Keys to Enjoying Fukushima
Scenery, History, Hot Springs, Food and Crafts

Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture, Japan
“Hanamiyama” Park
—A paradise on earth luxuriously graced with blossoms
Hanamiyama Park

This hill’s name “Hanamiyama” means Blossom-Viewing. In springtime, the entire hill looks as if dyed in pastel pink with a variety of blossoms and flowers—ume (Japanese apricot), flowering peach, cherry, among others. Reminding us of a flowery paradise, this enchanting place attracts many visitors from all around Japan every year.

Known as Hanamiyama Park, the hill is actually on private land owned by a flowering-tree farming family. It was opened to visitors free of charge around 1959 by its friendly owner.

On a good day, Hanamiyama Park offers a superb panoramic view. For example, one can view Mt. Azuma-Kofuji where you will see the remains of winter snow in the shape of a rabbit in April. Locals nicknamed it the “Snow Rabbit.”

Hanamiyama is to me “life itself”

Liu. Mr. Ichiro Abe
second-generation owner of
Hanamiyama Park

My family was originally a silk-raising family, but we quit silkworm culture in 1935 and decided to make our living as a flowering-tree grower.

So my father and I began cultivating our hill into a flowering-tree farm. It was the beginning of Hanamiyama Park. Indeed, Hanamiyama is to me “life itself.” Even today, at 99 I still love to work for Hanamiyama.” (Interviewed as of Sep. 2013)

Best Time to Visit: Early to late April

Access: 10 mins. by bus from Fukuizumi Sta., diagonally 50 mins. by bus when going Super Rindo from Koto to Toshima Enokyo.

*Please note that during the peak season, roads are restricted around the Hanamiyama area.
Minka-en features a variety of traditional structures that showcase the history of Fukushima City. For example, the former Hirose-za playhouse which was built around 1887; the former "Kakuji-ken," a famous restaurant/inn that served as a stage for activists involved in the Boshin Civil War and those supporting the Civic Rights/Freedom Movement—two major events that impacted Japan's modernization in the late 19th century; as well as thatched-roofed silk-raising farmhouses.

**History**

Minka-en Open Air Museum showcasing traditional houses and lifestyles

Some 20 traditional structures, dating back to the period of mid-18th and late 19th centuries, were transferred and restored here.

**Access:** Approx. 30 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 10 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-ebi IC on Tohoku Expwy.

**Visit the historical sites associated with Matsuo Basho**

Matsuo Basho, the great master of haiku poetry in the 17th century, left present-day Tokyo and set out on a 2,400-kilometer journey around northeastern Japan and central Japan Sea coast regions, which took him some 150 days. On his way, in mid-June of 1689, he stayed overnight in Fukushima. The following day he visited both "Shinobu-mochizuri" and "Io-ji Temple" and stayed overnight in Iizaka Onsen hot-spring resort. In his travelogue entitled "The Narrow Road to the Deep North" are found his haiku poems about these places.

**Shinobu-mochizuri**

The site contains the "Nochirui-ishi" (rock used for ancient grass-dyeing) related to a tragic love romance in the 9th century. Basho's haiku monument and others.

**Access:** Approx. 20 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 20 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-Iizaka IC on Tohoku Expwy.

**Admissions:** ¥600 for adults; ¥200 for junior high school students and younger

**Io-ji Temple**

The family temple of the Sato clan, a warrior family from the Iizaka region who's prosperity reached its height in the 12th century.

**Access:** Approx. 15 min. walk from Io-ji-mae Sta.; approx. 6 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-Iizaka IC on Tohoku Expwy.

**Admissions:** ¥300 for adults; ¥200 for junior high school students and younger
A castle town that prospered from silk-raising and river transportation

In 1592, warlord Kimura Yoshikiyo renamed a castle in today’s Sugiatsu-cho district of Fukushima City as “Fukushima Castle” and constructed a town around it. Hence, this area became known as “Fukushima.”

The town of Fukushima was created at the junction of the Abukuma and Arakawa rivers. This location was convenient for transporting silk and rice, the two major local products, on the Abukuma River and allowed Fukushima to thrive as a commercial town.

When Fukushima Prefecture was established in 1876, the prefectural capital was placed on the site of Fukushima Castle. Backed by the flourishing silk worm culture and silk-producing industry, Fukushima City continued to thrive as the hub for the prefecture’s commercial and financial activities. This led the Bank of Japan to establish one of its branches in Fukushima in 1899. Even today, the area extending to the southwest of the prefectural office is dotted with a number of historic buildings that are witness to the city’s glorious past.

Ogura-tei
The former official residence of the Bank of Japan Fukushima Branch managers

Waihan
The area behind the prefectural office along the left bank of the Abukuma River is called “Waihan.”

Itakura Shrine
This Shinto shrine, located in the Waihan area, was built in 1805 and is dedicated to the feudal lord Itakura Shigemasa, the ancestor of the Itakura family who ruled the Fukushima clan from 1702.

Access: Approx. 20 min. walk from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 10 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-nishi IC on Tohoku Expwy.

Statue of Hironaka Kohno, the 11th-generation speaker of the House of Representatives

Joko-ji Temple and cherry blossoms

Rice warehouse on the site of Ogura-tei

Go a bit farther...

Iwaya Kannon
Some 60 Kannon and Buddhist images are carved on the rock wall of Mt. Shinobu. These images were first made at the end of the 12th century.

Mt. Shinobu
This 275 meter hill is located in the center of the city, with its observation platform commanding a fine view of downtown. On the summit is Hagoito Shrine, where one can see “Japan’s largest straw sandal” which is offered to the shrine’s deity in its annual February festival.
Nature

Seasonally enhanced by the glories of nature

Tane-maki Cherry Blossoms at Jitoku-ji Temple  
A 450-year-old cherry tree. In olden times, farmers used its blossoming as a yardstick for beginning to sow seeds ("tane-maki"). 
Access: Approx. 30 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 15 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-nishi IC on Tohoku Expwy.

Weeping Cherry Tree at Daizo-ji Temple  
A 300-year-old cherry tree. The temple is noted for its image of the Thousand-armed Kannon (Buddhist deity). 
Access: Approx. 10 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 10 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-nishi IC on Tohoku Expwy.

Cherry Tree of Hoseni  
In the flowering season, its beautiful blossoms are reflected on the pond’s surface. 
Access: Approx. 30 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-nishi IC on Tohoku Expwy.

How about enjoying seasonal beauty? Pastel pink blossoms of cherry and flowering peach in spring, hydrangeas and river-side landscapes in summer, mountains clad with scarlet and golden leaves in autumn, and snow-clad peaks in winter. Fukushima welcomes you with its many seasonal attractions.

Hanamomo-no-Sato  
This private property features some 500 flowering peach trees of 40 varieties. Their best season is from April to early May. 
Access: Approx. 20 min. walk from Izakaya Onsen Sta.; approx. 15 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-Izakaya IC on Tohoku Expwy.

Cherry Blossoms at Tatenoyama Park  
The park near Izakaya Onsen hot-spring town is a noted spot for cherry blossom viewing. 
Access: Approx. 30 min. walk from Izakaya Onsen Sta.; approx. 15 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-Izakaya IC on Tohoku Expwy.

“Kumagaiso” in Mizuhara  
A precious plant designated an endangered species. In the Mizuhara district, open to viewers in their blooming season: mid- to late May. 
Access: Approx. 15 min. by car from Matsuura Sta.; approx. 10 min. by car after exiting Matsuura Smart IC on Tohoku Expwy.

Gingko Trees in Azuma Sports Park  
The park has a walkway lined with 116 gingko trees. The best season is from late Oct. to early Nov.; at night, their golden leaves are illuminated. 
Access: Approx. 30 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 10 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-nishi IC on Tohoku Expwy.

Hydrangeas in Doaidate Park  
The 5-ha spacious park contains some 4,500 hydrangea plants of 40 varieties. 
Access: Approx. 30 min. walk from Matsuura Sta.; approx. 5 min. by car after exiting Matsuura Smart IC on Tohoku Expwy.

“Mizubasho” at Nidanuma Marsh  
Some 100,000 Mizubasho, or skunk cabbage plants flourish in the marsh. 
Access: Approx. 50 min. by car from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 25 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-nishi IC on Tohoku Expwy.
Spectacular, touching scenery unfolds in front of your eyes

Mt. Azuma-Kofuji (alt. 1,707m) soars in the western part of Fukushima City. A scenic highway called “Bandai-Azuma Skyline” winds its way up and around the mountainside. The highway is dotted with a number of breathtaking sights, such as Tsubakuro-dani Valley, Tengu-no-Niwa and Umimi-toge Pass, where you can enjoy yourself en route. Visitors come to enjoy the seasonal scenic attractions created by Mother Nature.

Goshiki-numa Pond
Climb a steep slope toward the summit of Mt. Issaiyko and look down on Goshiki-numa known as the “Witch’s Eye” and enjoy the striking view of the changes of color depending on the sunlight.

Access: Approx. 1 hr. 40 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta. to Jodo-daïra; approx. 50 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-rinya IC on Tohoku Expwy to Jodo-daïra; approx. 1 hr. 40 min. walk from Jodo-daïra to Mt. Issaiyko summit. *Mountaineering equipment is recommended.

Jodo-daïra Astronomical Observatory
It has a telescope with a large lens 40 cm in diameter.

Access: Approx. 1 hr. 40 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta. to Jodo-daïra; approx. 1 hr. 40 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-rinya IC on Tohoku Expwy to Jodo-daïra; approx. 40 min. walk from Jodo-daïra to Mt. Issaiyko summit.

Crimson Foliage Calendar

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<td>Botanical Azuma Skyline</td>
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<td>Mount Azuma Skyline</td>
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<td>Goshiki-numa Pond</td>
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<td>Tohoku Expwy</td>
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<td>Botanical Foliage</td>
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<td>Area around Botanical Foliage</td>
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<td>Kizugawa Komakose area</td>
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Alpine Flora on Mt. Azuma

- Rhododendrons
- Cotton grass
- American hellebore
- Himalayan salal
- Bunchberry dogwood
- Bog bilberry

Makutaki Falls
Water dynamically drops down some 30 meters.
Access: Approx. 1 hr. by car after exiting Fukushima-rinya IC on Tohoku Expwy to Makukawa Onsen; approx. 20 min. walk from Makukawa Onsen to the falls.
Enjoy dropping in on the three onsen resorts

Nine community bathhouses available for visitors!
Lizaka Onsen

This traditional hot spring town boasts a long and rich history and is home to one of Japan’s oldest community bathhouse, Sabakoyu.

Once enjoyed by famous poet Matsuo Basho, Sabakoyu as well as other communal bathhouses serve both locals and visitors.

Access: Get off the train at Lizaka Onsen Sta.; approx. 10 min. by car after exiting Fukuishima-Lizaka IC on Tohoku Expressway.
Info: Lizaka Onsen Tourism Association Tel: 024-842-4241

Hako-yu
A communal bathhouse. Visitors can enjoy hot water directly from the spring source and moderately warm water. The watchtower on the 2nd floor commands a fine overview of this onsen town.

Kyu Horiyama-tei
A traditional residence that traced back to the 16th century, Kyu Horiyama-tei (Former Horiyama Residence). The site contains a garden, feet-only and hands-only hot baths.

Lake Moniwa (Moniwa-ko)
Moniwa-ko is an artificial lake formed by the dam constructed on the Surikami River. A campsite is available nearby.

Moniwa-no-yu
An onsen bathing facility located near the Surikami River Dam.
Ten different types of hot-spring waters!

**Tsuchiyu Onsen**

This Onsen resort has ten types of waters directly from the spring sources. Insns stand along the river. In the Tsuchiyu-toge Pass area, you can appreciate the atmosphere of a "truly secluded" onsen.

Access: Approx. 40 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 15 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-nishi IC on Tohoku Expwy.
Info: Tsuchiyu Onsen Tourism Association Tel: 024-995-2217

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Ashi-yu

Four Ashi-yu (feet-only hot-spring baths) can be found in Tsuchiyu Onsen town.

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Opened 400 years ago!

**Takayu Onsen**

Sitting atop a 750m high mountain plateau, the all-natural hot spring town features warm, soothing sulfuric waters that are known for their healing effects, and loved by many visitors.

Access: Approx. 40 min. by bus from Fukushima Sta.; approx. 15 min. by car after exiting Fukushima-nishi IC on Tohoku Expwy.
Info: Takayu Onsen Tourism Association Tel: 024-991-1222

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Welcome to the hot springs of Fukushima!

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Attaka-yu

A communal bathhouse for day bathing. It also has an open-air bath available on a reservation-only basis.

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“Konnyaku” — jelly-like food which is a specialty of Tsuchiyu
Cuisine and Crafts

Mouthwatering fruit and hand-made craft
Be amazed by the exquisite flavors and unique art of Fukushima

Fukushima City is widely known as a “Kingdom of Fruit”. With a wide variety of fruits coming into season from the beginning of summer right up until winter, fruit picking is the best way to enjoy them at their freshest. Local dishes such as enban gyoza (dumplings) and Fukushima yakitori barbeque burst with flavor unique to Fukushima. Fukushima also boasts diverse arts and crafts such as pottery and traditional kokeshi and daruma dolls etc. that are imbued with the warmth of the local artisans.

Tourist Orchards
The Fruit Line and the Peach Line are two routes in the Northwestern part of Fukushima City and are lined with orchards where a variety of fruit can be picked fresh. Beginning with cherries in the summer and followed by peaches, pears, grapes and apples, these succulent fruits are exceptionally sweet and juicy, and are on a whole new level of deliciousness.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit-Picking Calendar</th>
<th>(Average seasons)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apricots</td>
<td>Sato-mahiki</td>
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<td>Peaches</td>
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<td>Asian Pears</td>
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<td>Grapes</td>
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<td>Apples</td>
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Hands-on Experiences
Perfect for making gifts and memories!

Ms. Kayo Yokoyama
Fukushima City Tourism Information Center

Get your souvenirs here!
Tourism & Specialties Center [Map E-1]
On the 1st floor of Osone Fukushima, located near the Western exit of Fukushima Station, the center offers fruit products, sake and handicrafts from all across the prefecture. Different events are also held each week.

Azuma-no-Eki Kokora [Map B-2]
This rest area provides tourism information etc. as well as housing a farmers market offering local grown fruit and veg.

Michi-no-Eki Tsuchiyu [Map B-4]
Located at Tsuchiyu-Toge on National Route 115, this rest area sells local specialties as well as offering light meals.

Shiki-no-Sato [Map C-3]
Shiki-no-Sato is a farm village-style park, with quaint buildings and colorful manicured gardens set in the backdrop of the rural Japanese countryside. While you’re here, why not try your hand at glass making or kokeshi doll painting?

St. Anna’s Garden [Map C-3]
The Nishida Kokeshi Doll Memorial Museum stands at the center and a bear factory, restaurant, café, store and Christian church besides.

UFO Fureai-kan [Map E-5]
This museum houses a collection of around 3,000 UFO-related exhibits with a bathing facility and a UFO mountain path located nearby.
Fukushima Yakitori Barbeque

Fukushima is known for yakitori barbecue, where bite-sized pieces of free range chicken from nearby Date and Kawanami are grilled on a skewer over charcoal.

Mr. Masaki Yasuda of Yutaka (yakitori shop)

It’s fun to try out and compare the yakitori of different shops!

Fruit Juices

“Momo-biyou,” “Nashi-biyou,” and “Ringo-biyou”

Momo-biyou, nashi-biyou, and ringo-biyou juices are made from locally harvested peaches, pears, and apples.

Mugi-sebei Japanese Crackers

Made by mixing and kneading crushed peanuts with wheat flour, these crackers are popular for their simple, traditional flavor and are a typical gift from Fukushima.

Shim-dofu Dried Tofu

Shim-dofu is a traditional preserved food made of thin slices of tofu hung with strings to freeze-dry in the mid-winter cold. Exposed to icy winds and natural sunlight, they are packed with nutrients and rich flavor. The Tsutsumi-yama area in the South East of Fukushima City is celebrated as the birthplace of shim-dofu, and the nosen (curtains) of tofu, hanging from the eaves of farming houses, remind passers-by that winter has come to Fukushima City.

Abukuma Yakisoba Fried Noodles

A new local cuisine of Fukushima City. Abukuma yakisoba is a stir-fried noodle dish with sausages, salmon flakes, and yuzu citrus peels.

Ika-ninjin

Slices of ordure (dried squid) and carrots are mixed together to make the regional cuisine of Fukushima.

Radium Eggs

Boiled in the hot-spring water of famous radium eggs are full-bodied with a pretty white custard and a creamy, soft center. They are named after the element radium, which was discovered for the first time in Fukushima Date.

It’s a type of radium eggs.

Enban Gyoza

Mmm, Gyoza! Sautéed dumplings containing ground meat and vegetables are served in the shape of an okiku. It’s a famous dish that is popular among children.

Enban Gyoza are sauteed dumplings containing ground meat and vegetables.

Fukushima Daruma

Daruma dolls are a traditional lucky charm found all across Japan. They are typically red, depictions of a beard man with both eyes missing; the owners add one eye when they make a wish and the other when it comes true. Unlike their eyeless cousins however, Fukushima daruma dolls are distinctive for having both eyes painted on. They are protectors, whose turning glass frightens away demons and brings good luck.

Yatai-mura “Koransho Yokochō”

A row of small restaurant bars with a retro atmosphere, whose menus make use of ingredients from Fukushima.

Tsuchiyo Kokeshi Dolls

Kokeshi dolls are a traditional woodcraft of the Tohoku region, with the three most famous kokeshi towns being Naruko (Miyagi Pref.), Tojata (Miyagi Pref.), and Fukushima’s own Tsuchiyo Onsen. Made by local artisans, Tsuchiyo Kokeshi are distinguished by the indented pattern on their heads, crescent moon shaped eyebrows, gracefully curved eyes and small mouths, and are popular for their sweet expressions.

Healthy and juicy, enban gyoza make go great with beer!

Kotori-no-Mori

Three walking courses provide plenty of bird watching opportunities, and there is even a chance to learn about how charcoal is made.

Kuroiwa Kokuzosan Annual Festival

Date: Late Autumn
Venue: Kuroiwa Town

Waraji Festival

Date: Early August
Venue: Urban center of Fukushima City

Festivals

Shinobu-sanzan Akatsuki Mairi

Date: Feb. 10-11
Venue: Hogyo Shrine on Mt. Shinobu

Tsuchiyo Onsen Kokeshi Festival

Date: Apr. 28
Venue: Tsuchiyo Onsen Tourism Association

Fireworks Display

Date: Late July
Venue: World Tour de France

Dance of 3 Lions of Ohnami

Date: Early October
Venue: Ohnami Sannoyama Shrine

Omiya Shrine Annual Festival

Date: 3rd Sat. & 4th Sun. of Oct
Venue: Omiya Shrine in Uotsuka

Mizukake Matsuri of Okayama

Date: 1st Sun. of Oct
Venue: Oyama Kannaya Shrine

Please note that some of the foregoing festival periods may be subject to change.