



DISCOVER NIKKŌ & AIZU



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FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE



KITAKATA – AIZU
SPRING



OZE NATIONAL PARK – AIZU
SUMMER

NIKKO & AIZU BY RAILWAY

NIKKO ⇄ AIZU

AIZU RAILWAY*

\$35.00 / ¥ 3,500** Approx 3hrs 20mins

Tobu Nikko ⇒ JR Aizu-Wakamatsu

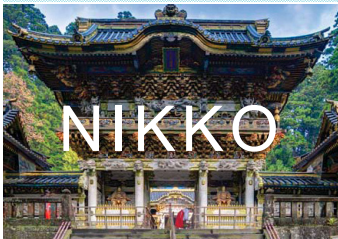
11:43 14:38

16:33 19:55

JR Aizu-Wakamatsu ⇒ Tobu Nikko

07:52 11:00

12:52 15:54



NIKKO

ASAKUSA ⇄ NIKKO

TOBU RAILWAY*

\$29.00 / ¥ 2,900** Approx 2hrs

Asakusa ⇄ Tobu Nikko

See www.tobu.co.jp/foreign/en/ for more information

TOKYO ⇄ AIZU

TOBU RAILWAY, AIZU RAILWAY*

\$68.00 / ¥ 6,800** Approx 4hrs 30mins

Asakusa ⇒ JR Aizu-Wakamatsu Revaty

06:30 11:04

09:00 13:41

11:00 15:31

14:30 18:51

JR Aizu-Wakamatsu ⇒ Asakusa

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JR-EAST

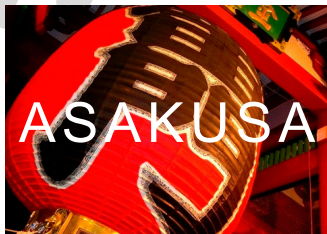
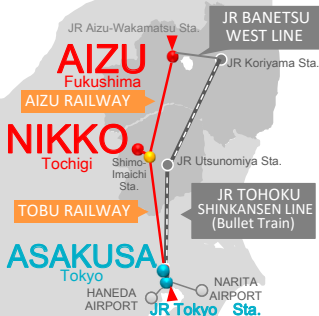
JR Tokyo ⇄ JR Aizu-Wakamatsu

\$88.00 / ¥ 8,800** Approx 2hrs 20mins

See www.jreast.co.jp/e/ for more information



AIZU



* Data of departure and arrival time : as of July 2017

**USD \$1.00 = ¥100 (fare and exchange rate may vary)



Yamagata

FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

TOCHIGI PREFECTURE

IBARAKI PREFECTURE

Murayama

Furukawa

Higashine

Izumi

Tendō

Shiogama

Nagai

Kaminoyama

Nanyō

Takahata

Shiroishi

Kawanishi

Yonezawa

Shibata

Bandai-Asahi National Park

Fukushima

Bandai-san (1819m)

Haramachi

Kitakata

Inawashiro-ko

Koriyama

Aizu-Wakamatsu

Ōuchi-juku

Tajima

Iwaki

Aizu-kōgen

TOCHIGI PREFECTURE

Kuroiso

Nikko National Park

Kita-Ibaraki

Yaita

Daigo

Nikkō


Utsunomiya

Hitachi



DISCOVER NIKKŌ & AIZU

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THE GOSHIKINUMA BISHAMON POND
HSAITO, FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

DISCOVER NIKKŌ & AIZU

For over 250 years, between 1603 and 1868, Japan was ruled by the powerful Tokugawa shogunate from the city of Edo, which later became Tokyo. The Edo era was a time of relative peace, when the country largely shut out outside influence. Society was rigidly hierarchical – presided over by feudal lords, known as daimyō, and their retainers, skilled warriors known as samurai.

Nikkō and Aizu capture the spirit of this era. Nikkō, in the forested foothills north of Tokyo, is home to temples and shrines – including several on the Unesco World Heritage list – constructed in the name of the Tokugawa rulers. They are the finest existing examples of architecture and decorative arts from the early Edo era.

Aizu, to the north, was a feudal domain. The capital, Aizu-Wakamatsu, is typical of castle towns of the era, and the reconstructed Tsuruga-jō is a classic example of Japanese fortress design. Within easy striking distance are the old post town of Ouchi-juku, with thatched roof buildings, and the merchant's town of Kitakata, famous for its storehouse architecture and ramen noodles.

Nikkō is a major tourist attraction and you may see plenty of crowds; in Aizu, further away from the tug of the capital, less so. There is some pretty countryside out this way, too. A visit to the historical attractions of Nikkō and Aizu can be supplemented with mountain hikes, soaks in natural hot springs and, in winter, skiing. There is also local cuisine and sake to be sampled. Trains connect Nikkō and Aizu with Tokyo, making these regions an easy excursion from the capital.



NIKKŌ'S SHRINES AND TEMPLES



THE TOSHŌ-GŪ SHRINE
©LEONIDA ANDRONICO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Tōshō-gū

The shrine **Tōshō-gū** is the final resting place of the first Tokugawa shogun, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616). It was first constructed in 1617, but 17 years later, Ieyasu's grandson, Tokugawa Iemitsu, decided it wasn't grand enough and spent the next year and a half (and considerable sums: in modern terms, over \$100 million in

manpower alone) re-doing it. The most celebrated artists, artisans and craftsmen of the day were brought in to work on the various halls and gates. Whatever image you may have of Japanese design being sombre and restrained gets thrown out of the window here: Tōshō-gū's structures are decorated with



intricate carvings, glossy black lacquer and gilt bronze ornamentation. Most striking perhaps is the use of colour: not just the bright vermillion typically found on shrines gates but also subtle tones of azure, jade and white, the latter of which is traditionally made from crushed shells from the ocean, 60 miles to the east.

The shrines and temples of Nikkō are currently undergoing an extensive, piecemeal restoration, which will last through to 2019. Tōshō-gū's **Honden** (main hall) is currently under scaffolding, though you can still go inside. Just completed in 2017 is the spectacular **Yōmei-mon**, the 'Sunset Gate'. This Japanese National Treasure,



TŌSHŌ-GŪ'S INTRICATE CARVINGS



THE MONUMENTS OF TŌSHŌ-GŪ



THE ORIGINAL MYSTIC APES

constructed in 1636, has over 500 carved figures, including many of mythical creatures such as dragons, phoenixes, and baku (a chimera that eats dreams), all of which reflect the exoticism that was in vogue at the time. Just as impressive, however, is Tōshō-gū's forest setting, among towering cedar trees and weathered stone lanterns.

The shogun himself was laid to rest in a comparatively solemn hilltop mausoleum above the shrine, accessed via a long flight of steps. The grave is marked with a tahōtō made of bronze. Upon his death, Ieyasu was deified and given the title Tōshō Daigongen, from which the shrine takes its name.

TŌSHŌ-GŪ SITS AMONGST TOWERING CEDAR TREES AND WEATHERED STONE LANTERNS



BRONZE TORII GATE & YOMEIMON GATE
© CORINNE SHUTTERSTOCK

THE LAKE CHŪZENJI AND SHRINE
ISTOCK®

Shintō Shrines

Tōshō-gū might be Nikkō's most famous attraction but it's not what originally put Nikkō on the map. Nearly a millennium before the Tokugawa geomancers deemed Nikkō an auspicious location, the wandering ascetic Shōdo Shōnin set down roots here, establishing the shrine Futarasan-jinja in 766. It was the nearby volcano, Nantai-san, that drew his attention: In Japan's indigenous Shintō religion, mountains, rivers and rocks were often worshipped as kami (gods). Shōdo built the shrine to honour Nantai-san.

Futarasan-jinja's current incarnation dates to 1619 – making it the oldest among Nikkō's major structures. Anywhere else, the shrine, painted a brilliant red and with colourful carved lintels under its long, sloping hip-and-gable roofs, might appear showy, but in contrast to Tōshō-gū, it appears almost subdued. There are several even humbler shrines, of weathered bare wood, in the hills behind Futarasan-jinja. Look for the walking path that leads up to **Takino'o-jinja**.


 AINO-MA, NIKKŌ MAUSOLEUM RIN-NO-JI TAIYUJIN
 NIKKŌ-ZAN RIN-NOJI TEMPLE ©

Buddhist Temples

Shōdo Shōnin also founded the temple, **Rinnō-ji**. Well into the 19th century, there was much overlap between Shintō and Buddhism, which was imported from China in the 6th century. It's not uncommon to see temples within shrines and vice versa. The hermitage Shōdo founded in Nikkō attracted ascetics for whom the path to Buddha-hood lay in isolated meditations and mountain pilgrimages, up Nantaisan in particular. Today, visitors are drawn to the Sanbutsu-dō, or 'Three Buddha Hall', home to a trio

of Buddha statues, carved in wood and covered in gold leaf. Each stands around 26ft high and is as old as the original Sanbutsu-dō. The hall itself is under scaffolding until 2019, but visitors can still enter to see the statues.

Another important Nikkō temple is **Taiyu-in**, where Ieyasu's grandson Iemitsu (1604-1651) was interred. Taiyu-in was completed in 1653; less showy than Tōshō-gū, it is representative of the more refined tastes that developed in the intervening years.



AIZU
**FEUDAL
HISTORY**

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Castle Town Aizu Wakamatsu

Aizu-Wakamatsu has been a castle town for over six centuries. It was from here that the ruling clans of the Aizu domain wielded control over a strategic stronghold at the entrance to the rugged, northeastern region of Japan known as Tōhoku. At one point, **Tsuruga-jō**, as the

castle eventually came to be called, was the largest fortress in the region. Rule over the castle passed from family to family until the Edo period, when the seat was awarded to the Hoshina-Matsudaira clan. Directly related to shogun by blood – the first clan patriarch was a grandson of Ieyasu – they were fiercely loyal to the Tokugawa shogunate.

THE TSURUGA-JŌ CASTLE
JAIMAX ISTOCK©

Students of Japanese history will know Aizu-Wakamatsu as the site of one of the last, great battles of the feudal era. In the mid-19th century, civil war broke out in Japan. On one side was a coalition of lords seeking to overthrow the shogunate and reinstate the emperor as the ruler of Japan. On the other was the Tokugawa regime and its loyalists.

Aizu, with its history of strong ties to the shogunate, naturally fell into the latter camp. Months after the abdication of the last shogun, the warriors of Aizu continued to defend their castle against the imperialist armies.

Among those fighting were a troop of young samurai, aged 16 and 17, known as the Byakkotai ('White

Tigers'). Twenty of them, having become separated from their unit, retreated up the **Mount Imori**. From this vantage point, they saw what they believed to be Tsuruga-jō go up in flames; in fact, it was the town outside the castle. Thinking all was lost, they committed seppuku (ritual suicide by disembowelment), to avoid capture by the enemy. This gruesome act was held up as a symbol of honour and fraternity, and the story is well known around Japan to this day.

The siege, known as the Battle of Aizu, lasted a month before the castle surrendered and brought the war to a close. The reinstatement of the emperor heralded the end of the Edo period and of feudalism in Japan. All remnants of the past were to be destroyed: damaged though still standing, Tsuruga-jō – said to be impregnable – was dismantled, leaving only its foundation of heavy stones.

A hundred years later, a groundswell of public support gave Aizu its castle back. Based on an old photograph of the castle and historical records, the five-storey main keep was reconstructed in

1965. In 2011, the slate-coloured roof tiles were replaced with rust red ones, like those found on the original castle – a unique characteristic of Tsuruga-jō. The first three floors of the keep house the **castle museum**, which has depictions of Aizu history, with a good amount of English explanations, plus historical relics like samurai swords and scrolls inked by lords. From the top floor of the keep, an **observatory** has views over town and the mountains beyond.



TSURUGA-JŌ WAS DISMANTLED, LEAVING ONLY ITS FOUNDATION

The grounds, encircled by the old castle moats, are now a grassy public space. It's a pleasant place to stroll, past the old castle walls speckled with moss and draped with ivy. Tucked away in one corner, within a small landscaped garden, is the castle's old teahouse, **Rinkaku**. Built more than 400 years ago, the teahouse was


 A BYAKKOTAI MEMORIAL EVENT
 FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

spared the fate of the rest of the castle. In 1872, two years before the Tsuruga-jō's demolition, a local family moved the teahouse to their land to keep it safe. Stop here after visiting the castle for a bowl of matcha. Like many other castle towns, Aizu-Wakamatsu developed a taste for the tea ceremony, a popular pastime among lords and high-ranking samurai. You'll spot several shops around town that specialise in the sweets served as an accompaniment to tea.

Aizu-Wakamatsu has plenty of attractions that bring feudal Japan

to life, like **Aizu Bukeyashiki**. This reconstruction of the villa that belonged to Saigō Tanomo, the highest-ranking samurai serving the lord of the castle, was built after the original villa burned down during the Battle of Aizu. Just outside the city is a reconstruction of the **Nisshinkan**, the school for young samurai – including the tragic Byakkotai – founded by the Aizu domain in the early 19th century. Considered among the top schools in Japan at the time, its exhibits describe the training that budding young samurai undertook from the tender age of 10.



Post Town Ouchi-juku

The Tokugawa government demanded that all feudal lords spend alternating years in the capital, a policy known as sankin kōtai. As travel at the time was largely by foot, a good number of lords spent much of the year in transit – and much of their wealth on lavish processions. Meanwhile, the lords' immediate families were to remain in the capital. It was a strategic policy for the Tokugawa regime to keep lords – potential

rivals – beholden to the shogun and too occupied to get up to much scheming. The policy also gave rise to countless post towns – each roughly one day's walk away from the other – along the trunk roads that crossed the land. Ouchi-juku was a key stop on the Shimotsuke Kaidō, the road that ran between Aizu-Wakamatsu and Nikkō. Here, travellers could find food, sake and shelter.

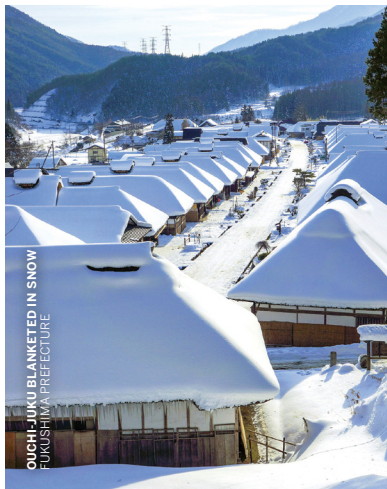
Post town culture faded after the fall of the shogunate; a few



LOCAL FAVOURITE NEGI-SOBA
FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

decades later, trains arrived in Japan, forever changing the way people travelled. Today, however, the Ouchi-juku of old has been painstakingly recreated based on historical records. The inns that line the dirt road have dark-stained timber beams, white plaster walls and thick, sloping roofs of thatch.

Many are restaurants, where you can tuck into bowls of soba, skewers of grilled river fish, and heaps of battered and fried mountain ferns. Others sell local



OUCHI-JUKU BLANKETED IN SNOW
FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

handicrafts and the grandest inn, once reserved for the lord, is now a **small museum**, with displays of ceramics and lacquerware from the Edo period. A few function as inns, and you'll need a Japanese speaker to help you make a booking.

Don't forget that camera, either: with signs of modernity almost entirely banished, Ouchi-juku is a picturesque place, whether flanked by golden rice paddies in summer or blanketed by winter snows.

Storehouse Town Kitakata

The town of Kitakata, to the north of Aizu-Wakamatsu, was for many years a prosperous centre for the production of miso, soy sauce and sake. From the late 1700s to the early 1900s, manufacturers constructed ever more elaborate kura (storehouses) in which to hold their goods – and many of them still stand today. The older ones have plastered mud walls, with decorative moulding, tile roofs and ornamental shutters; newer ones, from the late 1800s onwards, are of brick. Some have been restored so

as to look almost new; others are weathered and faded. Today they mostly house cafes and souvenir shops – where you can sample and shop for locally produced miso, soy sauce and sake.

One of the most impressive of the old kura belongs to the **Yamatogawa Sake Brewery** (yauemon.co.jp). When the brewery moved its operations to a modern facility outside of town, it turned its 220-year-old storehouse into a small museum. On display are various implements used in the traditional brewing of sake.

Aizu Festivals

Festivals take place year-round in Aizu

AIZU CANDLE FESTIVAL

(9-10 Feb)*

Aizu is cold in winter, but seeing the castle blanketed in snow is worth it. Even better when the grounds are illuminated with candles and lanterns, as at this popular annual festival.

*2018 dates

AIZU TAJIMA GION FESTIVAL

(22-24 Jul)

This summer festival held in Aizu-Tajima (south of Aizu Wakamatsu) is not to be confused with Kyoto's Gion Matsuri (aka the most famous festival in Japan). Expect parades of locals in exquisite traditional dress.

AIZU MATSURI

(22-24 Sep)*

Aizu-Wakamatsu's biggest festival sees reenactments of the processions of the lords and their retainers in full period dress. There are also sword-fighting performances on the grounds of Tsuruga-jō.

*2017 dates



AIZU MATSURI
FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE



A STOREHOUSE IN KITAKATA
FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

地蔵



EATING & DRINKING



WAPPA-MESHI AND OTHER LOCAL DISHES
FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

Aizu Traditional Dishes

Aizu is a great place to sample classic country cooking. Dengaku are made with a variety of ingredients, including mochi (pounded rice cake), tofu and taro, coated in a sweet miso paste and cooked over a charcoal hearth until their skin begins to blister. There's a cosy vibe at downtown

Mitsutaya (1-1-25 Ōmachi, Aizu-Wakamatsu; mitsutaya.jp), which got its start as a miso shop in 1834. Just past Aizu Bukeyashiki,

Ohide-chaya (308 Ishiyama, Tennei, Higashiyama-machi, Aizu-Wakamatsu) has been run by the same family for 16 generations and is another landmark dengaku shop.

Wappa-meshi is a dish of rice steamed with fish and vegetables in single serving-sized wooden boxes, which adds an earthy element to the flavour. Eating it at **Takino** (5-31 Sakae-machi, Aizu-Wakamatsu; takino.jp), a restaurant in a beautifully restored

house that is believed to be 150 to 200 years old, in downtown Aizu-Wakamatsu is a must.

Nikkō Specialities

Yuba, the thin skin that forms on the top of soy milk during production, is a local delicacy here. Sample it prepared a number of different ways – from 'sashimi' style (raw with soy sauce on the side) to tempura – in the yuba kaiseki course at **Nagomi-chaya** (1016 Kamihatsu-ishi, Nikko). Yuba also features in the spread of shōjin ryōri, the traditional vegetarian cuisine eaten by Buddhist monks, served at the elegant **Gyōshintei** (2339-1 San-nai, Nikkō; meiji-yakata.com/gyoushin).

Nikkō is also one of the few places in Japan where there are people making ice the old-fashioned way, harvesting it from mountain pools. Come summer, this means a special treat: kakigōri (shaved ice) made from natural ice (connoisseurs insist this makes for fluffier kakigōri). Lots of cafés in and around Nikkō serve it. At cute local hangout spot **Nikkō Coffee** (3-13 Honchō, Nikkō; nikko-coffee.

com), you can get it topped with coffee-flavoured syrup and condensed milk.



Soba

Aizu is soba country. Buckwheat grows in abundance here; combined with mountain stream water, buckwheat flour is kneaded, rolled and cut into soba noodles. It's available year round, though is a special treat in late fall when freshly harvested buckwheat is used.

There are countless soba shops in Aizu-Wakamatsu. Our favourite is **Kiriya** (2-34 Uwa-machi, Aizu-Wakamatsu;

kiriyasoba.co.jp), which stone grounds their own buckwheat flour in-house. A sampler set allows you to try three different varieties of soba. The noodles are served at room temperature, with broth on the side for dipping sauce – the best way to eat soba if you want to really appreciate its taste and texture.

Another atmospheric place to try is **Misawaya** (Ouchi-juku; misawaya.jp) in one of Ouchi-juku's reconstructed wooden buildings, with polished wood floors, low dining tables and bamboo shades. Here, the speciality is soba eaten with a sturdy leek instead of chopsticks, for a little added flavour.

Kitakata Ramen

Kitakata has enjoyed a curious second act: it's become a ramen pilgrimage site (along with much bigger cities like Sapporo and Hakata). There are over a hundred ramen shops around town and while flavour varies from shop to shop, there are a few details that distinguish Kitakata-style ramen.



These include broth flavoured with shōyu (soy sauce) thanks to the local industry, and noodles that are thicker than usual, wavy and super slippery (for maximum slurping power).

Genraiken (7745 Ippongi-ue, Kitakata) is Kitakata's original ramen shop, founded in the 1920s by a young immigrant from China, and is still a popular spot today (as the celebrity autographs on the walls show). **Shanghai Shokudō** (2-4650 Kitakata) is another long-running (though not quite as long-running) favourite. Just don't wait around for dinner: many Kitakata ramen shops open for breakfast and close when they've used up the day's quota of noodles.

Fukushima Sake

Fukushima sake is the current darling of the Japanese sake world, having won more gold prizes than any other prefecture at the annual Japan Sake Awards for five consecutive years. The prefecture is known for a style called hōjun amakuchi, which translates to 'mellow and sweet'. This is no dessert wine though; the sweetness is subtle, with the natural taste of the rice shining through. Most of the breweries are in and around Aizu, the better to take advantage of all that fresh snowmelt flowing down from the mountains.

Both Aizu-Wakamatsu and Kitakata have numerous breweries with shops attached, where tasting is possible. Spot a brewery by looking for balls of cedar leaves suspended from the eaves of venues you pass. Balls are hung in spring and when the leaves turn brown in the autumn, it means the sake is ready.

To get to know more about sake in Aizu, visit the following spots and sample it for yourself.

Uekiya (1-35 Baba-chō, Aizu-Wakamatsu; uekiya.net) This sake shop was founded in the Edo era and has been run by the same family for 18 generations. Uekiya only stocks sake from small Aizu breweries and this careful selection means you can't go wrong.

Suehiro Shuzō (12-38 Nisshin-machi, Aizu-Wakamatsu)

One of many breweries in downtown Aizu-Wakamatsu, Suehiro Shuzo – in a series of wooden buildings over 100 years old – offers regular tours on the hour and half hour. Not much English is spoken, but you'll get a pamphlet explaining the process. Sake is always brewed in the winter, so visit between October and March to see the brewery in action.

Kagota (8-49 Sakae-machi, Aizu-Wakamatsu) Sake isn't typically served in bars in Japan; rather, it's considered an accompaniment for food. The best place to sample a variety is at an izakaya – a Japanese-style pub. Kagota has a great selection of jizake (local sake).



OUTDOORS



TAKATSUE SKI RESORT IN AIZU
FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

Oku-Nikkō

Nikkō is just a small part of the 100,000-hectare **Nikkō National Park**. Less than an hour away from the World Heritage Sites, the Oku-Nikkō area (which means 'deep Nikkō') is a scenic escape with caldera lakes, waterfalls, sacred mountains and hiking trails. Nantai-san, the mountain that so entranced the ascetic Shōdo Shōnin, is here. A steep trail leads to the top. Easier paths

traverse boardwalks suspended over marshland, where wildflowers bloom in summer. The brilliant display of autumn leaves in the mountains of Oku-Nikkō is a big draw (warning: this means huge crowds, especially on weekends).

The lake, **Chūzenji-ko**, sits right next to the base of Nantai-san. It was formed 20,000 years ago when an eruption of the volcano created a natural dam. On sunny



ANCIENT ERUPTIONS OF AN 1816M VOLCANO HAVE LEFT THEIR MARK ON THE BANDAI PLATEAU

Niigata, encompassing a varied, mountainous terrain. Ancient eruptions of **Bandai-san**, an 1816m volcano, have left their mark on the **Bandai Plateau** in the form of lakes and marshes (the result of mountain rivers being damned by debris). The family-friendly **Goshiki-numa nature trail** winds past several small lakes stained different colours from mineral deposits. More ambitious hikers can summit Bandai-san in a day.

days the waters are a brilliant blue and reflect Nantai-san's perfect cone. There are also several waterfalls here, including the spectacular **Kegon-no-taki Falls**.

Bandai Plateau

Aizu-Wakamatsu is the southern gateway to **Bandai-Asahi National Park**. Japan's second largest national park, it stretches into the neighbouring prefectures of Yamagata and

In winter, there is skiing at **Alts Snow Park & Resort** (alts.co.jp/en), with two resorts, Alts Bandai and Nekoma, on either side of Bandai-san. Alts Bandai is the larger, with 29 runs in total, mostly beginner and intermediate.



THE SNOW-COVERED PEAKS OF BANDAI PLATEAU
MAMORU MUTO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES®



**AIZU-WAKAMATSU
IS THE SOUTHERN
GATEWAY TO
BANDAI-ASAHI
NATIONAL PARK**

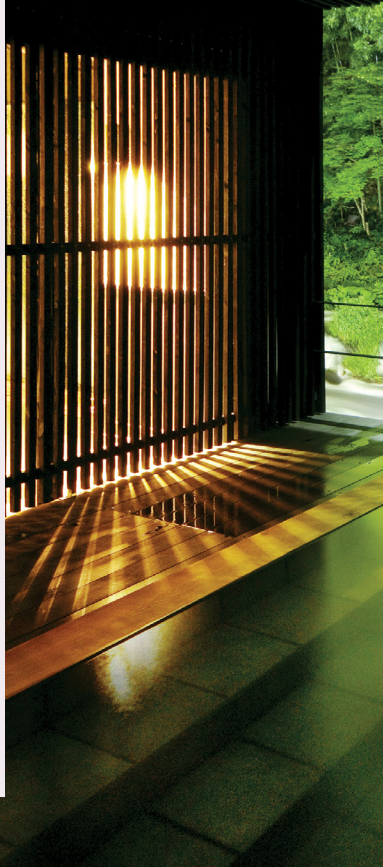
ONSEN

Nikkō and Aizu offer plenty of opportunities to engage in one of Japan's favourite past times: soaking in onsen (natural hot springs). Onsen resorts can be visited as a daytrip or as an overnight excursion and the resorts are a mix of Western-style hotels and traditional, Japanese-style inns.

Kinugawa Onsen is the biggest resort near Nikkō, conveniently located on the train line that connects Nikkō and Aizu. The town is strung out along the Kinugawa River, which cuts through a deep ravine; many hotel baths look out over the river. Kinugawa Onsen is a good choice for newbies, with clear, alkaline springs that are believed to be good for easing aches and pains.

Just east of central Aizu-Wakamatsu, and easily accessible from town, is **Higashiyama Onsen** (aizu-higashiyama.com). The sodium-sulphate water here makes for silky-smooth springs, which have been popular with locals for 1,300 years, including with the high-ranking samurai of the Aizu domain.

For unbeatable views of the Okawa Valley, it's worth paying a visit to the **Ashinomaki Onsen**. Hotels and inns pepper the lush, verdant banks of the Okawa river, providing a particularly awesome backdrop to a soak in the open-air baths here.





THE WATERS OF HIGASHIYAMA ONSEN
FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE

GETTING AROUND



Trains are the best way to travel between Tokyo, Nikkō and Aizu-Wakamatsu. From Tokyo tourist hub Asakusa, hourly Tōbu Spacia limited express trains run to Nikkō in under two hours. Tōbu's new Revaty express trains run four times daily from Asakusa all the way to Aizu-Tajima, via Kinugawa Onsen (Nikkō City). At Aizu-Tajima, transfer to the Aizu Railway line for Aizu-Wakamatsu. The total journey time is 4.5 hours and the Tobu Railway Line Limited Express Trains require seat reservations.

The JR line connects Aizu-Wakamatsu with Ashinomaki Onsen, to the south, and Kitakata, to the north. (Occasionally, a vintage steam locomotive makes the journey between Aizu-Wakamatsu and Kitakata.) Twice daily Aizu Railway Mount

Express trains run in both directions between Nikkō and Aizu-Wakamatsu, via Kinugawa Onsen and Ashinomaki Onsen, in three hours. (Otherwise the trip requires multiple transfers.)

If you're not in a rush, Tōbu's **Yuttari Aizu Tobu Free Pass** (adult/child ¥7260/3650) covers round trips between Asakusa and Kitakata on local trains for four days, allowing for stopovers within Aizu and Nikko area. You can pay a surcharge to upgrade to the faster limited express trains.

Nikkō and Aizu-Wakamatsu have frequent buses from stations to the main sights, though it's as easy to walk. Aizu-Wakamatsu is quite flat, and good for cycling (rentals are available around town). Less frequent buses run to sights on the outskirts. If you don't want to be beholden to transport schedules or want to get out into nature, you can pick up a rental car from counters at Nikkō and Aizu-Wakamatsu train stations. There is plenty of accommodation in all price ranges, plus amenities like post offices and ATMs near both stations.

DISCOVER NIKKŌ & AIZU

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Travel Information

Sightseeing	Diamond Route Japan	www.diamondroutejapan.com
	Rediscover Fukushima	www.rediscoverfukushima.com
	Nikko Kinugawa Travel Guide	www.nikko-travel.jp/english/
	Aizu Japan Tourism Guide	www.gokujo-aizu.com/iti/en/
	Aizu-Wakamatsu City Tourism	tsurugajo.com/language/eng/
	Visit Aizu	aizuwakamatsu.mylocal.jp/trip/en/
	Travel in Okuaizu	www.okuaizu.net/en/
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I PLAY FUKUSHIMA	www.iplayfukushima.com	
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	East Japan Railway Company	www.jreast.co.jp/e/
	Aizu Railway Co.,Ltd.	www.aizutetsudo.jp/
	Japan Expressway Bus Net	www.kousokubus.net/JpnBus/en
Sake Breweries	Yamatogawa Shuzo	www.yauemon.co.jp/
	Suehiro Shuzo	www.goo.gl/mhxLyT
	Homare Shuzo	www.goo.gl/8usD54
Dining	Gyoshintei	www.goo.gl/AvZrA3
	Aizu Izakaya Kagota	www.kagota.co.jp/index_eng.html
	Mitsutaya	www.mitsutaya.jp/
	Takino	www.takino.jp/
	Kiriya Gongentei	www.goo.gl/JccWRT
Accommodation Bookings	Rakuten Travel	travel.rakuten.com/
	Trivago	www.trivago.com/
Mobile Phone Operators	NTT docomo	www.nttdocomo.co.jp/english/
	AU	www.goo.gl/iD6VZp
	Softbank	www.softbank.jp/en/
Weather	Japan Meteorological Agency	www.jma.go.jp/jma/indexe.html
Translation	Google Translate	translate.google.com/



OKUAIZU AREA - AIZU
AUTUMN



TADAMI LINE - AIZU
WINTER

DISCOVER NIKKŌ & AIZU

Unearth the rich history of Nikkō & Aizu, where powerful feudal lords once ruled the land. Testaments to their sovereignty remain today in the form of majestic castles and shrines scattered throughout the region's landscape, itself an enthralling blend of sacred mountains, theatrical waterfalls and calming natural onsen.

