Hol-Wednesdays, closed next day instead) and around the New Year's Day
In a large European-style garden that holds over 500 kinds of herbs, visitors can take a leisurely stroll and smell the fresh herbs in abundance. The small garden shop is a world of homemade medicinal herbal teas, aromatherapy products, and dried flower arrangements.



10 E-2 North Alps Dairy Farm Shop (Ice Cream)

☎0263-83-7571

If you have never had Japanese soft serve ice cream, or "soft cream" in Japanese, you are in for a treat. North Alps Stock Farm offers the creamiest of the creamy in traditional Japanese and unique soft serve flavors like green tea and black sesame seed.



11 G-2 Tensan Silk Museum

☎0263-83-3835 ¥ Free ☎9:00-17:00 (Nov1-Mar31: -15:00)

Closed: Mon (but open on Nat Hol-Mondays), next days of national holidays, Dec 28-Jan 3
The museum features the rare silk of the tensan, a silk worm exclusive to Japan. The gallery displays various samples of natural silk along with ornate kimonos. Just ask to see the silk work on looms in the museum's workshop.



Optional Spots

ACTIVITIES

Fruit Picking

From early summer to late autumn, Azumino offers a variety of fruit picking, such as apples (late July to Nov), grapes (mid-Aug to Sep), peaches (July to early Oct), pears (late Aug to Sep), blueberries (late June to Aug), or plums (Sep). Fruits and picking schedules are highly seasonal so inquiries and bookies are recommended.



Azumino Fruit Land ☎090-4161-9120 [P2:Map2]
Azumino Fruit Farm ☎090-2449-2841 [P2:Map2]
Nakamura Fruits Farm (WWOOF only, The owner can speak English.) ☎090-3585-1539 [P2:Map2]

Glass Work/Glass Beads

The Azumino valley has an internationally and nationally vibrant glass-blowing community. The galleries and work studios are home to many practicing glass artists. You can make anything from beads to vases in various workshops. Some studios welcome walk-ins, but reservations are recommended for larger parties and/or projects.



Art Hills Glass Museum ☎P3 ③
Azumino Glass Museum ☎This page ⑥

Soba Making

Making soba noodles is a unique way to experience Japanese culture and cuisine. The opportunity to mix, knead, and cut your own soba noodles is a rare privilege of Nagano.



Konekone House ☎0263-82-0431 [E-7]

Hiking

Trailhead ☎ [P2:Map2]

Mt. Hikarujō Hike(Cherry)

A perfect half day hike for any age or fitness level and known as the sakura course because it is canopied and lined with blooming cherry blossom trees in spring. The path affords sweeping views of Japanese Alps. It takes about an hour, one way, and no technical hiking experience or gear is necessary, though sneakers or hiking shoes are recommended.



Former Railway Walking Trail



This unpaved trail follows the course of a disused rail line, allowing walkers to enjoy clean air and a quiet walk away from traffic. The path is lined with 30,000 zelkova trees that are particularly beautiful during the green spring growth and fall foliage seasons.

Trekking

The Japan Alps' Mt. Tsubakurodake, Mt. Jonen, and Mt. Chogatake tower at over 2500m (8200ft). Each mountain's trail head is accessible from Azumino. The trails' ridge lines offer panoramic views of the Alps range, including Mt. Yariyataka and Okuhotakadake (the 3rd highest peak in Japan).

Trailhead ☎ [P2:Map2]

Glass Bottom Boat, Rafting

A quiet and leisurely boat trip on Azumino's calm river is a touching experience of the area. The river is famous for its appearance in Akira Kurosawa's film, "Dream".

Azumino Kisen (Glass bottom boat trips pass by Azumino's water mills) ☎0263-87-9828 [E-8]
Wonder Egg (1-3 hr trips) ☎0263-71-6073 [C-7]
Hakuba Adventure Club (Rafting on the Saigawa River) ☎0261-72-5323

Museums & art galleries

There are many other museums and art galleries. Explore and find your favorite spots. ☎ P3