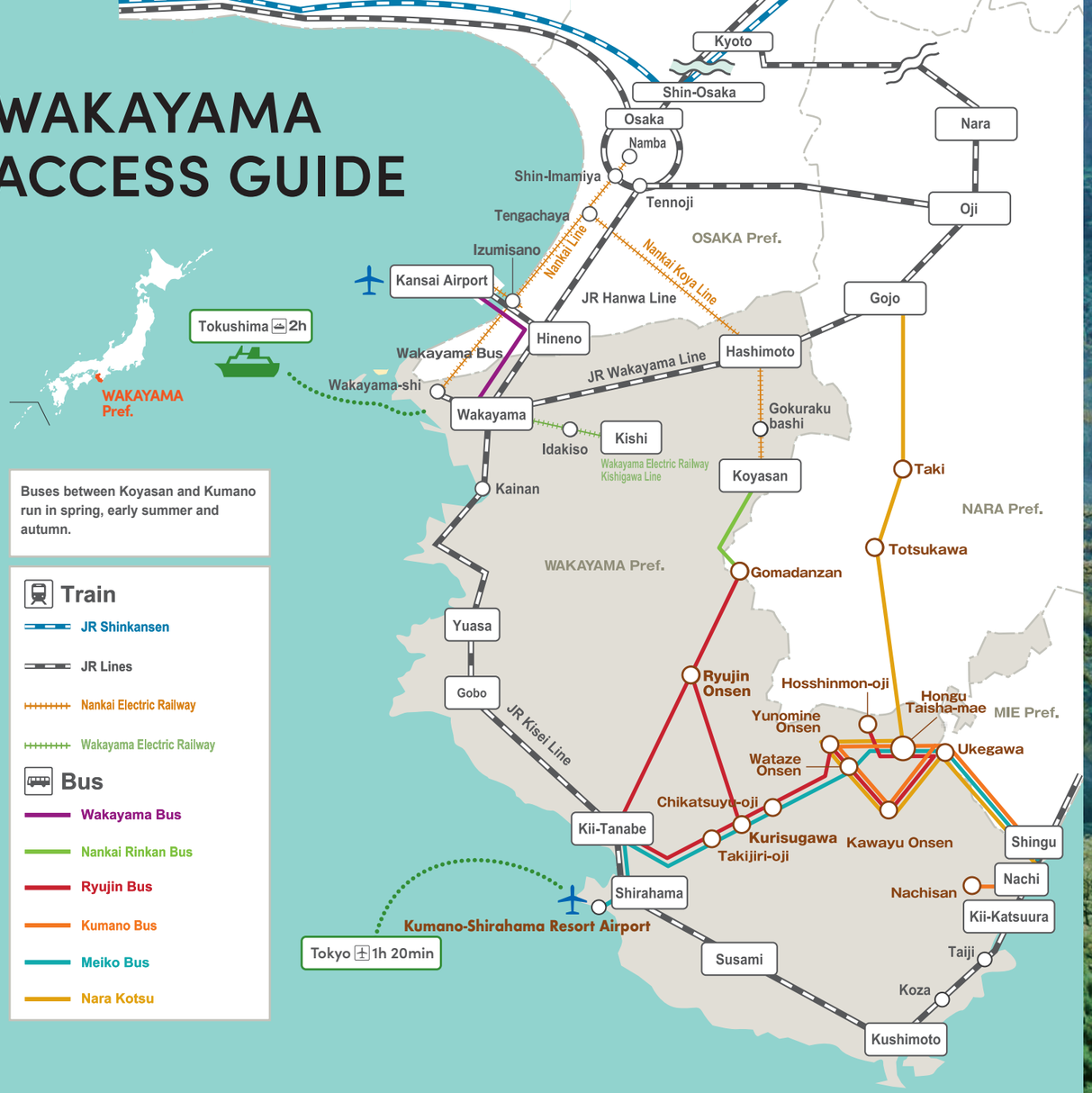
WAKAYAMA ACCESS GUIDE



WAKAYAMA Pref.

Buses between Koyasan and Kumano run in spring, early summer and autumn.

Train
- JR Shinkansen
- JR Lines
- Nankai Electric Railway
- Wakayama Electric Railway

Bus
- Wakayama Bus
- Nankai Rinkan Bus
- Ryujin Bus
- Kumano Bus
- Meiko Bus
- Nara Kotsu

TRAVEL BY TRAIN

Kansai WIDE Area Pass	5 days validity	https://www.westjr.co.jp/global/en/ticket/pass/kansai_wide/
Ise-Kumano Area Pass	5 days validity	http://touristpass.jp/en/ise_kumano/
Kansai Thru Pass	2 days validity	http://www.surutto.com/tickets/kansai_thru_english.html
Kansai One Pass	Rechargeable travel card	https://kansaionepass.com/en/

TRAVEL BY AIR

Haneda Airport (Tokyo) to Kansai International Airport (KIX)	1h 15min	https://tokyo-haneda.com/en/
Haneda Airport (Tokyo) to Kumano-Shirahama Resort Airport	1h 20min	https://visitwakayama.jp/plan-your-trip/shirahama-airport/
JAL Explorer Pass (Affordable domestic fares with this pass from Japan Airlines)		https://www.world.jal.co.jp/world/en/japan_explorer_pass/lp/

TRAVEL BY BUS

Kansai International Airport (KIX) to Wakayama	Limousine Bus	50min	https://www.kansai-airport.or.jp/en/touristinfo/wakayama.html
Kyoto to Shirahama	Express Bus	4h	https://visitwakayama.jp/itineraries/meiko-bus-osaka-kyoto/
Osaka to Shirahama	Express Bus	3h 30min	https://visitwakayama.jp/itineraries/meiko-bus-osaka-kyoto/
Tokyo to Shirahama	Express Bus	12h	https://visitwakayama.jp/itineraries/meiko-bus-tokyo/
Koyasan to Kumano (Daily in spring, early summer and autumn)	Koyasan & Kumano Access Bus	4h 30min	https://visitwakayama.jp/good-to-know/koyasan-kumano-bus/

TRAVEL BY CAR

Times Car Rental	https://www.timescar-rental.com/	Nissan Rent a Car	https://nissan-rentacar.com/english/
Toyota Rent a Car	https://rent.toyota.co.jp/eng/	ORIX Rent-A-Car	https://car.orix.co.jp/eng/
Nippon Rent-a-car	https://www.nrgroup-global.com/en/		

The Official Wakayama Travel Guide

Visitwakayama.jp

Tourism Division, Wakayama Prefectural Government

1-1 Komatsubara-dori, Wakayama City 640-8585, Japan TEL +81-73-441-2788 URL https://visitwakayama.jp E-mail e1005001@pref.wakayama.lg.jp

2025.12

Visit Wakayama

The Spiritual Heart of Japan

WHERE IS WAKAYAMA?

Wakayama faces the Pacific Ocean and occupies a large slice of the Kii peninsula. The prefecture is part of the Kansai region, which includes Osaka, Nara, and Kyoto. The prefectural capital is Wakayama City and is just one hour from Osaka by train, and 45 minutes from Kansai International Airport (KIX). Inland Wakayama is dominated by the Kii mountains, home to World Heritage ancient pilgrimage routes, sacred shrines, and mountaintop temples. Along the 600-kilometre coastline, there are world-class beaches, hot spring resorts, and fantastic ocean views.

Temperature in Wakayama	
Spring	9℃ - 19℃
Summer	22℃ - 30℃
Autumn	13℃ - 24℃
Winter	5℃ - 10℃



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KUMANO KODO
The ancient pilgrimage trails leading to sites of spiritual significance



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Sacred mountaintop temple complex high in the Kii mountains



P.05-06
NATURE
Wakayama's natural highlights include plenty of curious rock formations



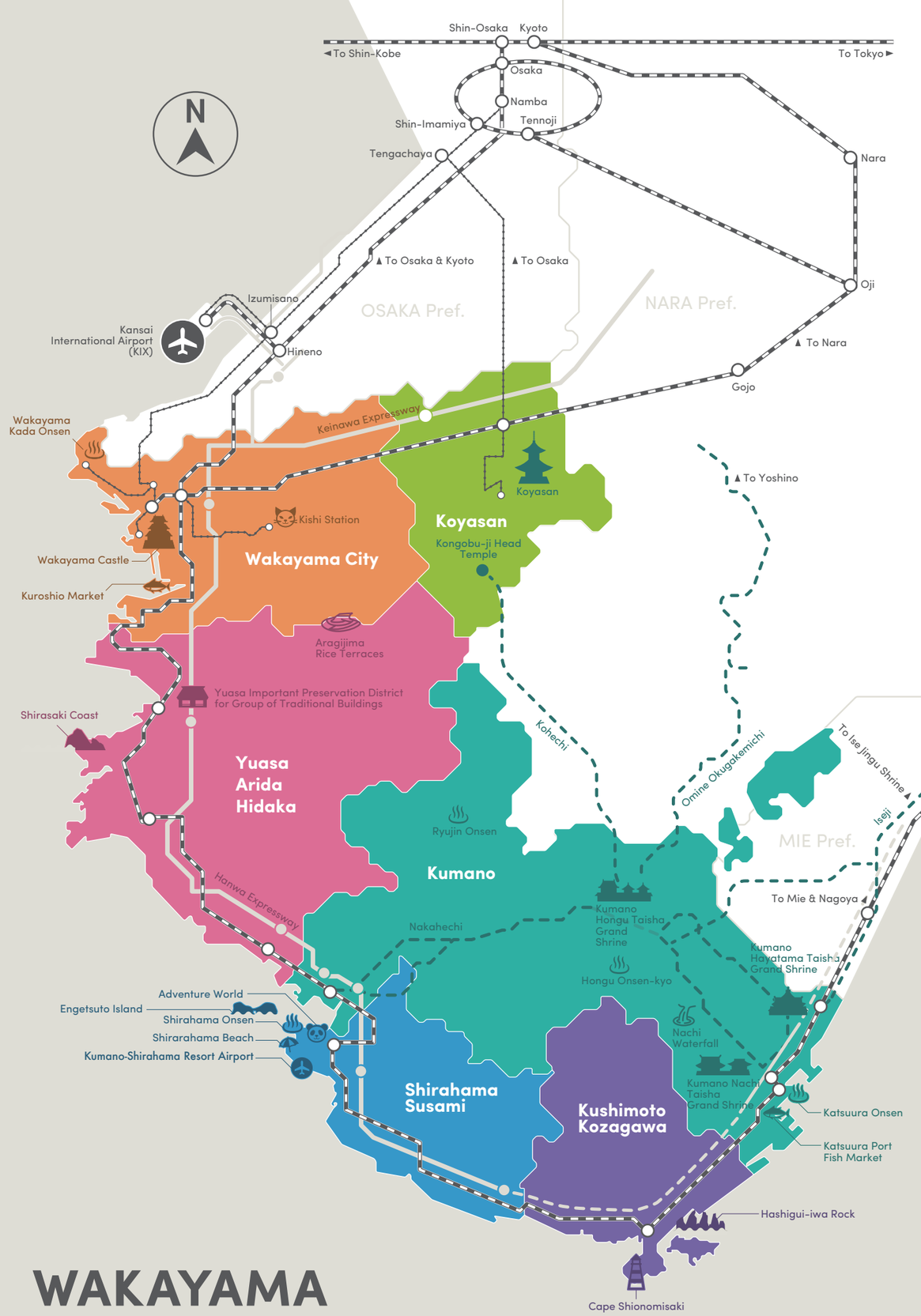
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PLACES TO GO
Some of the top places to go in the prefecture



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The best spots to take a therapeutic dip and some handy tips on bathing



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FOOD & ACTIVITIES
Taste the best of Wakayama and experience tradition and the great outdoors



WAKAYAMA AREA MAP

KUMANO KODO

The World Heritage Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Routes wind through the Kii mountain range leading to grand shrines and beautiful temples.







Ride a boat to Kumano Hayatama Taisha Grand Shrine

Trek the Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Routes

For over 1,000 years, pilgrims have walked the network of trails that make up the Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Routes. Pilgrims follow mountain paths, climb cobbled staircases and even take a boat along one section to visit the Kumano Sanzan, the grand shrines of Kumano. The routes became a registered UNESCO World Heritage site in 2004 as part of the Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range.

Model Itineraries (Popular)



3 Nights, 4 Days (Boat Trip)

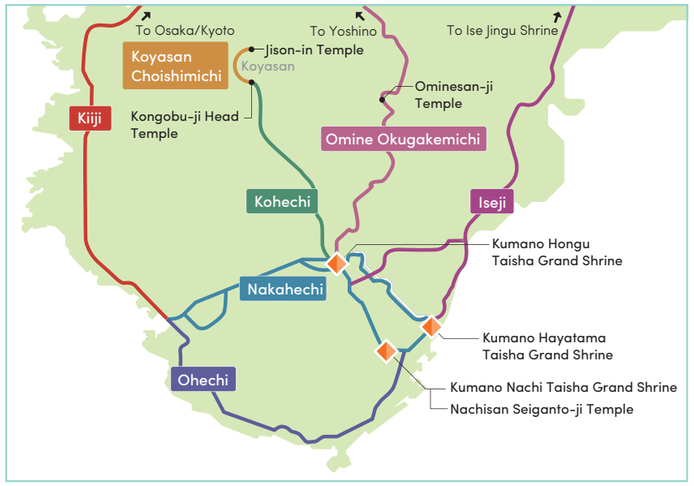
Take the bus to Hosshinmon-oji and follow the Nakahechi trail to Katsuura. Stay in one of the onsen hamlets in the mountains and ride a boat on the only section of the pilgrimage route that's on water.

Model Itineraries (Advanced)



5 Nights, 6 Days

Take on the full Nakahechi trail that rises and falls through the Kii mountain range. Start from Takijiri-oji and visit all the Kumano Sanzan along with many other sites of spiritual importance. For experienced hikers only.



Guides & Information

Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau
http://www.tb-kumano.jp/en/

Kumano Travel
https://www.kumano-travel.com/en

DUAL PILGRIM
SANTIAGO KUMANO

The Kumano Kodo and the Way of St. James (Camino de Santiago) in Spain are both UNESCO World Heritage pilgrimage routes. Those who walk both are rewarded with Dual Pilgrim status.



Rent traditional Heian period (794–1185) costumes

KOYASAN

Koyasan is a mountaintop temple complex considered to be the spiritual heart of Japan. Visitors can experience monastic life through shukubo and shojin-ryori.



Ajikan meditation during a shukubo temple stay



Shojin-ryori—vegetarian Buddhist cuisine



Goma Fire Ritual at a Koyasan temple





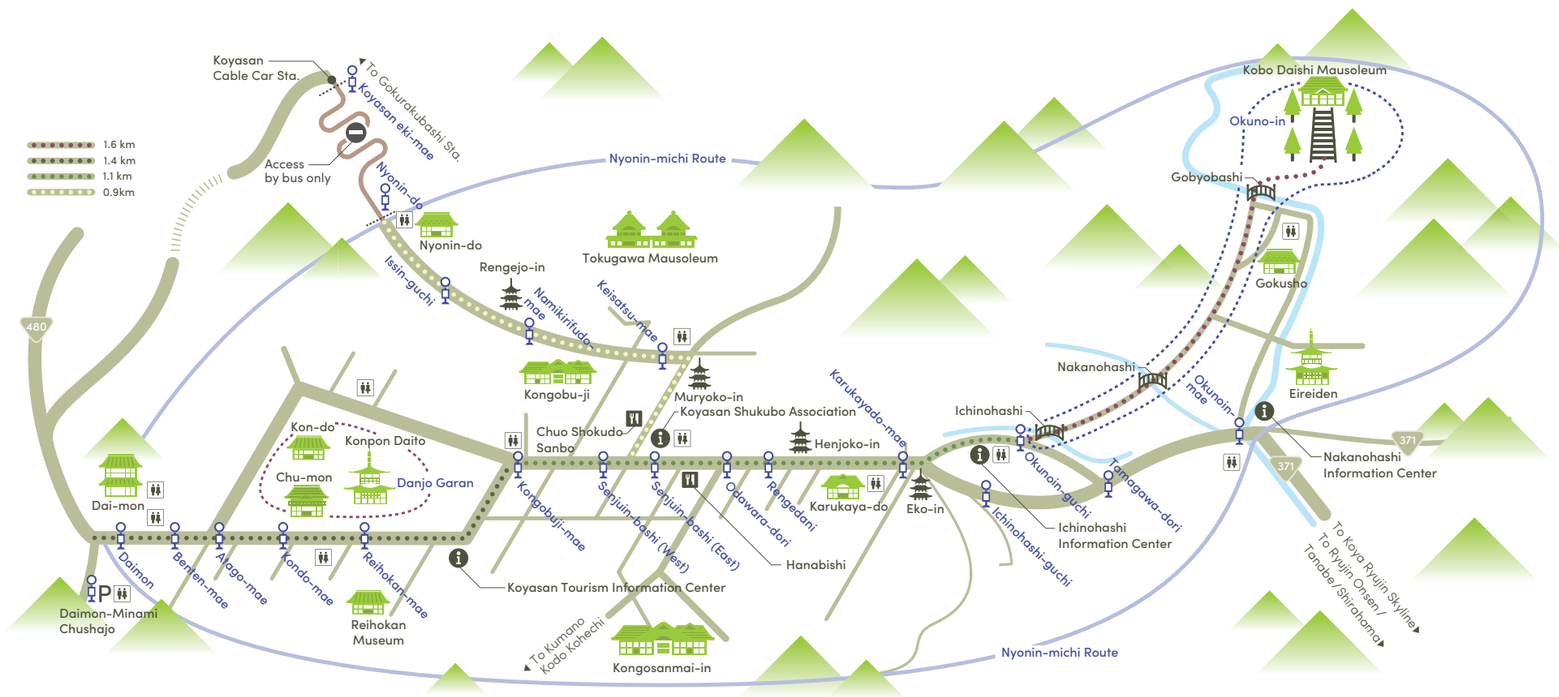
Discover a Mountaintop Temple Complex

Koyasan was founded by the monk, Kukai (774-835) who was posthumously named Kobo Daishi. Kukai chose this area because he thought the eight peaks in the area resembled a lotus flower. The monk is thought to be in a state of meditation in a mausoleum in Okuno-in—an expansive area of 200,000 memorials and commemorative monuments and believed to be the holiest location in Koyasan. At the centre of Koyasan is the beautiful Danjo Garan Sacred Temple Complex.

Guides & Information

Book a guided tour with the Koyasan Cross-cultural Communication Network (KCCN). Choose from a number of English tours and learn the secrets of Koyasan from knowledgeable and experienced guides.
https://www.koyasan-ccn.com/

Consider staying the night in one of Koyasan's temples. A shukubo experience is more than a place of rest for the night. Staying guests can experience morning prayers, ajikan meditation, and eat shojin ryori—vegetarian Buddhist cuisine.
http://eng.shukubo.net/

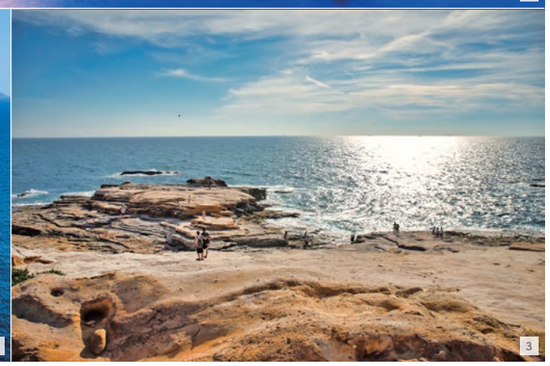


NATURE

Explore crystal-clear rivers, terraced rice fields and striking natural monuments







SHIRAHAMA/SUSAMI

1 ENGETSUTO ISLAND

Centuries of crashing waves eroded an archway into the rock of this small island. Photographers gather at the coast just before sunset to see the sun drop into this natural arch.

SHIRAHAMA/SUSAMI

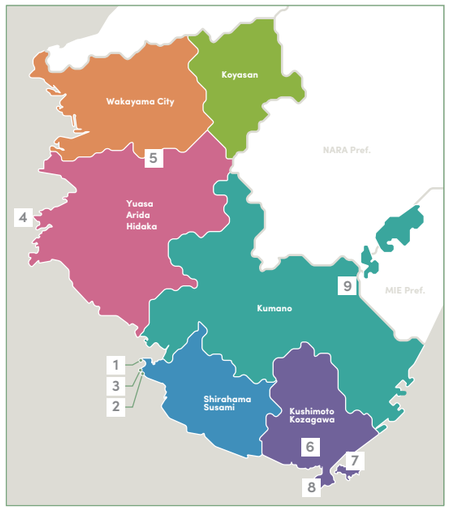
2 SANDANBEKI ROCK CLIFF

Watch from above as the waves crash against the 50-metre-high cliffs, then take the elevator down to the caves and explore this hideout of Heian period (794–1185) pirates.

SHIRAHAMA/SUSAMI

3 SENJOJIKI ROCK PLATEAU

Wander out to sea on 'a thousand tatami mats'. The Senjojiki rock plateau is so named because of its uniquely flat form, akin to the traditional Japanese mats.





YUASA/ARIDA/HIDAKA

4 SHIRASAKI COAST

A stretch of rugged and strikingly white coastline formed over millions of years. Explore the area by car or bicycle or head to Shirasaki Ocean Park and scuba dive below the waves.

YUASA/ARIDA/HIDAKA

5 ARAGIJIMA RICE TERRACES

These fan-shaped rice paddies are a favourite with photographers who come to snap the seasonal changes of the terraced fields. An observation area is located next to the Aridagawa River.

KUSHIMOTO/KOZAGAWA

6 ICHIMAI-IWA MONOLITH

This hulking rock towers above the crystal-clear Kozagawa River. Forged by volcanic activity millions of years ago, the area is a popular spot for river activities such as kayaking.

KUSHIMOTO/KOZAGAWA

7 HASHIGUI-IWA ROCK

The creation of these distinctively-shaped rock pillars standing out at sea is the stuff of Wakayama legend. These otherworldly rocks take on a particularly mysterious air at twilight.

KUSHIMOTO/KOZAGAWA

8 CAPE SHIONOMISAKI

Relax on the expansive lawn that faces the ocean and visit the 120-year old lighthouse for fantastic views of the area which is the southernmost point on Honshu—Japan's largest island.

KUMANO

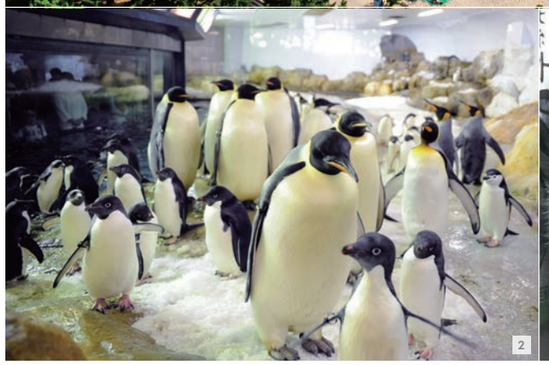
9 HYAKKEN-GURA

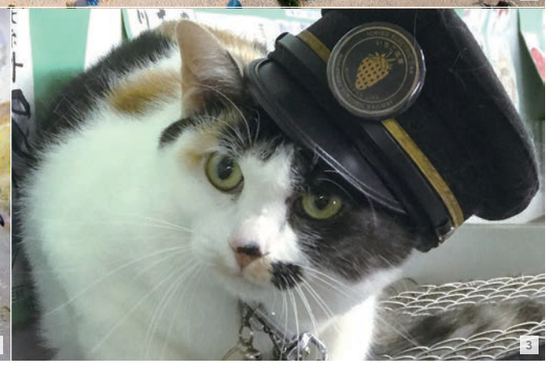
Hyakken-gura is the best view point on the Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Routes. Enjoy the panoramic view of spiritual Kii Peninsula.

PLACES TO GO

Traditional towns, retro ports, and pristine beaches


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3

SHIRAHAMA

1 SHIRARAHAMA BEACH

This beach of white sand fanning around a bay of amazingly clear water is a very popular summer spot. Shirarahama is internationally renowned as the sister beach of Hawaii's Waikiki.

SHIRAHAMA

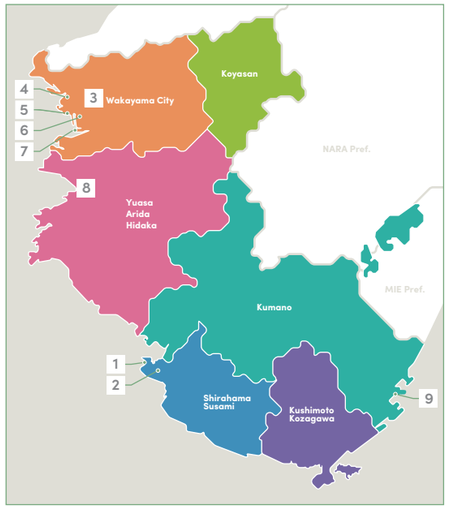
2 ADVENTURE WORLD

Explore this expansive wildlife park incorporating a zoo, aquarium and amusement park. Spend time in the free-roaming enclosures and pay a visit to the park's attractions.

WAKAYAMA CITY

3 KISHI STATION (KISHIGAWA LINE)

Take the train to Kishi, where the main attraction is the station itself. Notice the cat-shaped station building and look out for Yontama—the feline stationmaster.




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WAKAYAMA CITY

4 WAKAYAMA CASTLE

The impressive white castle with its distinctive gabled roof sits on top of a hill overlooking Wakayama City. Explore inside the castle and stroll the scenic grounds.

WAKAYAMA CITY

5 WAKAURA BAY

The area around Wakaura Bay has long been a source of inspiration for writers and poets. The entertainment complex Wakayama Marina City is on the edge of the bay.

WAKAYAMA CITY

6 KIMII-DERA TEMPLE

Climb 231 steps up to this ancient temple and its precincts. The elevated position offers excellent views of Wakaura Bay, and the grounds are known for hundreds of early-blooming cherry trees.

WAKAYAMA CITY

7 KUROSHIO MARKET

Amble around this vibrant market and taste a range of Wakayama local fare including some very fresh fish. Make sure to see one of the three daily tuna-filleting shows.

YUASA/ARIDA/HIDAKA

8 YUASA IMPORTANT PRESERVATION DISTRICT FOR GROUP OF TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS

Wander around this quaint town with its wooden structures dating back to the Edo period (1603-1867). Some buildings were used for brewing soy sauce—the town's most famous export.

KUMANO

9 KATSUURA PORT FISH MARKET

This port at the bottom of the peninsula is famous for fresh fish and hauling in Japan's largest catch of fresh tuna. Wake up early for the lively fish auction.

ONSEN

Many of Wakayama's hot springs are supplied by constant, gushing hot water direct from the source


Shirahama Key Terrace 1


Saki-no-Yu Onsen 1


Osakaya Hinanoyu 2

SHIRAHAMA

1 SHIRAHAMA ONSEN

Shirahama is one of the oldest onsen resorts in Japan. Experience a variety of therapeutic hot spring baths, including Saki-no-Yu Onsen where bathers can feel the spray of the crashing waves.

WAKAYAMA CITY

2 WAKAYAMA KADA ONSEN

The onsen resort looks out onto picturesque Kada Bay. Watch the sunset and spot the Tomogashima Islands in the distance while bathing in one of the outdoor hot spring baths.





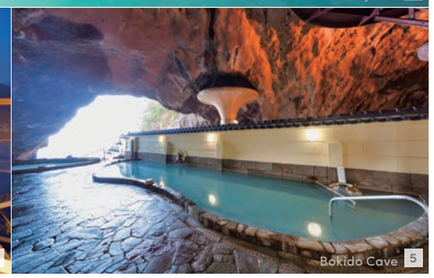

Kawayu Onsen 3

Tsuboyu Onsen 3


Nakanoshima Ryokan 5


Kamigoten Ryokan 4


Kamenoi Hotel Nachikatsuura 5


Bokido Cave 5

KUMANO

3 HONGU ONSEN-KYO

The three onsen hamlets Kawayu, Wataze and Yunomine form Hongu Onsen-kyo. Explore the small villages and choose from a tiny bath for two or a river-sized bath big enough for hundreds.

KUMANO

4 RYUJIN ONSEN

Set deep in the Kii Mountain Range, the onsen resort's popularity stems from its water properties, thought to make skin smooth and supple. It is known as one of three best onsen resorts for beauty in Japan. The outdoor baths offer lovely mountain views.

KUMANO

5 KATSUURA ONSEN

Katsuura Onsen has a number of hot springs in unique settings. Relax in a rocky bath set within a cave, or an outdoor hot spring with fantastic ocean views.

ONSEN TIPS

THE RULES

There are simple public bathing rules to follow in order to provide a pleasant experience for everyone. Go with the flow, be respectful and you are sure to have a warming and rewarding experience.

BATHING ETIQUETTE

Most onsen are separated by gender, and bathing suits are not allowed. Shower thoroughly before entering the baths and don't swim or put your head under the water.

TATTOOS

The topic of tattoos is profoundly cultural and sensitive in Japan. Most onsen refuse entry to anyone with tattoos, so bear this in mind if you are planning to go.

ONSEN EXTRAS

After your bath, enjoy the local tradition of gulping down a bottle of ice-cold milk. Also, look out for local products such as fruits, vegetables, and crafts that are sometimes sold in the lobby.

FOOD & ACTIVITIES

Get active, eat fresh and experience Japanese tradition


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1 SEAFOOD / SUSHI

The warm waters off the Wakayama coast are teeming with marine life. Savour a range of freshly caught fish in one of Wakayama's many restaurants. Order the tuna, a local speciality.

2 WAKAYAMA RAMEN

Order a bowl of Wakayama ramen noodles when visiting the area. The source of ramen's flavour is the soup, and here, it is generally a pork-bone based broth blended with soy sauce.

3 KUMANO BEEF

High-end Wagyu beef with the distinctive marbled pattern of premium meat. Order this deliciously tender beef as a steak, or in thin slithers to be quickly barbequed at a yakiniku restaurant.

4 NIGHTLIFE

If you are looking to experience some genuine Japanese-style bar-hopping, head to the narrow streets and alleys of the Ajikoji Food Entertainment district in Tanabe—Wakayama's second largest city.

5 UMESHU EXPERIENCE

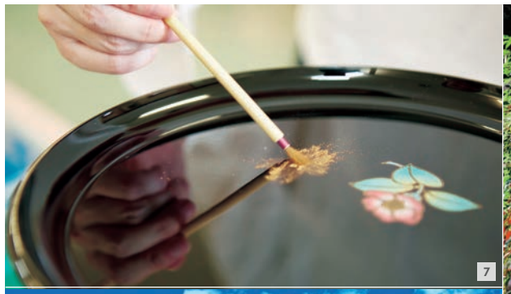
Wakayama is famous for ume, Japanese apricots. The distinctively sour apricots taste best when sweetened, and fermented into a liqueur. Try your hand at making umeshu liqueur or ume juice at the Kishu Umeboshi Kan.

6 FRUIT / FRUIT PICKING

Wakayama is bursting with fruit farms, and many offer fruit-picking experiences. Pick fruit that is fresh and seasonal, including mikan mandarin oranges, peaches, grapes, strawberries and melons.

EAT WAKAYAMA

Search for bars and restaurants and view menus in English


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7 URUWASHIKAN (TRADITIONAL KISHU LACQUERWARE INDUSTRY CENTER)

Join a workshop and decorate a wooden tray or lunch box in the Kishu lacquerware style. The distinctive patterns are painted using gold or silver powder.

8 HEIAN PERIOD COSTUME EXPERIENCE

Climb the Daimon-zaka Slope in authentic fashion by donning Heian period (794-1185) costumes. Rent the attire from the teahouse near the entrance of the slope.

9 CYCLING (WAKAYAMA 800)

Take to two wheels to explore Wakayama's natural scenery. 800 kilometres of designated cycling paths guide you through the prefecture's holy mountains and along its pristine coastlines.

10 KOZAGAWA KAYAKING

Rent a kayak and traverse the crystal-clear waters of the Kozagawa River. Look out for the plentiful wildlife, including monkeys that live in the forests that flank the river.

11 TRADITIONAL LOG RAFTING

Log rafting began in Kitayama Village as a means of transporting lumber down the river. Today, thrill-seekers can ride the whitewater of the Kitayamagawa River standing on a log raft skippered by an experienced log-runner.

12 DIVING

The warm waters off the coast of Wakayama are ideal for diving. Explore the coral reefs and see colourful tropical fish up close. Some diving schools in Kushimoto offer professional instruction in English.