

Historic Sites Related to Green Tea Production

Uji City

Obakusan Manpuku-ji Temple and the monument of Komano Ashikage Enpi

Within the precincts of Obakusan Manpuku-ji Temple, there is a hall dedicated to Koyugai Baisa-o, a Buddhist priest who served at Manpuku-ji Temple and founded the *sencha* tea ceremony. In the temple precincts, an assembly of *sencha*, tea masters is held annually, along with a tea ceremony to dedicate tea to the spirit of Baisa-o. In front of the temple gate, there is a stone monument with a poem inscribed on its surface. The poem suggests that a Buddhist priest named Myoe instructed villagers how to cultivate tea plants: *Togayama no onoe no cha no ki wakeuete atoso obeshi koma no ashikage* (I give you seeds of tea plants growing atop Mt. Toga. Implant the seeds in the track of this horse.) Admission fee required.



A monument indicating the place where *gyokuro* green tea was invented

This monument tells the story concerning the invention of *gyokuro*, the highest-grade green tea. When a tea producer named Yamamoto Kahei was stirring steamed tealeaves at a tea factory in Uji Ogura, he saw sticky fluid ooze from the tealeaves and turn into round balls. He named the balls *tama no tsuyu* (dew of balls; the Chinese characters of *tama no tsuyu* can also be read as *gyokuro*). The *gyokuro* processing method was subsequently developed in Ogura.



Approach to Byodo-in Temple (One of the 100 Paths of Fragrance)

A 160-meter approach leading to the front gate of Byodo-in Temple is lined by tea shops. The aroma of roasting tealeaves envelops the entire district.

Oyamazaki Town

Tea ceremony house “Tai-an” (National Treasure)

Tai-an is believed to be the only existing tea ceremony house built by Sen no Rikyu, the great master of the tea ceremony. After the Battle of Yamazaki, which took place on June 13, 1582, Hashiba Hideyoshi (the general who won the battle, also known as Toyotomi Hideyoshi) summoned Sen no Rikyu to Yamazaki and ordered him to reside there. It is supposed that the great tea master built Tai-an as his residence. This tiny tea ceremony house is the smallest building designated as a National Treasure. Prior booking required.



Kizugawa City

Monument of the Yamashiro tea industry

Along the ancient Yamashiro Path, there is a stone monument erected by the Yamashiro Tea Producers' Union to commemorate its 120th anniversary. The monument, which indicates the history of Yamashiro tea industry, was erected to pray for the further growth of the tea industry and the prosperity of Yamashiro Tea Wholesalers' Street, where the monument is located.

Ujitawara Town

Chasomyo Shrine

The shrine was erected in 1954 to enshrine the spirit of Nagatani Soen, who invented an innovative tea processing method. At the spring and autumn festivals, the shrine organizes great ceremonies, in which relatives of the Nagatani family participate. On the stone walls surrounding the precincts visitors can see the names of well-known tea producers from around the country.



Birthplace of Nagatani Soen

At the site of the home of Nagatani Soen, who developed the green tea processing method still used today (which involves steaming, kneading, and drying), this hall was built to preserve the *hoiro* (equipment to roast and dry tealeaves over a fire). The original house was larger and had various facilities for tea processing and agricultural activities, including a workshop and a storehouse. The Nagatani family owned a spacious compound, which extended to the border of Chasomyo Shrine. Part of its stone wall still remains today.

Kyotanabe City

Ikkyu-ji Temple

Although the formal name of this temple is Shuon-an Temple, it is commonly known as Ikkyu-ji, in recognition of its association with Ikkyu, a quick-witted Zen monk in the 15th century, who is now popular among Japanese people as a character of *manga* and *anime*. Ikkyu lived in this temple until he died at the age of 88. Among the many visitors to this temple are Murata Juko, one of the founders of the tea ceremony culture and Konparu Zenchiku, a well-known Noh



Yawata City

Shokado Garden, museum of art, and the "Shokado" tea ceremony house

During the early Edo Period (1603 – 1868), Shokado Shojo, a Buddhist priest who served at Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine, designed and built this tea ceremony house, which was recently relocated to the present site in Shokado Garden. Shokado Shojo displayed his extraordinary talent in calligraphy, painting, tea ceremony, and poetry, creating a great many works of fine art. The museum shop Ominaeshi sells green tea and powdered green tea produced in the area.



Taisho-ji Temple

This temple is closely connected with Shokado Shojo. His tomb, a treasure museum, and the site of the tea ceremony museum Kan-un-ken, which is counted as one of the 100 best tea ceremony houses in Japan, are all located within the temple precinct.

Tourist Attractions in the Yamashiro Region

Muko City

Muko City: The seat of the ancient capital—Nagaoka-kyo—and a center of bamboo production Muko City, located in the southwestern part of Kyoto Prefecture, is the smallest city in Western Japan (7.67 square kilometers). For a decade before the construction of the Heian-kyo capital in 794, Muko City was the seat of the ancient capital known as Nagaoka-kyo. Many archeological sites have been discovered around the city, including the site of the Imperial Audience Hall, where Emperor Kanmu was involved in policymaking. In the western part of the city, there are many hills covered by thick bamboo forests. Bamboo shoots produced in this area are very popular throughout the country.

Amid the bamboo forests, there is a path about 1.8 km long, lined by bamboo fences of seven different designs, including *takeho-gaki*, a fence of bamboo branches bound together, *kofun-gaki*, resembling the round shape of an ancient burial tomb, and *kaguya-gaki*, which evokes the neckline of the costume of the legendary bamboo princess (*Kaguya hime*).

Every year in October, on the evening of Kaguya, the path becomes particularly attractive, on that evening, with the path being lit by some 4,000 bamboo candle lanterns floating on water.



Muko Shrine

According to legend, Muko Shrine was erected in 718 (during the Nara Period). Another piece of evidence attesting its early presence is the book titled *Engishiki*, compiled in 927. In that book, there is a Muko Shrine included in the list of shrines. The present main hall, constructed in 1418, and designated as an Important Cultural Property, is highlighted by the traditional architectural style known as *sankensha nagaretsukuri*

(a three-front-span pent-roof building with a gabled roof) of the Muromachi Period (1333 -1573). The shrine also owns an old copy of *Nihon Shoki*, (Chronicles of Japan) which is also designated as an Important Cultural Property.



Kyotanabe City

Kannon-ji Temple

The temple was founded by Abbot Gien by the order of Emperor Temmu. The main statue of Buddha is the eleven-faced Avalokitesvara (National Treasure). Representing the young and healthy countenance of the Buddha, the dry lacquer statue with a wooden core features elegant designs from the Tempyo Era (729 - 748). In spring, the approach to the temple becomes particularly attractive with blossoms of cherries and rape flowers.



Nagaokakyo City

Nagaokakyo: An historic city and a center of bamboo shoots production

Nagaokakyo City, well known as a production center of bamboo shoots, is located midway between Kyoto and Osaka, which are the two largest cities in the Kansai region. In 784, Emperor Kanmu ordered the construction of the Nagaoka-kyo Capital, from which the present city name was derived. During the Warring States Period (1467 – 1573), a daughter of Akechi Mitsuhide (Akechi Tama, who



later became Hosokawa Gracia) had a happy honeymoon in the castle in this area, despite being destined to endure many hardships, resulting in her adopting Christianity. Today, Nagaokakyo City continues to develop as home to cutting-edge industries, historic assets, and abundant greenery. Throughout the year, tourists can enjoy beautiful landscapes, particularly azaleas blooming at Nagaoka Tenman-gu Shrine in spring and crimson maple leaves at Komyo-ji Temple in autumn.

Nagaoka Tenmangu Shrine

This shrine is dedicated to the spirit of Sugawara Michizane, a court noble of the Heian Period (794 – 1192), who was exiled to Kyushu despite being innocent. To the east of the shrine, there is a large pond, Hachijo-ga-ike. Visitors to the shrine can enjoy breathtaking views of the pond from the approach to the shrine and bridges over the pond. Especially in the latter half of April, the crimson flowers of 150-year-old Kirishima azaleas (designated as natural monuments by the city) bloom on both sides of the approach, fascinating viewers.



Uji City

Uji City is blessed with scenic beauty, as well as many historic and cultural assets. Around the Uji River, various historic assets are located, including Byodo-in Temple and Ujikami Shrine (both designated as World Heritage sites). Throughout the history of Japan, Uji has played important roles, sometimes as a cultural center, and other times as a battlefield.

As if they were time machines, historic sites and monuments remaining in the city envelop tourists in a historic atmosphere, ushering them on a tour to past days.



Uji Bridge and the statue of Lady Murasaki (author of *The Tale of Genji*)

Municipal Tea Ceremony House: Taiho-an



To promote Uji green tea and the tea ceremony culture, Uji City constructed this authentic tea ceremony house, named Tai-ho-an (lit: hut opposite to Ho). This name derives from its location, as it is opposite the Ho-o-do Hall of Byodo-in Temple. Visitors can enjoy viewing tea ceremony performances, and sipping powdered green tea with seasonal Japanese sweets (500 yen).



Ukai (traditional fishing using cormorants to catch fish) in the Uji River



The fish-shaped wooden gong at Manpuku-ji Temple

Oyamazaki Town

Oyamazaki Town: A battlefield at the foot of Mt. Tennozan

In the evening of June 13, 1582 (430 years ago), at the foot of Mt. Tennozan, one of the most important battles in Japanese history was fought between armies led by Akechi Mitsuhide and Hashiba Hideyoshi (also known as Toyotomi Hideyoshi). In total, 50,000 warriors were involved in this battle, known as the Battle of Yamazaki. After the army led by Hashiba overwhelmed its enemy, the victor constructed Yamazaki Castle near the summit of Mt. Tennozan, and Oyamazaki began to develop as a castle town. Subsequently, Hashiba Hideyoshi defeated all other rival generals and became the military and political ruler of Japan. In addition to the old battlefield and other historical monuments, Oyamazaki Town is home to an exceptional tea ceremony house Tai-an (National Treasure) and Asahi Beer Oyamazaki Villa Museum of Art, well known for its superb Western-style architecture of the Showa Period (1926 - 1989). It is recommended that tourists spend one full day in the town to visit the various historic sites.

Hoshaku-ji Temple and the seated statues of Enma-o (Yama-rajā) and his followers

According to legend, Hoshaku-ji Temple was erected during the Nara Period (710 – 784) by a well-known Buddhist monk, Gyoki, under the order of Emperor Shomu. The temple enshrines the statues of Enma-o (the lord of hell) and his followers, created during the early Kamakura Period (1192 - 1333) and designated as Important Cultural Properties. Although there are many similar statues in Japan, those in Hoshaku-ji Temple exceed their counterparts in terms of their powerful appearance, which indeed overwhelms viewers. Enma-o is believed to assess the deeds of the deceased and decide their punishment in hell; standing in front of the statue of the lord of hell, viewers are likely to feel that they are being judged rigorously. The temple with these statues is indeed worth visiting.



Kumiyama Town

Kumiyama: A dynamic town with lively people and peaceful natural settings

In Kumiyama Town, situated in the southern section of Kyoto Prefecture, there was once a lake called Ogura-ike, but it was reclaimed to become rice paddies and vegetable fields, which create a picturesque view. Along the banks of the Uji and Kizu rivers, a wide variety of wild flowers bloom. In addition to such

beautiful natural settings, Kumiyama Town is home to many industrial activities. The town is promoting community development based on a vision that prioritizes striving for harmony among people and between people and nature. The town has set its slogan as: Kumiyama: A dynamic town with lively people and peaceful natural settings.

Crosspeer Kumiyama Town Center

Crosspeer Kumiyama Town Center has been built as a symbol of the vigorous industries of Kumiyama Town. On the first floor, there is a waiting room for bus passengers with shops selling local specialty products. In the exhibition space on the first and the second floors, products of local companies are displayed. The building employs various measures to promote environmental conservation, including a roof covered with greenery, LED lighting equipment, and a parking space equipped with a quick recharger for electric vehicles.

Seika Town

Kansai Science City, linking people, nature, and science: Seika Town

Seika Town, situated at the southwestern tip of Kyoto Prefecture and the center of the Kansai region, enjoys a mild climate throughout the year. In the hills in the western section of the town, there are many industrial facilities and laboratories. In the eastern section of the town are vegetable farms. Lush green mountains can be viewed from anywhere in the town. As the core municipality of Kansai Science City, Seika Town is committed to innovative town planning, while preserving the abundant blessings of nature.



Keihanna memorial Park

Keihanna Memorial Park was designed to offer a relaxing and comfortable place for busy people, with a the main theme of harmony with nature. The park comprises two zones: one featuring a spacious grass field and a reproduced gorge with a crystal clear stream; the other comprising a Japanese-style garden, named Suikei-en. Concerts and outdoor recreational events are held in Suikei-en, where visitors can enjoy the blossoms of various plants from season to season.

Kasagi Town

Kasagi Town, embraced in the bosom of Nature

During the Nara Period (710 - 794), Kasagi Town flourished as a traffic node, with a route leading to Heijō-kyō Capital (now Nara). With the Kizu River running through the town from east to west, Kasagi Town features many places of beautiful natural landscapes and historic assets. A great many tourists visit the town to enjoy cherry blossoms in spring, crystal clear waters in summer, and crimson maple foliage in autumn. In summer, many colorful tents are set up along the banks of the Kizu River, and people enjoy paddling canoes on the clear water.



Mt. Kasagi (tour of places for ascetic training)

Since ancient times, Mt. Kasagi has been revered as a place for ascetic training for Buddhist monks. Today, visitors can tour their training spots in about 30 minutes on foot. On the path, they can view groups of huge rocks, as well as a huge image of Buddha carved in the rock face (the main deity of Kasagi Temple), which is the oldest and largest of its kind in Japan. Since the image is carved on a steep cliff, which is unlikely to allow for human access, there is a legend indicating that it was carved by an angel.

Ide Town

A town lying midway between Kyoto and Nara

Ide Town, located in the center of Tsuzuki County in southern Kyoto Prefecture, is blessed with abundant greenery and crystal clear water. The Tama River and the Minamitani River (both branches of the Kizu River) are home to fireflies. Since the Nara Period (710 – 794), the beautiful surroundings have been described in many poems and literary works. An ancient path, known as the Yamashiro Path, retains an historic atmosphere. A minister from ancient times, Tachibana no Moro-e, loved the area and planted Japanese globeflowers on the banks of the Tama River. The golden yellow flowers of the globeflowers on the banks bloom right after the peak of the cherry blossoms, and can be viewed along the Tama River and in the precincts of Jizozen-in Temple. Ide Town welcomes tourists with its beautiful natural settings and historic monuments.



Ide Town Community Development Center “Tsubaki-saka”

Ide Town Community Development Center, standing by the Yamashiro Path, features an architectural style similar to old farmhouses. Inside the building, there are rooms for ceramic art and other creative activities, and a lounge area with a hearth and a kitchen stove, where tourists can take a rest. In the vicinity there are historic sites, including Tsubaki-saka slope and the site of Ishibashi tile kiln.

Kizugawa City

Kizugawa City, located in the southernmost section of Kyoto Prefecture, was once the seat of an ancient capital city, known as Kuni-kyo, which was constructed under the order of Emperor Shomu. Although Kuni-kyo was the capital city for only four years (740 - 744), Kizugawa City has many historic and cultural assets because of its location midway between the two ancient capital cities: Kyoto and Nara. Such assets include Joruri-ji Temple and groups of stone statues of Buddha. Today, the city is located at the center of the Kansai Science City, home to world-class cultural and science facilities.



Tono-no-Sato

Many historic sites can be found in Kizugawa City. Among many tourist destinations in the city, Tono-no-Sato is particularly popular, since it is home to the Joruri-ji Temple with its many cultural properties; Gansen-ji Temple, well known for its hydrangea blossoms; and small stone statues of Buddha located in natural settings. Along the path linking Joruri-ji Temple and Gansen-ji Temple, in addition to viewing roadside stone statues of Buddha, tourists can enjoy shopping at small shops that sell fresh vegetables harvested in nearby fields.

Yawata City

Friendly, Exciting, and Comfortable Yawata City

In Yawata City, located midway between Osaka and Kyoto, there is the confluence of three rivers: the Kizu, the Uji, and the Katsura rivers (all flowing into the Yodo River). The city, 24.37 square kilometers in area, has a population of some 74,000. Since ancient times, Yawata flourished as a traffic node, linking Kyoto, Osaka, and Nara. The city is also home to many cultural assets, including Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine (one of the three greatest Hachimangu shrines and a Historic Site designated by the national government), Shokado Garden (known for Shokado lunch boxes), and Nagare-bashi Bridge (which is often used as a film location). Moreover, the city is blessed with superb natural settings, including Mt. Otoko and a park along the bank separating the Uji and the Kizu rivers.

Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine

The shrine, erected in 860, enshrines Emperor Ojin, Empress Jingu, and a deity called Hime Okami. The present shrine main hall, constructed by Tokugawa Iemitsu, is designated as an Important Cultural Property, and the shrine precincts are designated as a Historic Site by the national government. The main hall has corridors and a *Heiden* (hall for dedicating offerings), decorated with colorful carvings of animals and plants. From the top of Mt. Otoko visitors can enjoy magnificent views of cherry blossoms and crimson maple foliage, as well as Mt.Tennozan and the confluence of three rivers, all flowing into the Yodo River.



Ujitawara Town

Sarumaru Shrine

Sarumaru Shrine stands close to Zenjoji Pass, located on the border of Sotsuka Town (Otsu City) and Ujitawara Town. The main deity, Sarumaru-daiyu, is one of the Thirty-six Poetry Immortals. It is believed that he is the author of a famous poem in the *Kokin Waka-shu*, or *The Collection of Ancient and Modern Japanese Poetry*, compiled during the Heian Period (794 - 1192): *Okuyamani momiji fumiwake naku shikano koe kiku tokizo aki wa kanashiki* (Treading through the crimson maple leaves, deep in the mountain, I hear the lonely cry of a stag, evoking the sorrow that I always feel in this season — the autumn). Since the deity (Sarumaru) is believed to have the power to heal swellings and tumors, many worshippers come to the shrine, particularly from the Kansai region. The shrine observes grand annual spring and autumn festivals on April 13 and September 13, in addition to minor festivals on the 13th of every month. A bonfire festival is held on June 13 and December 13. On festival days, local people open the Sarumaru market in the shrine's parking lots to sell local specialty products. With donations from many people, the shrine recently planted many maple trees in the precincts so as to reproduce the settings suitable for the poem by Sarumaru.



Wazuka Town

Tenku Café (sky café)

A tea ceremony house named Tenku Café (sky café) opened in April 2012 on a hill 165 meters above sea level, commanding a panoramic view of Wazuka Town. The tea house, built with locally produced timber, was modeled after the Karakasa-tei tea ceremony house in Kodai-ji Temple in Kyoto.



The burial mound of Prince Asaka

Prince Asaka, the fifth son of Emperor Shomu, died in 744 at the age of 17. It is believed that he was buried along the path that he loved linking the Heijo-kyo Capital, Shigaraki Palace and Kuni—kyo Capital. The burial mound is also known as Mt. Taiko (Mt. Drum). From the top of the mound, surrounded by tea gardens, visitors can see magnificent views.

Image of Maitreya Buddha carved on the rock face

On the right bank of the Wazuka River, there is a standing statue of Maitreya Buddha carved on the huge rock surface. There is an inscription indicating that it was carved in April 1300.



Joyo City

Joyo City Sports Park

The park comprises a sports zone and a recreational zone. In the recreational zone, where visitors of all generations can enjoy outdoor activities, there are a spacious grass plaza, a roller slide, and various restaurants. In the sports zone, there are a gym, a baseball park, tennis courts, and a multi-purpose field. In December, Joyo City holds its greatest event of the year, known as TWINKLE JOYO, which is highlighted by illuminations of the facilities in the park.



Minamiyamashiro Village

The only village in Kyoto Prefecture, nurtured by nature

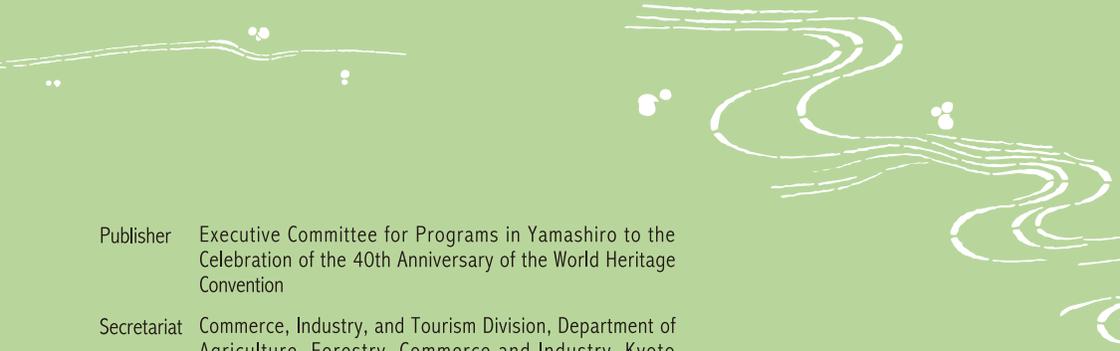
Minamiyamashiro Village, located at the southeastern tip of Kyoto Prefecture, is the only village in Kyoto Prefecture. It faces Nara, Shiga, and Mie prefectures. Lush green mountains surrounding the village and the crystal clear stream of the Kizu River flowing through the center of the village create superb scenic beauty.

The natural setting of the village has been preserved by villagers for generation after generation. Seeing the landscapes reminiscent of Japan's original scenery, visitors to the village feel nostalgia for the past. At the same time, the warm hospitality extended by villagers heals the hearts of tourists from busy and stressful cities.

Tayama Hana-odori

On November 3 (Culture Day), villagers offer dance performances to the deities of Suwa Shrine. The dance, originating from a prayer for rain, features dynamic performances by dancers in bright costumes, accompanied by songs and drums. (Designated as an intangible folk cultural property by Kyoto Prefecture)





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