

# NIKKO

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A Journey to an Enchanting Land Begins





# Nikko

Nikko City in Tochigi Prefecture is a one-of-a-kind destination where Japan's rich traditions and magnificent nature come together in perfect harmony. For centuries, it has been a sacred place where Shinto, Buddhism, and nature coexist, leaving a deep historical imprint. Recognized for its cultural significance, two shrines and a temple, including Nikko Toshogu Shrine, are designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, attracting visitors from around the world.

Nikko's breathtaking natural beauty, designated as a National Park, is also an essential part of its allure. Just about two hours from Tokyo by car or train, this serene retreat offers a welcome escape from the hustle and bustle of the city with its scenic views. Each season paints Nikko with a different charm—delicate cherry blossoms and plateau flowers in spring, lush greenery and clear mountain streams in summer, fiery autumn foliage, and stunning snowy landscapes in winter—all of which captivate countless visitors.

Adding to its appeal are some of Japan's most renowned hot springs, including Kinugawa Onsen and Yunishigawa Onsen, perfect for unwinding after the journey. Nikko also boasts a rich culinary tradition, with specialties such as yuba (tofu skin) dishes and handmade soba noodles, allowing travelers to savor the region's history and nature through its flavors. Why not experience the enchanting blend of history, nature, and culture that Nikko has to offer?







Nikko Toshogu Shrine



Nikko Futarasan-jinja Shrine



Shinkyo Bridge



Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple Hondo (Sanbutsudo / Main Hall)

## From Nikko's Founding to Its UNESCO World Heritage Designation

Since the late Nara period (710–794) or even earlier, Mt. Nantai in Okunikko has been revered as a sacred mountain. Nikko developed as a spiritual center after the Buddhist priest Shodo Shonin pioneered the area, establishing it as a holy site. Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple and Nikko Futarasan-jinja Shrine, both of which revere Mt. Nantai as a sacred being, preserve the history of Nikko's deep-rooted mountain worship traditions.

In 1617, Nikko Toshogu Shrine was built to enshrine Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616), the founder of the Edo Shogunate. The magnificent architecture and elaborate decorations seen today were crafted during a major renovation in 1636 under the third shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–1651), who gathered the finest artisans from across Japan. Later, in 1653, Iemitsu's own mausoleum, Taiyuin, was completed.

These three sacred sites, known as “the Shrines and Temples of Nikko,” were recognized for their historical and cultural significance and designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1999. Today, they continue to attract visitors from all over the world.



Nemuri-neko (Sleeping Cat)



San-zaru (Three Monkeys)

## Nature

自然

### Nikko National Park

Formed by volcanic activity approximately 20,000 years ago, Nikko's majestic landscape features towering mountains, pristine lakes, cascading waterfalls, wetlands, and dense forests. Recognized for its ecological significance, it was designated as a National Park in 1934. The majestic Mt. Nantai and Lake Chuzenji, the Ramsar Convention-registered “Okunikko Marshlands” of Senjogahara, and Kegon Falls—one of Japan's three most famous waterfalls—offer breathtaking natural beauty found nowhere else, captivating all who visit.

Mt. Nantai and Lake Chuzenji



Kegon Falls



Senjogahama Beach



Senjogahara Marshland



Ryukyo Valley

## History & Culture

歴史・文化

## A Beloved Resort Destination for the World

In the modern era, Nikko's breathtaking nature and rich history caught the attention of Western visitors, establishing the area as a popular summer retreat. In 1873, NIKKO KANAYA HOTEL, Japan's oldest Western-style resort hotel, opened its doors, and Okunikko soon became dotted with vacation villas belonging to foreign diplomats. Many of these historic landmarks remain and can be seen today. Continuing its legacy as an international resort, the city welcomed The Ritz-Carlton, Nikko in 2020, further cementing its status as a world-class travel destination.



NIKKO KANAYA HOTEL



The Ritz-Carlton, Nikko



British Embassy Villa Memorial Park



Italian Embassy Villa Memorial Park

## The Beauty of the Four Seasons

Nikko's seasons bring vibrant and dramatic transformations. In spring (late March to early May), cherry blossoms bloom across the region, with opportunities to enjoy illuminated nighttime sakura. Summer (June to August) blankets the mountains in lush greenery, providing ideal conditions for adventure activities. Autumn (September to November) is particularly renowned for its spectacular autumn foliage, creating mesmerizing scenery. Winter (late December to February) welcomes snow activities, and the illuminated snowy landscapes at night offer an enchanting experience.



Kinugawa River Boat Tour



Lake Chuzenji Sightseeing Boat



Night Hanami in Kinugawa Onsen



Yunishigawa Onsen Kamakura Festival





Ski Resort

## Experiences

体験

## Create Lifelong Memories with Your Loved Ones

Beyond historic sites and breathtaking nature, Nikko offers plenty of fun activities to enjoy with your family and friends. At Edo Wonderland Nikko Edomura, where the streets of the Edo period are recreated, transform yourself into a samurai or ninja, while Tobu World Square showcases miniature replicas of world-famous landmarks, perfect for capturing unique photos. Additionally, you can experience seasonal activities such as skiing, snowshoeing, and strawberry picking during the winter months.



Tobu World Square



Edo Wonderland Nikko Edomura

## Hot Springs

温泉



Yumoto Onsen



Yunishigawa Onsen

## A Blissful Time to Relax in Nature

Nikko City is also a popular hot spring resort destination close to Tokyo. Among the resorts, Kinugawa Onsen is one of Japan's most renowned hot spring destinations, offering the ultimate experience of soaking in an open-air bath while admiring the grandeur of the surrounding gorge. Additionally, Yunishigawa Onsen and Okukinu Onsen Village, nestled deep in the mountains, provide a rustic charm and the opportunity to enjoy open-air baths with breathtaking snowy landscapes. Yumoto Onsen in Okunikko is known for its milky-white sulfur waters, which are said to have healing properties for various ailments. For over 1,250 years, it has been soothing visitors with its therapeutic benefits.



Kinugawa Onsen

## Flavors Crafted by Local Blessings and History

When it comes to food that encapsulates the history and natural charm of Nikko, “yuba” stands out. Made from soy milk and Nikko's famously pure water, yuba is said to have spread as an offering to temples and shrines, and also as an ingredient in shojin ryori (traditional vegetarian cuisine). Moreover, the high-quality water from this area is the source of many Nikko delicacies, including soba noodles, kagigori shaved ice, and local sake. Additionally, around Yunishigawa Onsen, there is a culture of enjoying meals around a traditional irori sunken hearth, where you can savor irori-cooked dishes in inns that exude an ancient atmosphere.



Yuba Dishes



Soba Noodles



Kagigori Made from Nikko's Natural Ice

## Getting Closer to Nikko's History

For those eager to explore Nikko's rich history and culture, joining a guided tour led by local experts around the World Heritage sites is highly recommended. You can also try your hand at Nikko-bori, a traditional woodcarving craft representative of Nikko, with roots tracing back to the artisans who worked on the carvings of Toshogu Shrine. Experience the intricate craftsmanship firsthand and create your own Nikko-bori piece as a special keepsake from your journey.



Nikko-bori Craft Experience



Nikko-bori (Traditional Woodcarving)



World Heritage Guided Tour



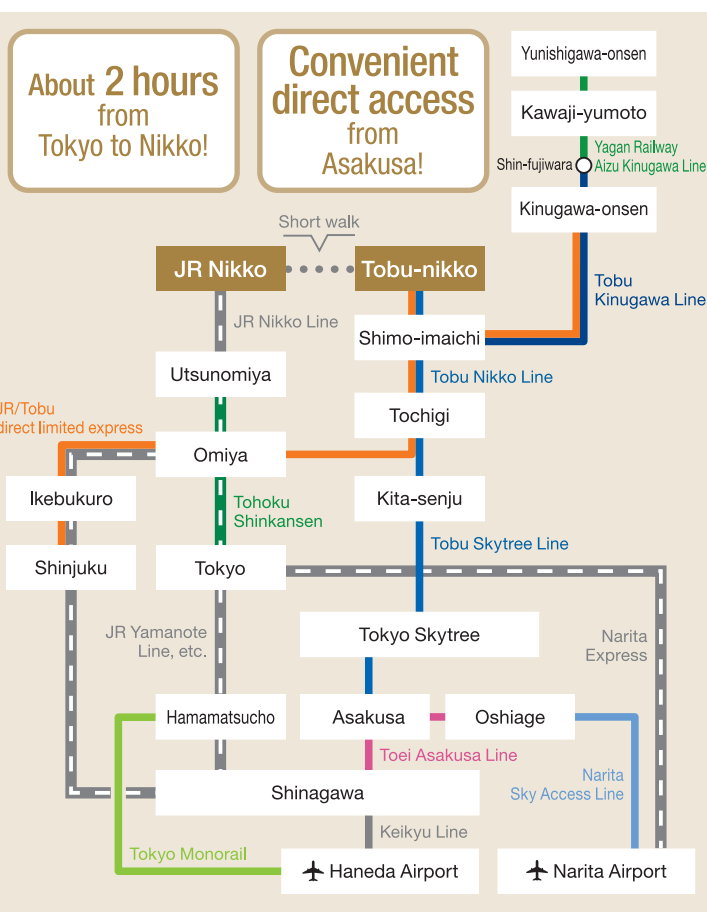
Irori Cuisine

## Local Delicacies

グルメ



# Access to Nikko



## ► Special Trains to Make Your Journey More Enjoyable



### From Tokyo to Nikko New Limited Express SPACIA X

A new limited express launched by Tobu Railway in 2023, connecting Asakusa Station with Tobu-nikko Station and Kinugawa-onsen Station in about two hours. The train features uniquely designed interiors and six different types of seats, including private rooms and sofa seats. Car 1 includes a cafe with food and drinks that reflect the charms of the areas along the line.



### From Shimo-imaichi Station to Kinugawa-onsen Station SL Taiju (SL Taiju Futara)

Experience a retro journey on a steam locomotive train. It's a unique opportunity to interact with local residents, who may wave to you along the way. Shimo-imaichi Station also has a nostalgic atmosphere, with an SL exhibition hall on site. Two trains operate: "SL Taiju" running between Kinugawa-onsen Station and Shimo-imaichi Station, and "SL Taiju Futara" running between Tobu-nikko Station and Shimo-imaichi Station / Kinugawa-onsen Station.

## ► Detailed information available on our website and social media.

Nikko Official Guide  
<https://www.visitnikko.jp/en/>

