

Discover
信楽
SHIGARAKI
JAPAN



**Travel Professional
Destination Guide**



**Come See it.
Feel it.
Be Part of it.**



日本遺産



旅する、千年、六古窯
光と人、土と火、器と人が四角の六風窯



Japan.
Endless
Discovery.

Welcome to Shigaraki

The Shigaraki Tourism Association's ultimate Travel Professional Guide—your key to unlocking unforgettable experiences in Japan's legendary pottery heartland.



Shigaraki Annual Touki Matsuri

SHIGARAKI TOURISM ASSOCIATION

E-mail: info@e-shigaraki.org

Postcode: 529-1851

1203 Nagano Shigaraki Town Koka City Shiga Prefecture Japan.

(Inside - Shigaraki Traditional Industries Hall)

Tel: 0748-82-2345

Fax: 0748-82-2551

We are delighted to present the Shigaraki Tourism Association's comprehensive Travel Professional Destination Guide—your essential resource for crafting extraordinary experiences in one of Japan's most authentic cultural destinations. The ongoing success of Expo 2025 has provided Shigaraki and its master artisans with remarkable opportunities for international recognition and cultural exchange. This transformative period continues to validate our strategic approach to showcasing authentic Japanese craftsmanship on the global stage, positioning us to establish ourselves as Japan's premier pottery destination.

Shigaraki represents the harmonious convergence of tradition and innovation—a living testament to over a millennium of ceramic excellence as one of Japan's six ancient kiln areas. Yet our appeal extends far beyond pottery, encompassing a rich tapestry of cultural heritage, natural beauty, and culinary traditions that create truly immersive travel experiences.

This comprehensive guide provides everything necessary for professional success: detailed insights into Shigaraki's geographical and cultural significance, practical travel planning resources, and complete coverage of our premier attractions, historic temples and shrines, distinctive local cuisine, outdoor adventures, and traditional arts and crafts experiences. You will discover the seasonal festivals that animate our community and explore accommodation options ranging from traditional ryokan to contemporary facilities.

Our unwavering commitment to sustainable tourism and cultural preservation is embedded throughout this resource, reflecting our dedication to providing authentic experiences that honor both visitor expectations and our environmental and cultural heritage.

We encourage you to utilize this guide as both a staff training tool—enabling your team to develop expertise in Shigaraki's unique offerings—and as your primary resource for creating memorable client journeys.

Whether your travelers seek the meditative artistry of our pottery workshops, the serene beauty of our mountain landscapes, or the cultural richness of our traditional festivals, Shigaraki provides the authentic connections that transform visitors into lifelong advocates.

Shigaraki Tourism Association
Authentic Heritage, Global Recognition

www.e-shigaraki.org

Follow our SNS
channels for the
latest information.



Japan. Endless Discovery.

Contents

Introduction

Welcome to Shigaraki	2
Contents	3
Shigaraki - The Destination	5-7
Shigaraki & Ceramic Racoon Dog (Tanuki)	8-9
Location	10
Map - Shigaraki Districts	12
Map - Shigaraki	13
Strengths	14
Activities	15

Access

Access - Shinkansen/Air/Train	17
Access - Bus/ Car	18
Shigaraki Kogen Railway	20
Shigaraki Station	21
Chartered Vehicle/ Taxi	22
Rental Car	23

Transport

Local Transport	24
Community Bus/ Routes	25
Four Seasons	26

Pottery

Shigaraki Clay	29
Firing Effects and Glazes	30
Shigaraki's Kiln Types	31
Exploring Kiln's and Galleries of Shigaraki	32
Kiln Exploration Trail	33-37
Pottery Activities	38
Fire Festival Hi Matsuri	36
Pottery Festivals and Events	37

Restaurants & Cafes

Cafe & Restaurants	43
Cafe & Restaurant Map	45

Sightseeing spots

Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park	47
Museum - Shigaraki ware Museum	48

Museum - Shigaraki Former Traditional Industry Hall	49
Museum - MIHO MUSEUM	50
Japan's Ancient Capital	51
Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine	52
Hikumo Shrine	54
Gyokkeiji Temple	55
Senzenji Ruins Cliffside Budha	56
Tarao Daikan Yashiki Site	57
Waterfalls	58
Hata Weeping Cherry Tree	59

Tea Plantations

Asamiya	61-64
---------	-------

Golf

Shigaraki Golf	67-72
----------------	-------

Accommodation

Shigaraki Accommodation	75
Ryokan	77
Hotel	78-79
Villa	80-81
Guest-house	83-84
Luxury Villa/Michelin Chef	85
Other Accommodation	86-87
Alternative Accommodation	88

General Information

Medical and Emergencies	91
Currency Exchange and ATM	92
Groceries and Amenities	93
Postage and Couriers	94-95

Yellow Pages

Galleries	97-100
Pottery Activities	101-100
Other Activities	103
Cafe & Restaurants	104-110

Koka City & Shiga

Koka City	112
Koka City and Shiga Information	113



"Ametsuchi no kotoba" Toshiharu Yoshimura



Retired "Tachizaya" spacers, originally used when loading kilns



Wood fired Shigaraki Tea Cups

The Destination

Shigaraki - The Destination

Shigaraki is one of Japan's six ancient kiln areas and a designated Japan Heritage destination, with a history stretching back centuries. Its enduring charm has been beautifully preserved, where the time-honoured craft of pottery seamlessly blends with modern creativity. Shigaraki is celebrated not only for its exquisite Shigaraki ware but also for its vibrant tea culture, deeply rooted in local tradition. While day trips from surrounding cities are possible, it is strongly recommended to consider an over-night stay—or even two—for those seeking a deeper connection with the area's cultural richness, and to fully enjoy the distinctive food and seasonal flavours that define the region.

Shigaraki Town is located in Kōka City, in the southern part of Shiga Prefecture; the town merged with neighbouring Kōka City on 1 October 2004. The town's population is 12,727 (2023). The total area of Shigaraki is 163.5 km². Shigaraki is easily accessible from Kyoto, Osaka, and Nagoya. While internationally recognised for its iconic Tanuki figurines (Raccoon Dogs), visitors can also immerse themselves in Shigaraki's pottery culture by participating in hands-on Shigaraki ware workshops, exploring numerous galleries, and engaging directly with skilled artisans across generations.

Shigaraki also served as the imperial capital for several months in 745 AD before the imperial palace was moved to Heijō-kyō due to a forest fire that destroyed Shigaraki Palace. The town is most famous for its ceramic industry, which has existed since ancient times. Shigaraki is well known for its high-quality clay and ceramic works, formally referred to as "Shigaraki-yaki" in Japanese, hereafter defined as Shigaraki ware throughout this guide. Many local potters still use traditional wood-fired anagama kilns to produce their pottery; however, over time, in the interests of commercial sustainability, there have been shifts to more predictable energy sources. Today, many artisans use a combination of modern gas-fired kilns and wood-fired kilns, alternating methods depending on the desired finish. In addition, Noborigama kilns in the area are fired regularly, sustaining traditional production techniques.

Tokoname, another of Japan's ancient kiln areas in Aichi Prefecture, influenced Shigaraki's pottery traditions during the 13th century. Shigaraki's roots, however, extend far deeper, traced back around 65 million years when granite, later forming the bedrock of Shigaraki clay, emerged in the local mountains. Around 4 million years ago, a large ancient lake existed near present-day Iga, considered a precursor to Lake Biwa, Japan's largest lake. Over time, this lake migrated northward, depositing sediments of sand and organic matter, creating ideal soil layers for pottery clay.

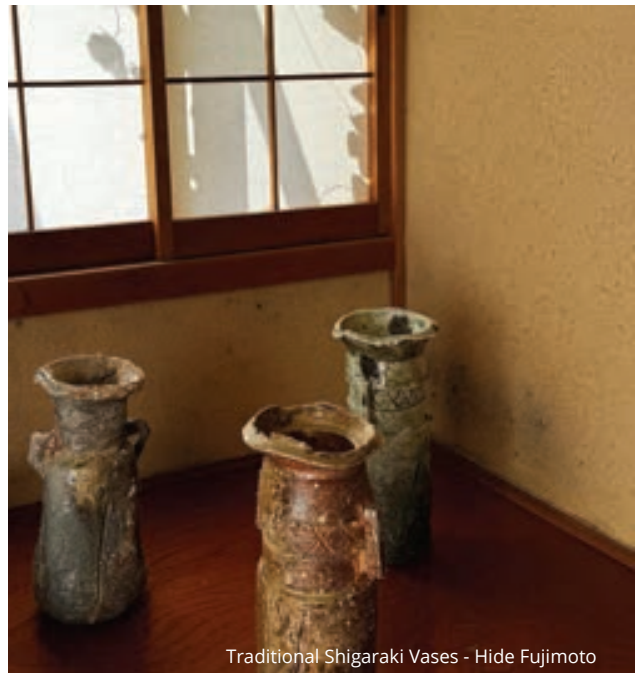
Shigaraki's natural isolation, surrounded by mountains, has played a pivotal role in shaping its history. Despite challenging terrain, the area was long accessible via mountain passes. The surrounding mountains provided abundant clay, while Shigaraki's degree of natural separation enhanced the desirability of its products. Finished Shigaraki ware was transported to Uji, Osaka, and Iga. The 16th century marked a turning point as the town leveraged its proximity to Kyoto, Japan's largest consumer city, becoming a flourishing pottery hub.

Shigaraki in Omi Hyakunin Isshu



Omi Province in Shiga, rich in nature and history, has inspired many outstanding poems. While Ogura Hyakunin Isshu is well-known, Omi has its own remarkable collection. The Omi Hyakunin Isshu, associated with Omi Shrine, features two notable waka poems about Shigaraki. One by Nokoreshige Fujiwara, a Heian period aristocrat and later monk, and the other by Ton'a, a monk and poet from the late Kamakura to Nanboku-Cho period. Ton'a, one of the "Four Heavenly Kings of Waka," played a crucial role in compiling the "Shinshui Wakashu" and contributed 44 poems to imperial anthologies.

During the Warring States period, Shigaraki ware gained prominence in tea ceremonies. Over time, the region diversified to meet changing demand, ensuring its survival. Today, production includes tea utensils, hibachi, homeware, tiles, plant pots, and whimsical figurines. Unglazed Shigaraki ware stands out among Japanese pottery for its firing techniques, creating a distinctive rough texture and natural hues that evolve during firing. Clay sourced from the ancient Lake Biwa layer offers excellent heat resistance, suitable for products ranging from tiles to grand jars.



Traditional Shigaraki Vases - Hide Fujimoto

In the 1970s, a revival of traditional techniques occurred under master potters such as third-generation Takahashi Rakusai III and fourth-generation Ueda Naokata. Notably, during this period, the renowned artist Tarō Okamoto created the "Black Sun" relief for the Tower of the Sun at the 1970 Osaka Expo, an icon associated with Shigaraki. The Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry recognised Shigaraki ware as a traditional craft in 1976. By the late 1980s, contemporary artists were expanding the boundaries of ceramic expression. In April 2017, Shigaraki ware was certified as Japanese Heritage, and Shigaraki was acknowledged as one of the Six Ancient Kilns of Japan.

Today, a new generation of artists in Shigaraki brings fresh creativity, crafting a wide range of lifestyle-oriented Shigaraki ware in diverse styles and colours. In areas undergoing change, traditional methods often risk fading, yet Shigaraki stands out for the adaptability and diversity of its artisans. Across generations, potters have met challenges while remaining attuned to market trends. What sets Shigaraki apart is not just its adaptability, but the artisans' commitment to their roots. Despite evolving conditions, they maintain production of "origin" unglazed Shigaraki ware. This includes traditional wood-firing methods, preserving cultural heritage while accommodating contemporary preferences. The uniqueness of each piece lies in its distinct finishes and colourings, the result of a high-temperature firing process entrusted metaphorically to the hands of the gods.

Consequently, Shigaraki ware produced by esteemed artisans commands high prices at auction and is sought after by collectors.



Shigaraki Streetscape - the streets of the Nagano district are perfect for a wander at any time of the year

Located in southern Shiga Prefecture, Shigaraki is a unique destination, easily accessible from Kyoto, Osaka, and Nagoya.

Shigaraki Streets

Shigaraki encompasses a vast area with distinct districts inviting exploration. Historically, Nagano and Eda villages focused on large items like jars and pots, while Chokushi and Maki specialised in smaller items such as divine vessels, lamps, sake cups, and pouring vessels. Today, these villages remain district names within Shigaraki, now part of Kōka City. Many kilns are managed by fifth- and sixth-generation potters, producing pottery without strict segregation by type or size.

Nagano district serves as the central business hub, hosting many kilns. Other areas function as gateways into the town. Spread across three slopes—Rokuro-zaka (Potter's Wheel Slope), Hiirō Tsubo-zaka (Scarlet Pot Slope), and Kamaba-zaka (Kiln Slope)—these streets are marked with embedded ceramic tiles, facilitating visitor exploration. The district preserves a traditional ambience, with climbing kilns and pottery stacked for drying, providing insight into daily Shigaraki ware production.

Walking through Nagano, large blue Shigaraki braziers are visible, remnants from the Meiji period when glaze research popularised brazier production. These once dominated the domestic market, comprising approximately 80% until the early 1950s. Some kilns continue to produce braziers in various sizes and styles.



Blue glazed Shigaraki "hi-bachi" braziers

Black vinegar jars also line streets, reflecting Shigaraki's industrial heritage. Additionally, "tachizaya" kiln spacers, once used for stacking pottery, now function as retaining walls, enhancing the townscape and providing visual interest.

Asamiya: A Historic Tea-Growing Region

Near Shigaraki's center, the Asamiya area stands as a historic tea-growing region with an extraordinary 1,200-year legacy. Introduced in 805 by the eminent priest Saichō, founder of Tendai Buddhism, a town with Ninjas and Tanukis! Koka and Shigaraki, tea cultivation has thrived continuously in the Miyajiri district, making Asamiya Tea the "oldest famous tea in Japan." A Town with Ninjas and Tanukis! Koka and Shigaraki.

Perched at approximately 400 meters elevation, Asamiya benefits from drastic temperature changes between night and day, creating a climate where mist forms frequently—an ideal environment for cultivating premium tea leaves.

The region's exceptional terroir is further enhanced by an east-west band about 1 kilometer wide containing nutrient-rich sediment from ancient Lake Biwa, providing the mineral foundation that contributes to Asamiya tea's distinctive character.

Asamiya ranks among Japan's "Five Great Teas", a prestigious designation that places it alongside the most revered tea-producing regions in the country. Located close to Uji-tawara and Wazuka, two large production areas of famous "Uji tea" in Kyoto, Asamiya has historically been widely loved by famous tea masters.



Picking Tea - Asamiya Tea Plantation

The connection between Asamiya's tea heritage and imperial history is profound. Emperor Saga himself planted tea seeds on Iwayayama (present-day Senzenji Temple area) in Asamiya. Modern Asamiya tea production also emphasizes sustainable practices. Some producers, such as Katagi Kokaen, have been cultivating without pesticides since 1976, using minimal fertilizers to maintain the purity and authentic flavor profiles that have made Asamiya tea renowned for over a millennium.

Visitor Experiences

Today's visitors to Asamiya can engage with this living tea heritage through seasonal tea picking experiences, where they participate in the same harvest traditions practiced for centuries and taste tea poured by the growers and masters themselves.

Events, Culture, and Culinary Delights

Shigaraki hosts a range of pottery and craft events, notably the Shigaraki Hi Matsuri (Fire Festival). Spiritual sites include Gyokukeiji Temple, once a temporary imperial residence, and Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine, significant for cultural context prior to pottery workshops.

Museums and exhibition halls dedicated to Shigaraki ware enrich the cultural landscape. The Miho Museum, designed by I.M. Pei, houses a significant collection of Asian and Western art, providing further context for professional visitors.

Shigaraki's culinary scene features organic produce, locally grown rice, and premium Ōmi beef, complementing its arts and culture. From traditional desserts to farm-to-table experiences, the gastronomy enhances itineraries for professional travel planning.

Shigaraki offers a fully immersive cultural experience in the Kansai region, combining Shigaraki ware workshops, galleries, festivals, tea culture, spiritual sites, museums, and culinary exploration. Its streets, adorned with blue pots, historic jars, and tanuki figurines, enrich storytelling opportunities for tourism professionals. The town allows visitors to engage with Japan's heritage in a serene, culturally rich environment, ideal for curated travel experiences focused on arts, crafts, and local traditions.

Beyond art and craft, Shigaraki is a destination for culinary exploration. The town's commitment to local ingredients—organic vegetables, premium rice, and the celebrated Ōmi beef (a regional wagyu)—makes it a hidden gem for food lovers. From traditional Japanese confections to modern farm-to-table cuisine, the region offers flavourful experiences that complement its artistic identity.

For travellers seeking a destination rich in heritage, craftsmanship, and natural beauty, Shigaraki stands as a compelling choice. It provides a rare opportunity to engage with a living tradition, explore a landscape shaped by centuries of creative pursuit.

Shigaraki & Tanuki

When visitors arrive in Shigaraki, they are greeted by a multitude of Shigaraki tanuki ceramic figurines. These charming and diverse figurines are often depicted in the style of "sake-buying young acolytes," holding a tokkuri (sake decanter) and a passbook. They come in various shapes and sizes, making them endearing and perfect for memorable photos. Shigaraki's tanuki figurines generate many questions, and are a focal point of much intrigue, the range of designs and the abundance of tanuki that adorn the streets of this historic kiln area is impressive.

Tanuki History

Across Japan, the practice of purchasing sake with a tokkuri and a passbook became established around the middle of the Edo period, during the Genroku era (1688-1704), when sake became accessible to commoners. Children were often sent to buy sake from liquor stores, carrying a tokkuri (sake decanter). Even temple monks would assign young acolytes the task of bringing back sake in a tokkuri from the liquor store. This practice created the iconic image of the "sake-buying young acolyte." It is believed that these sake-carrying acolytes inspired the original sake-carrying tanuki figurines.

The origin of these tanuki figurines in Shigaraki is a topic with multiple theories. During the late Edo period, a potter named Shinsai Okuda from Nagano Village, created tanuki figurines, some of which still exist in Shigaraki town. While Okuda's tanuki figures did not precisely match the "sake-buying young acolyte" style, he is considered one of the early Shigaraki potters who might have played a role in creating tanuki figurines.



Tanuki Figurines are located everywhere in the townscape

The appearance of these early tanuki figurines has been suggested to be inspired by the yokai (supernatural creatures). Folk songs from the Kansai region even feature lyrics about tanuki going to buy sake with a tokkuri. Actually, many kiln areas throughout Japan produced sake-buying acolyte tanuki figurines, and they were not exclusively made and sold in Shigaraki.

However, an event in 1931 catalysed stronger connections in Shigaraki to the tanuki figurines. A pottery studio called "Rian" relocated from Kyoto to Shigaraki and established a dedicated tanuki pottery studio called "Tanukiya Souhonkei Rian" marking the beginning of the flourishing era of Shigaraki tanuki.

Current Shigaraki Tanuki's beginning

Tetsuzou Fujiwara (1876 - 1966) played a significant role in popularizing Shigaraki tanuki throughout Japan to the point that when people mention ceramic tanuki, they refer to Shigaraki. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that his workshop and gallery "Tanukiya Souhonkei Rian" is the birthplace of Shigaraki Tanuki. Fujiwara, a first-generation artist,

was born in Mie and taken in by his uncle in Kyoto at 9. He began his apprenticeship in Kiyomizu and was already throwing on the potter's wheel by age 11. During his training, he witnessed tanuki of various sizes playing and tumbling along the banks of the Ooto River," He was enchanted by their cuteness and cherished the memory.

Around 1935, he received a request to create a giant ceramic jar. Rather than staying in Kiyomizu and complete the task he decided to move to Shigaraki, and a dream led him to start developing ceramic tanuki and the rest is history, the Shigaraki Tanuki that line the streets of the ancient kiln town were created. When it comes to tanuki figurines visitors tastes vary, however many people visiting Shigaraki comment on the charm of the tanuki and how they feel uplifted when entering the Tanukiya Souhonkei Rian gallery space.

For those that are interested, works dating back to the founder can be viewed in the gallery space on the 2nd floor. The current and third-generation successor of Rian, Mr.Kazuaki Fujiwara, has also honed his skills as a ceramic artist and is passionate about creating tanuki figurines. He plans to focus on creating handmade, artistically crafted Shigaraki tanuki and has stopped making mold-based tanuki.

Tanukiya Souhonkei Rian

957 Eda Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Prefecture Japan
Tel: 0748-82-0214

Emperors Visit

On November 15, 1951, Emperor Showa visited Shigaraki. During the welcoming ceremony along his route, people enhanced the atmosphere by adding flags to the tanuki ceramic figurines. Witnessing this spectacle, Emperor Showa was deeply moved and composed a poem, subsequently inscribed on a monument at the Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine.

The Emperors poem when translated poem reads:

"Seeing the Shigaraki-yaki tanuki with flags makes me nostalgic for the days of my youth."

This poem and photographs of the welcoming tanuki figurines were published in the media, catapulting Shigaraki tanuki to nationwide fame.



Monument inscribed with poem composed by the Emperor

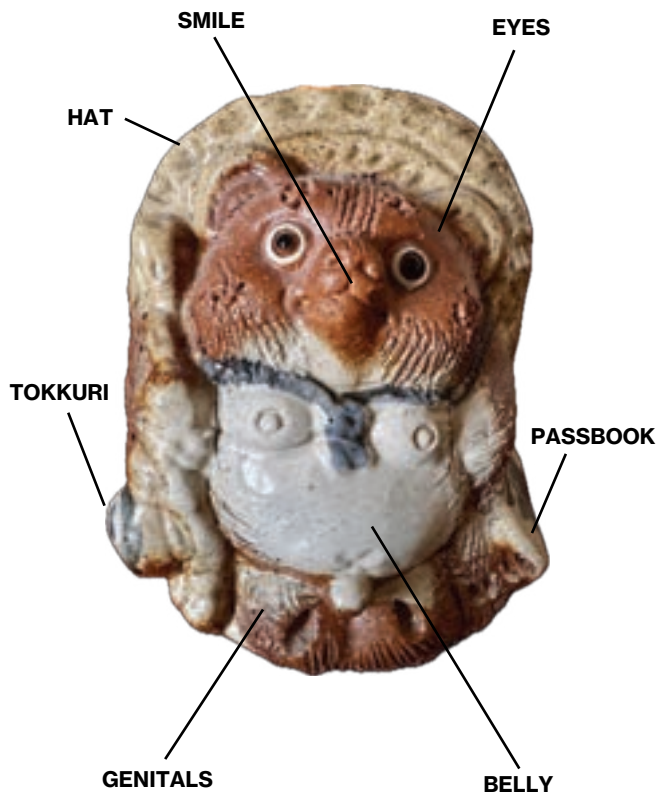
Shigaraki & Tanuki



The Tanuki Monk

In 1952, Gouchou Ishida (1910-2005), a Tendai sect monk and a renowned Buddhist scholar who pursued Zen painting, Buddhist painting, calligraphy, tanka, and haiku and, more importantly, for Shigaraki, was known for his collection of research literature on tanuki, earning him the nickname "Tanuki Monk", suggested the "Eight Features of Good Fortune for Tanuki" and further boosted the popularity of Tanuki figurines in Japan. Gouchou Ishida's concept attributed specific meanings to the various elements of the tanuki figurines.

Shigaraki Tanuki "8" Features of Good Fortune



Eyes: Access the situation to make the right decision.

Smile: Be amicable to others.

Hat: Be prepared to face unforeseen disasters.

Tokkuri: Be virtuous.

Passbook: Make building trust a priority, above all else.

Belly: Be Bold and composed.

Genitals: Luck with money.

Tail: Persevere to the end.

Large Tanuki at Shigaraki Station

The large Tanuki in front of Shigaraki Station eagerly dons different costumes to welcome visitors throughout the year. Shigaraki Tourism Association and local enthusiasts organize the wardrobe changes, and this iconic Tanuki undergoes a wardrobe change approximately six times annually. The Tanuki was installed at the station in 1987 and is 5.3 metres tall, with a circumference of 6.6 metres, making it a hard-to-miss landmark in Shigaraki Town. The costumes are inspired by cherry blossoms, summer yukata, Halloween pumpkins, and Valentine's Day and are created in collaboration with the local High School design department.



Child Safety Mascot - "Poponta"

Shigaraki, known for its whimsical tanuki figurines, has a unique guardian to protect the town's children - "Poponta," the Child 110 Emergency Tanuki was commissioned by the Shigaraki Town PTA Liaison Council. Poponta is no ordinary tanuki; it serves as a charming police officer to ensure the safety of the town's young residents. The name "Poponta" was aptly Chosen through a public solicitation among the townspeople. Poponta stands proudly in selected "Child 110 Emergency Houses" throughout the community. Look out for the cute Tanuki with "110" on his stomach.



Meet Shigaraki Town's Enchanting Mascot

Meet Pompoko, Shigaraki Town's beloved ambassador and town mascot! This charming character brings joy and warmth to both locals and visitors. As you journey through Shigaraki, you may discover yourself sharing a memorable moment with Pompoko, etching a treasured memory into your Shigaraki adventure.

Location

Shigaraki is located in the southern part of Shiga Prefecture, making it easily accessible from major cities like Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya, all within a convenient 100 km radius.

This proximity to urban centres has historically positioned Shigaraki as a vital transportation and trade hub. Moreover, Shigaraki is embraced by a picturesque natural landscape, with mountains encircling the region. These mountains not only contribute to the area's breathtaking scenery, they have provided the clay for producing pottery and a degree of separation from other areas, positively affecting demand for product from the area. Over centuries, people have navigated the mountainous terrain, establishing trade routes that connect Shigaraki to neighbouring regions like Uji, Kyoto, Nara and Osaka. The distance from Kyoto to Shigaraki is 44.4 km by car and the travelling time is around 50 minutes, depending on traffic conditions. The total travel time to reach Shigaraki by train from Kyoto is 1 hour and 30 mins.

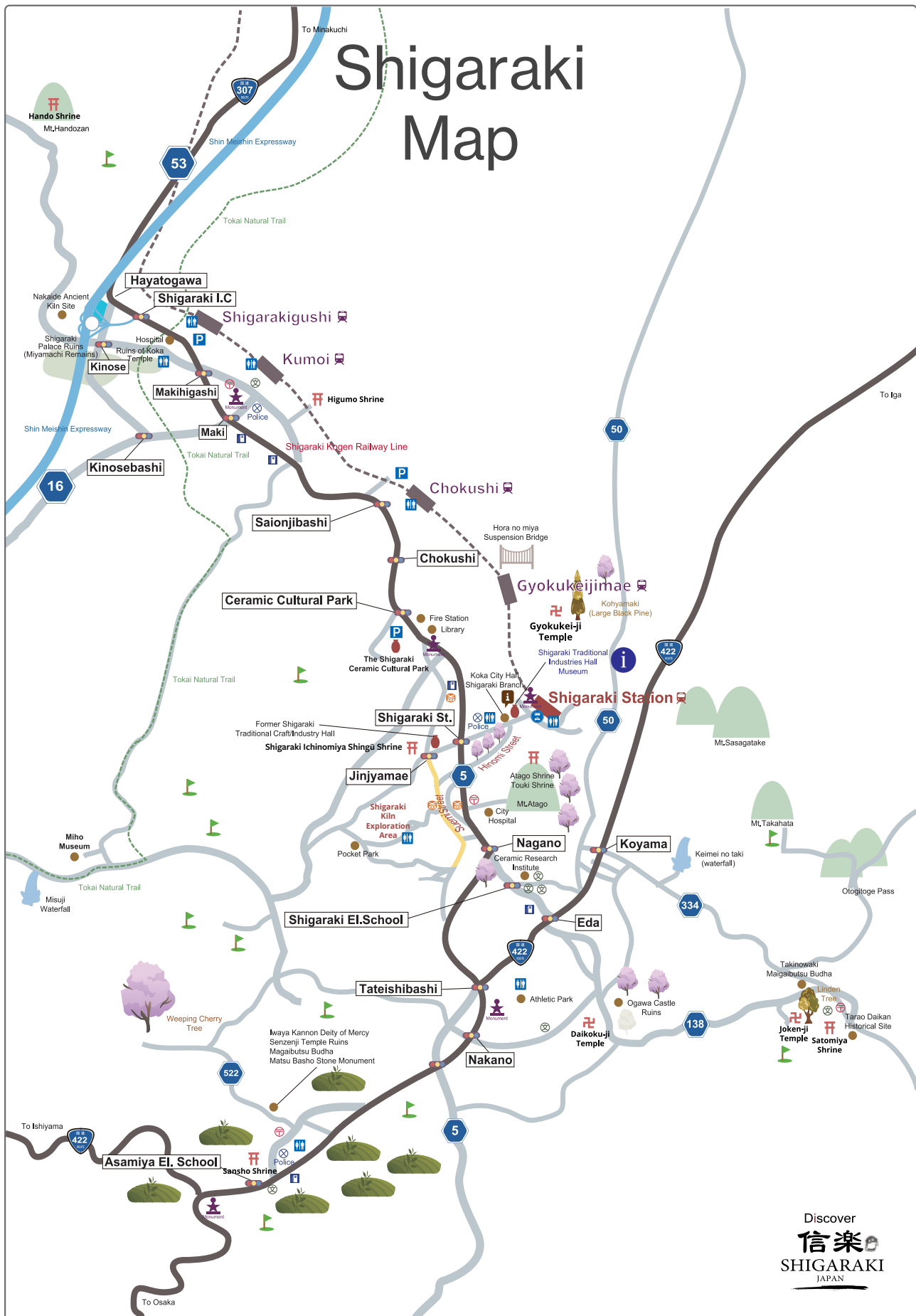




大 SHIGARAKI 窯
Ogama
Cafe
Shop
Gallery
Craft Studio



Map

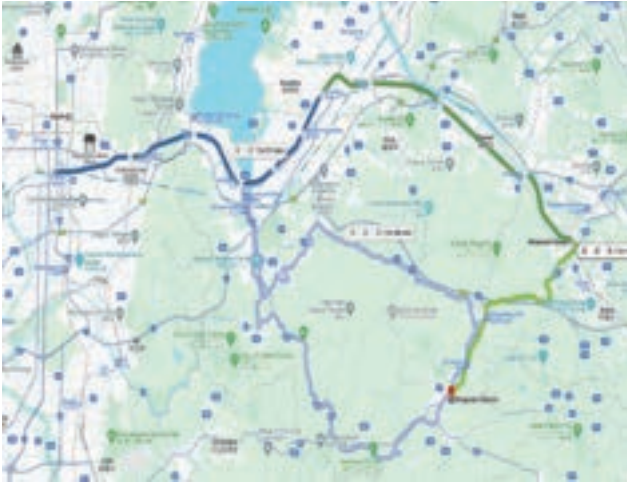


Strengths

When promoting Shigaraki as a destination, the following points are the strengths contributing to the destination's appeal.

Geographic Location and Easy Access

Shigaraki, just 44.4 km from Kyoto, offers easy access within 1 hour and 30 minutes by train, making it a convenient destination.



Tea Plantation Roots

Shigaraki, home to one of Japan's original tea plantations, has deep-rooted connections with Asamiyacha, one of Japan's five great teas.



Pottery Heritage

Shigaraki stands proudly among Japan's Six Ancient Kiln Areas, with a rich history dating back to the Azuchi-Momoyama period. It has not only survived but thrived, becoming a national pottery hub.



Golf and Artistic Pursuits

Shigaraki's proximity to Koka City, renowned for numerous golf courses, allows visitors to enjoy both golf and artistic pursuits seamlessly.



Charming Townscape

The town is adorned with Tanuki sculptures and unexpected pottery displays, creating a delightful and eccentric ambiance, perfect for pottery hunting and photography.



Diverse Culinary Scene

Shigaraki offers a diverse culinary experience with high-quality produce, including the exquisite Omi beef, delicious dairy products from local farms, and unique rice varieties like "Mizukagami."



Activities

As a destination, Shigaraki offers visitors a wide range of activities, events, and dining options. Whether seeking tranquillity and natural beauty, or wishing to immerse in cultural heritage, or indulge in culinary delights, Shigaraki invites you to explore, experience, and create unforgettable memories.

Pottery Experiences

Pottery Workshops

A wide range of pottery workshops are available and are suitable for all skill levels. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced potter, these workshops provide a hands-on experience to create your own pottery masterpieces. Participants can explore intricate techniques for shaping, glazing, and firing pottery, all with expert guidance.

Pottery Markets

Several pottery markets throughout the year, making them a must-visit for those seeking authentic pottery. And artefacts directly from the artists.



Shigaraki Touki Matsuri

Festivals

Shigaraki is renowned for its lively "Hi Matsuri" or "Fire Festival". The Fire Festival, with roots dating back several hundred years, is said to have continued since before the Edo period. It is conducted to express gratitude for "fire essential for pottery making" and "fire indispensable for daily life and culture," and to pray for safety in all matters related to fire. The event takes place on the fourth Saturday of July each year.

Kiln Explorations

Explore the kilns of Shigaraki with or without a guide. A guide who speaks a visitors native language can provide a deeper connection to everyone and everything encountered.

Shopping

Stroll through Shigaraki's charming streets, adorned with quaint shops and galleries. If you're interested in pottery or practice pottery crafting at home, a visit to a pottery supplies store is an exciting and satisfying experience.

Sporting and Lifestyle Activities

Golfing

Shigaraki boasts one of the highest concentrations of golf courses in Koka City and many are a stones throw from the Town centre and are set amidst lush greenery and scenic landscapes. Golf enthusiasts can enjoy a leisurely day on these immaculate greens while taking in breath-taking views. Many of these courses offer equipment rentals for visitors.



Shigaraki Tarao Golf Course

Cycling

Visitors can immerse themselves in Shigaraki's natural beauty by embarking on a cycling adventure. The roads and the attractions of the region lend themselves well to cycling. Rental cycles are also available from Shigaraki Station.

Trekking

Shigaraki is part of Koka City, historically known as one of the post towns along the famous Tokaido trade route that connected Tokyo to Osaka. Explore and hike along various sections of the Tokaido Nature Trails, including the captivating Mitsuji no Taki (waterfall).

Horse Riding

Enjoy horseback riding experiences in Shigaraki.

Gastronomy

Eating

Shigaraki is a culinary paradise, offering a delectable journey through traditional Japanese cuisine at local restaurants and a wide variety of regional delicacies. When visiting Shigaraki there is nothing like taking time out of the various activities to embark on the ultimate activity of eating. Trying the locally produced organic vegetables and locally grown rice is a must. The area is renowned for its Omi beef (wagyu), however there is something for everyone to eat and enjoy.

Farm Visits

Yamada Farm is a great Choice for visitors that want to get closer to animals. This local dairy farm and confectionery store offers dairy products and an area for taking photos with various animals.

Tea Harvesting

Asamiya Tea picking activities and tea tasting are available in the Asamiya area. Tea picking is seasonal, mainly in April and May when new tea is harvested, but other tea-related experiences are available throughout the year. The beautiful scenery in one of Japan's oldest tea-growing regions adds to the experience.

Visiting Historical Sites

Historical Sites:

Immersion in Shigaraki's rich history through visits ancient temples, shrines, and historic landmarks that provide profound insights into the town's cultural and architectural heritage.

Art/ Museums

Visiting Miho Museum's architectural masterpiece was envisioned and brought to life by the legendary I. M. Pei, the renowned Chinese-American architect behind iconic structures such as the Louvre Pyramid in Paris, France. Set against the backdrop of the Shigaraki Mountains, the museum is a harmonious fusion of modern aesthetics and the natural environment and features incredible permanent and temporary exhibitions.

The Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park

Established in 1990, serves as a dynamic hub to celebrate and preserve this cultural heritage. It features expansive exhibition spaces that showcase a diverse range of Shigaraki ceramics, highlighting the unique clay, glazing techniques, and firing methods that define Shigaraki ware. The Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park plays a vital role in passing on the knowledge and skills associated with Shigaraki ceramics to future generations.

Shigaraki Traditional Craft Centre

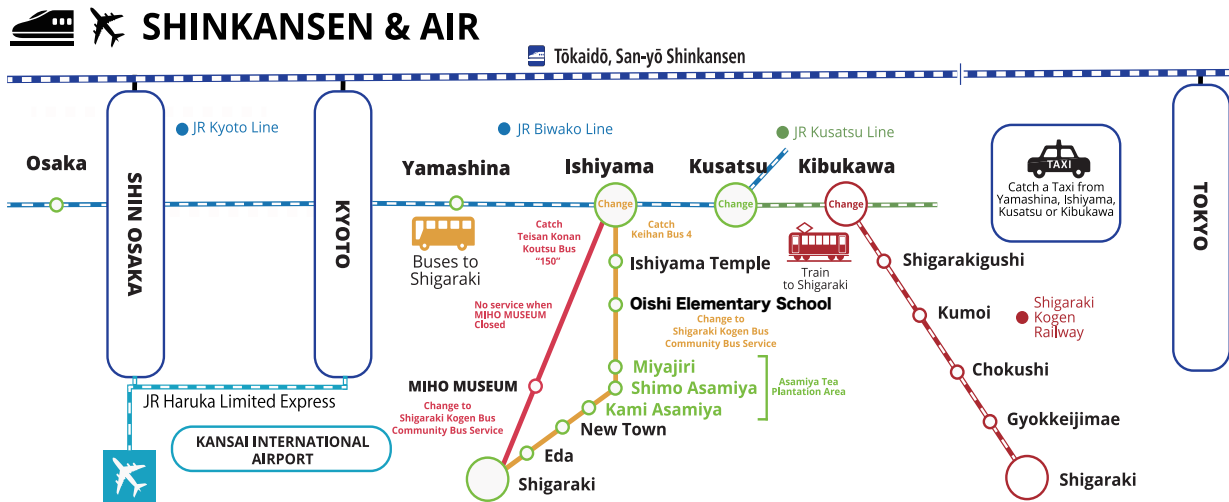
Shigaraki Traditional Craft Centre, recognized for its displays of Shigaraki ware since 1975, relocated in 2020 near Shigaraki Station. The exhibits showcase kiln transformations, tea culture links, and various glazed pottery from the Kamakura period to the present. With 15 yearly exhibitions and live demos, it's a central hub for exploring Shigaraki's traditional craft.

Access

Access

There are several methods to access Shigaraki and these vary depending on travellers requirements.

The main forms of access are Train, Bus, Taxi, Chartered vehicle or Rental car.



Access from Kansai Airport to Kyoto

JR Haruka Limited Express departs from Platform 4 at the JR Kansai Airport Terminal Station. The Limited Express Haruka runs about 30 round trips between Kyoto Station and Kansai Airport Station every day.

The train carriages are decorated in a "Hello Kitty" design. There are 4 different "Hello Kitty" design themes used to decorate the various trains, which provide this service. Many visitors can enjoy taking photos with the eye-catching "Haruka Limited Express" train before departure from the station.

Note: Fares and timetables listed below are an indication only and are subject to change, always check travel details independently.

JR Information & Timetable/ Route Map

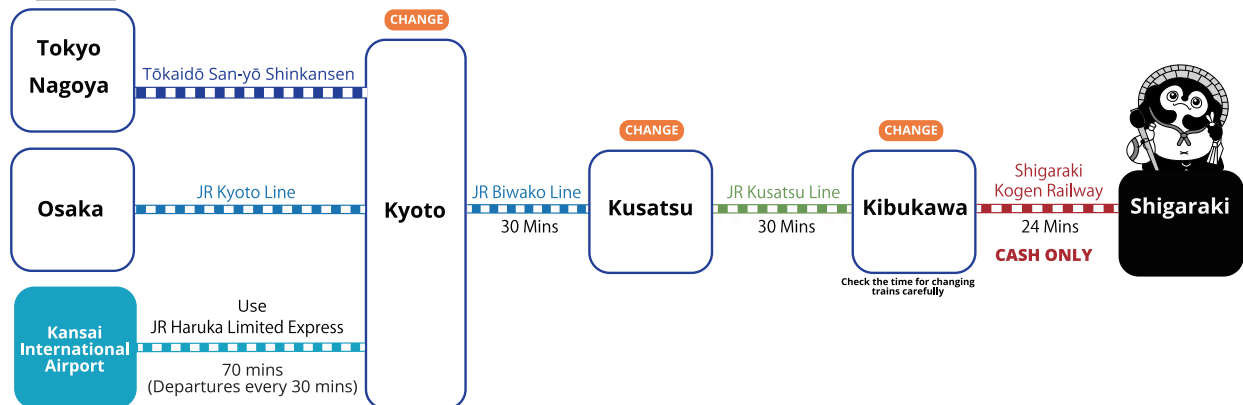
Use the QR Code below for access to the latest JR West Timetables and information.



JR Rail Access Information & Timetable



JR West Japan Line Route Map

TRAIN

Kyoto - Kibukawa

- Depart from **Platform 2** at JR Kyoto Station.
- Use the JR Biwako Line, board the **express train** bound for Kusatsu.

At Kusatsu Station - Change lines from the JR Biwako Line to the JR Kusatsu Line. The train bound for Kibukawa departs from Platform 5.

- Take a **local train** from JR Kusatsu Station to Kibukawa on the Kusatsu Line.

Fare: 770 yen Adult/ 380 yen Child
Travel time: 51 mins from Kyoto to Kibukawa.

Note: At Kibukawa Station change lines from the JR Biwako Line to the Shigaraki Kogen Railway Line. Do not go though the ticket gates at Kibukawa Station, follow the signs and get a transfer ticket from the orange vending machine.

Kibukawa - Shigaraki ★CASH ONLY★

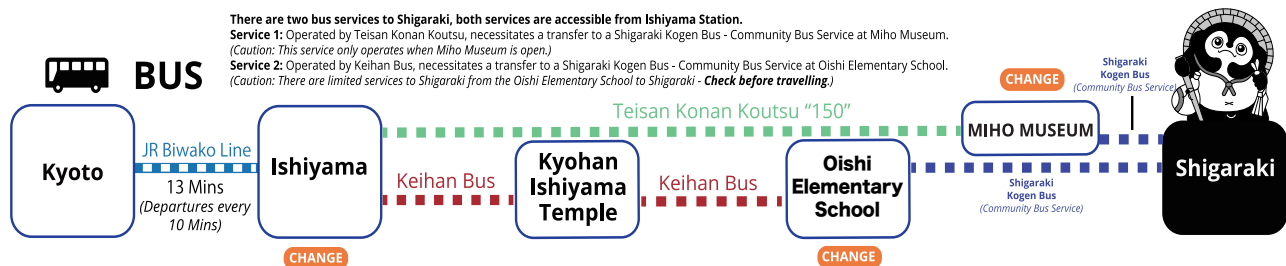
At the Kibukawa station, there are two ticket vending machines that accept **CASH ONLY**. Tickets can be purchased at these vending machines.

- Take the **Shigaraki Kogen Railway** - Local service to Shigaraki. There are 4 stops before reaching Shigaraki Station.

Fare: 470 yen Adult/ 240 yen Child
Travelling time: 24 mins

Note: IC Card Payments can not be made for the Shigaraki Kogen Railway Section of the journey to Shigaraki. **CASH ONLY.**

Access



Clients wishing to Shigaraki from Ishiyama by bus can Choose between two scenic options:

Tea Plantation Route: Opt for the community bus with a single transfer, winding through the picturesque tea plantations of Asamiya on the way to Shigaraki Station.

Cultural Excursion via Miho Museum: Explore cultural treasures at the MIHO MUSEUM before transferring onto a community bus for a seamless journey to Shigaraki Station. Whether through tea-scented tranquillity or artistic exploration, both routes promise a memorable introduction to Shigaraki's beauty. This option has two transfers.

Tea Plantation Route from Ishiyama to Shigaraki

Board the Kyohan Bus 4 (Orange and White Bus) at Ishiyama Station bound for Oishi Elementary School. The journey takes approximately 19 minutes.

- At Oishi Elementary School, transfer to the Shigaraki Kogen Bus - Community Bus at the terminal. This leg of the journey takes you through the picturesque tea plantation area of Asamiya before reaching Shigaraki.

- The bus will conveniently stop before Shigaraki Station. The entire travel time from the Oishi Elementary School to Shigaraki is approximately 50 minutes.

Ishiyama St. to Oishi Elementary School:

Fare: 310 yen.

Oishi Elementary School to Shigaraki:

Fare: 300 yen.

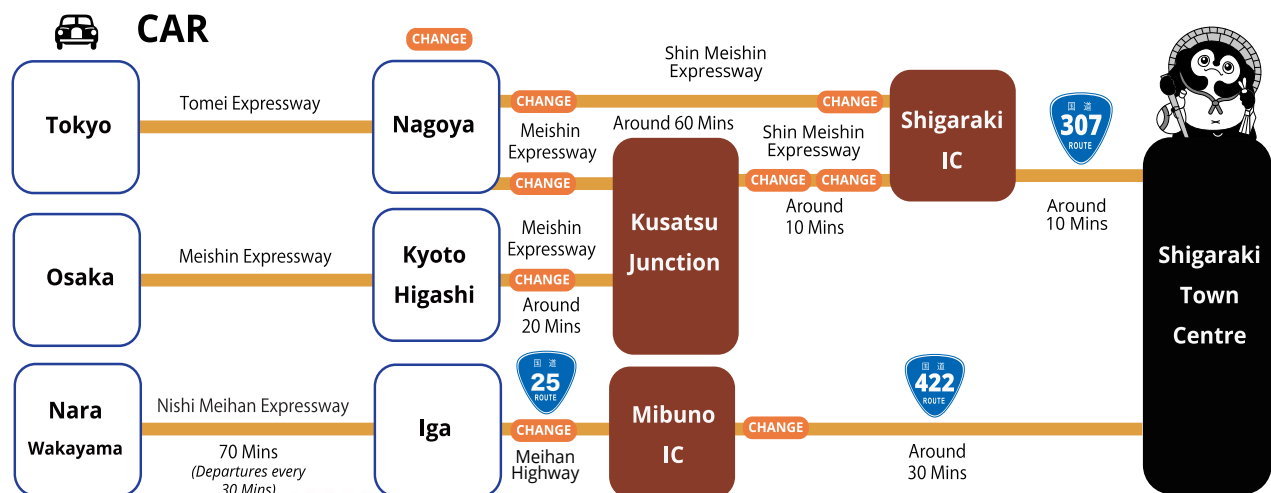
Ishiyama St. to Shigaraki via MIHO MUSEUM

Teisan Konan Koutsu Bus does not operate when MIHO MUSEUM is closed.

- Catch the Teisan Konan Koutsu 150 Bus from Ishiyama St. to Miho Museum. (Travelling time 42 mins.)
- Change to the Shigaraki Kogen Bus Community Bus service. (Travelling time 32 mins.)

Fare:

- Ishiyama St. to Miho Museum:** 840 yen
- MIHO MUSEUM to Shigaraki:** 250 yen



Access from Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe

- Take the Meishin Expressway to the "Kusatsu JCT" and change to the "Shin Meishin Expressway".
- Exit at the "Shigaraki Interchange" and use "Route 307" to reach Shigaraki.

Access from Nara-Wakayama

- Take "Nishi-Meihan Expressway" to "Iga" and change to the "Meihan Highway (Route 25)".
- Exit at the "Mibuno Interchange" and use "Route 422" to reach Shigaraki.

Access from Nagoya

- Take Tomei Expressway to "Kameyama JCT" and change to the "Meishin Expressway" at "Kusatsu JCT" change to the "Shin Meishin Expressway".
- Exit at the "Shigaraki Interchange" and use "Route 307" to reach Shigaraki.

Expressway information

Using the expressways, opens up the accessibility from many surrounding areas. The Nexco Kansai Expressway Map in English can be accessed and downloaded below.



Nexco Kansai Expressway Map

Travelling Times by Car

Kyoto to Shigaraki (Using Toll Roads)

Distance: 50.5 km

Travelling Time: 51 Mins

Toll Cost: 1280 yen

Kyoto to Shigaraki (Using Local Roads)

Distance: 44.4 km

Travelling Time: 1 hour 30 mins



Shigaraki Motorway Interchange



Shigaraki Kogen Railway

Shigaraki Kogen Railway is the primary railway connecting visitors from Kibukawa to Shigaraki; the journey offers a captivating ride through picturesque landscapes. Passengers are treated to views of rice paddies, rolling hills, and charming villages that have preserved their traditional allure. Shigaraki is located in Koka City, which is the birth-place of Japan's Koka Ninja, so the single-carriage train is adorned with a captivating 'Shinobi' Ninja theme. The railway company proudly honours the region's history and heritage; throughout the year, they actively organize promotions and special events. The trains on this line are "One Man Cars," featuring either a single-car configuration with a conductor or, during peak times, an expanded double-car configuration."

Shigaraki Kogen Railway Information

The Shigaraki Kogen Railway, a privately operated railway, spans a length of 14.7 km, and connects Kibukawa Station to Shigaraki. In total, there are six stations along this picturesque route. Shigaraki Station is the sole fully crewed station, providing a essential services for passengers using the line.

You Tube Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXSrjaHqL8c&t=53s>

Fare: 470 yen Adult/ 380 yen Child

Note: IC Card Payments can not be made for the Shigaraki Kogen Railway Section of the journey to Shigaraki.



Ninja theme railcars operate on the railway to Shigaraki

Stations along the Shigaraki Kogen Railway

- **Kibukawa Station**
Transfer point between the Omi Railway Line, JR Kusatsu Line, and Shigaraki Kogen Line.
- **Shigarakigushi Station**
Station for accessing the Shigaraki Palace historical site.
- **Kumoi Station**
Station for accessing Hikumo Shrine
- **Chokushi Station**
Station for accessing various galleries and business at the entrance to the town.
- **Gyokukeijimae Station**
Station for accessing Gyokukei-ji Temple
- **Shigaraki Station**
Main Station for accessing the kilns, galleries, museums, Ceramic institutes of Shigaraki.

The Nagano district, centred around Shigaraki railway station, is the hub for most pottery kilns, workshops, galleries, and restaurants in Shigaraki. The Shigaraki Kogen Railway serves as a link between Shigaraki and cities around Lake Biwa and Kyoto. It provides a convenient transportation option for those without a car, allowing them to explore the outskirts of Shigaraki. In areas such as Shigarakigushi, Kumoi, and Chokushi, where numerous kilns, galleries, workshops, and shrines are situated, a wealth of cultural and artistic content is waiting to be discovered.

Leave your name on the tracks

Railway Sleeper Owner Program

Visitors can leave their name on the tracks of the Shigaraki Kogen Railway, there are 23,476 essential railway sleepers along this line ensuring safe daily operations. The railway continuously replaces old sleepers with eco-friendly concrete alternatives for passenger safety. A nameplate will recognize a visitors contribution and is fixed to one of the railways' sleepers.

A photo of the nameplate installation is taken and sent as a memento and an exclusive rail paperweight crafted from historic Japan National Railway Shigaraki Line rails will be given as a souvenir.

Plate Placement and Public Acknowledgment

The owner's nameplates are installed sequentially, starting from Shigaraki Station and gradually along the line towards Kibukawa. The installation spots are designated by the Shigaraki Kogen Railway.

The Period of Ownership

The nameplate will adorn the sleeper for approximately ten years. However, this duration might change based on sleeper replacement schedules and plate longevity. In line with railway maintenance, occasional relocation of installation spots may be necessary.

How to Apply and Support

Visit Shigaraki Station to inquire about becoming a railway sleeper owner. Complete the application form and submit it with the application fee. Please note that the application fee is non-refundable.

Cost: 5,000 yen (per sleeper)

Join a pilgrimage for railway stamps

Tetsuin Collecting

In 2020, 40 affiliated railway companies, members of the Third Sector Railway and other Consultative Councils collaborated to enhance the appeal of local railway areas. This collaboration introduced "Railway Stamp Books," which are available for purchase, allowing travellers to document their journeys. At Shigaraki Station, you can acquire a "Tetsuin," or Railway Stamp Book, and, upon payment of the stamping fee, receive a unique stamp exclusive to the Shigaraki Kogen Railway. Subsequently, you can use this book to accumulate stamps from railway stations across Japan.

These railway stamps feature distinctive designs, incorporating a blend of hand-drawn elements, traditional stamps, prints, and other imaginative details unique to each railway company.

Railway stamps are available for 300 yen from Shigaraki Station and can only be affixed to the designated Railway Stamp Book, which is sold for 2,200 yen (inclusive of tax).



Shigaraki Station

Shigaraki Station is the terminal station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway line. It is within walking distance of Shigaraki's central business and the famed "Pottery Kiln Exploration Trail". In addition to various rail services, the station sells Shigaraki Kogen Railway memorabilia and many Shigaraki pottery tanuki figurines welcome visitors.



Tanuki figurines lined up on the railway station platform



Shigaraki Kogen Railway - Ticketing Counter

Shigaraki Station originally opened in 1933 as part of the Japan National Railway network. The line was used for cargo and passengers until 1982, and in 1987, the Railway was privatized. It became the Shigaraki Kogen Railway, and the Shigaraki Kogen Railway Co.,Ltd and Koka City operate it. The station is built above the ground station and has two side platforms and tracks. Passengers board and disembark from trains using the platform on the station building side, while the platform on the opposite side is adorned with approximately 100 tanuki (raccoon dog) figurines. Shigaraki Station is the only fully staffed station along the Shigaraki Kogen Railway Line.

Station Facilities

- Waiting Area
- Toilet Facilities
- Ticket Office
- Gallery
- Rental Cycles and Electric Vehicles
- Taxi Stand
- Bus Stop

Shigaraki Kogen Railway Co.,Ltd

Address: 192 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Prefecture

Tel: 0748-82-3391

Fax: 0748-82-3323

Gallery Kogen



Enjoy last minute gift shopping at Gallery Kogen in the Station

"Gallery Kogen" is a small shop located within Shigaraki Station. The name of the shop is derived from its location within the Kogen Railway station, the shop is well stocked with a diverse range of ceramics that are perfect as Shigaraki souvenirs. The staff have carefully selected a range of plates and coffee cups from popular ceramic artists. It is a great place to browse while waiting for a train and it is very different to souvenir shops in other rural locations.

Gallery Kogen

Address: 192 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Prefecture

Tel/Fax: 0748-82-2776

Closed: None

Hours: 10:00 - 17:00

Large Tanuki

The monumental tanuki statue at Shigaraki Station, was erected in 1987, it stands at an impressive height of 5.3 metres with a circumference of 6.6 metres. The statue functions as a public phone booth and a beloved landmark of Shigaraki Town, in fact this sizable tanuki has become an emblem of the region.

Serving as the gateway to the town, Shigaraki Station welcomes students, locals, and tourists using the Shigaraki Kogen Railway. To enhance the vibe of the area for visitors the tanuki undergoes a seasonal wardrobe change to greet visitors with thematic attire throughout the year.

Introduction to the Costumes

The tanuki undergoes a wardrobe change six times a year:

Spring Costume - "Sakura Tanuki"

Late Mar to Mid-Apr

May Costume - "Koka-style Ninja"

May

Summer Costume - "Happi Coat"

Mid-Jul to Mid-Aug

Autumn Costume - "Halloween Pumpkin"

Late Sep to 31 Oct

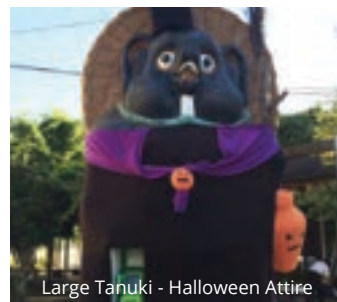
Winter Costume 1 - "Santa Claus"

Early Dec to 25 Dec

Winter Costume 2 - "Valentines"

Late Jan to Mid-Feb

Designs are selected from the local High School students' creations.



Large Tanuki - Halloween Attire

Chartered Vehicle/Taxi



Luxury Toyota Alphard Minivans



Latest EV vehicles

Chartering an English-speaking driver and a limousine car is an excellent way to access Shigaraki. Having a private driver who speaks English can significantly enhance your travel experience as it ensures smooth communication and a personalized approach to your journey. When chartering an English-speaking driver along with a limousine car for your trip to Shigaraki, you open up a world of convenience and comfort.

Benefits of using Chartered Vehicles

Visiting Shigaraki becomes a worry-free endeavour with the assistance of chartered vehicle services. The intricate and often challenging roads leading to Shigaraki are no longer a challenge when you have a dedicated vehicle and driver.

Chartered service providers present personalized and flexible itineraries, empowering visitors to explore Shigaraki at their own pace. Whether your destination is the renowned MIHO MUSEUM or the pottery-rich Nagano area, including a private vehicle and driver ensures an undisturbed and personalized journey.

Moreover, the flexibility to park conveniently near critical locations is a significant advantage, allowing for exploration of Shigaraki's kiln trails on foot and eliminating the hassle of finding parking in the narrow streets of the town centre. Additionally, having nearby luggage space simplifies shopping and activities.

Numerous companies in the wider Kansai region provide chartered services, offering pickups from locations convenient to clients. Opting for a service with a broader range of options guarantees more extensive services. Chartered vehicles can even be arranged to pick up clients directly from the Kansai Airport terminal.

Recommendation

The Shigaraki Tourism Association recommends utilizing MK Taxi services for their diverse vehicle selection, catering to various client preferences. Especially when travelling from Kyoto or larger centres that are located further away from Shigaraki for both comfort and style.

Mindful Travel

MK Taxi Shiga has you covered with their premium EV charters, combining sustainability with comfort. More than just a ride, their fleet of cutting-edge IONIQ 5s and Nissan Leafs offers an eco-friendly way to experience the serene beauty of Shiga. It's the perfect blend of modern convenience and mindful travel.

Vehicle Types

MK Taxi Shiga provides an "English-language" booking site with various vehicle types.

IONIQ 5, Camry HV, Sienta, Leaf (4 seats)
Voxy, Serena (6 seats)
Alphard HV (6 seats)
Crown HV (4 seats)
Hiace, Caravan (9 seats)

Charter Fees

Charter fees start from 18,200 yen for 3 hours, with rates varying based on the duration of use and the selected vehicle type. It's essential to note that tours outside Otsu City or areas like Kusatsu and Konan may incur additional fees, and clients are advised to check with MK Taxi for precise pricing details. Charter fees do not cover parking fees, tolls, entrance fees to facilities, or meal expenses.

Cancellations

Clients can make necessary alterations or cancellations directly by phone at 077-531-2001.

The cancellation fees are as follows: until noon on the day before the intended use (0% fee), up to 2 hours before the scheduled pickup time (50% fee), and 2 hours or less prior to the scheduled pickup time (100% fee).

Inquiries or bookings

MK Taxi Shiga

Address: 2-27 4 Chome Ishiyama Temple, Otsu City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 077-531-2001 (English).



MK Taxi English Site

Other Options

For visitors who prefer not to drive from one of the nearby main Cities Shigaraki's local taxi companies provide Minivan Charter services. For more details, please refer to the taxi page in this guide.

Disclaimer: This travel guide is for general information purposes only. While efforts are made to provide accurate and up-to-date information, conditions may change. Verify details with relevant authorities before making travel arrangements. The guide is not responsible for any loss or inconvenience resulting from reliance on the information provided. External links are included for reference but do not imply endorsement. Travellers should exercise judgment and consult with authorities for the latest information specific to their plans.



Rental Car

Easily accessible via well-maintained roads, embark on a captivating journey through its picturesque landscapes and cultural wonders.

Choosing a rental car provides the perfect blend of freedom and flexibility, making it the ideal option for those who wish to explore Shigaraki at their own pace.

Benefits of using a Rental Car

A rental car will offer travellers freedom and flexibility. Here's why opting for a rental car is the perfect choice for those seeking to explore Shigaraki at their own pace.

Scenic Flexibility

Experience the breathtaking beauty of Shigaraki, and take in the surrounding scenery as well. A rental car allows you to design your itinerary, ensuring you don't miss out on any of the region's stunning scenery.

Explore Off the Beaten Path

Discover the hidden gems of Shigaraki by venturing off the beaten path. With a rental car, you can access remote kilns, tranquil shrines, and idyllic countryside spots that may be less reachable by public transport.

Kiln-Hopping Convenience

For pottery enthusiasts, a rental car provides the convenience of transporting delicate ceramics without the limitations of public transportation schedules. Take your time exploring the kilns and galleries, collecting souvenirs without logistical concerns.

Rental Cars

There are limited Rental Car services in Shigaraki so collecting a vehicle before coming is recommended. Rental car agencies can be found across Shiga prefecture, if travelling from Kyoto it is recommended that visitors wishing to hire a rental car or minivan book and pick up their vehicle from one of the nationwide rental car agencies located near the JR Kusatsu Railway Station.

Road access to Shigaraki from Kusatsu is straight forward and using the train services from Kyoto to Kusatsu will avoid the heavy traffic areas of Kyoto.

Rental Car Agencies near Kusatsu Station

Toyota Rent a Lease Shiga Kusatsu Nishi Guchi Branch

Address: 1-27 Nishioji-Cho Kusatsu City Shiga Prefecture
2nd Floor Hotel Boston Plaza Kusatsu Biwako South Wing
Hours: 9:00 - 20:00
Tel: 077-567-5700
Website: <https://rent.toyota.co.jp/>

JR Nishi Nippon Rent a Car & Lease

(1 minute from the West Exit, inside the Nissan Rent-a-Car on the right after crossing the first traffic light through the rotary)
Address: 756-1 Nishioji-Cho Kusatsu City Shiga Prefecture
Hours: 8:00 - 18:00
Tel: 077-565-9052
Website: <https://www.ekiren.com/index>

Nissan Rent a Car Kusatsu Eki Mae Branch

Address: 756-1 Nishioji-Cho Kusatsu City Shiga Prefecture
Hours: 8:00 - 18:00
Tel: 077-565-4123
Website: <https://nissan-rentacar.com/>

Nippon Rent a Car Kusatsu Eki Higashi Guchi Branch

Address: 2-2-6 Oji Kusatsu City Shiga Prefecture
Hours: 8:00 - 18:00
Tel: 077-567-0939
Website: <https://www.nipponrentacar.co.jp/>

Rental Car Agencies in Shigaraki

KS Rentacar

Address: 1406 Maki Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Prefecture
Hours: 7:00 - 21:00
Tel: 0748-83-0005

IMPORTANT

International Driving Permit

- A valid Japanese driver's license or an international driving permit issued by 93 Geneva Convention (1949) member countries + 2 administrative regions, excluding Japan.
- Simultaneous presentation of a valid passport is also necessary.

Foreign Driver's License

- A foreign driver's license from the Swiss Confederation, Federal Republic of Germany, French Republic, Italian Republic, Kingdom of Belgium, and Taiwan can be accepted.
- A Japanese translation of the license and simultaneous presentation of a passport are required.

Safety

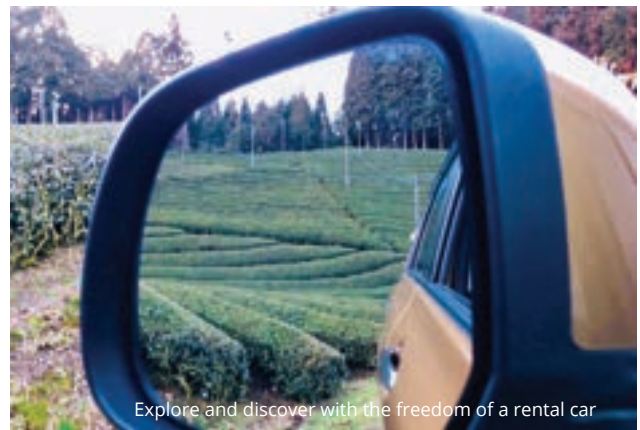
- Cars are right-hand drive, and traffic drives on the left-hand side of the road in Japan.
- Most rental cars are 2WD. (If driving in winter, ask the rental car agency about installing winter tires.)

Navigation systems

- Some vehicles are not fitted with English navigation systems.

Important Travel Tips

- Caution is strongly advised when navigating the local roads, as they tend to be narrow and are accompanied by deep, uncovered concrete "U"-shaped drains along their edges in numerous places. It is crucial for drivers to exercise extreme care, especially when heading to the MIHO MUSEUM or the Tarao region of Shigaraki, where the roads are narrow, making it challenging for two vehicles to pass each other in some areas.
- In the heart of Shigaraki, particularly in the Nagano area where the majority of kilns and pottery galleries are concentrated, the roads are narrow. To avoid complications, it is recommended that visitors park in the spacious, free car parks near the railway station and explore the kiln trails on foot.
- Wildlife, particularly deer, is known to frequently cross the roads at night, posing a potential hazard for drivers. Exercise caution when driving in these conditions.
- During the colder months, the roads may be prone to black ice, making surfaces slippery. Confirm whether rental vehicles are equipped with winter tires before setting out, and adjust driving speed according to the prevailing weather conditions.
- Given Shigaraki's location in a mountainous area, foggy conditions can suddenly occur. Drivers should remain vigilant and adjust their driving accordingly to ensure a safe journey.



Explore and discover with the freedom of a rental car



Enjoy Japanese "Satoyama" scenery while exploring

Local Transport

There are various Choices of local transport in Shigaraki, if you are looking for an eco-friendly option, the COMS electric cars are perfect for exploring the town and its surroundings while minimizing your carbon footprint. For those who prefer two wheels, you can rent a bicycle to leisurely tour the town, visit pottery studios, and immerse yourself in the beautiful landscapes. If you prefer a quicker and more convenient option, taxis are readily available throughout Shigaraki, offering door-to-door service.



Convenient Taxi rank in front of Shigaraki Railway Station

Local Taxis

Shigaraki taxis are available at the taxi stand located in front of Shigaraki Railway Station. It is advisable to make advance reservations or directly contact the taxi company for booking chartered minivans.

Omi Taxi Shigaraki

Address: 192 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan.
Tel: 0748-82-0106

Shiga Taxi Limited - Shigaraki Office

Address: 1189-1 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan.
Tel: 0748-82-1181 *Minivans Available.

Tanuki Taxi

Address: 1330-02 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan.
Tel: 0748-82-3368



Single seater compact electric vehicle

Single-Seater Compact Electric Vehicle "COMS"

Shigaraki Kogen Railway rents the Toyota designed "COMS" electric vehicle. This adorable electric vehicle is perfect for exploring Shigaraki Town.

Location: Shigaraki Kogen Railway Shigaraki Station

Hours: 10:00 - 15:30

Fee: 2,000 yen per vehicle (Limited to the first 2 vehicles)

**Please note that usage is limited to individuals possessing a regular driver's license. (High School students are not eligible.)*

Rental Cycles

At Shigaraki Kogen Railway Station, there is a good range of rental cycles available. There are traditional pedal-powered bicycles or the convenient electric-assisted bike.

The regular bicycles provide a classic and eco-friendly way to explore the picturesque surroundings of Shigaraki. They are perfect for those who enjoy the simplicity of cycling and want to take in the natural beauty at their own pace.

On the other hand, if you're looking for a more effortless and efficient ride, the electric-assist bicycles are an excellent choice. These bikes offer an added boost, making it easier to navigate hilly terrain or cover longer distances without exerting as much effort.

The rental process at Shigaraki Kogen Railway Station is typically straightforward, and the staff is available to assist you with any queries or instructions. Visitors can enjoy the freedom and convenience of cycling as they discover the kilns and unique attractions that Shigaraki has to offer.

Location: Shigaraki Kogen Railway Shigaraki Station

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00

Rental Rates

Regular Bicycle (Non-electric assist): 500 yen per day

Electric-Assist Bicycle: 1,000 yen per day

How to Rent

Enquire at the Railway Station Service Counter.



Single seater compact electric vehicle

Community Bus - Timetables/Routes

Shigaraki is served by a network of community buses (Minivan) that connect various parts of the town. These services operate on a loop circuit (*depending on the route). The timetables have times changes for weekends and public holidays and some services are not offered during Obon holiday and the New Years holiday period. These community buses allow convenient access to some of the attractions in Shigaraki for those without a car.

Note: Always check the bus schedules and routes in advance. Minivans are used to cover the various routes and due to the smaller capacity of these vehicles, there maybe some times of the day when using the community bus is difficult.

Shigaraki Station to Toge no Mori (Weekdays)

Shigaraki Kogen Railway		Dep. Shigaraki St.	→	Arr. Toge no Mori	Arr. In front of Toge Kan
Dep Kibukawa	Arr Shigaraki				
		7:07	→	7:20	-
6:50	7:14	8:34	→	8:36	-
8:05	8:29				
9:14	9:38	9:50	→	9:53	9:54
10:24	10:48	11:55	→	11:58	11:59
11:24	11:48				
12:24	12:48	14:55	→	15:08	-
13:24	13:48				
14:24	14:48				
15:24	15:49	15:55	→	16:08	-

Toge no Mori to Shigaraki Station (Weekdays)

Dep. Toge no Mori	Dep. In front of Toge Kan	→	Arr. Shigaraki St.	Shigaraki Kogen Railway	
				Dep Shigaraki	Arr Kibukawa
	7:20	→	7:24	7:31	7:55
11:58	11:59	→	12:13	12:54	13:17
14:34	14:35	→	9:54	14:54	15:17
	15:08	→	11:59	16:04	16:27
15:33	15:35	→	-		
	16:08	→	-	17:06	17:29
16:41	16:42	→	16:47		

Shigaraki Station to Toge no Mori (Weekends and Holidays)

Shigaraki Kogen Railway		Dep. Shigaraki St.	→	Arr. Toge no Mori	Arr. In front of Toge Kan
Dep Kibukawa	Arr Shigaraki				
		7:07	→	7:20	-
6:50	7:14	8:34	→	8:36	-
8:05	8:29				
9:14	9:38	9:50	→	9:53	9:54
10:24	10:48				
11:24	11:48				
12:24	12:48				
13:24	13:48				
14:24	14:48				
15:24	15:49				

Toge no Mori to Shigaraki Station (Weekends and Holidays)

Dep. Toge no Mori	Dep. In front of Toge Kan	→	Arr. Shigaraki St.	Shigaraki Kogen Railway	
				Dep Shigaraki	Arr Kibukawa
				11:54	12:17
				12:54	13:17
				13:54	14:17
14:34	14:35	→	14:40	14:54	15:17
15:33	15:35	→	15:40	16:04	16:27
16:41	16:42	→	16:47	17:06	17:29

Getting To MIHO MUSEUM

Community Bus Schedule - MIHO MUSEUM to Toge No Mori
(WEEK DAYS, WEEKENDS AND PUB. HOL)

Dep. Miho Museum	→	Toge no Mori - In front of Toge Kan	Toge no Mori	Arr. Shigaraki St.	Shigaraki Kogen Railway	
					Dep Shigaraki	Arr Kibukawa
14:06	→	14:34	14:35	14:40	14:54	15:17

Community Bus Schedules - Toge No Mori to MIHO MUSEUM
(WEEK DAYS, WEEKENDS AND PUB. HOL)

Shigaraki Kogen Railway		Dep. Shigaraki St.	Toge no Mori - In front of Toge Kan	Toge no Mori	→	Arr. Miho Museum
Dep Kibukawa	Arr Shigaraki					
9:14	9:38	9:50	9:54	9:55	→	10:10



Koka City Community Bus

Note: "Teisan Bus" operates a service from MIHO MUSEUM to Ishiyama Station from 11:00 to 17:00 with one bus running every hour.

Community Bus Schedule and Routes (*QR CODE links are in Japanese Language Only)



F1

Asamiya District Timetables (JP Language)



F2

Tarao District Timetables (JP Language)



F3

Tashiro/ Hata/ Toge no Mori Timetables (JP Language)



Route Map (JP Language)

Use the QR Codes to access the comprehensive timetables for the various community service buses, that operate in the Shigaraki area. The various routes are colour coded on the route map and have a different code to make using the service easier.

The codes are displayed in the front window on the right-hand side.

Fare: 250 yen Adult / 130 yen Child

Four Seasons

Shigaraki is known not only for its pottery but also for its distinctive four seasons. From spring's cherry blossoms to summer's vibrant greenery and cultural activities, autumn's warm hues transforming kilns, to winter's serene charm with occasional snow, each season offers unique experiences.



Spring breathes life into Shigaraki, transforming it into a picturesque haven. The mountains surrounding the region come alive with vibrant hues as leaves start to bud, creating a stunning panorama.

Along the rivers of the town, cherry blossom trees burst into bloom, painting the landscape in delicate shades of pink. Among these, the Hata Weeping Cherry Blossom tree stands as a symbol of unparalleled beauty.

In the serene hills of Asamiya, the emergence of new tea sprouts signals the beginning of a new season for tea enthusiasts. The golf courses of the area offer a delightful retreat, inviting enthusiasts to enjoy a round amidst the blossoming scenery. Shigaraki's shrines and temples, become even more captivating during spring. Many of these locales are revered as power spots, adding a spiritual dimension to the season's allure.



Spring - (Mar - May)
Temperatures increase gradually, with maximum temperatures rising from 11.0°C in March to 21.8°C in May. There is a significant increase in rain during this time of the year, with the most rainfall expected in April.



Summer in Shigaraki is a delightful blend of natural beauty and cultural richness. With rising temperatures, the surrounding mountains and landscapes burst into lush greenery, creating a vibrant backdrop for summer activities.

Riverside areas in town have become inviting spots for leisurely walks and picnics, offering a tranquil atmosphere with the soothing sound of flowing water. Traditional pottery studios and galleries in Shigaraki come alive with summer workshops and events, providing visitors with opportunities to immerse themselves in the local arts.

Notable summer festivals, like the Shigaraki Hi Matsuri (Fire Festival), mark significant cultural events featuring lively performances and traditional rituals. These festivities add a festive touch to the city, fostering a sense of community and joy among locals and visitors alike.

For those seeking a fantastic escape from the summer heat, Shigaraki's green spaces offer shaded pathways. Exploring the region's tea fields and enjoying freshly brewed local tea become refreshing experiences, highlighting the cultural richness that defines Shigaraki.

Summer (Jun - Aug)
Peak temperatures occur in Shigaraki during these months, maximum temperatures reach in excess of 28.8°C during July and in excess of 30.0°C during August. The most rain in the year falls in June and July.



Embraced by the surrounding mountains adorned in autumnal splendour, Shigaraki comes alive with vibrant hues as leaves change, transforming the town into a picturesque canvas.

Exploring the kilns and galleries during this season is an enriched experience. The "Shigaraki Mori no Craft Festa" is a great place to get in some shopping and to meet the artists of the area in person. Cooler temperatures also create perfect conditions for pleasant walks or cycling, inviting visitors to climb Mt. Atago's peak and pay homage to the pottery gods.

A stroll along the Shigaraki River paths in the town centre provides a serene escape. It's harvest time, and the local rice and produce and locally grown Matsutake mushrooms make for a culinary must, adding a delightful touch to the autumnal charm.



Autumn (Sep - Nov) :
Temperatures gradually start to decrease, with maximum temperatures ranging from 26.0°C in September to 14.9°C in November. Rain levels are still high in September but start to decrease during October and November.



Winter transforms Shigaraki into a serene wonderland, where the delicate touch of snow blankets the town. As temperatures drop, the warmth of traditional Japanese hot pot dishes like sukiyaki and shabu-shabu becomes a comforting ritual for locals and visitors alike. The sizzling sounds of ingredients cooking in a simmering earthenware pot, together with cosy ambience, offering the perfect way to warm up on chilly winter days. The snowy landscapes add a magical touch to the already picturesque town, turning Shigaraki into a serene and enchanting destination during winter.



Winter (Dec - Feb)
The lowest temperatures of the year, with minimum temperatures ranging from -1.9°C to -3.5°C occur during December and January. The rain levels at this time of the year are relatively low, with January being one of the driest months of the year.

Shigaraki Annual Temperatures

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
MAX Temp	6.5	7.1	11.0	17.3	21.8	25.0	28.8	30.0	26.0	20.3	14.9	9.5
AVG Temp	1.4	1.7	4.9	10.4	15.4	19.6	23.5	24.3	20.5	14.0	8.2	3.3
MIN Temp	-3.5	-3.4	-1.1	3.4	9.1	14.6	19.1	19.6	15.9	8.5	2.4	-1.9



Pottery

Shigaraki Clay



Hattori Kouzan - Former Clay Mine

Shigaraki Clay

Shigaraki ceramics have been shaped by several key factors, with the availability of high-quality clay playing a pivotal role. Shigaraki clay possesses unique properties that enable the creating of a wide range of ceramics.

Shigaraki clay exhibits remarkable dry strength due to the presence of angular sand particles, allowing for the construction of large objects like tanuki figurines. However, when mixed with water, the particles within the clay transform into a finer, more rounded form, making the clay ideal for crafting smaller items such as tableware and tea utensils on a potter's wheel.

An essential aspect of Shigaraki ware is the kiln transformation that occurs in wood-fired kilns, resulting in distinctive effects that are referred to in Japanese as "ishi haze," "kani no me," and "hiiro."

Various soil types are mined in Shigaraki; every clay produced has unique properties and applications. "Gairome" clay stands out for its quartz sand particles, "Kibushi" clay contains fossilized plants, and "Mizuchi" is a blended clay for achieving specific kiln transformations.

Historical records from the late Edo and early Meiji periods mention the use of white clay from the "Nihon Maru" and "Kananbo" districts of the area for creating "Shigaraki ware".

Shigaraki ceramics are usually fired at around 1250°C; the "Kibushi" based clays require higher firing temperatures. To address this issue, "Mizuchi"-based clay, known for its low refractoriness, is blended with "Kibushi"-based clay to reduce water absorption.

The region's geological history, dating back to the Cretaceous period, directly impacts Shigaraki ware. Granite bedrock formed from slowly cooling magma, and the clay used in Shigaraki ceramics results from the weathering of the granite. The physical and chemical transformation of granite, influenced by water, leads to the creation of clay minerals like kaolinite.

Shigaraki boasts various clay and intrusion rock resources, and aplite is one of the notable examples. Aplitite, a fine-grained rock with high quartz and feldspar content, is a raw material for mosaic tiles and sanitary ceramics. When added to ceramic bases, the aplitite acts as a flux during firing, reducing water absorption and can also be used for glazes.

Shiga Prefecture's aplitite holds significant mineral importance in the Kinki region due to its high production and diverse applications. In Shigaraki, several mines are involved in mining clay and other minerals. "Hoka" Mine, located in Hokke, Iga City, to the southeast of JR Kansai Main Line's Shimagahara Station, extracts "Kibushi" clay and "Gairome" clay through open-pit mining using the bench-cutting method.

Initially, manual tools were used for mining, but later, conveyor belts, wheel loaders, hydraulic shovels, and other machinery were introduced to enhance the mining process. The extracted clay is mainly shipped to Shigaraki.

Processed Clay Types

Rod Clay

Rod clay, known for its coarse and dry processing, exhibits exceptional responsiveness to the transforming effects of firing. A staple in traditional Shigaraki pottery, the rock undergoes grinding using rods (steel bars). The linear contact points in this process prevent the final clay from being too finely ground.



Clay after processing

Ichi Go Clay

Representing the quintessential "Red Clay" of Shigaraki, Ichi Go Clay boasts a pale red colour and a slight coarseness (30 mesh). With a firing temperature ranging from 1230-1280°C, it has a fine grain, making it suitable for various applications, from flower pots to tableware and folk crafts.

Tokusuki Clay

Tokusuki Clay, a semi-porcelain variant, excels in firing and is non-porous, making it ideal for slip-casting. With a firing temperature of 1230-1250°C, it is commonly used for small to medium-sized items, including tableware and flower vases. Its versatility extends to potter's wheel shaping.

Decoding the Elegance Shigaraki Uzukumaru Jars



Uzukumaru jars, repurposed as flower vases, are renowned for their origins in ancient Shigaraki and Iga, with examples also found in Bizen and Karatsu. The name comes from the posture of squatting, resembling one embracing their knees. Originally used as grain or oil jars, tea enthusiasts transformed these everyday items into flower vases. The term "Uzukumaru" became established during the Edo period.

Shigaraki's Uzukumaru jars, dating back to the late Kamakura to the Muromachi period, are generally small, around 20 cm in height, some with holes for hanging flower arrangements. The surface of Uzukumaru jars undulates subtly due to cord-mark patterns. Areas covered in ash display scorching and natural glaze, while sections without ash reveal a crimson hue. When selecting, consider the unique skin texture from firing and the overall form.

The charm lies in their rustic and amiable appearance, featuring rounded shoulders and a swelling body. Balancing elements like shoulder roundness and body width enhances the overall appeal. The mouth of Uzukumaru jars is notably distinctive, featuring double mouths. From a contemporary perspective this is a decorative element, historically, the double mouth served a practical purpose.

Examining the shoulder area, the "Higakimon" design, with intersecting lines resembling a cypress wood fence, is not uniform but adds dynamic charm. This pattern, common in the Muromachi period, became a characteristic feature in Shigaraki pottery.

Uzukumaru jars typically have a flat base. Some may feature a textured bottom resembling the teeth of geta (Japanese wooden sandals). Referred to as "Geta-In," concave markings called "Iri-Geta" and convex markings are called "De-Geta." These marks help ensure the centre remains stable during wheel throwing, preventing gaps in the bottom during firing.

Firing Effects/Glazes

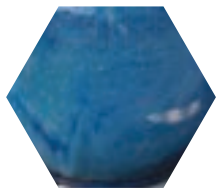
Characteristics of Traditional Shigaraki Pottery

Shigaraki pottery is a captivating blend of natural aesthetics and traditional craftsmanship. The flames and wood-fired ashes interact with the clay, yielding unpredictable and unique patterns that reflect the wabi-sabi aesthetic, celebrating imperfection and the beauty of natural processes. Some of the endearing characteristics of Shigaraki pottery are outlined here to make appreciation of the pottery a little easier.

Traditional Shigaraki Glazed Finish

Sea Cucumber Glaze ("Namako-yu")

A glaze named for its resemblance to sea cucumber colours, it is applied in two layers and fired to create a white opaque glaze. It is widely used in Shigaraki pottery, especially in the production of braziers.



Natural Glazing

Natural Glaze

This glaze is formed when wood ash from burnt firewood accumulates on the pottery's surface during firing, interacting with the long stone and creating a glassy, semi-translucent texture known as "natural glaze" or "beadoro glaze." The result varies subtly due to factors like humidity and firing conditions.

Oxidation and Reduction

Oxidation firing occurs when ceramics are fired in a well-ventilated environment with sufficient oxygen, resulting in specific colouration. In contrast, reduction firing happens in an oxygen-deprived environment, causing a different colouration.

Wood Fired Effects

Scarlet or Hi iro

The iron content in the base material oxidizes, resulting in a reddish-brown colour. It's called "fire colour" or "scarlet" because it resembles the colour of flames. It appears where the flames directly touch the pottery, while the areas not in direct contact remain white as the base material. The transformation in colour is one of the most captivating features of Shigaraki pottery.



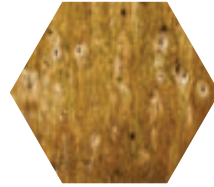
Ash Glaze

Wood, which serves as fuel, turns into ash when it burns out and may settle on the pottery, adhering during the firing process. When this ash covering carbonizes, it turns black, creating a striking effect on the vessel.



Natural Glaze

The components in the ash, such as alkali and lime, react with the silica in the base material, melting and forming a glassy glaze. This is called "Shizenyu," and it can change in colour depending on the firing conditions, producing shades of green, yellow, and brown.



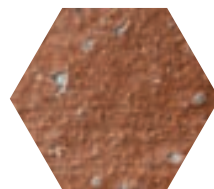
Hailstones

Feldspar, which is abundant in Shigaraki clay, melts at high temperatures and forms white glassy granules on the surface. This appearance resembles fallen hailstones, giving rise to the name "Arare." Its expanded look is also likened to crab eyes.



Ishi Haze (Stone Burst)

While the silica particles in the clay won't melt even at 1300 degrees, they may surface due to the base material's shrinkage, resembling stones that have burst. Hence, it's called "Ishi haze."



Dragonfly Eyes

This occurs when the melted long stone flows and forms into droplets with a rounded, hemispherical tip. Resembling the eyes of a dragonfly, it exhibits a complex and beautiful array of colours.



Loading of the Kiln

The loading of a kiln is a crucial step in pottery making that significantly impacts the colouration of the finished pieces. This process is not just about arranging pottery inside the kiln, the arrangement of the pottery, the placement of glazes, and the firing conditions all influence the final colours and patterns of the pieces. In wood-fired kilns, the type of wood used, its placement in the kiln, and the path of the flames can introduce ash and smoke, which can interact with the glaze and clay, creating unique and often unpredictable colour variations.

Shigaraki's Kiln Types

In Shigaraki, various types of kilns are used to produce create traditional and contemporary ceramics. Some of the most common types of kilns found in Shigaraki, are outlined below for ease of understanding when visiting the various pottery workshops in the region.

Traditional Kilns

Noborigama (Climbing Kiln)

Noborigama are built on a slope with chambers rising in succession, they have been in use in Japan since the 17th century. A key advantage is the efficient use of excess heat, the firing in the lower chambers preheats upper chambers, and preheats incoming air. Smaller climbing kilns, are prone to rapid cooling and require more work to operate.



Noborigama

Anagama

Anagama are single-chamber, wood-burning kilns designed in a tunnel shape and play a significant role in Shigaraki ceramics. The kiln is stoked with firewood until specific conditions for firing are achieved. Ceramic works fired in this type of kiln form a natural ash glaze through the interaction of the flames, ash, and clay minerals. When loading the kiln, careful attention is paid to the placement of the pottery to achieve the effects desired on the completed item. The firing duration of an Anagama Kiln varies from 48 hours to over 12 days.



Anagama Kiln

Modern Kilns

Gas Kilns

Modern versions are used alongside traditional wood-fired kilns for more precise temperature control and suitability for various pottery styles.

Electric Kilns

Known for their reliability and ease of use, electric kilns are employed in Shigaraki, making them suitable for artists working with different clay bodies and glaze formulations.

Tunnel Kilns

Long, continuous kilns used for large-scale production, with efficient temperature control and heat recycling. One of Shigaraki's largest tunnel kilns is now a popular restaurant and cafe.

Fast Firing Kilns

Some potters in Shigaraki use high-velocity gas or electric kilns that can quickly reach high temperatures, particularly suitable for contemporary ceramics.

Historical Kilns

Kanayama Kiln

Located at the Shigaraki Ceramic Culture Park, this reconstructed kiln

replicates the 2nd kiln from the Kanayama archaeological site, dating back to the latter half of the 16th century. Characterized by a steep slope and a dividing firebox wall, it is considered the original prototype for noborigama climbing kilns.



Reconstructed Historical Kiln

Kiln Firings

Wood-fired kilns in Shigaraki follow a meticulous firing process, wherein the kiln is loaded with a diverse array of ceramics, ranging from functional pottery to artistic masterpieces.

The kiln are generally stoked with red pine, which is generally sourced from outside Shigaraki, the way in which red pine burns imparts distinctive characteristics to the fired pieces. One of the intriguing aspects of wood-fired kiln firings is the unpredictable nature of the process. Factors such as the type of wood used, the kiln's design, and even atmospheric conditions play a role in shaping the final outcome. The unpredictable nature of wood fired kilns adds a touch of spontaneity and individuality to each piece, making each piece truly one-of-a-kind.

Wood-fired kiln firings in Shigaraki hold cultural significance. They embody a harmonious relationship between human craftsmanship and the elements, honouring the region's historical connection to pottery. The firing events also serve as communal gatherings, fostering a sense of camaraderie among artisans and enthusiasts alike.

Wood fired kiln firings do not occur every day in Shigaraki and it depends on the loadings of the various kilns as to when they are fired. Collaboration between people and large volumes of firewood are required for each firing so co-ordination is very important. Many of the kiln operations producing ceramics commercially use electric and gas fired kilns as opposed to wood fired kilns, however, Shigaraki ware is unglazed, wood fired ceramics and this firing method is highly respected and has been kept alive across generations.

For visitors that wish to see a wood fired kiln in operation, there are several kilns in the area that still fire on a regular basis, check the dates with the Shigaraki Tourist Association or with the kilns directly.

Japanese Pottery influence on Apple Boss - Steve Jobs

Steve Jobs found inspiration in Kyoto's Japanese ceramics in 1996. Captivated by Shokunaga Yukio's Etchu Seto-yaki creations and enamoured with sloping corners, Jobs shaped Apple's sleek aesthetics. His fascination persisted through 1999, exploring a 16th-century Shigaraki-yaki pot. The connection deepened in Shigaraki, meeting Takahashi Rakusai the Fifth, solidifying Jobs' legacy as a true aficionado, forever weaving the spirit of Japanese ceramics into Apple's innovation.

Exploring the Kilns and Galleries of Shigaraki



Hidden Galleries



Treasure Troves of Inspiration



Gallery and Kiln Shops

Shigaraki earned a new level of recognition when it played a central role in the 2019 NHK morning drama series titled "Scarlet," bringing the town's captivating charm to a national and even international audience. Shigaraki is, without a doubt, a haven for pottery enthusiasts from all over the world.

Shigaraki earned a new level of recognition when it played a central role in the 2019 NHK morning drama series titled "Scarlet," bringing the town's captivating charm to a national and even international audience.

Stepping foot into the Nagano area of Shigaraki, immerses visitors in a world where every street tells a tale of craftsmanship and artistry. The town offers an extensive exploration of its ceramic heritage, inviting visitors to embark on a journey of discovery. The opportunity to partake in pottery experiences, witness the age-old craft of kiln firing and delve into the very essence of Shigaraki ware through encounters with talented artists and artisans who continue to breathe life into this tradition.

One of the top activities to enjoy in Shigaraki is a kiln-hopping adventure. Kiln visits provide a unique opportunity to step into the world of ceramics, observe the meticulous process of crafting pottery, and interact with the artists behind these exquisite creations. Each kiln has its own story, and each artist adds their personal touch to the pieces they produce. It's a chance to witness the magic of clay transforming into beautiful, functional art. Explore the galleries adjacent to these kilns, and most visitors will find themselves on a treasure hunt, searching for exceptional ceramic works that can adorn their living spaces or serve as delightful gifts to loved ones.

Shigaraki has not only preserved its heritage but also embraced the present and the evolving tastes of contemporary enthusiasts. The town has seen the rise of stylish cafes and boutiques that cater to the ever-growing number of pottery lovers. Here, visitors can savour a cup of tea or coffee in uniquely crafted Shigaraki ware teacups, or shop for ceramics that blend tradition with modern aesthetics. These establishments add a touch of elegance a journey through the town, making it a place where artistry meets the comfort of a warm beverage and the thrill of discovering one-of-a-kind pieces.

In Shigaraki there are several ways to become immersed in the world of ceramics, and get close to the artisans, experiencing firsthand the beauty of Shigaraki ware .



Thatched Roof Buildings house beautiful galleries

Kiln Exploration Trail - "Wa"

Information on the galleries and the kilns along the Kiln Exploration Trail - Wa in the centre of Shigaraki is outlined on the following pages of this guide. Walking around these kilns is a great way to see and experience some of the area's ancient kilns and meet their owners.

Other Galleries and Kilns

When visiting Shigaraki, it is also important to remember that beyond the Kiln Exploration trail, there are even more artists to discover and kilns and galleries to visit. Check the other galleries' list for further information. Many of the smaller workshops and galleries also offer hands-on pottery-making lessons. Accessing some of these galleries and kilns may require a rental car or taxi, but the effort is worth it, and many surprises and once-in-a-lifetime experiences await.

Restaurants and Refreshments

Pottery is primarily produced as vessels for serving food and beverages, and there is nothing quite like enjoying delicious food on beautiful pottery. Later in this guide, the restaurants and the cafes of the area are also outlined for visitors' gastronomical pleasure.

Pottery and Artists Supply Stores

For visitors eager to explore this world of artistry, going beyond the galleries and kilns and visiting Shigaraki's pottery and artists' supply stores is a must. These emporiums house a treasure trove of specialized tools and equipment, a vast array of glazes in a mesmerizing spectrum of colours, and so much more. Many of the items sold are not only of exceptional quality but also distinctively tailored to the unique demands of Japan's pottery sector. It's a chance to be immersed in the very essence of this rich tradition and acquire the tools and materials that could bring pottery aspirations to life. If nothing else, visiting these stores will help visitors understand and appreciate pottery from a different perspective.

Essential Tips

For visitors to get the most out of a visit, comprehensive information on how to appreciate Shigaraki ware and prior planning is essential.

- Traditional Shigaraki ware is fired without glazes and the Japanese term "Haikaburi", is used to explain the affect of ash descending onto clay, in a wood fired kiln, creating a unique, glass-like finish. This unpredictable colouring and pattern ensure each piece is one of a kind. Despite the artisans loading the kilns with careful intent the final aesthetic is left totally up to the gods!
- Researching and providing information for travellers to understand the types of kilns and galleries that will captivate the imagination of the clients is recommended.
- Ensure to contact the kilns in advance especially, if you wish to see the artisans at work. During certain times of the year or when the kilns are busy filing orders this may not be possible.
- When planning and making enquiries or reservations, it is recommended these enquiries are made to the Shigaraki Tourism Association who can negate the language barriers and assist with enquiries more efficiently.
- Restaurants and cafes are generally small, making reservations in advance is recommended. If cancelling allow plenty of time to ensure that restaurateurs are able to keep their businesses sustainable.

Shigaraki's Kiln Exploration Area

The "Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail Committee" developed an exploration trail and created resources to promote the trail and area in 2003, with the vision of opening up many of the workshops in the area for visitors to experience a deeper side of Shigaraki that was previously hidden behind closed doors. The "Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Area" is visitors' key to getting a deeper look into what is involved in making pottery and gives a new depth of appreciation to the galleries and products that can be seen and enjoyed around the area.

Guide to Walking the Trails of the Shigaraki Kiln Area

The Kiln Trail is named "Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Wa" and comprises of four routes:

"Rokurozaka"	Potter's Wheel Slope
"Hiirizaka"	Colour of Fire Slope
"Kamabasaka"	Kiln Site Slope
"Sotonowa no Michi"	Outer Loop Road

Kilns are scattered throughout these routes. Since the routes are interconnected, visitors can start from any point along the Kiln Exploration Trail. However, for convenience, distances and estimated walking times from the starting point at the Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine are indicated on the website and in documentation.

Important Information

Pottery in Shigaraki is produced on a commercial scale and at a private atelier scale. In the past visitors could not visit the workshops of kilns making pottery. However, the "Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail Wa" has changed this and now visitation to interesting pottery production areas is possible, making the processes of pottery-making, mould creation, and kiln firings more visible.

Website

The "Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Wa" has a website which is updated regularly, which provides in-depth information on the best ways to explore and which kilns are open and which kilns are closed on certain days. There are downloadable maps, and the page is equipped with Auto-translate functionality, allowing a clear understanding of the content for speakers of various languages.

Website: <https://shigaraki-wa.jp/>



Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail Website - Multi Language Capability

Discover
信楽
SHIGARAKI
JAPAN

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Important Notes

- Kiln owners and staff may not have time to be hospitable. If they are busy working on orders or in the middle of a process. They would like nothing more than to share their workplaces, however they ask for visitors' understanding in these cases. Also many may not have confidence with language skills to communicate, however will try their best.
- The Kilns of Shigaraki operate on varying schedules and may not have uniform holidays or business hours. Please check the Kiln's holidays and hours on the web kiln list.
- Visitors wishing to visit a pottery-making site, typically not open to the public, such as the Kiln's production area, or to see kiln firings, please contact the Kiln in advance via phone or email. Please remember that English is difficult for everyone to understand. Inform the representative of your purpose, the number of visitors, date and time you are planning to visit.
- Many kilns sell their products directly, so please check their offerings on their Kiln's official website.
- During peak seasons, weekends, and holidays, parking spaces can become limited, so confirm parking locations in advance.



Uzan Gama Gallery



Walk and Explore the Kilns of Shigaraki's Nagano District



Uzan Gama Workshop



Glazing Ikebana ware at Yamakane Seutosho



Shigaraki's Kiln Exploration Area

Rokuro Saka

Uzan Gama

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Uzan Gama Kiln employs time-honoured techniques to craft a diverse array of items, both large and small. The factory and workshop can be explored with prior arrangement and coordination, and there is a stylish gallery for visitors to enjoy shopping.

Address: 789 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0203

Contact: Teruyuki Nishio

Products: Umbrella stands, flower vases, contemporary tableware, translucent ceramic lighting, hand wash basins, and more.

Hours: 9:30 - 17:00

Closed: Irregular holidays

Website: <https://uzan.jp/>

Marushi Seito Co., Ltd.

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Marushi Seito is dedicated to crafting pottery that seamlessly blends with contemporary lifestyles, a testament to the kilns' commitment to modern living. Creations can be purchased directly from the tastefully designed gallery space. Marushi Seito is an integral part of the KIKOF brand, contributing to and producing ceramics that are part of a broader collection that includes furniture, textiles and more, celebrating the rich craftsmanship of Shiga Prefecture, creating a bridge between tradition and modernity.

Address: 953 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0033

Contact: Masayuki Imai

Product: Hand wash basins, umbrella stands, garden tables, large vases, and KIKOF (Contemporary tableware).

Hours: Weekdays and Saturdays from 9:00 - 17:00

Closed: Irregular holidays

(Inquire in advance)

Website: <https://www.shigaraki-marushi.com/>

Shimakichi Toubou

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Original pottery, handmade craftsmanship, with a focus on everyday tableware.

Address: 1010 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0154

Contact: Kozo Shimada

Products: Tableware

Hours: Open from 9:00 - 17:00

Closed: Irregular holidays

(Inquire in advance)

Website: Not Available

Shikuya Seutosho

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Shikuya Seutosho specializes in producing frogs and has done so for two generations and for over 45 years. Shigaraki has an image of tanuki and not many people are aware that frog-shaped Shigaraki ceramics with a brown Irabo glaze are produced and also considered lucky charms and are well-known as decorations placed in gardens, entrances, and at the entrances of shops.

Address: 820-3 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0096

Contact: Yasutoshi Uda

Products: Ornaments, small items, and miscellaneous goods

Hours: Weekdays 9:00 - 17:00

Closed: Saturdays, Sundays, and Public holidays

Website: <https://shikuya.com/>

Tsubo Bun

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Established in 1862. 5th generation owner, Bungo Okuda creates large pottery items such as ceramic bathtubs and planters, while his brother Sho Okuda works on daily creations of smaller pottery items like tableware. Each piece is handcrafted with a simple and modern design. Items like reversible dishes, suitable for use on both sides, are quite popular.

Address: 1087 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-3153

Contact: Sho Okuda

Products: Tableware, Flower vases, Bonsai pots, Handwash basins, Large planters, Ceramic bathtubs

Hours: 10:00 - 18:00 (Closed from 12:00 - 13:00) (Winter: 10:00 - 17:00)

Closed: Mon, and the 2nd and 4th Tue of the month.

(Contact in advance for closures related to events)

Website: <http://www.bungoro.com/>

Marubei Seito Sho

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Marubei Seito Sho is located at the top end of the Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail. Skilled traditional craftsmen work diligently every

day to create pottery stunning pottery pieces on a daily basis. The primary focus is on creating unique pottery, with a central emphasis on making flower vases using the Tatara forming technique. Items can be purchased through the gallery shop. Kanzaki san is also the famed "Shigaraki apple pie man", a delicious treat to look out for at local pottery and craft events.

Address: 944 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-2012

Contact: Masumitsu Kanzaki

Products: Flower Vases, Umbrella Stands

Hours: Weekdays 9:00 - 17:00

Closed: Saturdays, Sundays, and Public holidays

Website: Not Available

Meizan Gama (Ogama Gallery)

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Ogama is the antenna shop of Meizan Kiln. It was opened in 2010 after renovating an old Noborigama kiln and surrounding workshop. Ogama is a symbol of the beauty of Shigaraki and the location on a rise on the Kiln exploration Trail route, provides spectacular views over the surrounding houses and kilns, providing a place where you can experience the unadorned beauty of Shigaraki pottery. Ogama has a Cafe, Accommodation and offers pottery classes. The Noborigama is open for visitors to freely view and take photos, however tours of the workshops and production facilities are currently not available.

Address: 947 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-8066

(Ogama has a small staff, so it may be challenging to reach by phone.

Contact via email.)

Products: Hina Dolls, Helmets, Owls, Ceramic Aquariums, Flower Arrangement Vessels, Umbrella Stands, Wash Basins, Modern tableware.

Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Holidays 11:00 - 16:30

(Last order 16:00)

Closed: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Website: <https://www.meizan.info/ogama/about>

Tsubokuro Toubou × Lily of the Valley

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Creations express the unique depth and serenity of Goshu. The Jizo-san (a Buddhist deity) which has been cherished by many people over the 20 years since it was released. The kiln also produces whimsical pottery figurines and miscellaneous pottery goods.

Address: 1384-121 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0446

Contact: Shoko Tomimasa

Products: Flower Vases, Tableware, Hand Washbasins, Umbrella Stands,

Large Vases, Miscellaneous items, Pottery Figurines, Jizo-san (Buddhist deity)

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00

Closed: Irregular holidays

(Contact in advance of visiting)

Website: <https://www.ac-koka.jp/~mth08701/>

Eizan Gama Houshouan

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Rokuro Saka

Throughout the transition from ancient Shigaraki ceramics to the present day, Eizan Gama Houshouan has contributed to ensuring that Shigaraki ware plays a prominent role in the world of the tea ceremony. Eizan Okuda is a registered treasure of Koka City and a tea master. Pottery lessons and experiencing the way of tea can be enjoyed at the Kiln. Eizan Gama Houshouan provides visitors with a deep and meaningful experience.

Address: 1036 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0114

Contact: Eizan Okuda

Products: Tea ceramics and tableware

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00

Closed: Irregular holidays

Website: <https://www.eonet.ne.jp/~eizangama/>

Hiiro Tsubo Zaka

Toranosu

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Hiiro Tsubo Zaka

A standalone pottery gallery located in the residential area of Shigaraki. Primarily exhibit and sell "naotora" tableware for daily usage. The shop also features a cafe (with some takeout options).

Address: 822 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-60-3233

Contact: Miyako Tanii

Hours: 11:00 - 16:00

Closed: Irregular holidays

(Contact in advance of visiting)

Website: <https://toranosu.com/>



Shigaraki's Kiln Exploration Area

Okuda Maru Taka Gama

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Hiiro Tsubo Zaka

Specialising in the creation of creative animal figurines, primarily tanuki, Chinese zodiac animals, and owls. Most items are crafted using the casting method, where clay is poured into plaster moulds. For workshop visits and tours prior arrangement and co-ordination is required.

Address: 967 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan
Tel: 0748-82-0723

Contact: Ryuji Okuda

Products: Figurines (*Tanuki, Chinese zodiac animals, and various animals*)

Hours: Weekdays, 1st and 3rd Saturdays 8:00 - 17:00

Closed: Sundays, 2nd and 4th Saturdays
(*Irregular holidays on public holidays*)

Website: Not Available

Kamaba Saka

Yamakane Seutosho and Toubou Jun

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Kamaba Saka

Yamakane Seutosho, founded during the Taisho era, is steadfastly committed to crafting exquisite flower vases tailored for Ikebana. Toubou Jun is located opposite the main factory in a repurposed workshop; the studio places a premium on the art of handcrafting, shunning mass production in favour of creating intricate, detailed figurines and internationally acclaimed pottery jewellery. For those with a passion for floral arrangements, a fascination with pottery figurines, or those searching for a distinctive gift for special occasions like a child's first birthday, this studio is an oasis of artistic expression. It also provides a cosy and welcoming setting for those seeking a peaceful escape to savour quality moments. All visitors are extended a warm and open invitation to experience the studio's artistry.

Address: 1423-10 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-1732

Contact: Junko Kuzuhara

Products: **Factory:** Specialist in vessels for Ikebana Floral Arrangements.

Artist: Handmade Pottery Figurines and Lightweight Revolutionary Ceramic Jewellery

Hours: 10:00 - 17:00

Closed: Irregular holidays (*Inquire in advance*)

Website: <http://www.tohbo-jun.jp/>

Ogawa Kenzo Toubou

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Kamaba Saka

At Ogawa Kenzo Toubou (Pottery Studio), pottery-making is undertaken on a daily basis and we offer pottery workshop experiences. A father and son team, dedicate themselves to "creating things" that reflect their individual personalities.

Address: 755-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-2216

Contact: Kiichi Ogawa

Products: Tableware

Hours: 11:00 - 16:00

Closed: Irregular holidays (*Contact in advance of visiting*)

Website: <https://ogawa-kenzo.com/>

Tanikan Gama and Gallery Houzan

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Kamaba Saka

Nestled along the Kiln Exploration Trail in Shigaraki, Tanikan Gama (Kiln) proudly upholds the age-old legacy of Shigaraki ceramics, a tradition passed down through generations of the family. The establishment boasts a spacious gallery and a charming café, creating an atmosphere that makes every visit a unique and memorable experience.

Address: 788 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-2462

Contact: Yuko Tani

Products: Japanese tableware, tea ceramics, flower vases

Hours: Wednesday to Monday: 10:30 - 17:00

Closed: Tuesdays, year-end, and New Year holidays

Café and Dining: Café, Coffee shop

Hours: Wednesday to Monday, 10:30 - 17:00

Website: <https://www.tanikangama.com/>

Masumi Gama

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Kamaba Saka

Specializes in crafting everyday tableware, that is visually delightful and enjoyable to use and perfect for gifting to others.

Address: 763 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-2222

Contact: Masumi Ueda

Products: Tableware and other items

Hours: Irregular schedule

(*Inquire in advance, tours require prior reservation*)

Website: Not Available

Matsusho Gama (Shiroiro-ie)

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Kamaba Saka

The charm of Shigaraki ware lies in its warm earthy aesthetics. Matsusho

focuses on proposing contemporary tableware that accentuates these unique qualities.

Address: 645 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0528

Contact: Yasuo Okuda

Product: Tableware, earthenware pots, rice cookers, handwashing basins, white tanuki, custom orders with inscriptions.

Hours: Monday to Friday (Open on holidays) 9:00 - 17:00

Shiroiro-ie: Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays 11:00 - 17:00

(*For kiln tours, make a prior email reservation.*)

Closed: Saturdays and Sundays

Shiroiro-ie: Closed on Weekdays - (*phone reservations required*)
(*Closed in January through March*)

Website: <https://www.kamamoto.co.jp/>

Yasuo Toubou

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Kamaba Saka

Yasuo Kiln, led by its fifth-generation operator, is renowned for its extensive array of glazes and diverse clay selections, actively pursuing a broad spectrum of artistic expression in each piece.

Address: 771 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0347

Contact: Yasuyuki Okuda

Products: Tableware

Hours: Weekdays: 13:00 onwards

Weekends: 10:00 onwards

Closed: Open every day

Website: <https://yasubeigama.com/>

Outer Ring Road

Daily Life Shigaraki - Donabe Restaurant Mutsumian

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Outer Ring Road

Mutsumian aims to connect pottery and food together, improving peoples affiliation to both the food and pottery of a Shigaraki experience.

Address: 317-21 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-3460

Contact: Masayuki Tanaka

Products: Donabe (earthenware pot)

Hours:

Closed Days: Irregular holidays

(*Inquire in advance*)

Website: <https://shigarakiya.jp/>

Tsubohachi - Daiki no Utsuwa

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Outer Ring Road

Tsubohachi is dedicated to the creation of one-of-a-kind and captivating pottery pieces. Crafting ceramics with distinct character, making them not only visually appealing.

Address: 1330-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0186

Contact: Daiki Okuda

Products: Suikinkutsu (water chimes), water basins, pottery utensils, smartphone amplifiers, unconventional tableware.

Website: <http://www.daikinoutsuwa.com/>

Churokuen

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail - Outer Ring Road

In today's fast-paced world, where mass production is the norm, it is a rarity to find artisans who value the beauty of handmade craftsmanship. A historic kiln that produces a stunning finish by burning red pine ash on the surface, creating a myriad of expressions.

Address: 1178 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0013

Contact: Taketoshi Furutani

Products: Vases, flower vases, tableware, and more

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00

Closed: Open daily

Website: <https://www.instagram.com/churokuen>

Naka Koubo

Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail -Outer Ring Road

Naka Koubo specializes in a wide range of products, with a focus on earthenware pots and heat-resistant utensils. "Gallery Bunsei." is located inside the kiln workshop.

(*Workshop visits require prior arrangements.*)

Address: 1368 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-1424

Contact: Fumio Nakamura

Product: Earthenware pots, heat-resistant utensils, tableware, flower vases, sake vessels, and more.

Hours: 11:00 - 19:00

Closed: Irregular holidays (*Open on weekends and holidays*)

Website: <https://nakakoubou.com/>

Pottery Activities

Participating in pottery activities offered by local artisans is crucial for visitors seeking a more enriching Shigaraki experience. Shigaraki provides various workshops and classes for individuals of all skill levels. These experiences can be categorised into two distinct types: those that are designed for tourists and those that offer a more immersive artisan encounter. Visitors can engage in wheel-throwing, hand-building, and hand-painting activities, all under the expert guidance of seasoned instructors. For visitors with limited time, Shigaraki offers experience-based pottery, people with more time and a desire to explore advanced techniques or spend additional time creating pottery can access programs led by local masters.

Bookings and Cancellations

Reserving these classes in advance is advisable to ensure staff allocation for effective instruction. Since many of the kilns have busy schedules and production deadlines to meet, it is crucial to make bookings and cancellations in advance and manage them accordingly. Try to make reservations online first, if there are difficulties in communicating contact the Shigaraki Tourism Association for assistance in reaching out to the kiln for further information.

For visitors with limited time, Shigaraki offers experience-based pottery sessions. Those with more time and a desire to explore advanced techniques or spend additional time creating pottery can access programs led by local masters.

Pricing

The pricing for pottery experiences and lessons varies depending on the type of experience required, size and quantity of the pieces made and firing costs. All prices indicated in the chart are indications only and are subject to change. Check with the kiln at the time of booking.

Clothing

Many of the kilns provide protective sleeves or aprons to wear when working with clay, as pottery-making can be a messy process, and clothing may get soiled. The kilns cannot take responsibility for any damage to clothing or accessories, so it's important to inform clients that wearing clothing and accessories that may get slightly soiled is advisable.

Language

Some of the kilns have staff that can speak English and some of the kilns only speak Japanese. For lessons it is convenient to have language support in the form of a guide or translator but not essential as many of the instructors are artisans and they communicate using the art of pottery making and action.

Groups

Several kilns that offer these experiences can accommodate large groups of visitors simultaneously. These activities are well-suited for packaged tour experiences, team building, and hands-on opportunities for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events (MICE) groups. They are also suitable for educational tours for students.

Individuals

For independent travellers, many of the listed facilities provide individual lessons. It is essential to book in advance to secure a spot and allow staff to allocate their time for teaching associated with the activity.

Firing and Completion Times

When booking pottery experiences in Shigaraki, clients should be aware that their pottery will take up to 2 months to be fired. Proper drying is crucial to prevent the pottery from exploding in the kiln. The loading process in the kiln is also a specialised step, especially for wood-fired kilns, and requires careful consideration for the desired final finish.

For groups and individuals who wish to take their creations home on the same day, larger kilns offer painting-type experiences using bisque ware and water-based paints. These sessions are more about art than traditional pottery making and are suitable for adults and children, and are also an enjoyable team-building option.

Postage

For many overseas visitors, returning to the kiln to collect their pottery may not be feasible, so international postage is required. More information can be found in the postage section of this guide. EMS (courier service offered by Japan Post) is a convenient option for sending items overseas, with a maximum allowance of 30 kg for most regions. Specific details on what can be sent should be checked with the kiln or the post office. Keep in mind that the cost of shipping is a separate charge. Some visitors may enjoy the experience and plan on returning to continue their pottery education. In such cases, the kiln may keep the works for the visitor until their return, this type of request will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Customs Clearance (When posting)

Customs clearance procedures vary depending on the country to which the items are being sent. Pottery for private use typically presents few

problems when clearing customs, especially if the items are considered personal effects. However, suppose items are being sent for commercial use or for sale. In that case, there may be issues related to health and safety regulations, especially if the items are intended for use as food containers. Ensuring that the items clear customs and meet health regulations is the responsibility of the buyer.

Pottery Activity Providers

A guide can be found at the back of this "travel professional-destination guide", providing further insight into Shigaraki's pottery related activity scene. Given some establishments' smaller size and irregular holidays, it is advisable to make reservations and confirm operating hours in advance. If cancelling or changing bookings do so in a timely manner.

Methods

Pottery Wheel

"Rokuro seikei" refers to placing clay on a potter's wheel called "rokuro" in Japanese and rotational force is used to create pottery works. When people think of traditional pottery making, the image that often comes to mind is wheel-throwing.

While electric pottery wheels, known as "dendouroku-ro," are now predominant, previously, many potters would use a foot-operated wheel called "kerokuro" or "kicked Wheel" where the potter would kick the wheel to make it rotate. Some artists still prefer using this traditional kicking wheel.

The significant advantages of wheel-throwing include the ability to create uniform pieces and the efficiency in producing a large quantity of work. Many ceramic pieces produced by artisans in pottery studios in Shigaraki are created using the potter's wheel.

Training is essential to produce items of the same shape and size consistently. It also takes time to master "tsuchigoroshi," compressing the clay after placing it on the wheel.

One drawback of wheel-throwing is that it's primarily suited for creating circular shapes. While it's possible to alter the form after throwing, centrifugal force limits the creation of complex shapes or objects with sharp edges, such as cylinders with corners.

Moreover, mastering the skill of "tsuchigoroshi" is necessary for the centre of the clay to shift, making it challenging to produce uniform pieces. Therefore, the learning curve for wheel-throwing is relatively steep.

Hand Forming

Forms are shaped directly using moulds or hands without a potter's wheel. This is often done on a manually rotated circular stand; pottery clay is placed on the stand, and the potter shapes it by manually rotating the wheel using the force of their hands. Compared to works created on an electric potter's wheel, a significant feature is the ability to express the creator's originality fully. The primary shaping methods include "coil building" and "pinch forming." This moulding method allows even beginners or those who need more confidence in their skills to create relatively as they desire.

Tatara Forming

Creating forms using "tatara" involves using elongated boards called "tatara" to slice a lump of clay thinly and uniformly so forms can be created. Similar to baking dough, forms can also be created by rolling out clay. Once a flat sheet of clay is cut, it can be pressed into moulds made from plaster to shape it. This method allows for creating not only simple shapes but also unconventional forms, and using moulds enables the efficient production of multiple identical pieces. Additionally, bending tatara cut sheets, adhering and assembling, allows for creating various shapes, such as boxes and cylinders. The distortions resulting from manual craftsmanship add charm to these pieces. Like pottery made on a wheel, tatara-zukuri possesses a unique charm not found in mass production.

Painting (using precast ceramics, not to be confused with glazing)

Precast bisque ware is provided, often with water-based paints and ceramic forms by the creator. The paint dries quickly, and the piece can be taken home without waiting. Perfect for families with children. Some kilns provide glazing options, in which case the item is fired following decoration and can be sent by post to the creator when it is complete.



Eizan Okuda - Koka City living treasure - demonstrating the pottery wheel

Fire Festival - Hi Matsuri



Shigaraki's Annual Fire Festival (Shigaraki Hi Matsuri)

The Shigaraki Fire Festival (Hi Matsuri) is held in mid-July in Shigaraki Town, Kōka City, Shiga Prefecture. It is said to have originated during the Edo period. The festival is dedicated to showing gratitude for "fire," which is essential in pottery and daily life, and to praying for safety.

During the festival, around 700 torches are dedicated and paraded from Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine to the shrines perched atop Mount Atago, including Atago Shrine, Akiba Shrine, and Pottery Shrine. This torch dedication procession covers approximately 2.6 kilometres, taking around 50 minutes to complete. The path along Denzan-dori is adorned with specially dedicated lanterns. Participants accompany the procession, walking alongside the Daido River before ascending to the summit shrine on Mt. Atago.

The torches used in the festival are handcrafted by residents and participants every year. Bamboo, harvested and pre-cut by committee members, is prepared for the event. Town residents collect materials on the first Sunday of July; then, at home and in their workshops, they secure wooden boards and cloth into slots cut into the bamboo. These materials are fastened with wire or rough twine to prevent collapsing. Each finished torch weighs between 6 and 7 kg.

During the festival, seeing people lighting and carrying these torches on their shoulders creates a mesmerizing atmosphere along the route.

Additional Festivities

At the Shigaraki Fire Festival, numerous food stalls and vendors set up shop. Visitors can enjoy a variety of food, drinks, and souvenirs.

Local Taiko Drum Group - Shigaraki Honoo (Flame)



This group provides support and encouragement to torch-carrying participants during the Fire Festival. Every year, torches are dedicated to Atagoyama Shrine atop Mt. Atago.

The Taiko drummers perform continuously until all the torches have been dedicated, lasting about two hours. The grand finale occurs before the fireworks display, providing a dynamic and powerful conclusion to the festivities.

The group also participates in other local events, such as gatherings for the elderly, summer festivals at preSchools, and cultural festivals in high Schools.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/shigarakidaikohonoo/>
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/hono_shigarakitaiko/



Event Details and Location

Date: Mid-July

Time: 15:00 – 21:30

Venues: Atago-yama Tōki Shrine, Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingu Shrine.

Schedule

15:00 – 17:00: Torch offering registration

(No advance booking; same-day registration only)

19:00: Fire Lighting Ceremony (Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingu Shrine)

19:25: Opening Ceremony

(Shigaraki Town Center Parking Lot; explanation of start/end points.)

19:45: Torch offering & Taiko drumming

21:05: Dedication fireworks (Approx. 30 minutes)

Admission: Free

Organizer: Shigaraki Ceramic Capital Festival Executive Committee

Inquiries: Shigaraki Ceramic Capital Festival Executive Committee
(within the Shigaraki Ceramic Industry Cooperative Association)

Address: 985 Eda, Shigaraki-cho, Kōka-shi, Shiga 529-1811, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0831

Fax: 0748-82-3473

Hours: 9:00 -17:00 (Weekdays only)

Website: <http://www.593touki.jp>

Pottery Festivals & Events



Enjoy shopping at Shigaraki Touki Matsuri

Throughout the year, artisans and potters come together to showcase their masterpieces at various events. Visitors have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the market-like atmosphere, enjoying the thrill of searching for that special piece of pottery while indulging in the unique foods offered during these gatherings.

Shigaraki Sakkaichi (Artist Market)

The Shigaraki Artist Market is a long-standing, popular event held over four days during the Golden Week holidays in early May. Participating ceramic artists set up booths to display and sell their works directly. The event also features artists working in wood, glass, leather, and fashion.

Visitors can enjoy hands-on workshops to experience professional techniques and a food area serving dishes made with local ingredients.

Date: Early May (Golden Week, annual)

Schedule

Time: 9:00 – 17:00 (first day from 11:00, last day until 16:00)

Venue: Shiga Prefectural Ceramic Cultural Park – Taiyo no Hiroba

Website: <https://www.shigaraki-sakkaichi.com/>



Shigaraki Sakkaichi

Shigaraki Touki Matsuri (Shigaraki Autumn Pottery Festival)

The Shigaraki Touki Matsuri is held at galleries throughout Shigaraki, as well as at tents set up in the parking lot of the Shigaraki Ceramic Wholesale Cooperative and at participating local shops. During the festival, distinctive Shigaraki Touki Matsuri banners are displayed, making it easy to identify participating galleries and stores.

The festival features special discounts, giveaways, and a stamp rally, giving visitors the chance to win luxurious prizes unique to the Touki Matsuri. The latest information is regularly updated on the festival's official website.

Date: Mid-October, lasting about 1–1.5 weeks

Schedule

Time: 9:00 – 17:00

Venue: Galleries and shops throughout Shigaraki, and the Shigaraki Pottery Wholesale Cooperative parking lot

Website: shigaraki-matsuri.org

Shigaraki Mori no Craft Festival

A outdoor event featuring exhibitions and sales of works by female ceramic artists and creators with connections to Shigaraki. It includes workshops, a market, a stage, and much more. The festival arena is a great place to meet the Tanuki mascots of Shigaraki as well.

Details and Location

Date: 4th Nov - 5th Nov (Annual Event)

Time: 9:00 - 16:00

Location: Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park - Sun Plaza

Website: <https://www.shigarakimori-craft.com/>



Shigaraki Mori no Craft Festival

Cafe & Restaurants

Cafe & Restaurants

Local eateries take pride in curating culinary experiences that reflect the town's rich heritage. With a meticulous selection of regional ingredients, cafes, restaurants, and hotels lovingly prepare dishes presented on unique Shigaraki pottery.

Shigaraki's marriage of craftsmanship and cuisine transforms every plate into a work of art, where the pottery not only enchants the eyes but also enhances the flavours when utilized as a cooking vessel. Each piece of pottery carries its narrative, weaving an enriching story into the overall dining experience. Adding to the gastronomic allure, Shigaraki embraces a profound tea culture deeply ingrained in its fabric and numerous establishments, from cafes to restaurants and accommodations, feature locally grown Asamiya tea in diverse forms, creating an additional layer of sensory delight.

The culinary canvas of Shigaraki is a vivid tapestry of diversity, catering to a broad spectrum of tastes. Whether exploring charming bakeries championing organic produce, savouring mouthwatering Kushi Katsu, indulging in Tea Kaiseki dinners, experiencing the smoky allure of yakiniku, relishing generous servings of Sanuki udon, satisfying vegetarian options or finding solace in cosy cafes offering the finest coffee, heavenly cheesecakes, and expertly crafted handmade soba, Shigaraki's culinary offerings are a treasury of flavours awaiting discovery.

Visitors can explore Shigaraki's streets and outlying areas to encounter hidden gems of cafes and restaurants, each promising an exceptional dining experience. But beyond the conventional, Shigaraki offers unique culinary adventures. Imagine a Matsutake feast where certain restaurants go beyond limits, offering an "eat all you can eat Matsutake" experience. Picture an immersive outing where patrons can partake in Matsutake picking adventures in private forests before indulging in a sukiyaki feast.

For those seeking architectural whimsy, explore tanuki-shaped udon restaurants—charming buildings that are not just eateries but architectural wonders. Inside these unique structures, patrons enjoy udon dishes served on Shigaraki pottery, creating a delightful fusion of art and cuisine. And, for a dining experience rooted in history, step into the Noborigama Cafe, nestled within a historically listed Noborigama kiln. This unique setting adds a touch of the ancient to cafe time or a hotpot lunch.

Good food is enjoyed with good sake and the Koka region is no exception, when it comes to sake. Like pottery, sake production in the Koka region is a craft and a cherished cultural legacy passed down through generations. The community underscores its commitment to preserving agricultural heritage, and local Shiga-grown rice varieties like Yamadanishiki, Ginpu, Tamane, and Nihonbare are used in local sake production. These distinct rice varieties play a pivotal role in shaping the diverse and rich flavours that define the flavors of sake produced in this region.

Like food sake is best enjoyed in Shigaraki using locally produced pottery Tokkuri and Choko, the Tokkuri is an indispensable vessel, deeply rooted in Japanese sake culture and tracing its origins back to the Muromachi period (1336-1573). Historically, during the Kamakura period (1185-1333), sake was commonly served in bottles. However, the impracticality of small pouring mouths led to the gradual rise of the tokkuri as the preferred container. Its design, featuring a narrow neck and a bulging lower part, proved ideal for the smooth pouring of sake.

Beyond its practical function, the tokkuri symbolized Japanese craftsmanship and aesthetic finesse. Various regions and kilns contributed to its cultural significance by producing tokkuri with unique and intricate designs.

The clay used in crafting Shigaraki ware, inherent to the Koka region, imparts earthy tones and textured surfaces that define traditional Shigaraki pottery. The Shigaraki Tokkuri, in particular, boasts a robust and unpretentious appearance. Its forms can vary from cylindrical to bulbous, and the surfaces may exhibit natural irregularities and markings formed during the firing process. Notably, the "koge," or kiln-induced scorch marks, are distinctive features adding character to Shigaraki ware, reflecting the dynamic interaction between clay, fire, and ash.

The unglazed exterior provides a tactile experience, connecting the drinker to the raw, natural qualities of the pottery. The Shigaraki Tokkuri is not just a vessel for sake; it is a manifestation of cultural heritage, a

testament to meticulous craftsmanship, and a tactile journey into the elemental beauty of Shigaraki ware.

Cafe and Restaurant Information and Contacts

A guide can be found at the back of this "travel professional-destination guide", providing further insight into Shigaraki's culinary scene. Given some establishments' smaller size and irregular holidays, it is advisable to make reservations and confirm operating hours in advance. If cancelling or changing bookings do so in a timely manner.

One of Japan's Culinary Maestros A Contributor to Shigaraki's Ceramic Renaissance



Kitaōji Rosanjin, a polymathic figure in the artistic landscape of Japan during the Shōwa period, maintained a significant connection to Shigaraki, a region renowned for its rich ceramic tradition. Rosanjin's impact on Shigaraki stemmed from his profound contributions to the world of ceramics, an art form deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of the area.

Renowned for his diverse talents, including calligraphy, ceramics, and gastronomy, Rosanjin's journey in Shigaraki was marked by his innovative approach to pottery. In the post-Great Tokyo earthquake period of the 1920s, which had devastated much of his ceramics collection, Rosanjin contributed to the revival of the traditional crafts in Shigaraki. His commitment to the art of pottery involved both the preservation of classical forms and the creation of daring original designs, making him a pivotal figure in Shigaraki's ceramic renaissance.

To further celebrate Rosanjin's artistic legacy and culinary prowess, exhibitions of his works are held in Shigaraki, paying homage to the man who left an indelible mark on the region. These exhibitions not only showcase his iconic pottery but also explore the intersection of gastronomy and ceramics, two realms that Rosanjin masterfully bridged throughout his career.

When discussing gourmet culture in Japan, it is impossible to overlook the influence of Kitaōji Rosanjin. His role as a restaurateur, particularly with the establishment of the Bishoku Club and later the Hoshigaoka-saryo, highlighted his commitment to elevating the dining experience through the careful selection of traditional ceramics. Rosanjin's emphasis on the aesthetic harmony between food and the vessels on which it was served revolutionized the culinary landscape, setting a standard that resonates even today.



Cafe and Restaurants



Sightseeing Spots

Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park

Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, referred to by locals as "Tougei no Mori" is a public park with diverse functions and facilities such as creation, training, and exhibition spaces related to ceramics. Additionally, it serves as a place for the exchange of people, goods, and information, aiming to promote regional industry and create new cultural expressions. Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park opened in June 1990.

Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park is divided into four main areas, each with a different concept, allowing visitors to enjoy various aspects. Throughout the park, outdoor exhibitions showcase the works of ceramic artists, and there are specific areas dedicated to a ceramic museum, an industrial exhibition hall, a creative training facility, and a plaza. The park functions both as a hub for the dissemination of culture and art and as a natural retreat surrounded by greenery.

Ceramic Museum (Ceramic Art Museum)

A specialized museum showcasing ceramics, including Shigaraki ware and ceramics from around the world. Various themed exhibitions are held, and during these periods, gallery talks are conducted to provide explanations of the works, allowing a wide audience to enjoy the experience. The museum shop, "6 senses," offers pottery capsule toys, catalogues, and original goods for purchase.

Shigaraki Industry Exhibition Hall

This exhibition hall disseminates the current state of Shigaraki ware as an industry. Various products from Shigaraki manufacturers are on display, and the on-site shop sells Shigaraki products. The adjacent restaurant, "Gingetsusha," provides a space to relax in a natural setting, offering a delightful meal experience, including delicious rice balls, which are cooked in a Shigaraki produced earthenware pots.

International Cultural Residency Studio

The Creative Training Center hosts an international artist-in-residence program, bringing ceramic artists from around the world to stay and create in the studio. Additionally, open studios are held every two months, featuring workshops and lectures by renowned ceramic artists.

Plaza

As a hub for the dissemination of culture and art, ceramic works are displayed in various outdoor locations throughout the park. On sunny days, visitors can enjoy a picnic in the midst of nature, making the park an ideal retreat. The Star Plaza, with its impressive outdoor exhibit pieces, and the Sun Plaza, surrounded by lush greenery, are perfect places for relaxation. Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park not only offers exhibitions but also hosts participatory pottery classes and events during holidays.

About the Artist-in-Residence Program

Since its establishment in 1992, the Creative Training Center has been a haven for ceramic artists worldwide, offering them the freedom to craft their masterpieces amidst the picturesque landscapes of Shigaraki. Devoid of a structured curriculum, artists enjoy the liberty to pursue their unique projects in this imaginative space. Approximately 10 ceramic artists are consistently immersed in diverse projects, fostering a dynamic atmosphere enriched by interactions with individuals of varied styles and nationalities.

The Artist-in-Residence program encompasses two main categories. The first category includes Studio Artists, who undergo a rigorous application and selection process to reside at the center and delve into their artistic pursuits. The second category comprises Guest Artists, some of whom are invited by Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, while others are selected through an open call. The aim is to inspire artists to refine their skills by fully utilizing the Creative Training Center's facilities and engaging in meaningful exchanges with fellow ceramic artists.

Shigaraki, is known for producing various ceramic wares, is home to manufacturers and artists with diverse skills, offering an excellent opportunity to engage with different techniques. Additionally, being a production area ensures readily available raw materials. The opportunity to observe clay and feldspar excavation sites is a unique aspect of the Artist-in-Residence program in Shigaraki.

Since its inception in 1992, the Creative Training Center has hosted numerous ceramic artists from Japan and abroad, fostering growing international exchanges centered around ceramics. Depending on the time of visit, artists have the chance to collaborate with peers from various countries. This environment also provides Japanese Studio Artists with the opportunity to learn a new language, as many communicate with foreign artists using basic English.

Detailed Information:

Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park

Address: 2188-7 Chokushi Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-83-0909

Hours: 9:30 -17:00

Entrance to the Museum and the Shigaraki Industrial Hall is until 16:30

Website: <https://www.sccp.jp/e/>

Access Details

<https://www.sccp.jp/e/access/map/>



Entrance to the Tougei no Mori Ceramic Museum



Expansive grounds - Pottery events held on a regular basis



Ceramic Cultural Park



Local Industry Exhibition Hall

Museum - Shigaraki ware Museum

In 1975, Shigaraki-yaki was officially recognized as a traditional craft, leading to the establishment of the Koka City Shigaraki Traditional Craft Center - Shigaraki ware Museum in 1977 to promote local industries. However, due to the aging condition of the original building that housed the Traditional Industry Hall, the exhibition hall for traditional crafts and the Tourist Association offices were relocated to a new site closer to Shigaraki Railway Station in 2020.

Within a dedicated exhibition room, visitors can explore the history of Shigaraki-yaki from the Kamakura period to the present day. The displays feature various kiln variations, including the Anagama kiln, showcasing its ties to tea culture. Notable exhibits include large pottery pieces from the Chokushi district and smaller pottery items, all crafted with precision. The exhibition also highlights glazed pottery items, with a special section focusing on the distinctive deep blue colour known as sea cucumber blue—a legacy from Shigaraki's era of producing Hibachi stoves for homes throughout Japan.

The Koka City Shigaraki Traditional Craft Center - Shigaraki ware Museum provides a comprehensive overview of Shigaraki-yaki as a traditional craft in a permanent exhibition space. Additionally, a separate exhibition room hosts approximately 15 annual exhibitions by local groups, including the Shigaraki-yaki Traditional Craftsmen's Association. Visitors may also have the opportunity to witness traditional craftsmen demonstrating their skills in the entrance hall.

Strategically located near the station, the museum shares a parking lot with the civic center, offering parking space for about 100 cars. Furthermore, the hall serves as an information hub for kilns and shops through the Shigaraki Town Tourism Association.

For those exploring Shigaraki, it is highly recommended to begin the journey at the Koka City Shigaraki Traditional Craft Center - Shigaraki ware Museum, gaining a comprehensive understanding of the region before venturing into the town.

Tip for further enjoyment

Next to the reception, there is a large plate with a diameter of 1.3 metres created by traditional craftsman Koji Kotani. Creating an item of this size is challenging, and when you view the edge of the plate from the side with one eye, you'll notice it is almost perfectly straight. Feel the craftsmanship at its finest.

Address: 1203 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Hours: 9:00- 17:00

Closed: Thursdays (or the following day if it's a Pub.Hol), New Year's holidays

Admission: Free

Tel: 0748-82-2345

Fax: 0748-82-2551

Parking: About 100 spaces (shared with the civic center)



Displays in the Shigaraki ware Museum



Displays in the Shigaraki ware Museum



Discover the history of Shigaraki pottery



Koka City Traditional Industries Hall - Central Shigaraki



Pottery usage over the ages



Daihatsu Midget changed local industry

Museum – MIHO MUSEUM

The "MIHO MUSEUM" houses an impressive collection of around 3,000 artworks, ranging from Japanese art to ancient global masterpieces. It serves as an excellent destination for visitors to Shigaraki, especially those staying for an extended period in the area.

Crafted by the acclaimed architect I.M. Pei, famed for the glass pyramid at the Louvre Museum, the museum's architecture harmoniously integrates with the natural beauty of Shigaraki. Drawing inspiration from the concept of "Utopia," it creates a seamless connection between art and the surrounding environment.

Discover a contemporary paradise nestled in the mountains of Koka City, Shiga Prefecture. Immerse yourself in the captivating architecture and experience the enchanting world of ancient art at the MIHO MUSEUM. Situated in Shigaraki-Cho, Koka City, in the southern part of Shiga Prefecture, the MIHO MUSEUM welcomed its first visitors in November 1997. Established by the religious organization Shinji Shumei-kai, its mission is to enrich society through the appreciation of beauty.

The collection boasts around 3,000 pieces, spanning ancient art from Egypt, Greece, and Rome, to Western Asia, South Asia, China, the Western Regions, the Americas, and Japan. This includes Buddhist art, tea ceremony pieces, paintings, lacquerware, and ceramics. Special exhibitions during the spring, summer, and autumn openings complement the display of ancient art collections from across the globe.

The architectural brilliance behind the MIHO MUSEUM is credited to I.M. Pei, a Chinese-American architect renowned for iconic designs like the glass pyramid at the Louvre Museum in the 20th century. The concept of creating a "utopia" is both grand and beautiful, captivating countless visitors. The layout features a reception building for ticket sales and a restaurant, along with the main art museum building. The 500-meter journey from the reception building, through a tunnel, and across a bridge unveils the museum building. The landscape design seamlessly incorporates Pei's architectural vision, guiding visitors into an otherworldly experience.

While strolling and relishing the scenery is recommended, a 10-person electric vehicle is also available at 10-15 minute intervals (free of charge, except during peak times). Approximately 80% of the museum building is submerged underground to preserve the natural environment, with only select elements, like the gabled roof, visible from above. Upon entering, visitors are welcomed by a spacious and luminous entrance hall, leading to the southern wing (collection exhibition) on the left and the northern wing (special exhibition) on the right.

In the southern wing, priceless art pieces such as the "Goddess Statue" (Egypt, 3rd century BC), the "Horus Statue" depicting the gods of the sky and sun (Egypt, 13th century BC), and the relief "Spirit and Attendant in Bas-Relief" (northeastern Iraq, 9th century BC) from Nimrud's northwest palace adorn the displays. Noteworthy items include the silver "Winged Beast Pattern Bowl" (Iran, 6th century BC). Two delightful spots for rest and meals are "Cafe Pine View" on the underground floor of the southern wing (open from 10:30 am to 5:00 pm, last order at 4:30 pm) and "Restaurant Peach Valley" in the reception building (open from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, last order at 3:30 pm), offering menus crafted from vegetables grown through the Shumei Natural Agriculture method.

The museum shop, available in three locations, features catalogues, books on ancient art collections and MIHO MUSEUM architecture, original goods from the MIHO collection, stationery, and miscellaneous items. Whether exploring the southern wing shop, northern wing shop, or reception building shop, visitors can find past exhibition catalogues, books, tableware, household goods, and bottles of MIHO original wine, creating an additional layer of enjoyment to their visit.

Detailed Information:

MIHO MUSEUM

Address: 300 Tashiro Momoyama Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-3411

Hours: 10:00 to 17:00 pm (last admission at 16:00 pm)

Operating Period: Late March to mid-December

(Varies by year, check the official website's opening calendar: <http://www.miho.or.jp/calendar/>)

Closed: Mondays during the operating period (open on public holidays, closed the next weekday), and others

(Check the official website's opening calendar: <http://www.miho.or.jp/calendar/>)

Admission:

Adults: 1100 yen

High School/College Students: 800 yen

Elementary/Middle School Students: 300 yen

Parking: 300 spaces

Access: About 15 minutes from Shin-Meishin Expressway Shigaraki IC

/ About 20 minutes from Shin-Meishin Expressway Kusatsu-Tajima IC /

About 30 minutes from Meishin Expressway Ritto IC / About 35 minutes from Meihan National Highway Mibuno IC

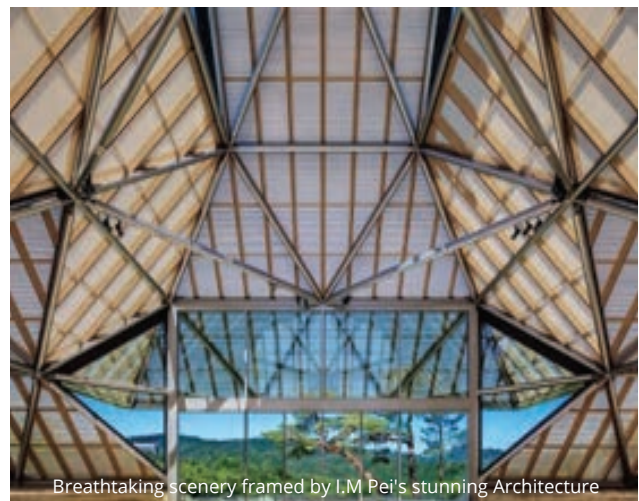
Website: <http://www.miho.or.jp/>



MIHO MUSEUM Entrance



Significant collection of artefacts



Breathtaking scenery framed by I.M Pei's stunning Architecture

Japan's Ancient Capital

Shigaraki Palace was the capital of Japan and was built approximately 1,250 years ago during the Nara period in the northern part of Shigaraki Town.

The Shigaraki Palace Site is a nationally designated historic site. It is located about 1km northwest of the Shigarakigushi Station and can be accessed using the Shigaraki Kogen Railway line. The historic site is in a hilly area covered in groves of pine trees. Using the access path which winds through pine groves; visitors can gain view the remains of the main hall (Golden Hall). Surrounding the central area of the site, foundation stones for various structures, such as temple buildings, lecture halls, bell towers, and pagoda precincts, have been excavated. The layout resembles the Todai-ji Temple.

It is believed that this temple complex is the site of Koka-dera Temple, where Emperor Shomu initiated the construction of the Great Buddha during his time at Shigaraki Palace. The area size is approximately 90 metres from east to west and 110 metres from north to south, and 335 foundation stones from the time of the Palaces construction can be viewed here. In the Miyamachi district, the "Shigaraki Palace Site-Related Ruins Research Office" houses artefacts excavated from the Shigaraki Palace Site.

Emperor Shomu, who established the capital in Shigaraki, ruled the country from the Nara capital, Heijokyo (present-day Nara). In October of the 12th year of the Tenpyo era (740), he left Nara and began constructing a new capital north of Nara, near Kizugawa City, Kyoto Prefecture. This new capital was called "Kuni-kyo."

While construction of Kuni-kyo was underway, a road connecting to Shigaraki Village in Koka District (The Kuni Northeast Road) was opened. Emperor Shomu began the construction of a detached palace in Shigaraki Village. The Emperor made several trips (referred to as "gyoko") to the detached palace, encouraging its construction as a place for the Emperor to stay temporarily during his visits.

During this period, the national treasury was under tremendous strain as Kuni-kyo and the simultaneous construction of Shigaraki Palace were in progress. By the end of the 15th year of Tenpyo (743), the construction of Kuni-kyo, which had been ongoing for nearly four years, was halted.

In the 16th year of Tenpyo (744), preparations to establish another capital, Naniwa Palace (located around present-day Morinomiya in Osaka City), were made. In late February of the same year, an official declaration was made to establish Naniwa as the capital officially.

Despite the significant changes going on elsewhere, construction of Shigaraki Palace continued. In October of the 15th year of Tenpyo (743), Emperor Shomu issued the "Imperial order to Build a Great Buddha" at Shigaraki Palace, initiating the construction of Koka-ji Temple and the Great Buddha. In November of the 16th year of Tenpyo (744), a ceremony was held to raise the core pillar (the innermost pillar) of the Great Buddha, and Emperor Tenmu (the former Emperor) came from Naniwa Palace to Shigaraki Palace. Shigaraki became lively, and on the first day of January in the 17th year of Tenpyo (745), Shigaraki Palace was referred to as the "New Capital," and a large shield and spear were set up at the palace gate.

However, its status as the capital of Japan was a short-lived four months, due to a series of fires in the vicinity of Shigaraki Palace and Koka-ji Temple. Additionally, earthquakes occurred consecutively, believed to be aftershocks of a major earthquake in Mino Province (current Gifu Prefecture). These uncertain circumstances led to the decision to return the capital to Nara in May of the same year.



Foundation stones



Shigaraki Palace Shrine

Temples & Shrines – Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine

Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine has a long history dating back to the Nara period in 715 AD, when it was first established. Since the establishment, it has been widely revered as the tutelary deity of Nagano, Kamiyama, Eda, and Ogawa, all within Shigaraki Town. The shrine is honoured with the title "Shinomiya Daimyojin."

Throughout Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine's history, various notable individuals and families, including the Konoë family, guardians of Ōmi Province, have fervently worshipped at the shrine and made offerings, including its precincts and lands.

The shrine faced almost total destruction during the battles of the Northern and Southern Courts in 1336, but it was later rebuilt. Later the Shrine suffered significant damage from a ferocious storm and its main hall was largely destroyed. Reconstruction occurred in 1663. The current main hall stands as a testament to that reconstruction.

During the Meiji period in 1876, it was designated as a village shrine (mura-sha) and during the Taisho period in 1913, the designation was changed and it was established as a shrine for offering sacred food, money, and goods. Later during the Taisho period in 1924, the status was promoted and it became a district shrine (gōsha). Today, it is highly revered as the primary shrine of the Shigaraki district.

Ooyamazumi-no-Kami, one of the enshrined deities, was initially worshipped at Yama Shrine in the Nagano district of Shigaraki Town, this Shrine was merged with Shigaraki Ichinomiya Shingū Shrine on May 30, 1915.

Various rites and festivals held during the year

2 May - Shun kitai sai - Annual Grand Festival: The most important and grand festival held once a year, where the deity and worshippers come together for various ceremonies, including the Main Shrine Festival, Evening Shrine Festival, Grand Festival, Procession of the Deity (Mikoshi), Children's Shrine Visit, and the Return Festival. It is a time for the deity to bless the local community's safety and prosperity.

8 May - Mikoshitogyo - Portable Shrine Procession: During this festival, the deity travels around the parish area to pray for the safety and prosperity of the community.

Late May - Otauesai - Rice Planting Festival: Local rice is offered as newly harvested rice to the deity's altar with the cooperation of Shigaraki Farm.

30 Jun - Ooharae Shiki - Summer Purification Festival: (Minazuki Harai) is a Japanese purification ritual that takes place in June. It is a Shinto practice that serves to purify and ward off impurities during the month of June, which is called "Minazuki" in the traditional Japanese calendar. The term "Minazuki" literally means "month without water."

10 Jul - Gion Matsuri: This festival includes a flower shaking ritual designated as an intangible cultural heritage in Shiga Prefecture. People compete to take home the "Gion flowers" and pray for the community's safety, the prevention of epidemics, household safety, and good health for the year.

23 Jul - Shigaraki Hi Matsuri - Fire Festival: This is an ancient ritual where offerings of torches are dedicated to the deities of fire, earth, and pottery at the summit of Mount Atago. It is a time to express gratitude for fire, earth, and pottery and pray for the protection and prosperity of the pottery industry.

1 Aug - Hassaku sai: Held on the first day of August, this festival prays for the protection of crops, especially from natural disasters like typhoons.

31 Aug - Yakubi sai: This festival involves dedicating lanterns in front of the deity's shrine on the night before the 210th and 220th days of the year to pray for protection from earthquakes and other natural disasters.

15 Sep - Hojyo sai: This ritual is based on the Buddhist precept of refraining from killing living beings. It involves releasing living creatures into bodies of water or natural environments to honor and comfort them.

23 Sep - Shubun sai: This festival involves offering the year's first harvested rice to the deity.

End of Sep - Touya sai: While no longer practiced today, this festival was traditionally held by four parishioner groups known as "Miya Za." It involved making offerings to the deity, thanking for their safety and well-being, and presenting performances like Kagura dances and Noh plays to entertain both the deity and the community.

Early Oct - Tyukonhiirei sai: Blessing a stone monument enshrining 302 spirits of the departed in the former town of Shigaraki. This monument is dedicated to the souls of those who offered their lives in the various conflicts, including the First Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War, and the Greater East Asia War, out of deep reverence and gratitude.

23 Nov - Kanname sai housyuku sai: Newly harvested rice and other seasonal offerings are presented to the local kami to give thanks and pray for a successful agricultural year. Aligns with a similar festival at the Grand Shrine in Ise.

31 Dec - Toshikoshi no Ooharae shiki: A Japanese Shinto ritual that takes place at the end of the year. It is conducted to purify and cleanse away the impurities and misfortunes of the past year as well as to welcome the new year with a fresh start.

31 Dec to 1 Jan - Jyoya sai: New Year's Eve festival in Japan.

1 Jan - Saitan sai: This is the New Year's festival celebrated on January 1st. It is a time to welcome the new year and pray for the prosperity and well-being of the nation, imperial family, and the local community.

3 Jan - Genshi sai This festival celebrates the origin of the emperor's reign and offers blessings for the emperor's long and prosperous reign.

3 Jan - Yamagami Jinjya sai/ Goshinbokusya sai: This festival is dedicated to the mountain deities and is often celebrated by communities that revere mountain spirits. It may involve offerings to the local mountain deities.

3 Jan - Mikuragi Festival: This festival is dedicated to the sacred trees within the shrine's precincts and may involve rituals related to these trees.

3 Feb - Setsubun: Setsubun is the traditional Japanese festival held on the day before the beginning of spring in the old lunar calendar.

11 Feb - Kigen sai: A celebration of the country's founding and history, praying for its prosperity and the well-being of the imperial family and community.

11 Feb - Jimmutennousya sai: This festival honors Emperor Jimmu, Japan's legendary first emperor.

23 Feb - Tentyo sai: Tentyo sai is celebrated to bless the reigning emperor on his birthday and wish for a long and prosperous life for the emperor.

17 Mar - Kinensai: A festival that prays for a bountiful harvest and the well-being of the nation, imperial family, and the local community. It is closely related to the Japanese agricultural calendar.

Syunbun sai: Shunbun-sai is the spring equinox festival,

Shinjo Festival: Celebrated in gratitude for the harvest and to offer the first-fruit rice to the deity.

Ookuni sai: Ookuni-sai is dedicated to the deity Ookuninushi, who is associated with agriculture and prosperity.

Tsukihajime sai: This monthly festival is observed on the first day of each month to pray for the safety and well-being of the local community and its residents.

Tsukinami sai: Tsukinami-sai is a monthly festival held on the 16th day of each month to pray for the safety and well-being of the local community and its residents.

Interesting points and places at the Shrine

Tara-You-no-Ki (Tree of Tara Leaves)

This tree is believed to be the origin of the modern word "hagaki" (postcard). It was used in ancient times as an alternative to paper because writing could be done on the underside of its leaves. A monument is dedicated to the "Tara-You-no-Ki" within the precincts of Shinomiya Shrine.

Ogatama-no-Ki (Tree of Inviting Spirits)

Branches from the "Ogatama no Ki" tree are used to invite and welcome the divine spirits. It was planted in the shrine's precincts during a tree-planting dedication ceremony on June 14th as part of the 20th-anniversary celebration of the enthronement of the Emperor.

(This tree is depicted on the reverse side of the one-yen coin.)

Tanuki Amulet

Enter the Shrine grounds from the main approach and inside the inner precinct near the main Shrine on the right side is the Seiseikan, visitors can receive goshuin, large stamps handwritten by monks that prove you have visited the Shrine. Protective amulets are also sold here.

One of the Shrines unique amulets is a unique and adorable ceramic "Tanuki ", the cost is 500 yen, each face is slightly different so taking time to Choose one is part of the experience.

Hi Iro Omomori

This is a lucky amulet for those who are practising pottery, it is ceramic and comes with its own bag and people come and pray and buy this lucky charm before taking pottery lessons.

Shinrei-Kaki (Sacred Persimmon Tree)

A sacred persimmon tree believed to be 300 years old, serving as a holy tree representing the divine spirits.





Temples & Shrines - Hikumo Shrine

Hikumo Shrine in the Maki area of Shigaraki was registered as Tangible cultural property on March 18, 2003. The Shigaraki Kogen Railway runs through the middle of the Shrine grounds, making for some exciting photo opportunities. The main hall was rebuilt in the Genroku era (1691).

The shrine's history is intertwined with the legends of Princess Yamatohime no Mikoto, who is said to have enshrined the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. This enshrinement is documented in the "Nihon Shoki" (Chronicles of Japan), which mentions "Omi Province," and the "Yamatohime no Mikoto Seiki" references "Koka Hikumo Palace" as a place of tradition in the former Ise region. This connection with Ise suggests that Hikumo Shrine may have been an original shrine of the Empress Grand Shrine at Ise (Ise Jingu), specifically the Inner Shrine (Naiku). The shrine's founding is also based on the "Koka Hikumo Palace" mentioned in the "Yamatohime no Mikoto Seiki."

Hikumo Shrine reveres Amenominakanushi-no-kami as its primary deity. This deity is known for bestowing blessings such as good fortune, protection from all directions, and warding off misfortune.

Hikumo Shrine's historical evolution is intriguing. In the late Edo period, during the 5th year of the Bunsei era (1822), Miyamachi and Kinose, two neighbouring areas, separated from the congregation, leaving only people in the Maki area as its followers. There was also a sub-temple known as the Tendo Temple, abandoned during the Meiji era's separation of Shinto and Buddhism. In the 9th year of the Meiji era (1876), Hikumo Shrine was designated as a village shrine, and in the 18th year of the Meiji era (1885), it adopted its present name.

The shrine's main hall is an architectural gem dating back to the early Edo period. It is believed to have been rebuilt in the 4th year of the Genroku era (1691). The main hall retains the traditional elements of shrine architecture, including cypress bark roofing and a simple, elegant design.

Annual Festivals and Rituals

During the annual festivals held at Hikumo Shrine on May 5th and September 4th, a lively drum dance known as "taiko odori" occurs. The dance is dedicated by the shrine's parishioners and performed by a group of a few leaders (otonatori), about twenty dancers, and a shinpouchi (master of ceremonies). A bonfire is lit in the central square in front of the shrine, and the dance continues from evening until late at night. Six Michiyuki songs and eleven Odori songs have been preserved. The shrine's rituals and traditions have evolved, with the present form of the shrine and its rituals taking shape around the middle of the Edo period.

If visiting the festival, it is a good idea to check beforehand that the festival is being held and is not postponed for some reason.

Access

Hikumo Shrine is 5-minute walk from Kumoi Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway Line.

Address and Contact

Hikumo Shrine
78-78 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan
Tel: 0748-83-0432



Rare level train crossing inside the Shrine precinct



Wooded approach to Kumoi Shrine



Main Shrine Hall constructed in 1691



Taiko Odori Festival - May



Taiko Odori Festival - May



Taiko Odori Festival - May

Temples & Shrines - Gyokukeiji Temple

Gyokukeiji is a Buddhist temple of the Koyasan Shingon sect located in Chokushi, Shigaraki. According to temple records, it is believed that Gyokukeiji was founded during the Nara period when Emperor Junnin constructed the "Horyu Palace" in the northern capital of Heijokyo, and Kukai (Kobo Daishi) established the temple at that site.

Later, it became a temple designated for the imperial court by Emperor Montoku and Emperor Go-Tsuchimikado. The temple is home to several cultural assets, including a designated natural monument, the "Takano Maki" tree, which is estimated to be 500 to 600 years old and stands at a height of 29 meters. Additionally, the temple houses an important cultural property, a wooden statue of Amida Nyorai (Amitabha Buddha), which dates back to the Kamakura period (1212). The statue is 98.6 cm in height and is known to have been dedicated by Minamoto no Tomo, a disciple of Honen, during a memorial ceremony for Honen.

Accessing Gyokukeiji

For visitors to Shigaraki, visiting Gyokukeiji is highly recommended. Access is simple. Use the Shigaraki Kogen Railway from Shigaraki Station and disembark at the "Gyokukeijimae Station." After getting off the train, there is a suspension bridge over the river. This bridge provides pedestrian access to Gyokukeiji; it is also an adventure in its own right and quite popular with visitors to the area for its views of the surrounding nature and because it swings underfoot.

There is a red, red-lacquered gate and a large cedar tree. The cedar tree closest to the bridge is uniquely shaped and split into two trees at the base. This tree is the "Kobodaruma Cedar," a legendary tree believed to bring fertility. It is said that women from a village that had trouble conceiving children crossed this cedar and were blessed with offspring.

After entering the grounds on the right side, there is a Jizo Bodhisattva for comforting children's souls, and behind it stands a statue of Fudo Myoo. This Fudo Myoo statue is an impressive 13 meters in height.

There is a large stone basin for ritual purification located on the right approach to the main hall. Further down the approach is the Takano Maki, a designated natural treasure believed to have been planted by Kobo Daishi over 1,200 years ago.

Entrance to the main hall doesn't require any reservation or admission fee. Inside, you can see the wooden statue of Amida Nyorai, the main deity. You can also pay your respects to Yakushi Nyorai and other deities in the underground area.

Koyasan is famous for the "Sanko no Matsu" (the three-pronged pine needle, although typically pine trees have two needles). Gyokukeiji also has a pine tree with three needles, and it is believed to bring good fortune when a sprig is carried in one's wallet.

Returning to Shigaraki

There is a nature walk from Gyokukeiji to Shigaraki Ceramic park on the opposite side of the river. This is not a difficult walk and if the weather is nice then instead of taking the train back to Shigaraki walking back is a nice local adventure. The trail head is signposted and if visitors are unsure they can ask.

Amida Hall

A seated wooden Amida Nyorai Buddha statue that dates from the Heian period and is designated as a cultural asset of Koka City and as a nationally important cultural property, stands at a height of 98.6 cm. During recent dismantling and repair work to the statue, various items were discovered hidden within, including a list of names from over 50,000 people and a written prayer (sutra) dedicated to the construction by Minamoto no Tomo. The list of names is known as "Kechien Komyo" and consists of names written with the hope that, after death, they can reach the Pure Land (Paradise). It includes names of individuals such as Minamoto no Yoritomo, Yoriie, and Sanetomo, the three generations of Kamakura Shoguns, as well as names from the Fujiwara clan and the Wake clan. It is considered one of the largest and most significant finds

of its kind in Japan, in both in terms of quality and quantity.

Gozonzo Amida Buddha Seated Statue

The temple also houses a wooden statue of Gozonzo Amida Buddha from the Muromachi period, which is also designated as a cultural asset by Koka City.

Yakushi Nyorai for Neuralgia

If you are suffering from neuralgia or other ailments, you can seek the blessings of Yakushi Nyorai by visiting the underground passage of the main hall.

Goma-do (Fire Ritual Hall)

On the 21st of each month (the auspicious day of Kobo Daishi), a fire ritual (Goma) is performed by burning wooden sticks with the prayers of temple followers. This ritual is dedicated to Dainichi Daisho Fudo Myo-O and Boke-fuji Kannon from 9:00 to noon.

Great Fudo Myo-O

You can pray to the 13-meter high Great Fudo Myo-O (Fudo Myo-O who grants one's wishes). It is believed that if you sincerely offer your prayers here, your various wishes will be granted.

Mizuko Jizo Statues

"Mizuko Jizo" statues console the souls of children, particularly those who pass away within the first seven days or within their mother's womb. Infants, deemed divine until their seventh day, are not fully integrated into society. These Buddhist figures aim to subdue the spirits of departed children, providing solace for their unfulfilled existence.

Matsuo Basho's Haiku Monument

Near the main gate's large lantern, a monument is located with an inscripted with a haiku by the renowned poet Basho.

The haiku reads:

"Matsutake ya shiranu ki no ha ga hebaritsuki."

It is considered a brilliant verse and is a testament to the poet's deep emotions. Basho, a haiku master, was originally from Iga Ueno, just over the mountains from Gyokukeiji Temple. It is believed that he traveled back and forth to Lake Biwa in Otsu through Shigaraki when he was alive.

Child Conception Prayer Stock-Crossing Cedar

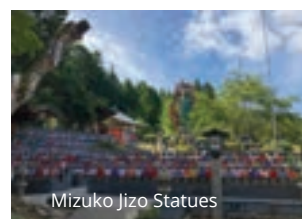
As a heartwarming tradition, many people visit Gyokukeiji Temple because in the past, villagers who had trouble conceiving children would cross this cedar tree and subsequently be blessed with a happy family.

Sanko-no-Matsu, a Famous Pine Tree Associated with Kobo Daishi

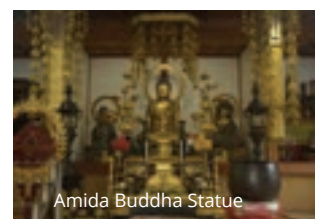
Over 1,000 years ago, Kobo Daishi Kukai brought a pine tree with three needles from Chang'an in Tang Dynasty China to Japan, which he planted in Mount Koya. There is a similar pine tree at Gyokukeiji Temple with three needles, a rare characteristic. It is said that carrying fallen needles in your wallet brings good fortune.



Gyokukeiji Shrine



Mizuko Jizo Statues



Amida Buddha Statue



Stunning Autumn scenery



13-meter-high Great Fudo Myo-O

Temples & Shrines – Senzenji Ruins Cliffside Buddha

Senzan-ji was established in the 7th year of Yōrō (723). Enshrining the hidden statue of Eleven-faced Kannon as its main deity. Under the floor of the Kannon Hall is the second oldest Yakushi triad rock carving in Japan which dates from the Kamakura period.

Iwatanizan Senzenji was founded in the 7th year of Yōrō (723) and is said to have been a branch temple of Shubōzan Kintaiji in Yamashiro, with a monk's quarters. The temple ruins are in the Asamiya district of Shigaraki.

The tea fields of Asamiya Tea stretch out alongside the access road, alongside the Iwatani River. The cliff-side main hall of the Iwatani Kannon is located on the right side of the access road in an elevated position.

The temple is said to have been destroyed in Japan's warring states period. There is a chapel dedicated to the Eleven-faced Kannon, "Iwatani Kannon," and nearby, there are carved Buddha images.

On the rock face of the destroyed temple's inner sanctuary, quietly stands a carved cliffside Buddha from the Kamakura period, depicting three deities.

On the upper right, a standing Fudo Myoo statue, and on the upper left, a standing Bishamonten statue, form a distinctive configuration known as the Hiei Mountain Yokogawa-style triad.

The inscription is engraved on the left side of the main deity, starting from the lower end of the standing Bishamonten statue, with three lines and 23 characters. "KenCho 1st year (1249)...."

The carving techniques for the stone Buddha include line engraving, thin carving, semi-carving, thick carving, and round carving. The temple ruins are a designated treasure of Koka City.

Senzan-ji is also the birthplace of Asamiya Tea and a stone monument in front of the main hall commemorates this. Next to the "Monument to the Birthplace of Asamiya Tea" at Senzan-ji Temple in Asamiya, a monument commemorating a haiku composed by the renowned poet Matsuo Basho in 1694 can be found.

The inscription on the memorial translates to;

*Amidst the trees,
Could the women plucking tea
Hear the warbler's song?*

Standing at Senzan-ji, in this atmosphere it is easy to envisage Matsuo Basho enjoying sipping tea while gazing at Asamiya tea fields and composing this famous poem.



Iwatanizan Senzanji Monument



Carved cliffside Buddha



Carved Buddha



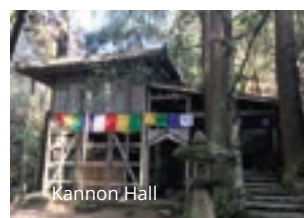
Paying respect to the carved stone Buddha



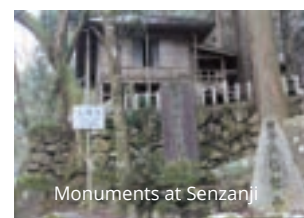
Moss covered pathway



Stunning Autumn scenery



Kannon Hall



Monuments at Senzanji

Historic Site - Tarao Daikan Yashiki Site

Shigaraki has a long history, and in the Tarao region, there is a historical site known as the "Tarao Daikan Yashiki" or "Shigaraki Yakusho," this was the residence and office of the Tarao family, who served as hereditary officials from the early Edo period. The Tarao Daikan lineage, started with Kouta, the family held the position of daikan (local magistrate) for ten generations.

The Tarao Daikan Yashiki grounds extended with a gentle curve from north to south, consisting of an upper enclosure where the daikan's buildings and gardens were located and a lower enclosure.

The middle section had the main entrance from the east. Although no buildings remain today on the site, through interviews and on-site investigations, the locations of the main building, front and rear gardens, daikan's storehouse, and burial grounds have been approximated.

Old photographs taken around the end of the Meiji era and early Taisho era suggest that the thatched main building had a prestigious tiled entrance. The surrounding mountain forests also reveal remnants of medieval castles, such as "Tarao Kojyoato" and "Tarao Castle Mountain Castle Site," hinting at the possibility that this daikan's residence may have been part of a group of medieval fortifications.

Throughout the Edo period, there were very few hereditary daikans, including the Egawa family in Niigata and the Kobori family in Kyoto. The Tarao Daikan Yashiki site is a valuable resource, with old photographs effectively documenting its evolution from the late Edo period to the early Taisho period.

The remains, including cut stone walls believed to date back to the late Edo period, and findings from excavation surveys in the backyard garden indicating late Edo period garden renovations, provide valuable insights into the appearance of a samurai residence and a magistrate's office in the early modern period.

In the 10th year of Tensho (1582), during the "Honnoji Incident," Tarao Mitsutoshi assisted Tokugawa Ieyasu, who was staying in Sakai, in his escape. He played a crucial role in what is known as the "Iga Crossing," a perilous journey through Iga and Koka. Subsequently, he actively contributed to the security of the route between Iga and Koka during the Iga Crossing.

Afterward, during the rule of the Toyotomi government, the Tarao family was deprived of its status due to its association with Toyotomi Hidetsugu, who was the nephew of Toyotomi Hideyoshi and held the position of Kanpaku (Chief Advisor to the Emperor). However, when the Tokugawa shogunate was established, their service in aiding Ieyasu's escape was recognized, and Mitsutoshi and his sons were appointed as Hatamoto (direct retainers of the shogun). The Tarao family's territory exceeded 4,000 koku (a measure of land value) and included more than half of Shigaraki. In 1600, Mitsumoto returned to Shigaraki and was appointed as the local governor.

The historic site in Tarao is famed for its Autumn splendour and is one of the first locations to begin to change colour as the weather cools. Koka City closes the grounds for the majority of the year and opens them to the public in Autumn.

Accessing the site requires a car or taxi ride.

Website: <https://bunka.nii.ac.jp/heritages/detail/280413>



Heritage Site - Tarao Daikan Yashiki Site Grounds are stunning in Autumn

Scenic Spot - Waterfalls

Immersing yourself in the natural beauty that envelops Shigaraki reveals a distinct facet of the area. Exploring the trails and discovering the waterfalls is a wonderful way to connect with the environment. Among the notable waterfalls to explore are Keimei no Taki and Mitsuji no Taki.

Keimei no Taki

Keimei no Taki (Rooster's Crow Falls), is a picturesque waterfall situated in the Minami Kamiyama area of Shigaraki Town. This natural wonder is surrounded by the serene mountains of the region, creating a tranquil and scenic atmosphere.

Legend has it that on the eastern slope of Mt. Sasagadake, the highest peak in Shigaraki, there was an ancient temple site. According to local folklore, on the morning of New Year's Day, a golden rooster emerges from the Aga Ike pond at this temple site, symbolizing and heralding the good fortune of the upcoming year. This legend has given the waterfall its unique and auspicious name.

The area is not only home to Keimei no Taki but also boasts seven other waterfalls, collectively known as the "Keimei Hachitaki" (Rooster's Crow Eight Waterfalls). Each of these falls has its own distinct charm, and together they contribute to the natural beauty of the surroundings.

The Keimei no Taki and its companion waterfalls offer a stunning display of nature's changing expressions throughout the seasons, making it a popular destination for photographers and nature enthusiasts alike. The negative ions generated by the cascading water add to the refreshing and rejuvenating ambiance, providing visitors with a serene and calming experience.

It's important to note that due to the natural and delicate environment, certain activities such as barbecues, bonfires, and fireworks are prohibited in the Keimei no Taki area, including its parking lots and parks.

Visitors are encouraged to enjoy the falls responsibly and appreciate the natural beauty that Shigaraki's Minami Kamiyama area has to offer.

Mitsuji no Taki

Mitsuji no taki is a charming waterfall located along the Tashiro River, close to Miho Museum. The waterfall features a 15-metre drop. The name Mitsuji no taki, which translates to "waterfall with three streams," is derived from the distinctive characteristic of the river splitting into three separate flows along its course.

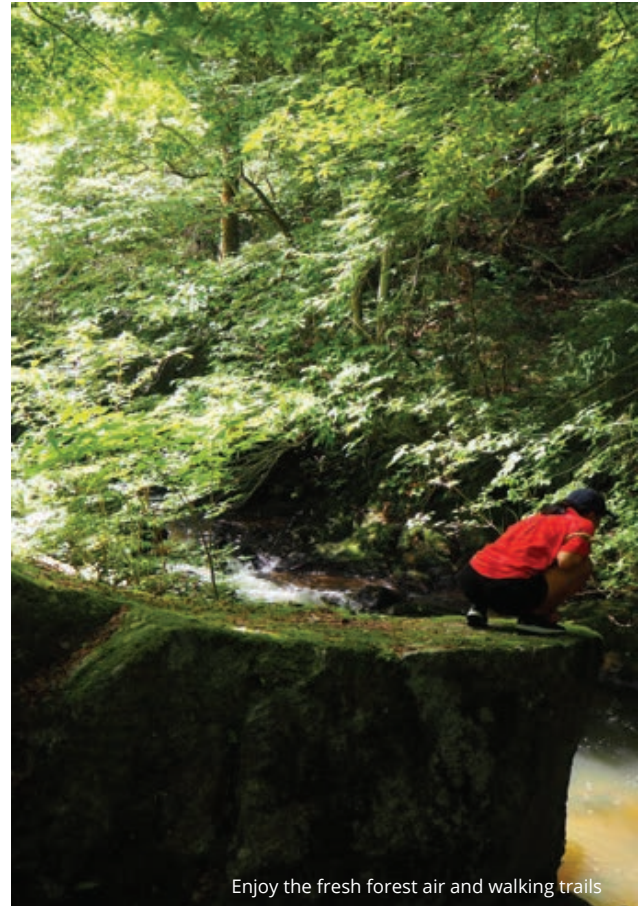
For visitors seeking an up-close experience, there is a convenient parking area nearby that allows for easy access to view the waterfall from its upper reaches. From this vantage point, one can admire Mitsuji notaki as it loudly flows over the drop, surrounded by the ever-changing beauty of nature throughout the seasons.

The waterfall is known for its diverse and vibrant expressions, presenting a different spectacle with each passing season. Whether it's the lush greenery of spring, the vibrant hues of autumn foliage, or the serene icy landscapes of winter, Mitsuji notaki never fails to captivate with its natural splendor.

At the entrance to descend to the waterfall from the road, there's a resting area for the Tokai Nature Trail.

With benches and restrooms available, it's a perfect spot to drop by during a drive around Shigaraki.

When visiting the waterfall of the are, keep in mind that the terrain can be quite rugged, so wearing comfortable clothes and shoes is advisable.



Enjoy the fresh forest air and walking trails



Keimei no Taki (Waterfall)



Mitsuji no Taki (Waterfall)

Scenic Spot - Hata Weeping Cherry Tree

The Hata Weeping Cherry Blossom tree is one of Shigaraki's natural wonders and is cared for by the Hata Weeping Cherry Blossom Preservation Society. The 400-year-old weeping cherry blossom tree is located within the Hata district of Shigaraki.

This cherry blossom tree is said to be native to Kyoto, and according to historical records, it is believed that during the late Heian period when the Heike clan fell, people who had lost their homes and belongings brought these cherry trees with them to the locations where they fled to remember the capital. They are also known as "Miyako Shidare."

The "Hata Weeping Cherry Blossom Preservation Society" takes on the solemn responsibility of safeguarding a venerable 400-year-old weeping cherry blossom tree nestled within the Hata district of Shigaraki. Before establishing the society, the weeping cherry blossom tree languished in silence amidst a bamboo thicket, resembling an elderly tree teetering on the brink of decline. While the tree's presence was known to the residents, it languished in abandonment, for there was no caretaker to tend to its well-being. Some residents desired to witness the tree's former splendour again, but their aspirations alone failed to spur them into action.

However, the catalyst for change arrived in 1988, courtesy of the "Hometown Creation Project" initiated by the then-Prime Minister Takeshita's government. This initiative prompted the establishment of the preservation society, and with its creation, a wave of determination swept through the local community. The result was an immaculate transformation of the cherry tree's surroundings, leading to substantial growth and restoration, surpassing its prior condition.

The actual origins of the weeping cherry blossom tree remain a mystery, with no records explaining. Within the community there were various oral accounts of how the tree got to this location; however, to ensure that conflicting narratives did not reach visitors' ears, a uniform narrative was crafted in 1995, fostering a shared understanding among residents. This narrative was then displayed as an informative sign next to the tree, making it more accessible for visitors to grasp the historical context.

Apprehensions persist regarding the weeping cherry blossom's 400-year age and the looming spectre of its eventual withering. To address this concern, in 2006, the preservation society successfully embarked on the propagation of clonal seedlings, culminating in the growth of 13 progeny as the tree's second generation. These seedlings are carefully nurtured alongside their venerable predecessor.

The aging tree was damaged by a Typhoon in 2018 and the tree lost a percentage of its original canopy and the volume of blossoms during the flowering season are less than in the past. The tree is still cared for by the "Hata Weeping Cherry Blossom Preservation Society" and in light of the trees longevity and historic significance to the area it is still worth a visit when visiting Shigaraki.

It is important to note that photos of the tree lit up at night have been left in this guide to show the beauty of the tree in the past and why it was an icon attracting people from afar each year. However in the interests of preservation, a decision was made after the large branch broke to no longer light the tree at night.

Location:

Hata, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Access:

The Hata district of Shigaraki is 20 minutes from Shigaraki Station, visitors can use a taxi or the community bus from Shigaraki Station to reach the location of the Hata Weeping Cherry Blossom Tree.

Shigaraki Kogen Railway/Shigaraki Line: Disembark at "Shigaraki

Station," then a 15-minute car ride.

Shigaraki Kogen Railway/Shigaraki Line: Disembark at "Shigaraki Station," then take a 20-minute bus ride, getting off at "Hata."

By car

30 minutes from Shigaraki IC on the new Meishin Expressway.

Contact:

Shigaraki Town Tourism Association

Tel: 0748-82-2345

Fax: 0748-82-2551



400 year old Hata Weeping Cherry Blossom tree



Tea Plantations

Tea Plantations - Asamiya

Renowned as one of Japan's Five Great Teas, Asamiya tea boasts a history dating back over 1,200 years. Its origin can be traced back to the year 805 AD when the eminent priest Saicho, the founder of Tendai Buddhism in Japan, brought tea seeds back from his studies in China and planted these seeds at the foot of Mt Hie, ten years later in 815 AD tea was planted in the Asamiya area.

Asamiya Tea is primarily produced in the Asamiya district located in the western part of Shigaraki. Asamiya, situated at an altitude of about 400 meters in the mountainous region of Shigaraki, experiences significant temperature differences between day and night, and its climate is conducive to tea cultivation with frequent mist, making it suitable for producing some of the finest and delicious teas in Japan.

Asamiya Tea has a long history and is considered one of the Japan's Five Famous Teas, alongside Asamiya, Sayama, Uji, Shizuoka, and Yamato. Among tea enthusiasts, it is the most popular tea. Particularly, Asamiya's new tea is often referred to as the "gem of tea." Only those who have tasted it can understand the unique "fragrance and richness of tea."

In 2009, the total area of Asamiya's tea fields was 174 hectares, with approximately 60 tea-producing farms. Currently the cultivation area is approximately 90 hectares, with a production of around 180 tons per year. About 90% of the tea cultivated is of the "Yabukita" variety, and in addition, small quantities of other tea varieties such as "Benifuki," "Okumidori," "Saemidori," "Sayamakaori," "Sayamamidori," "Okuhikari," and "Asatsuyu" are also grown.

The beginning of Asamiya Tea dates back approximately 1200 years. In the year 805, the great Buddhist monk Saicho brought tea seeds from the Tang Dynasty and planted them at the foot of Mount Hiei. In 815, during the visit of Emperor Saga to the Omi Province, the monk Eichu brewed tea and presented it. According to historical records such as the "Nihon Shoki" (Chronicles of Japan) and "Ruiju Kokushi" (Categorized National History), in the same year, tea was planted in the Kinai region, as well as in Omi, Tamba, and Harima, and offered as tribute. This is when the planting of tea seeds in the Asamiya area began. This historical event predates the time when Eisai, the founder of the Rinzai sect, is said to have brought back tea seeds from Tang Dynasty in China by about 400 years.

The timing of harvesting new tea varies depending on the weather each year, but generally, the picking of Asamiya Tea's new leaves begins in early May. The growth of new shoots varies depending on the exposure of the tea fields to sunlight, and with warming weather, the growth of new shoots accelerates. Picking tea is a day-by-day competition, and the quality of tea is heavily influenced by the timing of harvest. Even for experienced tea farmers, this judgment is considered the most challenging. Therefore, during this period, tea factories operate at full capacity, and some even run 24 hours a day.

The large and numerous fans in the tea fields are not for wind power generation; they serve another purpose. They are installed to prevent frost. In Asamiya, when the new tea buds appear, frost is common. If frost occurs, the new shoots are at risk of being completely destroyed. The fans are used to circulate air and protect the new shoots from frost. Asamiya pioneered the use of these frost prevention fans in 1973, ahead of the rest of the country.



Picking new seasons tea in the plantations of Asamiya

Asamiya's Elixir The Camellia Sinensis Legacy



Tea Plant - Camellia sinensis

Tea is a perennial plant from the Camellia genus, scientifically named *Camellia sinensis*, belonging to the Theaceae family. The Camellia genus has over 80 confirmed species globally, with tea plants having the widest distribution. Tea plants are originally from subtropical areas but have adapted to diverse environments worldwide. In Japan, tea cultivation thrives in temperate and highland tropical regions with ideal climate and soil conditions. Tea plants undergo various stages of growth, from budding to flowering and fruiting, with the leaves being the most important part for harvesting. The intricate network of tea roots is deep and dense, and replanting is necessary after several decades of vitality.

New buds

As spring arrives, new shoots emerge from the tea plant's branches and leaves, with a delicate "frost cover" shielding these tender nascent buds. As the temperature rises, these soft and delicate shoots, known as "miru me", progress into mature leaves with a firm texture.

New Shoots

For the first-flush tea, plucking is deemed optimal when four to five leaves have unfurled, a meticulous process of selecting one bud and two or sometimes three leaves.

Pruning

Over time, the tea plant's trunk and branches are trimmed, this method is called "sen-eda," it increases the branches and promotes the growth of numerous leaves.

Flowering

Tea plants bloom smaller white flowers than camellias in the autumn, with variations in colour or petal count depending on the variety. Tea gardens focused on leaf harvesting minimize flowering as much as possible.

Fruit

Tea seeds, ranging from one to three enclosed in shells slightly smaller than marbles, can often be found on the ground in a tea plantation. Although rare in Japan, tea seeds were used to extract oil or used by children when playing in the past.

Replanting

When tea trees lose their vitality after several decades, they find rejuvenation through replanting, although the intricate network of tea roots poses a challenge for easy removal. If allowed to linger in the earth, the tenacity of these roots may produce new shoots.

Tea Plantations - Asamiya

The teas of Asamiya

The distinctive features of Asamiya tea include significantly larger and glossier leaves compared to teas from other regions. The brewed tea has a water colour that is not green but golden, and the taste is simple, somewhat nostalgic, starting with a slight astringency and gradually transitions into a refreshing aftertaste.

Shincha

Shincha refers to tea made from the first-picked new buds in the year, also known as the "first tea." Shincha garners attention not only as a symbol of good luck but also for its unique flavour that can only be enjoyed during its season. Shincha has a refreshing aroma, and it is characterized by minimal astringency and bitterness but abundant umami.

Sencha

Sencha is the most commonly consumed tea in Japan, accounting for about 80% of the tea produced in Japan. It is made by steaming and rolling the tea leaves while drying them. Sencha has a well-balanced taste with sweetness, umami, and a hint of bitterness. It has a unique refreshing and transparent flavor. Higher-quality sencha has enhanced richness and aroma.

Gyokuro

During the growth period of new shoots, gyokuro is cultivated by covering the plants for about 20 days. Blocking direct sunlight enhances the umami while suppressing bitterness, resulting in a high-quality tea. It features a unique aroma reminiscent of nori (seaweed).

Matcha

Similar to gyokuro, matcha is grown by shading the plants from direct sunlight. After steaming, the leaves are dried without rolling (tencha) and finely ground with a mill. It is whisked with a tool called a chasen in a bowl before drinking.

Hojicha

Hojicha is a dark brown tea made by roasting leaves or stems of tea plants over high heat. It has a light and refreshing taste, making it suitable for post-meal tea or pairing with sweets. It is enjoyable both hot and cold.

Genmaicha

Genmaicha is a blend of high-pressure-roasted brown rice and tea leaves. It combines the nutty flavor of roasted rice with the refreshing taste of sencha.

Karigane

Karigane is a tea with a high content of stems, selected during the production of high-quality sencha or gyokuro. It contains a lot of amino acids, imparting sweetness and making it easy to brew, even with boiling water.

Organic Tea

Organic tea is cultivated without the use of chemical fertilizers or pesticides, utilizing compost to create environmentally friendly tea. There are several producers in Asamiya that grow tea organically.

Powdered Tea

Powdered tea consists of finely ground tea leaves, selected during the production of gyokuro or sencha. Due to its fine texture, it releases flavour easily, resulting in a rich taste and colour when brewed. Frequently requested by pastry chefs, powdered tea serves as a versatile ingredient in cooking and baking, suitable for various situations.



Picking new seasons tea in the plantations of Asamiya

The art of making

The best cup of Asamiya Tea

Sencha, Gyokuro, Fukamushi (Deep Steamed Tea)

Water Cooling (STEP-1)

Prepare a teacup for each person and fill the cup to around the 80% level with hot water and let cool to the optimum temperature.

(The best water temperature for Asamiya tea is 70 degrees celsius for sencha or 90 degrees celsius for higher-grade teas.)

Tea Leaves (STEP-2)

Place the tea leaves in the teapot. For five people, use 6-10g (about two tablespoons). If serving a smaller group, use a slightly larger amount.

Steeping (STEP-3)

Pour the hot water into the teapot and wait for approximately 1 minute (30 seconds for fukamushi tea) for the tea to steep.

Extraction (STEP-4)

When pouring the tea, do so evenly to ensure consistent strength. Pour until the last drop, and for the second round, wait for 10 seconds after adding hot water.

Bancha, Genmaicha, Hojicha (Roasted Green Tea)

Tea Leaves (STEP-1)

Place the tea leaves in the teapot. For five people, use 15g (about two to three generous tablespoons).

Steeping (STEP-2)

The amount of water per person is roughly 130ml. Pour hot water into the teapot and wait for about 30 seconds for the tea to steep.

Extraction (STEP-3)

When pouring the tea, do so evenly, and squeeze out every last drop. For the second steeping, use slightly hotter water than the first round and pour it into the teapot. Wait a moment before serving.

Since most of the beneficial components of tea are extracted by the third steeping, consider replacing the tea leaves.

Gyokuro

Water Cooling (STEP-1)

Pour hot water into the teapot. (For gyokuro, use 50 degrees Celsius for higher grade or 60 degrees Celsius for regular.)

Water Measuring (STEP-2)

Prepare a small teacup for gyokuro, and pour about 70% (approximately 20ml) of hot water from the teapot. Discard the remaining water.

Tea Leaves (STEP-3)

Place tea leaves in the teapot. (Use about two generous tablespoons.)

Steeping (STEP-4)

Pour the hot water from the teacup into the teapot and wait for about 2 minutes for the tea to steep.

Extraction (STEP-5)

When pouring the tea, do so evenly, squeezing out every last drop. For the second round, wait for about 30 seconds after pouring hot water.



Attractions - Asamiya

Yamamoto En



Established in 1870 during the early Meiji era, Yamamoto En is a tea cultivation enterprise guided by the principles of "Sanpo Yoshi" (Benefit for the buyer, seller, and the environment). This philosophy is the foundation of the company's operations. Renowned for their unique and delightful taste, Yamamoto En's Asamiya Teas are a testament to the commitment to quality.

As both a tea grower and processor, Yamamoto En is dedicated to coexisting with nature. The landscapes where tea is cultivated are cherished and protected, and Asamiya Tea is cultivated without the use of pesticides. Drawing on the natural beauty of the rural surroundings and the 1200 years of cultivation history, steeped in historical and cultural significance,

Yamamoto En aims to contribute to the creation of a sustainable and environmentally friendly society and has been honoured with the prestigious "Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Award," the highest recognition in Japan. Consistently excelling in national tea competitions, their teas have been presented to successive emperors throughout history.

Yamamoto En Tea undergoes meticulous inspection and verification based on Omi Tea Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). Traceability (production history) is established, and processes and materials are rigorously managed, ensuring comprehensive control from production to ingredient management. With three nationally certified tea examination technicians and two Japanese tea advisors, Yamamoto En ensures stringent quality control with carefully selected raw materials.

Yamamoto En WITH TEA



Operating on the same philosophy as Yamamoto En, the tea house "WITH TEA" provides a relaxing space for visitors to unwind and enjoy green tea, matcha, and coffee amidst busy sightseeing schedules. A highlight of a visit to "WITH TEA" is indulging in delightful Asamiya tea-infused sweets, crafted with one of Japan's top five renowned teas, "Asamiya Tea."

Full Experience of Pesticide-Free Cultivation "Asamiya Tea":

Experience Time: 10:00 - 12:00 (Approximately 2 hours)

Number of Participants: Up to 10 people per session

Cost: 5,500 yen (Incl Tax) p.p

Experience Contents:

- Hands-on experience of crafting pesticide-free cultivated "Asamiya Tea" (Hand-rolled tea making experience).
- Tea tasting experience of pesticide-free cultivated "Asamiya Tea" (Includes tea and sweets produced using tea from Yamamoto En's plantations).

Experience Reservations:

Reservations are essential and can be made online via a form.

Check the calendar on the form page and fill in the required details. The tour is conducted in Japanese, so for English-speaking visitors, it is recommended to visit with a guide/translator.

Although the experience is hands-on and understandable without detailed language assistance, having your guide/translator is essential for a

deeper understanding and the ability to ask questions.

Yamamotoen Co., Ltd. (WITH TEA)

Address: 275-1 Kamiasamiya Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-84-0014

Hours: 11:00 - 17:00 (L.O: 16:30)

Closed: Mon (If Mon is a pub.hol, will close the following day), also closed on the 4th Tue of each month (subject to change)

Parking: Cars - 50 spaces / Large Vehicles - 10 spaces

Website: <https://www.yamamotoen.co.jp/>



Asamiya tea fields



The beauty of the mist in the rolling hills of Asamiya

Tea Culture

"Ocha no Sumi Hachijyu Hachiya" 88th Night of Tea

Asamiya showcases its cultural heritage through a phrase that resonates with the rhythm of Japanese tea culture - "Ocha no Sumi Hachijyu Hachiya", which means the "88th night of tea" in English. This phrase is rooted in the traditional Japanese calendar and signifies a specific period closely linked to the first picking of tea leaves in spring. This temporal marker holds extreme importance for tea enthusiasts and practitioners in early May, as it marks the emergence of the eagerly awaited "shincha," or the first flush of green tea. The "shincha" is highly valued for its fresh and vibrant flavours that captivate the senses. During this early harvest, the delicate leaves embody the season's essence, capturing spring's vitality. The "shincha" is characterised by its bright green colour and nuanced, refreshing taste, making it a sought-after beverage among connoisseurs and tea lovers. The "88th night" is celebrated as a symbol of renewal by the community, as it is a time when the tea fields come alive with activity, and the delicate leaves are carefully harvested to craft the exquisite "shincha." Spring is a perfect time of the year to visit Asamiya and experience the joys of "Ocha no Sumi Hachijyu Hachiya" firsthand.

Chanomiyagura

Located in Shimoasamiya at an altitude of over 400 meters, Chanomiyagura benefits from the region's significant temperature variations between seasons and day and night, which enhance the flavor of its tea. Mr. Masaharu Higuchi started the tea cultivation in this area, and now his son, Mr. Masanao Higuchi, manages the farm with his family. The family cultivates 6.4 hectares of tea, 2.1 hectares of which are dedicated to organic production.

In 2011, Chanomiyagura's "Comprehensive Business Plan" was certified under the "National Local Production for Local Consumption Act," and they developed processing facilities. The farm is renowned for its tea as well as the sweets made using its tea, which are sold at their Asamiya retail store.

In response to growing demand, Chanomiyagura began organic cultivation, obtaining JAS certification for some fields in 2019. The farm manufactures sweets like Asamiya Tea Roll Cakes using tea harvested from its fields. Varieties include:

Adult Roll Cake with Sencha: A mature flavor with the distinct aroma, richness, and astringency of sencha, accented with black beans.

Matcha Swirl Roll Cake: A vibrant green roll made with first flush matcha and fresh Hokkaido cream.

Chanomiyagura

Address: 275-1 Shimoasamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: +81 748-84-0405

Hours: 10:00 - 18:00 (Closed every third Tuesday; tea leaves still available)

Parking: Large parking area

Website: chanomiyagura.com



Chanomiyagura - Tea infused Ice Cream, Cakes, Specialty teas

Katagi Kouka-en

The seventh-generation tea grower, Takatomo Katagi, runs his tea plantation in Asamiya at about 550 meters above sea level. Known for its unique fragrance and rich umami, Asamiya tea has long been prized by the imperial court. Takatomo's father, Akira Katagi, pioneered pesticide-free tea cultivation in 1975, a revolutionary move that faced significant challenges before yielding results. Today, the Katagi family's tea is celebrated for its purity and quality, and their work has inspired others to adopt pesticide-free farming.

Katagi Kouka-en's tea has won numerous accolades and is sold both locally and internationally. The plantation uses sustainable farming practices, including nitrogen-fixing clover to improve soil quality, and they avoid deep steaming to preserve the delicate taste of the tea.

Katagi Kouka-en

Address: 1090 Miyajiri, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Hours: 9:00 - 16:00 (Open daily)

Tel: +81 748-84-0135

Website: katagikoukaen.com



Katagi Kouka-en

Shōryūen

Located in the historic Asamiya tea region, Shōryūen has been managed by the Hattori family for generations. Originally focusing on rice and tea farming, the family transitioned to mechanized harvesting in the Showa period, eventually making tea their primary focus. The farm initially grew the native "zairai-shu" tea, known for its distinctive flavor, and later adopted the Yabukita variety. Despite this, Shōryūen continues to maintain its zairai-shu fields through organic, pesticide-free farming methods.

Today, Shōryūen produces both Yabukita sencha and hōjicha, alongside organic zairai teas, blending traditional and modern farming methods. Akihiko Hattori, who inherited the farm at the age of 24, continues the legacy of his father and grandfather, adapting to climate challenges while preserving the farm's heritage. Visitors can tour the tea fields, experience hand-rolling techniques, and enjoy freshly brewed tea served in Shigaraki-yaki pottery, offering a deeper connection to the culture and flavors of Asamiya tea.

Shōryūen

Address: 516 Shimoasamiya, Shigaraki-cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: +81 748-84-0037

Hours: By appointment only. During peak harvesting season, visits may not be possible.

Website: shouryuuken.com



Mr Akihiko Hattori - Shōryūen



Harvesting at Shōryūen



Golf

Shigaraki Golf

There are a total of eleven golf courses in Shigaraki, ranging from public to members-only facilities. The majority of courses are located in the picturesque highlands of the area. The Kansai region is renowned for its warmer temperatures in summer, and the slight elevation means that the areas surrounding Shigaraki are a little cooler. The golf courses in the area are characterized by their challenging course ratings, ensuring a satisfying experience for golfers of all skill levels, including seasoned players. Many golf courses are conveniently situated near hotels and other amenities, allowing immersion in the sport without rushing. The facilities and meals offered at many courses are highly rated, making the courses the perfect sporting addition to a visit to Shigaraki.



Asamiya Golf Course

Address: 1-1 Kamiasamiya Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-84-8080
Fax: 0748-84-8070
Website: <https://reserve.accordiagolf.com/golfCourse/shiga/asamiya/>
Visitor OK

Course Features

Course set amidst abundant natural beauty, featuring a gentle rolling terrain in an orthodox style. Bunkers and ponds are strategically placed, making it a course that requires both power and skill at key points.

Holes: 18 holes, Par 72

Course Type: Hillside

Course Rating: 72.2 (OUT, IN, Bent)

Round Style: Self-play for all groups

Self-play, using 5-passenger ride-on carts. Twosomes may be allowed depending on the situation.

Number of Greens: 1

Green Grass Type: Bentgrass (Pennncross)

Fairway Grass Type: Corai

Mowing Style: 2-direction cut

Number of Bunkers: 42

Number of Holes Involving Ponds: 0

Rough Grass Type: Noshiiba

Course Distance Regular: 6257 yards

Toilets on the Course: 2

Amenities

Cart: Ride-on carts (5-passenger)

Self-propelled equipped with score calculation function and GPS navigation

Practice Range: Available

Number of hitting bays: 6

Restaurant/ Bath

Restaurant: Breakfast/ Lunch

Bath: Available

Orange Shiga Country Club

Address: 1000 Hinotani Miyamachi Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-83-0111
Fax: 0748-83-0115
Website: <https://orange-shiga.co.jp/>
Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
Visitor OK

Course Features

Stunning 18 hole course that combines both beautiful scenery with a challenging game, that requires strategy. Conveniently located 5 minutes from the Shin Meishin Shigaraki Interchange.

OUT Course: A dramatic course that requires precise shots and a variety of techniques.

IN Course: Spreads along the foothills of Mt. Iido, a strategically designed course that skillfully utilizes its favorable terrain.

Holes: 18 holes, Par 72

Course Type: Hillside

Course Rating: 71.1 (OUT, IN, Bent (Main Green))

Course Rating: 70.6 (OUT, IN, Bent (Sub Green))

Number of Greens: 2

Green Grass Type: Bentgrass (Pennncross), Bentgrass (Pennncross)

Fairways Grass Type: Corai

Rough Grass Type: Noshiiba

Mowing Style: Zebra cut

Number of Bunkers: 42

Rough Grass Type: Noshiiba

Course Distance Regular: 6343 yards

Toilets on the Course: 2

Amenities

Cart: Ride-on carts (5-passenger)

Remote-controlled, Equipped with score calculation function and GPS navigation

Practice Range: Available

Number of hitting bays: 16

Restaurant/ Competition Room/ Bath

Restaurant: Breakfast/ Lunch

Competition/Meeting Room: Available

Bath: Available



Shigaraki Golf

Koga Country Club

Address: 3354 Mikumo Konan City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-72-1221
Fax: 0748-72-3445
Website: <http://www.koga-cc.jp/>
Hours: 7:30 - 17:00
Visitor OK

Course Features

The course is characterized by its beautiful natural surroundings, spectacular forests of red pine trees and seasonal flowers. With large undulations and spacious fairways, the layout is designed to be enjoyable for both long hitters and beginners.

Holes: 18 holes, Par 72

Number of Greens: Not specified

Green Grass Type: Corai

Course Distance Regular: 6451 yards

Course Type: Hillside

Course Rating: 70.3 (OUT, IN, Corai), 71.3 (OUT, IN, Bent)

Round Style: Option to Choose between having a caddy or playing self-carry. Ride-on carts are used, and twosomes may be allowed upon request.

Toilets on the Course: Available

Amenities

Cart: Ride-on carts (5-passenger)

Remote-controlled, Equipped with score calculation function and GPS navigation.

Practice Range: Available

Restaurant/ Competition Room/ Bath

Restaurant: Lunch

Competition/Meeting Room: Please inquire

Bath: Available

The Country Club

Address: 1782-2 Maki Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-83-1711
Fax: 0748-83-8001
Website: <https://rttg-golf.jp/thecc>
Hours:
Members Only/ Visitor by introduction only

Course Features

This course is laid out spaciouly across a vast area with 18 holes, and only a very small part of the neighboring holes is visible. Each hole exudes an independent and tranquil atmosphere. Designed by R. T. Jones Jr., it features an American-style layout with the extensive use of ponds, mounds, and bunkers. The 9th and 18th holes unfold around a large pond in front of the clubhouse, offering both beauty and ample strategic opportunities.

Holes: 18 holes, Par 72

Course Type: Hillside

Course Distance Regular: 6523 yards

Course Rating: 72.8 (OUT, IN, Bent)

Number of Greens: 1

Green Grass Type: Bentgrass (Pennncross)

Fairways Grass Type: Corai

Rough Grass Type: Noshiha

Number of Bunkers: 79

Number of Holes Involving Ponds: 3

Round Style: Option to Choose between having a caddy or playing self-carry. Normally, groups of four are preferred, but twosomes may be allowed depending on the situation.

Toilets on the Course: 2

Amenities

Cart: Ride-on carts (5-passenger), Remote-controlled

GPS Navigation

Practice Range: Available

Restaurant/ Competition Room/ Bath

Restaurant: Breakfast, Lunch, Refreshments

Competition/Meeting Room: Available

Bath: Available



Shigaraki Golf

Shiga Country Club

Address: 1224 Kamiasagami Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-82-1961
Fax: 0748-82-3168
Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
Website: <https://www.shigacc.jp/>
Visitor OK

Course Features

Located on the Shigaraki Plateau, this course has a garden-like design with a charming atmosphere of preserved hinoki cypress groves throughout. There are few uphill shots. The standout holes on the front nine include the third, with a pond carry, and the famous fifth, where the green is long and guarded by bunkers. The back nine presents an overall challenge with difficult short shots. The renowned hole is the 12th, resembling a completely Japanese garden with a lantern placed in a bunker just before the green and a rock surface featuring a statue of Kannon.

Holes: 18 holes, Par 72
Course Type: Hilly
Course Distance Regular: 6813 yards
Course Rating: 71.8 (OUT, IN, Bentgrass)
Round Style: Not specified

Amenities

Carts: Ride-on carts (5-seater), Remote-controlled
Toilets on the Course: Available
Practice Facility: Available
Number of hitting bays: 16

Restaurant/ Competition Room/ Bath

Restaurant: Breakfast, Lunch, Refreshments and Party Menus.
Competition Room: Available
Bath: Available
Powder Room: Available



Shigaraki Country Club Sugiyama Course

Address: 55-1 Hata Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-82-3711
Fax: 0748-82-3166
Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
Website: <https://www.shigarakicc.jp/sugiyama/>
Visitor OK

Course Features

The undulating terrain presents three distinctive courses: North, East, and West. The North course stands out with its long distances and expansive, flat fairways. Noteworthy is the challenging 3rd short hole adorned with sizable bunkers. The East course harmonizes with the natural landscape's contours, demanding precision in tee shots due to its numerous cross bunkers. While slightly shorter, the West course poses challenges with intricate holes and treats golfers to splendid panoramic views. Bunkers meticulously guard the greens, and the back nine intensifies the challenge with demanding short shots. The iconic 12th hole captures attention with its Japanese garden-like ambience, featuring lanterns strategically placed in front-right bunkers on the green and a Kannon statue atop a rocky surface.

Holes: 27 holes, Par 108
Course Type: Hilly
Course Distance Regular: 10449 yards
Course Rotation:

North Course - East Course

East Course - West Course

West Course - North Course

Course maintenance days or large tournaments may result in changes to this rotation. For detailed information in such cases, please contact the golf course directly.

Course Rating: 73.7 (North-East Bent), 73.2 (West-North Bent), 73.3 (East-West Bent)

Round Style: Choice of Caddy or Self play

Caddy and self-play options available. Riding carts are used.

Reservations accepted for groups of three or more, but grouping may occur on the day.

Toilets on the course: Available

Amenities

Cart: Ride-on carts (5 passengers), Remote-controlled
Practice Range: Available

Restaurant/ Accommodation/ Bath

Restaurant: Breakfast, Lunch, Refreshments and Party Menus.

Accommodation: Shigaraki Kogen Hotel

Family Rooms: (Accomodate up to 4 people) 17 rooms

Rates: From 16,800 and up per person

Non-smoking rooms: 17 rooms

Check-in: 15:00 -

Check-out: Until 10:00

Competition/Meeting Room: Available

Bath: Available



Shigaraki Golf

Shigaraki Country Club Tashiro Course

Address: 767-1 Tashiro Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-82-3711
Fax: 0748-82-3166
Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
Website: <https://www.shigarakicc.jp/tashiro/>
Visitor OK

Course Features

This is a hilly course, but thanks to a significant amount of earth movement, each hole is very flat. The fairways are also wide and long. The front nine, in particular, offers challenging distances, and getting a par on holes like the first and seventh is a difficult task. On the back nine, the longer holes are more attackable, but the greens of the middle holes are surrounded by bunkers, requiring precise iron shots.

Holes: 18 holes, Par 72

Course Type: Hilly

Course Distance Regular: 7192 yards

Course Rating: 69.8 (OUT, IN, Bent (EMERALD))
 71.2 (OUT, IN, Bent (GOLD))

Round Style: Choice of Caddy or Self Play

Caddy service available, self-play allowed. Ride-on carts are used. Reservations are accepted for groups of three or more, but on the day, group combinations may be necessary.

Amenities

Carts: Ride-on carts (5 person), Remote-controlled

Toilets on the course: Available

Practice Range: Not available

Restaurant/ Accommodation/ Bath

Restaurant: Breakfast, Lunch, Refreshments and Party Menus.

Competition Room: Available

Accommodation: Shigaraki Kogen Hotel

Family Rooms: (Accomodate up to 4 people) 17 rooms

Rates: From 16,800 and up per person

Non-smoking rooms: 17 rooms

Check-in: 15:00 -

Check-out: Until 10:00

Bath: Available

Taroo Country Club

Address: 1 Tarao Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-85-0025
Fax: 0748-85-0045
Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
Website: <https://www.tarao.co.jp/>
Members Only

"Japan Open to be held at Tarao Country Club in 2026"

Course Features

Located on a plateau at an altitude of about 600m, the course consists of 36 holes, divided into WEST and EAST, exceeding 7,200 yards in length, making them champion courses. In particular, the WEST course hosts one of the LPGA's major tournaments, the "Nippon Women's Professional Golf Championship Konica Minolta Cup," where many top players engage in heated competition. Each hole, spaciouly laid out on the vast grounds, features 11 large ponds, with the pressure of the ponds awaiting golfers in crucial shots.

Holes: 36 Holes, Par 144

Course Type: Hilly

Course Distance Regular: 13,312 yards

Course Rotation

East Course OUT - East Course IN

East Course IN - East Course OUT

West Course OUT - West Course IN

West Course IN - West Course OUT

Course Rating:

74.0 (East Course OUT, East Course IN, Bent (Main Green))

73.6 (East Course OUT, East Course IN, Bent (Sub Green))

75.1 (West Course OUT, West Course IN, Bent (Main Green))

73.8 (West Course OUT, West Course IN, Bent (Sub Green))

Round Style: Self-play for all groups

Caddies are available by request.

Ride-on carts are used. Twosomes are possible based on the situation (weekdays only).

Number of Greens: 2

Green Grass Type: Bent (Pencross), Bent (Pencross)

Rough Grass Type: Noshiiba

Fairway Grass Type: Corai

Mowing Method: Zebra Cut

Number of Bunkers: 140

Holes with Ponds: 21

Amenities

Carts

Ride-on Carts (5-seater), Self-driving, GPS Navigation

Toilets on course: 12 locations across the course

Practice Range: Available

Restaurant/ Accommodation/ Hotel/ Bath

Restaurant: Breakfast, Lunch, Refreshments and Party Menus.

Competition Rooms: Available

Accommodation Facilities: Available

Type: Lake Villa Hotel

Twin (10 rooms): from 13,393 per person

Check-in: From 15:00

Check-out: Until 10:00

Hot Springs: Available (Bathing tax: ¥150)

Cancellation Policy: Please provide notice of cancellation up to 7 days before your stay.

Cancellation fees after that are as follows:

7 days prior: 10% of the accommodation fee

The day prior: 20% of the accommodation fee

On the day of stay: 80% of the accommodation fee

No-show without notice: 100% of the accommodation fee

Bath: Available (Hot Spring), Powder Room



Shigaraki Golf

Daily Shigaraki Country Club

Address: 1577 Aza Jyouryu Tarao Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-85-8050
Fax: 0748-85-8060
Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
Website: <https://www.d-shigaraki.co.jp/>
Members Only

Course Features

This hilly course, was the first golf course to open following relaxation of regulations in Shiga Prefecture, related to Golf course construction. The course is surrounded by lush woods and blessed with natural beauty. The course combines grandeur with subtlety, with a particular focus on the ingenious use of water hazards. Players need to exercise caution, especially with the varied bunkers, to enhance the strategic aspect of their play. The course also offers four tee grounds and one bent green to add variety to the game.

Holes: 27 Holes, Par 108
Course Type: Hilly
Course Distance Regular: 9,895 yards
Course Rotation:
 Yagyu - Koka
 Koka - Iga
 Iga - Yagyu
Course Ratings
 73.6 (Yagyu, Iga, Bent)
 72.6 (Yagyu, Koka, Bent)
 72.4 (Koka, Iga, Bent)
Round Style: Self-play for all groups
 Enjoy rounds with a self-play format, using 5-person ride-on carts. Four players per group, twosomes are allowed based on loading (weekdays).
Number of Greens: 1
Green Grass: Bent (Pennncross)
Fairway Grass Type: Corai
Rough Grass Type: Corai
Number of Bunkers: 75
Number of Holes with water hazzards: 10
Toilets on the course: 3

Maintenance days are subject to change.

Amenities

Cart: Ride-on Carts (5-person capacity), Self Driving.
Practice Range: Available

Restaurant/ Competition Room/ Bath

Restaurant: Breakfast/ Lunch
Competition Room: Available
Bath: Available
Sauna: Available

Maple Hills Golf Club

Address: 65 Tashiro Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-82-3800
Fax: 0748-82-3880
Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
Website: <https://maple-hills.com/>
Visitor OK

Course Features

Maple Hills Golf Club stands as a paragon of elegance, featuring a clubhouse adorned with refined stone architecture. The clubhouse, characterized by its soaring ceilings and expansive, inviting lobby, fully embodies the philosophy of "Member's Home, Hospitality for Guest," providing the pinnacle of hospitality.

One of Maple Hills GC's distinctive features is the natural radon hot spring open-air bath. Renowned for its abundant radon content and the purity of its mildly radioactive cold mineral spring, officially registered as Shigaraki Onsen, this facility, coupled with a sauna, provides golfers with a sanctuary for relaxation and post-round rejuvenation.

Holes: 18 Holes, Par 72
Course Type: Hillside
Course Distance Regular: 6505 Yards
Course Rating
 72.9 (OUT, IN, Bent)
Round Style: Choice of Caddy or Self-play
Number of Greens: 1
Green Grass: Bent (Pennncross)
Number of Bunkers: 0
Number of Holes with water hazzards: 8
Toilet on course: Available

Amenities

Carts

Ride-on Carts (5-person capacity), Remote-controlled, GPS Navigation
Practice Range: Available

Restaurant/ Competition Room/ Bath

Restaurant: Lunch, Party Menus.
Competition Room: Available
Bath: Available (Open-air Hot Spring/ Sauna)



Shigaraki Golf

Rose Golf Course

Address: 1224 Kamiasagami Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-85-8020
Fax: 0748-85-8060
Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
Website: <https://www.rose-golfclub.com/>
Visitor OK

Course Features

This golf course offers a new and unique experience with a theme around "art and resort". The club's name was completely revamped, and the clubhouse has been adorned with art throughout, making it a attractive destination. The course itself features minimal elevation changes, wide fairways, and includes challenging holes that are over 600 yards long, the course layout caters to golfers of various skill levels.

Holes: 18 Holes, Par 72

Course Type: Rolling Hills

Course Distance Regular: 6,424 Yards

Course Rating: 72.3 (OUT, IN, Bent)

Round Style: All groups are self-play.

All groups are self-play. Ride-on carts are used. While the standard is one group of four players, twosomes may be allowed depending on the situation.

Number of Greens: 1

Green Grass: Bent (Pennncross)

Fairway type of Grass: Korai

Rough Type of Grass: Noshiha

Number of Bunkers: 62

Number of Holes with water hazards: 4

Toilets on the course: 2

Amenities

Carts

Ride-on Carts (5-person capacity), Remote controlled, Score Tracking
 GPS Navigation

Practice Range: Available

Restaurant/ Competition Room/ Bath

Restaurant: Lunch, Refreshments, BBQ's and Party Menus.

Accommodation Facilities: Rose Village

Type of Facilities: Cottages

Cottage (5 rooms): from 11,000 yen per person

Check-in: 15:00 - **Check-out:** Until 11:00

Bath: Available

Cancellation Policy: Notify of cancellations at least 10 days before stay. For cancellations after this period, charges made according to our hotel's lodging agreement.

9 days prior: 20% of the lodging fee

4 days prior: 50% of the lodging fee

2 days prior: 80% of the lodging fee

The day prior: 100% of the lodging fee

The day of: 100% of the lodging fee

No notification of cancellation: 100% of the lodging fee





Accommodation

Shigaraki Accommodation

Whether clients are avid explorers, luxury seekers, or budget-conscious travellers, Shigaraki's accommodations facilities are designed to meet their needs. Many featured lodgings not only provide a comfortable place to rest but also offer a glimpse into the town's unique cultural experiences.

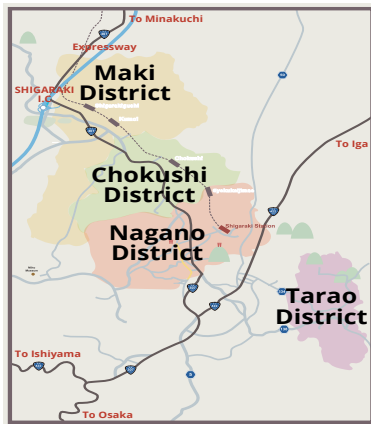
Accommodation in Shigaraki caters to diverse preferences, ranging from luxurious suites radiating elegance to eco-friendly options aligned with sustainable practices. Shigaraki warmly welcomes visitors, ensuring a memorable stay for every discerning traveller.

Reservations are conveniently made through online booking engines, accessible via respective accommodation websites. To guarantee a smooth process, the Shigaraki Tourism Association recommends utilizing these platforms for a hassle-free experience. With a diverse array of options, Shigaraki stands as an inviting destination, ready to cater to the preferences of all types of travellers.

During a visit to Shigaraki journey, allow accommodation experiences to become an integral part of your experience, allowing for deeper immersion in the town's history, cultural richness, and warm hospitality. Choose a stay that resonates with your travel preferences to enhance your overall visit.

Please note that this travel guide is for general information purposes, and it's recommended to verify details with relevant accommodation providers before making travel arrangements.

Accommodation Locations



Maki District

The Maki district is Shigaraki's primary gateway, and most visitors travelling to Shigaraki by car using the Shinmeishin Expressway will exit from the Shinmeishin Highway here before travelling along Route 307 to access road or rail. The Shigaraki Palace Site, a nationally designated historic site, is located here.

The Maki district boasts kilns, activity providers, galleries, popular cafes, and restaurants. Accommodation options are limited, with only a few boutique providers.

Access: Best accessed from Shigarakigushi or the Kumoi Railway Stations or by car from the Shin Meishin Expressway - Shigaraki Interchange. The Maki area is 10 to 15 minutes from the centre of Shigaraki.

Chokushi District

Travellers entering Shigaraki from the Shinmeishin Expressway or utilizing the Shigaraki Kogen Railway through the Maki District traverse the Chokushi District en route to central Shigaraki. This area boasts numerous kilns, galleries, restaurants, and cafes, offering a range of activities for visitors to explore, however due to the close proximity to the centre of Shigaraki there is no accommodation in this area.

Accommodation:

Due to the proximity to central Shigaraki, this area has no accommodation.

Access:

The Chokushi area can be accessed by car or rail; the Chokushi Railway station provides adequate access to this district's cafes and restaurants due to its proximity to Route 307. Visitors accessing Gyokukeiji Temple can disembark at the Gyokkeijimae Railway Station. For visitors travelling to the Shigaraki Ceramic and Cultural Park, access is best by Taxi from central Shigaraki.

Nagano Area (Central Business District of Shigaraki)

The Nagano district is Shigaraki's central business district, housing the majority of accommodation options. Many pottery workshops, galleries, restaurants, cafes, and essential businesses are here.

Access: Easily accessible by train, chartered vehicle, or private car from the Shinmeishin Expressway.

Accommodation: Providers are within a 5 to 10-minute walk from Shigaraki Railway Station, and some luxurious accommodation providers offer courtesy transportation for groups from Kyoto.

Tarao District

The Tarao District is another gateway into Shigaraki Town, allowing access from Iga City. Known for golf and onsen, Tarao is a quiet farming hamlet celebrated for its rice: there are kilns in the area, and the Tarao Daikan Yashiki Site is also located here.

Access: Best accessed by car, though caution is needed when driving due to narrow roads.

Accommodation: Hotel Lake Villa and Tarao no Ie are in the Tarao District.

Groups

Securing accommodation within Shigaraki can prove challenging for larger groups or during peak seasons. Alternative options in larger towns of Koka city or nearby cities like Kusatsu or Otsu present viable choices. Larger Cities in Shiga prefecture also offer internationally branded hotel options, providing a retreat from the bustling centre of Kyoto.

Shigaraki Perfect for Crafting an Enriching Workcation Experience



Shigaraki is an exemplary workcation destination, embodying the ideal fusion of professional engagement, personal growth, and cultural exploration. Beyond offering a conducive environment for work, Shigaraki beckons individuals with the flexibility to extend their stay, providing an enriching experience that transcends the confines of professional obligations. The community's warm hospitality and robust internet infrastructure empower visitors to linger longer and savour the diverse offerings of this unique region.

Amid significant global shifts in lifestyles, work practices, and travel preferences prompted by global challenges, the sentiment of wistfully concluding a vacation and yearning for an extended sojourn resonates widely.

Seamlessly combining work with leisure in an exotic locale may have seemed far-fetched before the transformative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global work landscape. However, the rise of "workcations" is reshaping this narrative, with more individuals embracing the opportunity to harmonize their professional responsibilities with the pleasures of leisure.

While attendees continue to fulfil work commitments - meeting deadlines, responding to emails, and participating in virtual meetings - Shigaraki, as a workcation haven, offers the added dimension of indulging in existing hobbies or exploring new crafts. Renowned for its welcoming community and reliable internet connectivity, Shigaraki is an alluring option for an extended stay. It allows individuals to immerse themselves in the rich culture and traditions of one of Japan's oldest kiln areas.



料理
旅館

小川亭

Ryokan

Ogawatei



Lobby entrance at Ogawatei, building dates back to 1847

876 Nagano Shigaraki Cho, Koka City Shiga Prefecture Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0008

Enquiries by form: <https://www.shigaraki.co.jp/contact/>

Website: <https://www.shigaraki.co.jp/> (*Japanese*)

Property Introduction

"Ogawatei," an enchanting Japanese-style ryokan, is a living testament to the bygone era, exuding old-world charm and encapsulating a rich history that spans over a century. The main building, a venerable structure dating back to 1847, was ingeniously repurposed into an inn by the visionary first-generation owner. Established in 1891, Ogawatei has thrived through the hands of five generations, amassing a legacy that now proudly boasts over 130 years of continuous operation.

As guests enter Ogawatei, they are immediately enveloped in a time-honoured ambience. The interior is a museum adorned with an exquisite collection of antiques that narrate the story of Shigaraki's past. Among the treasures are roof tiles from the Tenpyo era, offering a glimpse into the architectural craftsmanship of yesteryears and an extensive array of works by Shigaraki's ceramic artists, showcasing the evolution of the region's artistic heritage through various periods.

Art lovers and curious wanderers alike are in for a treat at Ogawatei. The nooks and corridors showcase pieces by none other than the renowned Japanese artist Okamoto Taro, adding an extra layer of cultural richness to the experience. What truly sets Ogawatei apart is its unique embrace of tanuki pottery sculptures, setting the tone for a stay that seamlessly blends tradition with charm. The garden surrounding Ogawatei is a sanctuary of history and art, housing one of the oldest tanuki sculptures—a tangible symbol of Ogawatei's profound connection with the area's artistic legacy. Ogawatei is more than just a place to stay; it is a homely haven, inviting guests to immerse in Shigaraki's culture.

Location

Ogawatei is located centrally in the Nagano district of Shigaraki and is close to the Railway Station and the kilns of the area.

Guest Facilities

Room Types

- 9 Traditional Japanese Tatami Guest Rooms.
(5 rooms with ensuite bathrooms and 4 rooms with shared toilets facilities.)
- Lobby Area, Banquet Hall, Private Dining Rooms.
- Onsen - Both communal and Private baths.
- Wi-Fi for guest use.

Note: When making a Booking, some rooms do not have showers and toilets, ensure to make sure clients understand this point to avoid issues at the Ryokan upon check in.

Meals

Ogawatei specializes in the finest local produce, and when visiting Shiga Prefecture, one cannot overlook "Omi beef," one of Japan's three most renowned wagyu beef varieties. Fresh Omi beef and local ingredients are combined in dishes complementing regional sake. Enjoying food and beverages using Shigaraki pottery adds a unique touch to the experience.

Dining is in private dining rooms or for larger groups in a large function room, located on the ground floor.

Functions or group meals

Ogawatei can also cater for lunches or private functions and events for guests that are not staying in house.

(Dietary requirements can also be accommodated at time of booking, allowing all guests the same levels of comfort during a stay.)

Tanuki Bath

There are two private baths known as "Tanuki Buro" on a secluded rooftop terrace, with views over the rooftops of Shigaraki's Nagano area, which is famed for its many kilns. These baths are shaped like the many tanuki that adorn the streets of Shigaraki, bringing a closer provide a bathing experience unique to Shigaraki. There is a separate charge for using these private baths. Booking at the same time as making a room reservation is essential.

Note: Amenities are not provided at the Tanuki Bath area, this is for sanitary reasons. Guests are advised to take their own towels from their room.



Hallway to the Guestrooms



Private Tanuki Bath



Japanese suite

Hotel

Hotel Lake Villa



Restaurant area at Hotel Lake Villa at night

Hotel Facilities

Indoor swimming pool

Hours: 10:00 - 17:00

Indoor swimming pool only open in summer.

Body care massage

Hours: 13:00 - 23:00 (L.O at 21:00)

Marjhong Rooms

Hours: 12:00 - 24:00

Cost: 3,300 yen (2 hours - per table, additional cost of 1,100 yen per table to extend playing time.)

Hotel guest usage: 4,400 yen per table per day.

Karaoke

Hours: 12:00 - 24:00

Cost: 3,025 yen per hour

Hotel Lake Villa Restaurant

Breakfast: 7:00 - 9:00

(All staying guests dine in this restaurant and it can get crowded.)

Lunch: 11:00 - 15:00 (L.O at 14:40)

Dinner: 18:00 - 21:30 (L.O at 20:00)

Closed: None

Restaurant Meal Options

Check the Hotel for the latest menu dinner menu options.

The following Choices are available when booking.

**Advise the Hotel of allergies or dining preferences in advance.*

- Japanese Kaiseki
 - Creative French Course Dinner
 - Sukiyaki
 - Shabu Shabu
 - Yosenabe (Hot Pot)
- Children's Meal and Kids Plates available.*

Hotel Lake Villa Room Types

- 10 Western Style Guest Rooms
- 10 Japanese Style Guest Rooms

Deluxe Room Japanese

Room Configuration:

Western-style room with 2 beds + 6-tatami mat Japanese-style room with 3 sets of futon bedding.

Capacity: 3 to 5 guests

Address: 1 Tarao Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-85-0250

Email: lake-villa2001@gamma.ocn.ne.jp

Website: <http://www.lakevilla.co.jp/shisetsu/>

Property Introduction

Hotel Lake Villa is a delightful and well-appointed resort designed to offer a peaceful escape from large city's hustle and bustle, enabling guests to relax amidst the serenity of nature.

The hotel is surrounded by vast, well-maintained grounds, providing guests with various activities. When booking, guests can Choose between Japanese and French-style accommodations. Additionally, during the warmer months of the year, there's a BBQ option available for those who prefer outdoor dining.

The hotel's onsen is renowned for its skin-rejuvenating and beautifying qualities. The modern and meticulously designed hotel building is complemented by individual hillside cottages that offer scenic views of the golf course, granting guests a villa-like experience with added privacy. Notably, the hotel is situated within the expansive grounds of the Tarao Championship golf course, celebrated for its significant size among highland courses in the Kansai region.

This accommodation is suitable for FIT clients (especially self drive clients) and group clients.

Location and Accessibility

Lake Villa is situated in the Tarao district of Shigaraki Town, which is approximately 30 minutes drive by car from Shigaraki Station.

The most convenient means of reaching the hotel are by taxi or bus there is also a scheduled bus service from Shigaraki Station.

Hotel is located close to Iga City and also the "Tarao Daikan Yashiki Historic Site".

Number of Rooms: 6

WiFi: Available

Deluxe Room Japanese

Room Configuration:

Western-style room with 4 beds + 10-tatami mat Japanese-style room with 5 sets of futon bedding

Capacity: 5 to 9 guests

Number of Rooms: 4

WiFi: Available

Twin Room Western

Room Configuration: Western-style room with 2 beds

Capacity: 2 guests

Number of Rooms: 10

WiFi: Available

Cottages

- 8 Duplex style cottages
- 5 Family style cottages

Cottage - Twin

Western-style room (2 beds, no private outdoor bath)

Capacity: 2 persons

8 rooms

WiFi: Available

Cottage - Family

Room Configuration:

[1st Floor] Japanese-style room (6 tatami mats) with 3 sets of futon mattresses, living room, kitchen

[2nd Floor] 3 Western-style rooms (2 twin rooms, 1 double room)

**Private outdoor bath included*

Capacity: 2 to 8 persons

WiFi: Available

5 cottages

Cottage - Family Deluxe Room

Room Configuration:

[1st Floor] 1 Western-style room (2 bedrooms), Japanese-style room (10 tatami mats) with 5 sets of futon mattresses, living room, kitchen

[2nd Floor] 3 Western-style rooms (2 twin rooms, 1 double room)

**Private outdoor bath included*

Capacity: 2 to 12 persons

WiFi: Available

1 cottage

** Pet Friendly accommodation options available.*

Hotel

Hotel Lake Villa

Guest Activities

Barbecue Garden

Large purpose built BBQ area.

Hours: 11:00 - 14:30 (Last Admission)

Operating Period: Mid-Apr to Mid-Oct

BBQ reservations required by 20:00 the previous day.

Group reservations accepted, inquire at the Hotel.

**Additional menu options are available.*

**Orders start from two servings.*

**Two room sizes available.*

Golf Garden

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00 (Last Admission)

Golf Members: Free

General Public:

Weekdays: 2,200 yen per person

Sat, Sun, Pub.Hol. and Designated Dates: 2,800 yen P.P

Scores:

No.	Yard	Par
1.	112	3
2.	100	3
3.	137	3
4.	166	3
5.	127	3
6.	103	3
7.	84	3
8.	117	3
9.	89	3
Total	1035	27

Tennis Courts (2 Omni Courts)

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00 (Last admission)

Closed: None

Fee: 1 hour - ¥2,200 (per court)

Rental:

Racket: ¥550/1 racket

Shoes: ¥550

**Please come to the Start House for court usage registration, racket rentals, and purchases.*

**Reservations can be made by phone or at the Hotel Lake Villa Front.*

**Locker rooms are not available, so please come dressed in appropriate attire for playing.*

Miniature Golf (18 Holes)

Opening Hours: 9:00 - 17:00 (Last admission)

Closed: None

Fee: Adults - ¥550 / Children - ¥220

**Free for hotel guests*

**Putters and balls available for free rental*

Start House

Opening Hours: 9:00 - 17:00

Services available at the Start House:

- Tennis
- Golf Garden
- Miniature Golf (18 Holes)

Visit the Start House for admissions, rentals, and purchases



Japanese Kaiseki Dinner



French Dinner Course



Golf Course and Villa's at Hotel Lake Villa



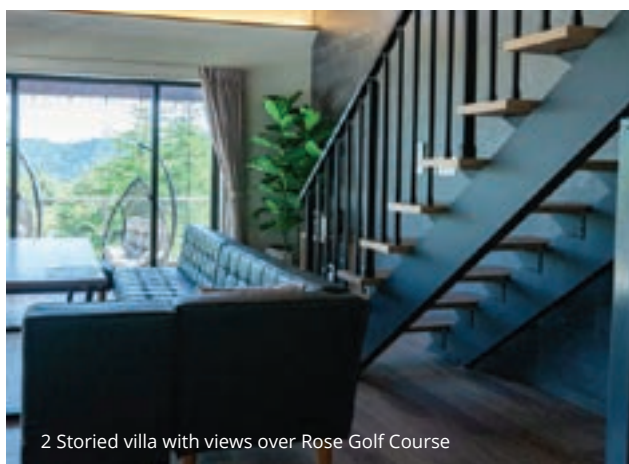
Guest Rooms with garden views

Villa

The Rose Village



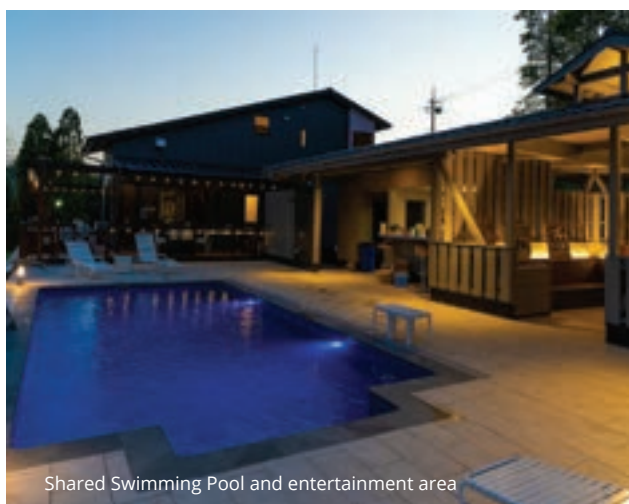
Entertainment deck area, with views over the Rose Golf Course and Shigaraki



2 Storied villa with views over Rose Golf Course



Sauna facility



Shared Swimming Pool and entertainment area



Twin Bedroom

The Rose Village



1532-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-83-0031 (Rose Golf Club)

Enquiries by form: https://rosevillage.jp/?page_id=51

Website: <https://rosevillage.jp>

Property Introduction

"The Rose Village" consists of five self-contained villa-style accommodation units, each with its own unique features. Some are single-story, while others have two levels. Situated opposite the Rose Golf Course, these villas offer modern, well-equipped vacation rentals in Shigaraki, providing a comfortable and contemporary option for visitors. They are particularly suitable for those who want to experience pottery making in a relaxed manner while enjoying the privacy and conveniences of home.

The property features a shared pool area, a billiards entertainment deck, and sauna facilities. Guests can arrange meals on-site or dine at the Rose Golf Course clubhouse.

Location and Accessibility

Located uphill from the Shigaraki Ceramic and Cultural Park in the Nagano District, "The Rose Village" offers a sense of separation from the central Nagano district due to its location. However, this slight distance gives guests spectacular views overlooking the surrounding golf course and nature. The Shigaraki Kogen Railway Station is conveniently located just 3.03 km from "The Rose Village."

For optimal convenience, guests are advised to use a taxi or a private vehicle when accessing the property or exploring the nearby galleries and attractions.

*While many visitors may enjoy the leisurely walk down to the centre of Shigaraki, the return journey may feel a bit longer due to the continuous rise in elevation.

Guest Facilities and Room Types

Each Villa has a unique name and individual colour scheme and varying guest amenities.

(*Guest number listed below is the maximum guests per room.)

Applause [Standard Type]

Indoor Area: 1st Floor 46.1 sqm, 2nd Floor 24.8 sqm, Total 70.9 sqm

Capacity: 6 persons

Features an open living space with a high ceiling and a unique deck on the 2nd floor for BBQ, exclusive to this villa.

Elina [Standard Type]

Indoor Area: 62.9 sqm

Capacity: 6 persons

This single-story villa offers a magnificent view of the golf course from each room, providing a special escape from everyday life.

Marina [Standard Type]

Indoor Area: 57.8 sqm

Capacity: 6 persons

The closest single-story villa to the golf course, offering a view of the 18th hole, making it a great Choice for golf enthusiasts.

Cherish [Poolside Type]

Indoor Area: 62.9 sqm

Capacity: 6 persons

A single-story villa with an open living space and deck, providing a sense of freedom.

Bolero [Poolside Type]

Indoor Area: 1st Floor 43.1 sqm, 2nd Floor 23.2sqm, Total 66.2 sqm

Capacity: 6 persons

This luxurious two-story cottage offers a starry night view from the 2nd-floor terrace.

Facilities and Amenities

Each villa is equipped with air conditioning, a refrigerator, an electric kettle, a humidifying air purifier, and a washer/dryer and free WIFI.

*Private sauna is available for rent for one group per day

(Additional cost of 13,200 yen per day from check-in to check-out).

Live Alpacca

There are live Alpacas that can be visited during opening hours of the Rose Golf Course.

[Amenities]

Shampoo, conditioner, body soap, towels, and hairdryers.

As part of Rose Villages commitment to SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and reducing environmental impact, dental kits, cotton sets, hairbrushes, hair ties, razors, shaving gel, and similar items are not provided in the rooms. If required, these items let the front desk know

and they will be provided free of charge.

[Parking]

Free parking is available.

[Shared Facilities]

Guest-exclusive pool and guest-exclusive sauna are available.

Rates

Rates depend on the type of plan that is booked, the price indicated below is an indication only and rates should be checked directly on the website or by contacting the Rose Golf Club.

1 Villa (2 guests) Room Rates start from 28,000 yen (14,000 yen per person)

Meals

Rose Village has three talented chefs who specialize in Japanese, Western, and Chinese cuisine, all of whom are passionate about utilizing seasonal ingredients to create exquisite dishes. Choose the menu from the options available online at the time of booking. There is also a BBQ plan option as well.

*The room rate per person will change depending on the meals Chosen.

Check-in/Check-out

Check-in and check-out for this property is at the Rose Golf Club Clubhouse located diagonally opposite the Rose Village Villas.

Check-in: 15:00 - 18:00

Check-out: 8:00 - 11:00

Payments

Cash and Credit Cards (Visa, UC, DC, JCB, American Express, UF, MasterCard, Diners Club)

*Rates change when meals selected and when options are Chosen.

Choose a plan and make a reservation

<https://reserve.489ban.net/client/rosevillage/0/plan/#content>

*Note the booking site is in Japanese only.

Cancellation Fees

Please note the following cancellation fees, if cancelling more than 10 days in advance there are no cancellation fees.

5-9 days before: 20% of the fee for the plan type booked.

3-4 days before: 50% of the fee for the plan type booked.

2 days before: 80% of the fee for the plan type booked.

On the day or the day before: 100% of the fee for the plan type booked.

Guesthouse

Ogama Guesthouse



Ogama Guesthouse - Self contained Kitchen

Facilities and Amenities

- Single Guesthouse
- Tatami style bedrooms
- Dining room and kitchen

[Kitchen]

Gas stove, refrigerator, toaster oven, microwave, electric kettle, electric coffee mill, coffee filter, rice pot, cooking utensils, portable gas stove, dishes, glasses, cutlery, various seasonings, and more.

[Living]

Speaker, air conditioning/heating, gas fan heater, tablet.

[Bedroom]

Single futon x 6, air conditioning/heating, hangers.

[Bathroom]

Pottery bath, shower.

[Amenities]

Face towel, bath towel, shampoo, conditioner, body soap, toothbrush, cotton swabs, hairdryer.

[Gift for guests]

Shigaraki Koshihikari rice (1 serving per person), Asamiya tea / Katagi Furukoen (1 pack), coffee beans (Ogama blend).

[Parking]

Parking is available for two cars
(Confirmation of the number of vehicles required at time of reservation).

[Free WiFi] Free WiFi is available for guest use.

Rates

All prices are inclusive of tax.

1-2 guests - 22,000 yen per night

3-6 guests

3 guests: 30,800 yen per night **5 guests:** 48,400 yen per night

4 guests: 39,600 yen per night **6 guests:** 57,200 yen per night

An additional charge of 8,800 yen p.p applies for each extra guest above 3 guests.

- Infants are free.
- Elementary School students are half-price.
- Junior High School Students and above are charged the regular rate.

947 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Hours: 10:30 to 16:30

Closed: Wed and Thu (Cafe L.O 16:00)

Tel: 0748-82-8066

Email: ogama@meizan.co.jp

Website: <https://www.meizan.info/ogama/>

Property Introduction

Ogama Guesthouse offers a profoundly immersive Shigaraki experience. It's nestled in the heart of the historic pottery town, providing a unique connection to local culture and the art of ceramics.

The interior design, bath facilities, tableware, and kitchen equipment all centre around Shigaraki Pottery. The bath is made from pottery in Shigaraki. The kitchen is equipped with Shigaraki ceramics, inviting guests to engage with the pottery in a more hands-on way than ordinarily possible in accommodation.

Ogama Guesthouse places guests in the centre of the kiln district, where they can live the history and ambience of the town. The property is self-check-in and self-check-out, and no meals or other services are provided. The bedrooms upstairs are Japanese tatami-style rooms, and sleeping is on futons.

Location and Accessibility

Ogama is located on the "Shigaraki Kiln Exploration Trail" and is one of the attractions of the area. The accommodations location alongside the famed "Ogama" Noborigama Kiln makes it arguably one of the most scenic locations in Shigaraki.

The most convenient means of reaching the guest house is by car or taxi.

Check-in/Check-out (Self-service)

This accommodation operates on a self-service check-in and check-out system.

Check-in: 16:00 ~

Advise Ogama staff if guests are arriving earlier than 16:00

Check-out: 10:00

Payments

Accommodation fees are prepaid at the time of booking. Credit cards, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and other payment methods are accepted.

- Reservations should be made up to one week in advance.
- In case of cancellation, please notify as soon as possible.
- Refrain from making provisional reservations as there is only one building.

Cancellation Fees

10-6 days prior: 10%

5-2 days prior: 50%

Day prior: 100%

Meals

- Meals are not provided, guests can use the kitchen's cooking utensils freely.
- Bring ingredients and drinks.
- Shigaraki-produced rice (1 serving per person) Asamiya tea (1 pack) is provided as a welcome gift upon arrival.



Guesthouse

Kochu-an/Rakunyu Ceramic Studio



Entrance Gate to Kochu-an/ Rakunyu Ceramic Studio

703 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-1133 / 090-1242-3000 (Keiko Honiwa)

Email: contact@kochu-an.com

Website: <http://kochu-an.com/>

Reservations accepted between: 10:00 – 17:00

Property Introduction

Kochu-an is more than just accommodation; it offers a unique blend of experiences that create special moments and lasting memories. Rooted in the "heart of tea" (Cha no Kokoro or Chado), it combines a pottery studio, tearoom, and boutique lodging, all centered around ceramics and tea.

Led by tea master and pottery artisan, Rakunyu Honiwa III, Kochu-an provides tea classes that respect "the way of tea," offering an educational and enjoyable experience.

Rakunyu Honiwa III, is an accomplished artist, born in Shigaraki in 1965. He constructed an anagama (kiln) inside Kochu-an's attached workshop and explores ceramic creation from traditional Shigaraki-yaki to early modern tea ware. At Kochu-an, guests can join morning, afternoon, or evening tea ceremonies and enjoy seasonal tea kaiseki while experiencing pottery making in the workshop.

Kochu-an's guest rooms blend modern and nostalgic aesthetics, offering a comfortable stay. The rooms are adorned with over 600 tiles fired at the Rakunyu kiln, adding a unique touch. Various accommodation packages can be booked through the website, with availability easily checked via the online calendar.

Location and Accessibility

Kochu-an is located in the Nagano district of Shigaraki, within the Kiln exploration area and is best accessed by taxi from Shigaraki station, for visitors that are on a driving holiday, there are carparks available. Check details in advance when booking.

Guest Facilities

- 2 Guest suites
- Indoor/ outdoor bathrooms
- Private living areas in each suite
- 1 x western bedroom and 1 x Japanese tatami room in each suite.
- Communal lounge area

Rates

Inclusive Stay Package

One-night, two-day: 50,000 yen p.p (incl tax)

Check-in (11:00) - Checkout (evening of the following day)

Included : Tea ceremony (morning, noon, or evening) and two meals.

Pottery lessons only

The pottery workshop is also available separately, with pricing starting from 5,000 yen p.p

Reservations

Kochu-an is only available on days indicated in the calendar, which can be found on the website.

Check the calendar and if the dates align reservations can be made online.



Ocha Kaiseki Dinner



Rakunyu Ceramic Gallery



Guest Suite, all tiles fired at Rakunyu Ceramic Studio

Guesthouse

Tarao no ie



150 year old Kominka farmhouse

876 Nagano Shigaraki Cho, Koka City Shiga Prefecture Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0008

Enquiries by Form: <http://taraonoie.com/contact/>

Website: <http://taraonoie.com/>

Property Introduction

Tarao-no-ie is a restored Japanese farmhouse, with 150 years of history, the property offers a genuine taste of the past and is rented out as an entire house. The property is in the Tarao district of Shigaraki-Cho, Koka City, at the southernmost tip of Shiga Prefecture. This idyllic village is just a 15-minute drive from Minami Yamashiro Village and Iga City, and Tarao is a place where time stands still.

With around 300 people living in the village, Tarao embodies a close-knit community where local wisdom enriches daily life. Surrounded by majestic mountains, it's a retreat from the fast-paced world, embracing an old-fashioned way of living.

Activities like picking wild vegetables, nature walks, and cultural experiences await guests.

Location and Accessibility

Tarao no ie is situated in the Tarao district of Shigaraki Town, which is approximately 30 minutes drive from Shigaraki Station.

The most convenient means of reaching the accommodation is by taxi or by private vehicle

Capacity

Upt to 6 guests

Note: No laundry and washing of clothes needs to be done at the coin laundries that are located in the Nagano district, which is the central business district of Shigaraki.

Guest Facilities

- Tatami Rooms for sleeping and relaxing
- Futons provided but need to be laid out by guests
- Modern toilet and bathroom
- Renovated, simple yet functional kitchen
- Microwave/Oven
- Dishwasher
- Cutlery/Crockery

Stay Plans

Stay Only Plan

Excludes meals, allowing guests to cherish their private time in the house.

House Stay with meals included

Dishes prepared for guests at "Tarao no ie", feature seasonal ingredients such as freshly harvested Shigaraki tarao rice and famed local Japanese wagyu "Omi beef" and are often made by the locals in the village and are delicious.

Welcome Rice

A pot of delicious Shigaraki Tarao Rice,

Dinner

Depending on the the plan Chosen when booking dinner and breakfast are avaiable and there are options to upgrade to Omi beef.

Drinks

Various alcoholic beverages can be purchased.

Rates

1 adult: 44,000 yen p.p

2 adults: 22,000 yen p.p

3 adults: 14,800 yen p.p

4 adults: 13,800 yen p.p

5 to 6 adults: 11,800 yen p.p

Child Rates

Elementary School age and above: Same as adult rate

Infants (from 3 years old): Half the adult rate

During the Obon period from August 11th to August 20th, there is an additional 1,000 yen charge to the above rates.

Drum Bath and Tent Sauna

As an option, guests can enjoy a "drum bath" and "tent sauna" facilities. These facilities provide relaxation and detoxification opportunities and are a fun way to enjoy Japanese country life.

Drum bath: 3,000 yen per time.

Tent Sauna: 10,000 yen

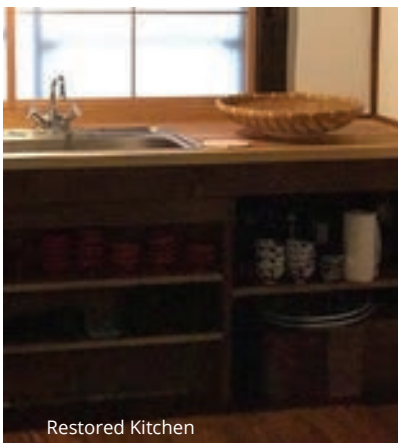
(Up to 4 people, extra people are charged 2,500 yen each)

Reservation

Payments

Required in advance and can be paid by credit card.

Check-in: from 15:30 **Check-out:** up to 10:00



Restored Kitchen



Comfortable Living and Dining rooms



Welcome Rice

Luxury Villa

Keiyaki no Yado En



Stunning Luxurious Private Villa with Michelin Chef

876 Nagano Shigaraki Cho, Koka City Shiga Prefecture Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0008

Email: info@keyaki-en.jp

Website: <https://keyaki-en.jp/>

Property Introduction

Keyaki no Yado En is a recent addition to the accommodation scene in Shigaraki, opening in August 2022. The property is an "auberge" that offers exclusive rental of the entire building for one group per day. The concept of the property is "Teikouki Ichinyo," which means seamless combination of the house and garden. The concept has been delivered by talented Kyoto based architects, craftsmen, and Shigaraki garden designers. Guests enter the property through a traditional Japanese thatched-roof gate and moss-covered stone garden, the main building has been assembled using traditional construction methods that don't require a single nail. The property is not a mimicry of tradition, but rather the essence of traditional Japanese architecture itself. Whilst keeping in line with tradition, the property also seamlessly covers the needs and wants of a modern traveller.

The dining table is adorned with Shigaraki produced tableware, When dining guests have a Choice of sitting at the counter overlooking the commercial kitchen, where the michelin star chef is working, enjoying his craftsmanship up close or at the dining table with an irori fireplace while admiring the view of the spectacular gardens outside the window.

Location and Accessibility

Keiyaki no yado En is located 10 minutes by taxi from Shigaraki Railway Station. For optimal convenience, guests are advised to use a taxi or a private vehicle when accessing the property or exploring the nearby galleries and attractions.

While many visitors may enjoy the leisurely walk down to the centre of Shigaraki, the return journey may feel a bit longer due to the continuous rise in elevation.

Guest Facilities

Villa Rental (Run of House)

Maximum Occupancy: 2-8 guests

(Consult for 9 or more, up to a maximum of 15)

Check-In: 15:00

Check-Out: 11:00

Dining: Meals are served around the irori hearth in the dining room.

Facilities: Large communal bath, plunge baths, and a large sauna

Amenities:

Shampoo, conditioner, body soap, cleansing oil, balancing foam, lotion, balancing emulsion, bath towels, body towels, face towels, sauna towels, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, cotton sets, hairdryer, slippers, in-house wear, geta sandals, blankets, shaving foam, refrigerator, freezer, TV, safe, satellite broadcasting, NETFLIX, Bluetooth-enabled speaker.

Meals

Ikuo Ikeda, a Michelin-rated chef, skillfully transforms seasonal ingredients from the Omi region into delectable dishes. Having earned a prestigious Michelin one-star rating, Chef Ikeda achieved this recognition through his culinary expertise showcased at his self-established restaurant, "Kyoto Okazaki Ikuta." Prior to venturing into his own establishment, he served as the head chef at the Kyoto Brighton Hotel.

With a culinary career spanning over 50 years, Chef Ikeda has cultivated a distinctive style that seamlessly blends the essence of traditional kaiseki cuisine the flexibility reminiscent of ordering from a Japanese kappo restaurant.

Luxury Transfer Option

For group reservations complimentary transport in a luxury Mercedes Benz bus from Kyoto station is available. Inquire at time of booking regarding other transport options.

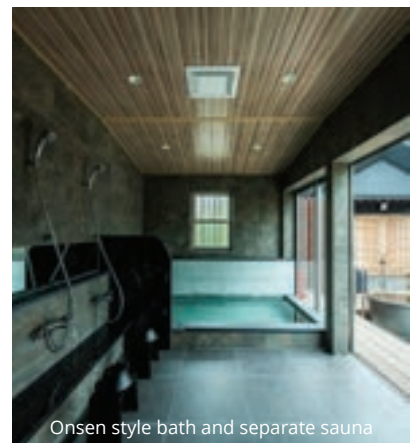
- Transfers are available in the Mercedes Benz Bus for groups from 5 to 12 people.
- If there 4 people or fewer, a domestic minivan will be provided.



Luxurious modern living/ dining area



Commercial Kitchen/Michelin Chef



Onsen style bath and separate sauna

Shigaraki Accommodation



Ryori Ryokan Hiraokaya

Hiraokaya is a family-run "Ryori Ryokan" located in the heart of Shigaraki. There are three guest rooms providing accommodations for up to three small groups daily. For larger groups, please feel free to inquire about availability. Meals are traditional Japanese Kaiseki and can be tailored to accommodate guests with allergies or specific dietary requirements.

Check rates on website and at time of booking.

Location and Accessibility

The property is close to cafes, kilns and galleries in the centre of the kiln district of the town, and access from Shigaraki Station can be by taxi or on foot.

Address

516-28 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0875

Email: hiraokaya@mx.biwa.ne.jp

Website: <http://www.biwa.ne.jp/~hiraokay/>



Pension Shigaraki

Pension Shigaraki is situated at the heart of Shigaraki Town. The pension is located on Hinomi Avenue in an area with several galleries and easy access to the many kilns of the town. There are ten guest rooms available (including two small cottages), and there is a Cafe and lounge area in the main building.

Location and Accessibility

The property is located 3 minutes walk from Shigaraki Station.

Address

1185-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-1109

Enquiries by form: <http://www.p-shigaraki.com/toi.htm>

Website: <http://www.p-shigaraki.com>



Minshuku Accommodation - Irorina

"Irorina" is a hidden "minshuku" type lodge located in a forested area near Shigaraki; There is a focus on the sustainability of the surrounding environment; heating is by wood stove, and water is from a private well. Perfect for those wanting an emersion type experience, groups of potters often stay and learn pottery from the neighboring kiln.

Note: *There are three guestrooms, guests are required to make their own beds and no amenities are provided.*

- Meals are included.
- Check rates on website and at time of booking.

Location and Accessibility

Irororina can be accessed from the Shigarakigushi Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway line, and is 400 meters from the station. It is a pleasant though a forested area. However, there are times of the year when two small creeks need to be crossed. Prepare to walk and carry luggage to the house.

Address

1-130 Maki Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 090-5647-8697

Email: miyata1mint@yahoo.co.jp

Website: <https://irorina1017.amebaownd.com/>

Replies to emails may take longer.



Minpaku Nanbu

Minpaku Nanbu is a rural homestay experience, limited to one group per day. This accommodation allows guests discover Shigaraki. Guests can dine out or use the kitchen to cook meals, making it suitable for families and friends. Meals are not provided at this homestay. The owner provides, rice and onigiri (rice balls) ingredients are provided for breakfast.

A complimentary shuttle service to Shigaraki Kogen Railway Shigaraki Station can be provided.

Optional experiences can be arranged, like "Ohagi-making" and "Mochitsuki" (pounding rice). The owner's "Shigaraki's walking tour", is popular with guests. .

Capacity: 6 Adults.

Amenties: Not provided

Location and Accessibility

A complimentary shuttle service to Shigaraki Kogen Railway is available, many guests self-drive to this accomodation.

Address

151 Sugiyama Shigaraki Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Website: <https://stayjapan.com/area/shiga/koka/pr/13773>

Bookings and Enquiries online.

Shigaraki Accommodation



Guesthouse Shigaraki Villa

Guesthouse Shigaraki Villa is located next to the famous Uomatsu Yakiniku Restaurant in Shigaraki. There are two types of room available.

Type S (Up to 5 guests): 44,000 yen (tax incl) - Outdoor bath with spacious deck terrace.

Type A (Up to 5 guests): 33,000 yen (tax incl) - Marble indoor bath
**Reservations must be made by the day prior to stay.*

Location and Accessibility

The property is located 5 minutes from the Shigarakigushi Station and next to Uomatsu Yakiniku Restaurant.

Address

1795 Maki Shigaraki Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-88-2206 or 0748-83-1525

Enquires by phone only: (Japanese)

Website: <http://www.uomatsu.co.jp/shigarakivilla.html>



Shigaraki Kogen Hotel

Nestled amid the refreshing breezes and natural surroundings, Shigaraki Kogen Hotel exudes a matured ambiance crafted from the elements of greenery and earth. Located adjacent to the 99-hole golf courses of the Shinwa Golf Group, it is a hotel designed with golf enthusiasts in mind.

The hotel features 17 rooms in total, including 12 Western-style family rooms (for four guests) and 5 Western-style twin rooms (for two guests), allowing for a maximum accommodation capacity of 58 individuals. In addition to comfortable lodging, the hotel is equipped with entertainment facilities such as karaoke rooms and mahjong rooms, providing diverse recreational options for guests.

Location and Accessibility

The property is located 20 minutes by car from Shigaraki Station on the grounds of the beautiful Shigaraki Country Club.

Address

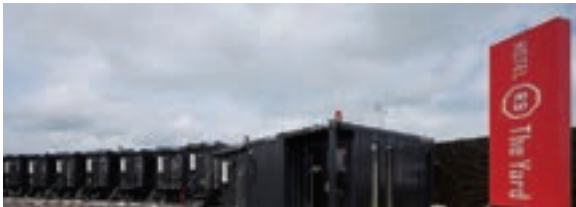
767-1 Tashiro, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-3711

Enquiries by form:

<https://www.shigarakicc.jp/tashiro/other/contact.php>

Website: <https://www.shigarakicc.jp/tashiro/facilitie/hotel.html>



Hotel R9 the Yard Koka

The Yard R9 Hotel redefines the concept of comfort by transforming shipping containers into rejuvenating spaces. The sleek black exterior, adorned in monochromatic tones, offers an unexpected sense of tranquility.

Each container unit operates independently, providing a private oasis where guests can enjoy their time without concerns about neighboring room noise.

Discover an innovative and distinctive stay at the Yard R9 Hotel, offering a novel container hotel experience that feels akin to staying in a secret hideaway.

Location and Accessibility

The Yard R9 Hotel is located in Konan, a neighbouring part of Koka City. Access is best by car and the property is suited to travellers in a rental vehicle or private vehicle.

Address

398-1 Ryuhōjizawanoshiri Konan Cho Koka City Shiga Japan.

Tel: 0748-69-5851

Enquiries by form:

<https://go-develophotels.reservation.jp/en>

Website: <https://hotel-r9.jp/hotels/koka/>



Shigaraki no Sato House

Unique dome-shaped accommodation, "Shigaraki no Sato House," stands out with its distinctive form. There are a variety of popular meal choices for dinner, all highlighting the delicious local produce of the region. The dome houses are comfortable year round and a point of difference to

Location and Accessibility

The "Shigaraki no Sato House" is located in the perfect location near the Daily Shigaraki Golf Courses main club house.

Address

1577 Aza Jyoryu Tarao Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-85-8020

Website: <https://www.d-shigaraki.co.jp/>

Alternative Accommodation

In Shigaraki, where a diverse range of accommodation options caters to various traveler preferences, there are instances throughout the year when alternative lodging becomes essential. This is particularly true during peak seasons or when the size and specific requirements of a group demand alternative solutions.

While immersing oneself in the unique charm of Shigaraki is best achieved through staying in the immediate vicinity, it's worth noting that the town is conveniently close to larger cities that provide a different spectrum of accommodation choices. These urban centers boast branded accommodations and facilities better suited to the needs of sizable groups.

Koka City:

Shigaraki is a part of Koka City and there are several business hotel-style accommodations in the Koka City central business district providing visitors with a variety of choices for their stay. The options listed below are the options for Koka City.

For those looking for a change of scenery or alternative resort-style accommodations, several appealing options are also available in neighboring cities.

Otsu City:

Located on the southeastern shore of Lake Biwa, Otsu City provides a tranquil setting with its lakeside charm. Visitors can explore historical temples, enjoy lakeside strolls, and indulge in the local culinary scene.

Traveling Time to Shigaraki from Otsu:

Approximately 30 to 45 minutes by car, depending on traffic conditions.

Kusatsu City:

Known for its modern amenities and accessibility, Kusatsu City offers a dynamic urban experience. The city is recognized for its commercial centers, cultural attractions, and easy transportation options.

Traveling Time to Shigaraki from Kusatsu:

Around 40 to 50 minutes by car, providing a convenient option for those seeking a balance between city life and Shigaraki's charm.

Hikone Onsen Resort Area:

Hikone, situated on the eastern shore of Lake Biwa, is celebrated for its historic Hikone Castle and traditional Japanese gardens. The Hikone Onsen Resort Area adds a relaxing touch, offering hot springs and resort-style accommodations.

Traveling Time to Shigaraki from Hikone:

Approximately 30 to 40 minutes by car, allowing visitors to experience the cultural richness of Hikone and the nearby onsen facilities.

These locations provide an opportunity for visitors to explore the wider region while ensuring a delightful and memorable stay beyond the confines of Shigaraki. Whether opting for the tranquility of Otsu City, the vibrant atmosphere of Kusatsu City, or the rejuvenating experience of the Hikone Onsen Resort area, there's a wealth of alternatives to enhance one's stay in the vicinity.

Alternative accommodation options in Koka City

Name	Details	Transport	Address	Contact	Website
Shiono Onsen	This is an established Ryokan with hot springs in the heart of the Koka-ryu Ninja homeland, founded in the 31st year of the Meiji era. The onsen is sourced from a legendary discovery attributed to Kobo Daishi, as recorded in the 'Omi Yochi Shirakawa,' a historical compilation from the Edo period, making it one of the oldest hot spring sources in the prefecture.		269 Shiono Konan Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-86-2130	https://www.shiono-onsen.com/stay.htm
Miyanoo Onsen	A long-established inn with a history of 110 years. Located near the border between Shiga and Mie Prefectures, this area is known as the birthplace of the Koka Ninja tradition. Meals are made from local ingredients and include Omi beef. The baths are made from Shigaraki Pottery.	Transport Available by Arrangement	364-1 Sugitani Konan Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-86-2212	http://www.miyanooonsen.com/
Minakuchi Century Hotel	Minakuchi Century Hotel is just 10-minutes walk from the JR Minakuchi station. Restaurant serves both Western dinner and Japanese-style breakfast.	Transport Available by Arrangement from Minakuchi Station	170-1 Nasaka Minakuchi Cho Koka City Shiga Japan	Tel: 0748-63-2811	https://mi-ch.com/english/
Green Hill Suntopia	Located in a quiet environment surrounded by greenery. Shopping centres and convenience stores just a 5-minute drive away by car. Japanese-style rooms are also available.		1-1 Kitanaiki Minakuchi Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-63-2950	http://suntopia.shiga.jp/
Hotel New Mifuku	A Business Hotel, guest rooms feature separate bathtubs.		3-59 Ayano, Minakuchi Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-62-0456	https://hotel-newmifuku.com/
Hotel Route Inn Koka Minakuchi	A 3-star hotel offers free WiFi throughout the property, a restaurant, and free private parking. It provides a 24-hour front desk and luggage storage.		254 Kitawaki, Minakuchi Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 050-5847-7567	https://www.route-inn.co.jp/hotel_list/shiga/index_hotel_id_660/
Ayano Ryokan	Ayano Ryokan is located in Koka City, Shiga Prefecture. With a homely atmosphere		3-41 Yasaka Minakuchi Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-62-0998	https://ayano-ryokan.com/
Daifuku Ryokan	Warm and welcoming Ryokan. Often used for sports groups.		703 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1133	https://www.daifuku-ryokan.com/
Kamoshikasou	A hidden retreat nestled in the Suzuka mountain range, isolated from the hustle and bustle of the city.		1104 Ogawara Tsuchiyama Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-69-0344	https://www.kamoshika-yado.com/
Diamond Shiga	Variety of room types, including Japanese-style rooms, Western-style rooms (Twin/Triple), Semi-Suite (Japanese-Western style), Suite (Japanese-Western style), and Royal Suite (Western style).		1711 Kurokawa Tsuchiyama Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-68-0211	https://www.diamond-s.co.jp/shiga/
Business Hotel Sansui	Business Hotel with restaurant facilities		345 Ohara Ichiba Koka Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-68-0211	https://bh-sansui.com/



General Information

Medical and Emergencies

Emergency Services

Police Ambulance Fire

110
119
119

Police Box

Address: 1202-11 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan
Tel: 0748-82-0021

Medical Services

Shigaraki Hospitals and clinics do not have specialized english language assistance, if medical services required a translator will need to be organized. Hospitals in larger cities are better equipped to deal with the provision of services in English.

National Hospital Organization - Shigaraki Hospital

Address: 997 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan
Tel (Main): 0748-83-0101

Fax: 0748-83-1262

Director: Mitsuru Sanada

Licensed Bed Capacity: 180 beds

Internal Medicine, Neurology, Respiratory Medicine, Cardiology, Rheumatology, Pediatrics, Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, Dentistry, Rehabilitation Medicine

Koka City Shigaraki Central Hospital

Address: 473 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0249

Fax: 0748-82-3060

Internal Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics

Shigaraki Clinic

Address: 619-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel (Main): 0748-82-7833

Fax: 0748-82-7834

Director: Shuichi Matsuno

Internal Medicine, Surgery, Gastroenterology, Cardiology

Hours:

Weekdays

(Morning) 9:00-12:00

(Afternoon) 16:00-19:00

Sat - Sun

(Morning) 9:00 - 12:00

Clinic closed on Wed and Pub.Hol

Dispensaries/ Pharmacies

Saito Pharmacy (Shigaraki Branch)

Tel: 0748-82-7888

Address: 1336-6 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Distance from Shigaraki Station: 9 minutes on foot

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00

Dispensary/Pharmacy closed on Sat, Sun and Pub.Hol

Jouzan Pharmacy

Address: 623-3 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0159

Hours:

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 9:00 - 19:30

Wed: 9:00 - 17:00

Sat and Sun: 9:00 - 13:00

Dispensary/Pharmacy closed on Pub.Hol

Flower Pharmacy (Shigaraki Branch)

Address: 479-13 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-76-4193

Fax: 0748-76-4194

Hours:

Mon - Fri: 8:30 - 17:30

Sat: 9:00 - 12:00

Dispensary/Pharmacy closed on Sun and Pub.Hol

When dispensing medications, medication information and specific health examination data is obtained and used with the patient's consent.

Drug Stores

Drug Yutaka (Shigaraki Store)

Address: 1280-3 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-1553

Hours: 9:00 - 23:00 Daily (Hours may change on cultural holidays)

General Drug Store selling off the shelf pharmsuticals, household cleaning supplies and more.

Japan Shigaraki Store

Address: 1296-1 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-78-0010

Dentist

Iida Dental Clinic

Address: 454-6 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-8148

Hours:

(Morning) 9:00 - 12:00

(Afternoon) 14:00 - 19:00

Consultation Days:

(Morning) Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat

(Afternoon) Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat

Specialties: Dentistry, Pediatric Dentistry

Muraki Dental Clinic

Address: 632 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-2755

Fax: 0748-82-2755

Hours:

(Morning) 9:00 - 12:30

(Afternoon) 15:00 - 18:30

Sat 9:00 - 12:30

14:00 - 16:30

Specialties: Dentistry, Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Consultation Days, and Hours:

General Dentistry:

(Morning) Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri

(Afternoon) Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri

Sat Morning only, 9:00 - 12:30

Clinic Closed on Sun and Pub.Hol

Orthodontics:

Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri: Morning only, 9:00 - 12:30

Pediatric Dentistry:

Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri: Afternoon only, 14:00 - 17:00

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery:

Sat Afternoon only, 14:00 - 17:00

Clinic Closed on Sun and Pub.Hol

Oya Dental Clinic

Address: 1221-6 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Dentistry

Tel: 0748-82-0713

Hours:

Mon: (Morning) 9:00 - 12:45, (Afternoon) 14:30 - 18:00

Tue: (Morning Only) 9:00 - 12:45

Wed: (Morning) 9:00 - 12:45, (Afternoon) 14:30 - 18:00

Thu: Closed

Fri: (Morning) 9:00 - 12:45, (Afternoon) 14:30 - 18:00

Sat: (Morning Only) 9:00 - 12:45

Sun: Closed

Tue and Sat mornings are by appointment only.

Unannounced closures may occur.

Chiropractic

Shigaraki Chiropractic Clinic

Address: 236-4 Eda Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-2556

Hours:

Mon - Sat

(Morning) 8:30 - 12:00

(Afternoon) 15:00 - 20:00

Sundays: Open only in the morning and closed in the afternoon.

Closed on Sun afternoons.

Tsujii Chiropractic Clinic

Address: 146-2 Hosohara Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-76-4882

The clinic's offers specific treatments for spinal and pelvic issues.

They also have massage services available.

Hours:

Mon - Sat: 9:00 - 12:30

Mon, Tue, Wed, and Fri: 16:00 - 19:30

Closed on Sun

Eye Clinic

Muraki Eye Clinic

Address: 1363-1 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-78-0077

General Ophthalmology, Pediatric Ophthalmology, Colour Vision (Colour Blindness), Contact Lens Prescription, Eyeglass Prescription

Specialty Clinic for Colour Vision Deficiency: (By Appointment Only)

The clinic offers an appointment-based specialty clinic for colour vision deficiencies.

Hours:

Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri

(Morning) 9:00 - 12:30

(Afternoon) 16:00 - 18:00

Saturday 9:00 - 13:00

Closed on Thu, Sat Afternoon, Sun and Pub.Hol

Note: The clinic is not strictly by appointment; you can come at your convenience during the reception hours. However check the times for consultation prior to going. The colour vision clinic is by appointment only.

Currency Exchange and ATM



Shigaraki is renowned for its unique and authentic experiences that beckon visitors from afar. Ensuring that these experiences are accessible and enjoyable for visitors necessitates the availability of suitable financial services. ATMs located at Seven-Eleven and Lawson offer cash withdrawal services for most internationally-issued cards. Additionally, credit cards are widely accepted at most businesses, simplifying transactions when in Shigaraki.

However, it's vital to be aware of certain limitations. Shigaraki's local banks and post offices do not provide currency exchange services, and their ATMs are incompatible with internationally-issued cards. Visitors are asked to make their money exchange transactions in larger cities with comprehensive financial facilities.

Currency

Japan's currency is the yen, and there are three denominations of paper currency and six types of coins in circulation:

Paper Currency: 1,000 yen, 5,000 yen, 10,000 yen
Coins: 1 yen, 5 yen, 10 yen, 50 yen, 100 yen, 500 yen

ATM's/Currency Exchange

Currency exchange is recommended at Kansai International Airport or Banks in the major centres.

IMPORTANT: In Shigaraki, it is not possible to exchange foreign money for yen.

Withdrawing cash at an ATM

Many of the ATMs that are located at banks and financial institutes in Shigaraki can not be used with cards that are issued overseas. If visitors need to get cash from an ATM. The only ATMs that can be used are located at Seven-Eleven and Lawson convenience stores.

Lawson Convenience Store - Shigaraki

Address: 1966-1 Chokushi Nishide, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Lawson Bank ATMs allow Japanese yen to be withdrawn 24 hours a day with overseas-issued cards, with the following considerations: If the ATM installation location is not open 24 hours, you won't be able to use the ATM outside the opening hours of the installation location, even if the ATM itself is available.

Visa, MasterCard, JCB, and UnionPay cards are accepted.

Using the ATM

The ATM transaction screens support English, Simplified Chinese, and Korean languages.

Website: <https://www.lawsonbank.jp/international/en/>

Seven Eleven Convenience Store - Shigaraki

Address: 1183-1 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Seven Bank ATMs are available for use 365 days a year.

The following card brands and their respective marks are accepted, with their available usage times:

- **VISA (including VISA PLUS):** 00:00 to 24:00
- **Mastercard (including Mastercard, Maestro, Cirrus):** 00:00 to 24:00
- **UnionPay (銀聯):** 00:10 to 23:50
- **American Express:** 00:05 to 23:50
- **JCB:** 00:10 to 23:50
- **Discover:** 00:10 to 23:50
- **Diners Club:** 00:05 to 23:55

- *For overseas-issued cards, the maximum withdrawal limit per transaction is 100,000 yen.*
- *Transactions made with a magnetic stripe, have a limit of 30,000 yen.*



- *Note that even cards with the same branding may not always be accepted. The handling fees for overseas-issued cards vary depending on the brand.*
- *For further questions or concerns, contact the UnionPay Help Desk at 00531-086-0044 (Chinese language).*
- *Please note that the information provided is subject to change, and it's a good idea to verify the details with the bank or ATM provider.*

IC Card payments

IC card payments in Japan provide a convenient and efficient way for locals and visitors to handle various transactions. These contactless smart cards, including Suica, Pasmo, and others, are widely accepted across public transportation, convenience stores, vending machines, and even some taxis.

Suica and Pasmo, two of the most popular IC cards, can be loaded with money at ticket machines or online, enabling users to seamlessly navigate public transportation systems like trains and buses. The cards also work for purchases at vending machines and convenience stores, eliminating the need for cash for small transactions.

Suica card and other IC card payments can be made in locations showing the IC card logo that the customer is carrying. Not all businesses accept IC card payments and if unsure check it is recommended that the visitor checks with the business first prior to receiving services.

Please note that IC cards can not be used for payment on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway.

Other Banks

Important: Internationally issued card transactions and money exchange services are not available at the following financial institutes.

Kansai Mirai Bank Shigaraki Branch

623-3 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan
Tel: 0748-82-2666

Business Hours:

[Counter Service (Weekdays)] 9:00 - 15:00
[ATM (Everyday)] 8:00 - 9:00

JA Koka Shigaraki Branch

1170-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan
Tel: 0748-82-1165

Shigaraki Post Office (Main)

441-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Business Hours:

Postal Service Counter [Mon-Fri]: 9:00 - 17:00

Savings Counter [Mon-Fri]: 9:00 - 16:00

ATM [Mon-Fri]: 8:45 - 18:00 **[Sat]:** 9:00 - 17:00

Insurance Counter [Mon-Fri]: 9:00 - 16:00

Shiga Ken Shinyou Kumuai Shigaraki Branch

466-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan
Tel: 0748-82-0851

Shiga Bank Shigaraki Branch

897-3 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan
Tel: 0748-82-0800

Family Mart

Shigaraki Maki Higashi Store (YuCho Bank Outpost - ATM)
 977-1 Higashi Kaito Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

ATM Operational Hours

Mon-Fri 12:05 - 23:55

Sat 12:05 - 23:55

Sun 12:05 - 23:55

Groceries and Amenities

Supermarket

Shigaraki Friendmart - Heiwado

Address: 623-3 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-4050

Website: https://www.heiwado.jp/news/2016/0701_shigaraki.html

Butcher

Gyushi Sangyo Kabushiki Gaisha

Address: 898 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0031

Hours: 9:00 - 18:30

Open Daily

Niku no Shimokawa (and Yakiniku Restaurant)

Address: 898 Honhara, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0031

Hours: 9:00 - 18:30

Closed: Tue, Wed

Open: 11:00 - 14:00 16:00 - 22:00

Bakery

Yakume Bakery

Address: 516-18 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0031

Hours: 10:00 - 17:00

Closed: Mon, Tue

Yamazaki Sun Royal no mise Kouyama

Address: 1988-10 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-83-1128

Hours: 9:00 - 16:00

Closed: Sat, Sun

543 Bread Style

Address: 1527 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 090-8577-0543

Hours: 11:00 - 16:00

Closed: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed

Convenience Stores

Seven Eleven Convenience Store - Shigaraki

Address: 1183-1 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-3808

Lawson Convenience Store - Shigaraki

Address: 1966-1 Chokushi Nishide, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-83-1610

Familymart - Shigaraki

Address: 977-1 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-83-8288

Sporting Facility

Shigaraki Undo Koen (Sporting Facility)

Address: 233 Nishi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Applications for usage can be made at the following locations.

Shigaraki Chuo Community Center

(Open from 8:30 - 17:15 closed on Sundays and Mondays)

Address: 1252 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-8075

**Applications can be made starting three months prior to the intended use date.*

(Important: For users from outside the city, applications can be made starting two months prior.)

Usage Hours

9:00 - 22:00

Closed Days

Mon (Except when Mon is a public holiday, then the following day), Dec 28th to Jan 4th of the following year.

Shigaraki Public Gym

Address: 1310 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Volleyball and Basketball Courts

Tel: 0748-82-0934

Hours: 8:30 - 22:00

Closed: Mon

Different charges apply for non local users

Library

Koka City Shigaraki Library

Address: 1312-1 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0320

Hours:

Closed (Mon, Tues)

Open 10:00 - 18:00

Coin Laundry

Coin Laundry Sentaku Tanuki

Address: 2191-6 Chokushi Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-83-0268

Hours:

6:00 - 24:00 daily

Coin Laundry KiLaLa

Address: 675 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0320

Hours:

24 Hour Operation

Dry Cleaning

Naomura Cleaning Store

Address: 828 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-822013

Matsuya Cleaning Store

Address: 977-1 Eda, Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-1524

Miki Cleaning Friend Mart Shigaraki Store

Address: 623-3 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0030

Hair Dresser

Beauty Salon Ueda

Address: 773-4 Kami-Asamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-84-0030

Beauty Salon KAORU

Address: 510 Kami-Asamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-84-0111

Hair Salon NAKAMORI

Address: 718-2 Eda, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-1735

Mulan Beauty Salon

Address: 1158 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-1061

Yui Beauty Salon

Location: 233-1 Honbara, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-3132

Home Centre/ Hardware

Komeri Hard & Green Shigaraki Store

569-1 Hiradani Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-8086

Open Daily

Website: <https://www.komeri.com>

Kida Shouten

906 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0017

Hours: 8:00 - 18:30

Closed: Sun

Furniture

Ebisu Kagu Ten

Address: 459-2 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0073

Antiques

Omiya Komingei Kan (Large Selection of everything Japan)

Address: 1404-4 Maki Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Hours: 9:00 - 18:00

Tel: 0748-83-1100

Open Daily

Website: <https://komingeikan.com/product/toy/>

Antique Flex (Large selection of imported antique furniture)

Address: 1181 Chokushi Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Closed: Thu

Hours: 10:00 - 17:00

Tel: 0748-83-1161

Website: <https://www.flex-antiques.com/>

Recycled Clothing, Silk Printing, Design

Sivel Furugi (T Shirts and more)

Address: 553 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Hours: 10:00 - 22:00 Daily

Tel: 080-4233-5539

Open Daily

Website: <http://sivel.jp/>

Postage and Couriers

Shigaraki benefits from an extensive postal and courier service network that caters to the diverse needs of its residents, businesses and visitors. Japan Post, as the national postal service, offers comprehensive mail and package delivery services, including EMS services for sending items overseas. They also provide standard mail delivery, express services, registered mail, and international shipping. Shigaraki also boasts a competitive landscape of private courier services, which offer a wide range of delivery solutions, including same-day delivery, express services, and specialized courier offerings.

Sending items directly from Galleries and Kilns

Shigaraki Galleries and Kilns offer a range of postal and courier services for international purchases. Nevertheless, it is crucial to consult with the staff or owner at the time of your purchase. To avoid issues related to breakage/loss and address label errors leading to returns, many businesses recommend that visitors handle their shipping for their purchases. For those participating in pottery classes and requiring shipment for items created during the class, it is advisable to coordinate with the staff for shipping arrangements.

Japan Post

Japan Post Shigaraki Branch

Address: 441-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan

Tel: 0748-82-0550

Fax: 0748-82-1744

Hours:

Weekdays - Postal counter 9:00 - 17:00

(No services available on Sat, Sun, Pub.Hol)

Note: There may be times when Postal window services and ATMs may be temporarily out of action or unavailable.

Services

Postal services, Revenue stamps, Yu-Pack (parcel delivery service), Chilled Yu-Pack, Registered mail, [International postal services](#), E-Shipping Service, Lottery ticket services, Certificate issuance services, Agency services (sales), Agency services (delivery), Other local public body services,

*Cashless payment available

Regarding Registered Mail Services

"Registered mail" services may be available at certain post offices on weekdays only, irrespective of the postal counter's business hours. If you plan to use these services on Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays, kindly contact the post office in advance for confirmation.

EMS International Postal Service

EMS is a convenient and reliable way to send items to many countries overseas and as there is a **30 kg weight allowance** for most countries, it makes sending items overseas easy.

Global Availability: EMS is available worldwide in over 120 countries and regions. It is widely offered as an international postal service.

Send Items Up to 30kg: With EMS, documents and packages weighing up to 30kg can be sent. It is suitable for sending large or heavy items.

Reliability and Peace of Mind: EMS is a highly reliable international postal service, offering options for tracking your items and insurance for safe and secure delivery.

Ease of Use: The process of using EMS is relatively straightforward, and it is available through many postal operators and post offices. Simply bring items for shipment and provide the required information to send packages.

Convenience: EMS is a fast and efficient international postal service, making it highly convenient for international business transactions and sending mail between individuals. Items reach their destination relatively quickly.

EMS English Website and Important change.

- From 1st March 2024 (Fri), for international postal items containing goods, it is mandatory to submit customs electronic data for all countries/regions. As handwritten labels do not transmit customs electronic data, acceptance will no longer be possible if the goods have a handwritten label.
- Labels can be completed online check the website for further information.

Website: https://www.post.japanpost.jp/index_en.html



Japan Post EMS Services English Page

Courier Services

Kuroneko Yamato Takyubin Service

Office: Shigaraki Branch

Branch Code: 063140

Address: 1708 Maki Shigaraki Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Hours:

Weekdays: 8:00 - 21:00, Sat 8:00 - 21:00, Sun & Pub.Hol 8:00 - 21:00

Same-Day Dispatch Cutoff Times: (Limited to Office Drop-off)

Weekdays: 19:00

Sat: 18:00

Sun: 18:00

Services:

Parcel Drop off

Parcel collection

Open on Sat, Sun and Pub.Hol

Nationwide Customer Service Center

Tel: 0570-200-000

Fax: 077-553-9810

Inquiry Hours: 8:00 - 21:00

Website: <https://www.global-yamato.com/en/hands-free-travel/>



Yamato Takyubin English Page

Sagawa - Konan Sales Office

Branch Code: 4020

Address: 1656-24 Iwane Konan Shiga Japan

Services: Inquiry about delivery status and services, Bringing in parcels, Collecting parcels, Receiving parcels

Same-day dispatch:

Weekdays: 7:00 - 18:30, Sat: 7:00 - 17:30, Sun & Pub.Hol: 7:00 - 16:00

Hikyaku Cool Service Parcels Bringing-In Acceptance Hours:

Weekdays: 7:00 - 18:00, Sat: 7:00 - 17:00, Sun & Pub.Hol: 7:00 - 16:00

Sales Office

Weekdays: 7:00 - 20:00

Sat: 7:00 - 20:00

Sun & Pub.Hol: 7:00 - 20:00

Inquiry Tel: 0570-01-0609

(Available from 8:00 - 19:00)

Fax: 0748-72-3970

Collection Request Only: 0120-99-4500

Responsible Delivery Areas: Konan City and Koka City in Shiga, Japan

Website: <https://www.sagawa-exp.co.jp/english/>



Sagawa Takyubin English Page



Convenient Courier and Postal Services

Postage and Couriers

JAL ABC Airport Delivery and Storage

Luggage delivery to Kansai International Airport Terminal ABC Storage Counter from within Shiga Prefecture can be arranged online. There are 3 baggage sizes and if sending a carton the maximum weight allowance is 30kg. Luggage can be collected and checked in for flight back to visitors country of origin.

Rates from Shigaraki to Kansai Airport

120 Size 2,390 yen
140 Size 2,640 yen
160 Size 2,730 yen (Up to 30kg max)

**For some remote islands and areas, rates may differ from those mentioned above.*

**There may be changes in deadlines and final collection days due to last-day collection cancellations.*

Reservation Deadlines and Final Collection Days apply.

Reservation Deadlines:

- 3 to 4 days before the departure date (receipt date) until 17:00

Final Collection Days:

- 2 to 3 days before the departure date (receipt date)
- In areas where collection on Sundays and holidays is not possible, please apply early.
- For evening collection between 18:00 and 20:00, an additional two days beyond the shortest collection day mentioned above will be added.
- Please note that for late-night and early-morning flights, the collection deadline is one day earlier than the final collection day.
- For detailed collection deadline information, contact the call centre below.

Ordering ABC Airport Delivery Services

Tel: (Call Center) 0120-919-120 or 03-3545-1131

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00 (Closed New Year's Day to January 3rd)

English Information

Website: <https://www.jalabc.com/en/hands-freetravel/airport-baggage-delivery/to-the-airport.html>



JAL ABC Airport Delivery Services English Page



Nippon Express

Nippon Express provide shipping solutions from Japan to 33 countries worldwide, they handle general commercial cargo weighing 45 kg or more. Nippon Express have extensive global forwarding capabilities together with extensive domestic and international networks and provide transparent rates, lead times, and attentive customer service.

There is no local Shigaraki based handling agent for these services. For more information check the Nippon Express English Website.

Website: <https://www.nipponexpress.com/service/>



Nippon Express English Page

Overseas Postage

Careful packaging of items is essential, and responsibility for breakages will be the sender's responsibility. Check when sending regarding insurance options. For visitors purchasing for personal usage, generally, there will be no problems with customs, and if worried about breakage, carrying the items as hand luggage is recommended.

It is essential to note traditional Shigaraki Pottery can be porous due to the clay and techniques used in its production. There may be water seepage from vases, and plates may absorb moisture; for personal enjoyment, this is not a significant problem and adds to the charm of handmade pottery.

However, for commercial use, there can be problems when dealing with customs regulations in different countries. These difficulties can be amplified when the pottery is intended for use in a restaurant or as a food container. Using an expert to assist with shipping is essential.

Packing Agents

There are specialist packing agents that handle the packaging of large items for sending overseas.

Nippon Logipack Co., Ltd.

Postal Code: 520-3306

2002-17 Kooji Konan Cho Koka City Shiga Japan

Koan Frontier Park D-2

Tel: 0748-86-1411

Fax: 0748-86-1401

Website: <https://www.logipack.co.jp>

Here are some key points to consider:

Customs Regulations Vary:

Customs regulations can vary significantly from one country to another. Some countries have strict import restrictions on ceramics, mainly if they are intended for food use. It's essential to research and understand the specific regulations of the destination country.

Food Safety Standards:

When sending pottery as food containers, it must meet the food safety standards and certifications of the destination country. Many countries have stringent requirements to ensure the safety of the vessels used in food service.

Documentation:

Proper documentation is crucial. Pottery for commercial use will require clear labelling, certification of safety standards, and, in some cases, documentation of the materials used in making the pottery. Providing accurate and comprehensive documentation can help ease the customs process.

Packaging and Labeling:

Ensure pottery is well-packaged to prevent breakage during transit. Additionally, clear labelling indicating the intended use of the pottery can help customs authorities understand its purpose.

Import Taxes and Duties:

Be aware of the import taxes and duties that may apply. Some countries impose high taxes on ceramics, which can significantly affect the cost of importing pottery for commercial purposes.

Import Permits:

Depending on the destination country and the type of pottery, you may need to obtain specific import permits or licenses. Research the local requirements and allow time for processing. Consult with Experts to navigate the complexities of international customs and regulations. It can be beneficial to consult with experts, such as global shipping companies or legal advisors with expertise in international trade.

Time and Patience:

Importing pottery for commercial purposes, especially for use in restaurants, can be a time-consuming process. It's essential to be patient and plan well to account for potential delays.

Yellow Pages

Galleries

Along with the galleries and workshops that can be found on the Kiln exploration trail, various other galleries are showcasing the tradition and innovation of Shigaraki. The Nagano district of Shigaraki is the hub of the town's gallery scene. However, there are galleries dotted across the town. Shigaraki's galleries are not just spaces to display art; often, they have workshops attached and also offer pottery lessons and other related experiences.

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Utsuwa no Shigoto	Trendy gallery space in a repurposed car workshop with a wide variety of products. Open exclusively on Sundays	11:00 - 17:00 (Sunday Only)	1978-1 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Mob: 090-4305-6662 Tel: 0748-89-9106	https://www.instagram.com/utsuwa_no_shigoto/
Rengetsu	Rengetsu pottery shop in Shigaraki has a long family tradition of pottery-making dating back to the Edo period. The interior that has preserved the atmosphere of the past, with thick ceiling beams, charcoal braziers, potter's wheels, and even a staircase leading to a climbing kiln where ceramics are fired.	10:00 - 17:00 (Closed on irregular days)	720 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-3566 Fax: 0748-82-3077	https://rengetsu.co.jp/
Toumu	Toumu, proudly offers the creations of ceramic artists from Shigaraki. Gallery hosts solo exhibitions approximately once a month. New Stock constantly introduced.	Open Wed (Incl Pub.Hol)	65 Sugahara, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2686	http://www3.ocn.ne.jp/~rinca65/
Ogama (Meizan Kiln's Café, Shop & Gallery)	An integral part of the Kiln exploration trail, located on the Rokuro Slop. The symbol of Ogama is an imposing climbing kiln. "Ogama," is a dynamic space that combines a café, shop, pottery classes, and even lodging.	10:00 - 16:30 (Cafe L. O. at 16:00) (Open on Wed,Thu, incl Pub.Hol)	947 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-8066	http://www.meizan.info/ogama
Shigaraki Share Studio	"Gallery & Kitchen @ Shigaraki Share Studio" is a creative co-working space with a focus on pottery and art.	11:00 - 16:00 (Closed on irregular days)	1140-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0690	https://sss-shigaraki.com
Kougen no Utsuwaya Fujitou	A wide range of pottery, from artisanal pieces to commercial-grade tableware. Specialist in durable pottery certified by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.		1485-68 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-1177 Fax: 0748-83-1200	https://fujito-utsuwa.com
Kamamoto Utsuwa (Kiln and Gallery)	Lovers of traditional architecture, you'll be fascinated by the original thatched roof building. The Store stocks an impressive range of handmade tableware. The owner is an artist, so don't hesitate to strike up a conversation and learn more about their work.	10:00 - 19:00 (Closed on Fri)	2048-1 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0999 Fax: 0748-83-2828	http://www.kamamoto-utsuwa.co.jp/
Kotani Co.Ltd	Kotani Pottery is a retail store, which allures customers with its extensive array of products. Offering over 2,000 varieties of tableware and ornaments. With a delicious Authentic Sanuki Udon Restaurant as well.		1248-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2201 Fax: 0748-82-0551	http://www.kotanito-ki.com/
Noborigama Soutoen Kiln	At Soutoen Kiln, each piece is meticulously handcrafted, resulting in truly unique and intriguing pottery. Products, are fired in the on site Noborigama kiln for seven days and nights and exhibit various expressions based on how the flames interact with them.		1423-13 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0316 Fax: 0748-82-1344	http://www.shigarakiyaki.co.jp/
Utsuwa no Shigoto (Shigaraki Nagano Branch)	Specialists in pottery that draws its inspiration from the natural forms of plants to create tableware that is functional, stylish and embraces the needs of modern users. It opened in April 2020.	11:00 - 18:00 (Open on Sun, closed on irregular days during the week)	1318 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Mob: 090-4305-6662 Tel: 0748-89-9106	Instagram: @utsuwa_no_shigoto
Tsuchinoko Kiln Minakawa Toubou	Focus on hand made pottery, including tableware, vases, and tea ceramics. Products are known for their natural glaze firing, displaying a timeless taste with effects like fire colour, ash coverage, and kiln transformation.	10:30 - 17:00 (Closed on Wed and the 1st and 3rd Tue of each month)	1182-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2586	http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~tsuchinoko/
Yamakane Touki Ltd	Specialists in garden pottery, plants and Bonsai as well as a variety of Shigaraki Pottery items. For those interested in garden pottery for a special bonsai, this is the place to look.	10:00 - 17:00 (Open 7 Days a week)	1176 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0146	https://chinaware-store-203.business.site/

Galleries

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Daily Life Shigaraki (Kiln, Gallery Restaurant, Cooking Lessons and more)	Daily Life Shigaraki was founded with the goal of utilizing a network cultivated by the owner over many years, and the aim of creating new markets.	9:00 - 18:00 (Call in advance) (Irregular Holidays)	739-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2866	http://shigarakiya.jp/
Gallery Rokuro	Gallery specialists in Shigaraki ceramics.		1254-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2289	
Otani Touki	Comprehensive selection of Shigaraki ceramics. Dedicated to bringing the colours and forms created naturally by flame to market. Large variety of products offered for sale.	9:00 - 17:30 (Open all year - closed on New Year's Day)	541 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0404 Fax: 0748-82-3545	http://www.otanitoki.jp/
Kohara Yojiro Shop - Gallery KOHARA	Gallery KOHARA is a shop with a relaxed atmosphere where jazz music flows. Original artistic potter featured and works by various artists. Monthly solo exhibitions featuring Shigaraki artists.	11:00 - 18:00 (Open on Sun, closed on irregular days during the week)	1194 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0138	
Shigaraki Toubou Oogoya	A large spacious store. Oogoya offers a wide range of products, miscellaneous goods and food items. Located near the entrance of the Prefectural 'Tougei no Mori' (Ceramic Forest).	10:00 - 17:00	2349 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-2220	http://www.oogoya.co.jp
Yamatate Seito Jyo	A vast selection of Shigaraki produced items are sold in the gallery.	9:00 - 17:00 (Open all year, closed on New Year's Day)	1192-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1002 Fax: 0748-82-0782	
Marushi Seito Co., Ltd	Offers Shigaraki ceramics for living, that suit various aspects of modern lifestyles. A wide range of pieces, from those crafted many decades ago to the latest creations straight from the kiln on the same day. Factory tours are available with prior arrangement.	9:00 - 17:00 (Closed on the 2nd Sat, Sun, Pub.Hol & year-end and New Year's holidays.) *Factory tours are available with prior arrangement.	953 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0033 Fax: 0748-82-0313	https://www.shigaraki-marushi.com/gallery
Kama-to no Mori	Manufacturer of Japan's "Plus Garden" brand, specialists in garden materials including plant pots. Offer a diverse range of products such as water basins, table sets, and tableware. The Gallery and cafe are popular and often stage special events.	10:00 - 17:00 (Closed on Tue)	1361-4 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-69-5466 Fax: 0748-82-2000	https://www.kama-to.jp/
Tetsuzan Gama	Artistic and stylish potters kiln and gallery. Tea ware, sake vessels, and flower vases for daily use. Pieces embrace the beauty of 'Wabi-Sabi,' Each piece is unique: no two are the same. Gallery & wood-fired kiln.	11:00 - 17:00 (Closed irregularly)	408-1 Kouyama, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Mob: 090-3572-8562 Tel: 0748-70-3259	https://www.instagram.com/mt.zacky/
Kabushiki Kaisha Tōri (Wholesaler)	A nationwide wholesaler and exporter of Shigaraki ceramics as well as ceramics from various regions in Japan. Original equipment manufacturer, and we also import overseas products for domestic sales.	11:00 - 18:00 (Open on Sun) (Closed on irregular days during the week)	2193 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-1700 Fax: 0748-83-1701	
Cokoro no Tsue L-Born Co., Ltd.	Ceramic items created as memorials to family members that have passed. In Japan new funeral options are gaining popularity and new ways to celebrate a loved ones life are developing and this gallery celebrates peoples lives and families.	9:00 - 17:00 (Closed: Mon,Tue, Wed,Thu) (Please contact for visits on closed days)	1197-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2700 Fax: 0748-82-2705	https://www.cocoro-tue.com/
Shigaraki Marumoto Pottery Co., Ltd. Showroom (Platinum Network)	Offer stay-based pottery experiences, ranging from creating large pieces to small items, as well as tours of pottery kilns. Prior arrangement essential.		694-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-7966 Fax: 0748-82-3231	http://www.shigaraki-marumoto.jp/
Shigaraki Toen Tanuki Mura	Large tourist orientated facility famous for its extra large tanuki and Pottery experiences, studio tours, climbing kiln tours, and shopping opportunities. *Dining requires reservations. *ENGLISH OK	9:00 - 17:00 (Closed irregularly)	1293-2 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0126 Fax: 0748-83-0127	https://tanukimura.com/

Galleries

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Marui Seito Hechimon Shop	Offer a wide range of products as well as their own modern "Hechimon" range, that is popular in department stores around Japan.	9:00 - 17:30 (Closed Dec 29 - Jan 2)	1201 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0164	https://www.hechimon.com/
Tsuji Kyu Pottery Co., Ltd.	Located in the heart of Shigaraki. Extensive selection of hand selected table ware.	9:00 - 17:30 (Open year round)	414-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0194 Fax: 0748-82-3100	
Kabushiki Gaisha Maruta Touki	Diverse selection of pottery. Café on the premises, features monthly exhibitions of local ceramic artists works in the second floor gallery.	9:00 - 17:00 (Closed on the 1st and 3rd Wed of each month)	1198-5 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0071 Fax: 0748-82-2717	https://www.marutatouki.com/
Minoru Gama (Kiln and Gallery)	Housed in a traditional building, dedicated to the handcrafted pottery and flower arrangements created by ceramic artists Minoru and Kyoko Matsukawa.	9:30 - 18:00 (Irregular holidays)	628-2 Nagano Shigaraki Cho Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2548 Fax: 0748-82-2705	http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~minorugama/
Gallery Yasuo (Yasubeigama)	Located alongside Route 307 in central Shigaraki, Yasuo Gallery is operated by 5th generation owners of the Yasubeigama Kiln. In store the works of 3 generations of the family are on sale.	11:00 - 17:00 (Irregular holidays)	620-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0090 Fax: 0748-82-2395	https://yasubeigama.com/gallery/index.html
Kaneyu Touki	Stock a wide range of items, from unique and handpicked pieces to the finest quality ceramics. Store has a warehouse-style setting and is one of Shigaraki's older style establishments.	9:00 - 18:00 (Irregular holidays)	317 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0385 Fax: 0748-82-2888	http://www.kaneu.jp/
Nakamura Touki	Tanuki galore, over 100 tanuki in front of the store and unique handmade tanuki can be made. Also sell a variety of tableware and flower vases and garden pottery.	(Irregular holidays)	1300 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2001, Fax: 0748-82-1021	https://www.nakamura-touki.jp/
Okuda Chuzaemon Gama (Shigaraki Togeji Mura)	Gallery shop stocks a wide variety of souvenir items, Togeji Mura is one of Shigaraki's older and long established kilns. Items range from tableware to figurines and many products exclusive to Okuda Chuzaemon Gama Kiln. Enjoy a tea break at the famed Noborigama Café.	9:00 - 17:30 (Entrance to pottery closes up until 15:30) (Open year round)	1131 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0522 Fax: 0748-82-3070	https://tougaimura.jp/
Tanuki no Sato Matsumoto Touki (Matsumoto Pottery Co., Ltd.)	Tanuki specialist, run by a 3rd generation owner. Tanuki sold in a variety of sizes, ranging from miniature tanuki measuring 1.5cm in height and weighing 20g, to massive ones towering at 5m in height and weighing 10 tonnes. The galleries pride and joy is the 2-metre tall "Wolf Tanuki." This is a must-see.	9:00 - 17:00 (Open daily - Except New Year's Day)	632 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0155 Fax: 0748-82-0828	
Kabuski Gaisha Yamajyo Touki "Gallery Tou-Dou-Kan"	The Tou-dou-kan Gallery, displays and sells a wide range of Shigaraki ware. With an impressive collection exceeding 30,000 items, Exhibits include numerous masterpieces showcasing the techniques of the Taisho era. Gallery is visually special and must visit.	9:00 - 17:00 (Open Year Round)	330 Hosohara, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0770 Fax: 0748-82-3228	https://www.yamajyou.com/
Yamasho Touki Kaubshiki Gaisha	A range of interior decor, tableware, small items, and original products, Retail Division and Wholesale Division.	8:00 - 17:00 (Wholesale Division: Closed - Sat, Sun and Pub.Hols Retail Division: Closed irregularly)	560-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0045 Fax: 0748-82-2145	https://yamasho-touki.co.jp/
Marutoku Touki Tokusai Toubou	Gallery with a pottery Studio that teaches pottery lessons. Conveniently located near Shigaraki Railway Station. Wide selection of products sold in store, great place for shopping and browsing for special tableware and Shigaraki products.	Marutoku Touki 9:00 - 17:00 (Closed: Wed, Thu if Pub.Hol following day substituted & New Year holidays) Tokusai Toubou (Reception Hours: 10:00 - 16:00 Closed: Wed, Thu if Pub.Hol. Following day substituted & New Year holidays)	1198-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1016 Fax: 0748-82-3063	http://www.tokusai.jp
Bunpuku Co., Ltd. Tanukiya bunpuku	Building is a "huge" sleeping tanuki located alongside Route 307 and can't be missed. Inside the building there is a gallery called "Togindou" and there is well known and delicious udon restaurant. Tanukiya bunpuku, also has a footbath, and pottery classes are offered at Togindou.	(Closed Irregularly)	459 Nishi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2001 Fax: 0748-82-1021	https://www.bunpuku-tonchinkan.com/

Galleries

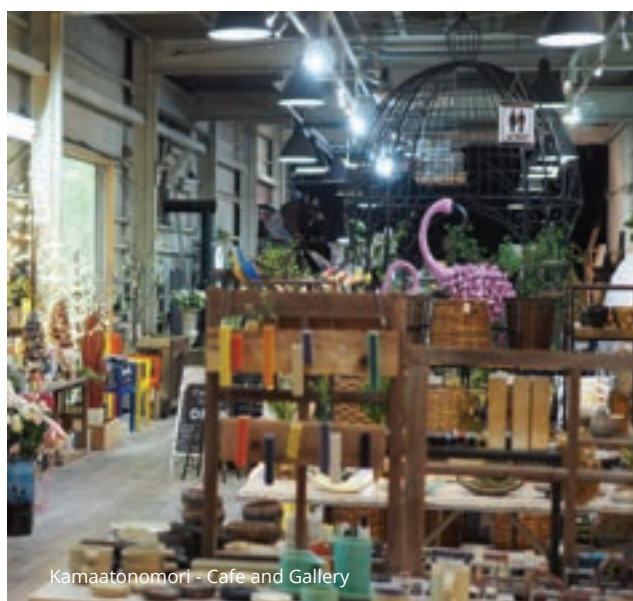
Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Tsubo Hachi Gama Daiki no Utsuwa	Kiln constructed in 1955, specializing in garden pottery, including lotus flower pots, umbrella stands, and water fountains, and teapots. Experienced craftsmen with 40 years of expertise support the craftsmanship that characterize Tsubohachi Kiln.	9:00 - 18:00 (Closed on Thu)	1330-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0186 Fax: 0748-82-3483	http://www.daikinoutsuwa.com/
Bunpuku Co., Ltd. - Tochin-kan (Pottery Museum)	Tochin-kan, operated by Bunpuku Co., Ltd., is a treasure trove of ceramics that are difficult to find in Shigaraki. This store is filled with handcrafted items, rare finds, celebrity pieces, items of unknown origin, both affordable and high-end items, retro and modern pieces, craft objects, ornaments. Tochin-kan offers pottery classes, and a restaurant called "Donburi Bunpuku" dining.	9:00 - 18:00 (Hours may vary depending on the season. Closed on Fridays)	2376-3 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-1645 Fax: 0748-83-1007	
Kabushiki Gaisha Maruta Touki	Diverse selection of pottery. Café on the premises, features monthly exhibitions of local ceramic artists works in the second floor gallery.	9:00 - 17:00 (Closed on the 1st and 3rd Wed of each month)	1198-5 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0071 Fax: 0748-82-2717	https://www.marutatouki.com/
Craft & Gallery Kirin	Situated in the Chokushi area of Shigaraki, this charming shop showcases the playful and artistic world of Shigaraki ware. Inside, shelves and displays feature delightful tableware and whimsical ceramic figurines, each piece reflecting the creativity and skill of local artisans.	11:00 - 17:00 (Hours may vary; closed on Tuesdays for preparation)	1993 Chokushi, Shigaraki-cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-60-4005	https://www.instagram.com/mayumi_mekata/



Meizangama - Ogama Gallery



Tanikan Gallery near Shigaraki Station



Kamaatonomori - Cafe and Gallery



Kamamoto Utsuwa

Pottery Activities

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website/ Notes
Shigaraki Touen Tanuki Mura	Hand-building: 1,650 yen (1 hr) • Other options incl. Electric pottery wheel, Painting, Raccoon dog (tanuki) making. • Reservations required.. English support is available. • Pick-up or delivery options. • (Shipping fees apply).	10:00 -17:00 Last Session 15:30 (Open Year Round)	1293-2 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0126	http://www.tanukimura.com Groups up to 300 people can be accepted.
Sawazen	Hand-building: 1,650 yen (1 hr) Painting: From 1,450 yen (1 hr) Moulded raccoon dog (tanuki) making: from 2,400 yen. • Firing Fee Included. • Shipping fee is separate. • Reservations required in advance. • Same-day inquiries welcome.	9:00 - 17:00 Last Session 15:00 (Irregular Holidays)	1424-1 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0215	 Up to 30 Individual lessons or up to 200 people in a group can be accepted.
Marutaka Touki Potters Wheel Experience	Hand-building Course: 2,000 yen (1 hr) includes 1 kg of clay and firing cost for 1 piece of pottery. Electric Pottery Wheel Basic Course: 3,800 yen (1 hr) 3 kg of clay and firing cost for 2 pieces of pottery incl. • Finished pieces will be ready in approximately 1 month for pickup or delivery • Shipping fee is separate. • English support available	10:00 - 17:30 Last Session 16:00 (Irregular Holidays)	1198-5 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0026	https://marutaka-touki.com/ 9 Potters Wheels. 15 Hand building stations.
Oogoya Pottery Classes	Hand-building: 1 piece: 1,500 yen (50 minutes) 3 pieces: 3,000 yen (1 hr) Electric Pottery Wheel: 1 piece: 2,500 yen (40 mins) 2 pieces: 3,500 yen (50 mins) • Additional options include painting and study courses. Prices do not include tax. • Approximately 1.5 months until completion. • Firing and glazing costs incl. • Shipping fees are separate.	10:00 -17:00 Last Session 16:00 (Irregular Holidays)	2349 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-2220	http://www.oogoya.co.jp Groups up to 190 people in a group can be accepted.
Tonchinkan	Pottery Hand-Building Course: 1,650 yen (includes 600g of clay, for creating 1 piece of pottery). Electric Pottery Wheel Course: 4,400 yen (1 hour, allows you to create 2 pieces). Painting Course: 440 yen to 2,750 yen (for items like raccoon dogs, tableware, piggy banks, etc.). • Firing cost is included. • Completed pieces can be picked up at the store or shipped • Shipping fee is separate. • Reservations are not required; same-day walk-ins are welcome for most activities. • Prior reservations for the electric pottery wheel course are required.	9:00 - 18:00 Last Session 16:00 *Times changes Depending on season (Closed on Friday)	2376-3 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-1645	http://www.bunpuku-tonchinkan.com Groups up to 45 people in a group can be accepted.
Marurigama	Hand-building: 1,500 yen. Electric Pottery Wheel: 2,500 yen • Each course includes firing for one piece of pottery. • Prices do not include tax. • Other courses are available; refer to website for more information.	9:30 -18:00 Prior Reservations Essential (Irregular holidays)	1349-24 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2239	 Capacity for 16 people
Ogama	Hand-building and Tatara (90 mins) 1,650 yen + firing cost. Painting (60 min) For Free Cup: 2,200 yen, Plate or Teacup: 2,750 yen. Handprint Impressions (40 mins): 3,300 yen per piece (Handprint impressions require advance booking). • Shipping fees are separate.	AM Session: From 10:00 PM Session: From 13:00 (Discuss details directly) (Closed Wed, Thu)	1300 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-8066	https://www.meizan.info/ogama/ Capacity for 16 people
Miharugama	Hand-building: (2 hr) Pottery Wheel: (2 hr) Experience fee: 5,000 yen (Incl. Tax) • Select same experience for groups. • Reservations are required in advance (no same-day bookings). • Pricing includes tax. • Shipping fees are separate.	10:00 - 17:00 (Reservations Essential) (Irregular Holidays)	1388-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0213	https://miharugama.com Capacity for 2 to 10 people

Pottery Activities

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website/ Notes
Shigaraki Togeji Mura	Hand-building: 1,650 yen (1 hr) Electric Pottery Wheel: 3,300 yen (90 mins) (Reservation required) Tanuki (Raccoon Dog) Making: 2,200 yen (1 hr) Painting: from 880 yen (40 mins) • Other experiences available. • Shipping fee is separate.	9:00-17:00 Last Session 16:00 (Open year round - Closed New Year)	(Main Kiln) 1131 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan (Branch) 1468 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Main Kiln Tel: 0748-82-0522 Branch Tel: 0748-83-0230	http://tougaimura.jp/ Main Kiln: Groups up to 500 people. Branch: Groups up to 200 people.
Challenge	Electric Pottery Wheel: 1,000 yen (1 hr) Firing cost is separate depending on size. Hand-building: 1,500 yen Incl firing cost, allows for creating up to 2 pieces with 800g of clay. • Prices do not include tax. • No reservation required. • Walk-ins welcome. • Shipping fee is separate.	9:00 - 17:00 (Open year round)	1245 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0611	http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~rokuro/ 24 Potters Wheel. 20 Hand-building Stations.
Marutoku Touki Tokusai Toubou	Hand-building Course: 1,800 yen. (1 hr) Electric Pottery Wheel Course: 2,400 yen. (1 hr) Includes firing cost for one piece up to 18 cm in size, additional pieces incur separate fees. • Fired pieces can be picked up at the store or shipped • Shipping fee is separate	10:00 - 16:00 Session 1 10:00 Session 2 12:00 Session 3 14:00 Session 4 16:00 (Closed Wed, Thu)	1198-5 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1016	https://tokusai.jp 7 Potters Wheel 10 Hand-building Stations
Ogawa Kenzo Toubou Shigaraki Kenzo Tougei Club	Electric Pottery Wheel: 5,500 yen Hand-building Course: 5,500 yen Each participant can create up to 3 pieces. • Firing cost included. • Shipping cost separate. • 1 month to completion. • Reservations are required for groups of 2 or more. • No same-day bookings.	AM Session: From 10:30 PM Session: From 13:30 (Reservations Only) (Irregular Holidays)	755-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2216	http://www.tougei-kenzo.com Capacity for 2 to 20 people
Minorugama	Electric Pottery Wheel: 5,000 yen (2 hours) Hand-building Course: 4,000 yen (2 hr and 30 mins) Each participant can create up to 3 pieces. • Completed pieces can be picked up or shipped. • Shipping fee is separate. • Reservations are accepted for groups of 2 or more. • Reservations essential.	10:30 - 16:30 Last session 15:30 (Irregular Holidays)	628-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0213	http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~minorugama/ 3 Potters Wheel 8 Handbuilding Stations
Soutoen	Electric Potters Wheel: From 4,000 yen (1 hr 30 mins) Hand-building: From 1,800 yen (1 hr) Tanuki (Raccoon Dog) Making: From 3,000 yen (2 hr) Painting: 800 yen (30 mins) • Firing cost for 1 piece incl. • Firing for additional pieces separate cost. • Reservations required • Shipping fee is separate.	Session 1 10:20 Session 2 13:00 Session 3 14:30 (Closed year end)	1423-13 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0316	https://www.shigarakiyaki.co.jp/ Capacity for 1 to 500 people
Okuda Eizan Gama	Electric Potters Wheel: 1 Day (6 hours) 5,000 yen to 10,000 yen • Reservations must be made in advance. (No on day sessions.) • Completed pieces can be picked up in person or shipped. • Shipping fee is separate. • Lessons are mainly offered on Saturdays and Sundays, consult for other days.	10:30 -16:30 (Irregular Holidays)	1034-5 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0114	http://www.eonet.ne.jp/~eizangama/ Capacity for 1 to 15 people
Hide Fujimoto	Hide Fujimoto, a traditional artisan, gently and carefully instructs students in everything from basic hand-building to advanced pottery making techniques. Classes taught in his studio located in the Kumoi forest. 45,000 yen, incl instruction fee, clay and classes	Enquire re lesson times and when wood fired kiln is being fired - using website form. (Irregular closures)	33 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Contact via website	https://www.fujimotoyama.com/english/works/class-others/ Capacity for in excess of 10 people, all ages welcome

Other Activities

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website/ Notes
Shigaraki Washi Making (Make traditional Japanese Washi Paper)	Washi Paper Making: - Costs start from 300 yen - Time 10 - 20 minutes - Make a postcard - Suitable for participants 6 years of age +	Two Sessions 10:00 - 12:00 13:00 - 15:00 <i>Bookings Essential and must be made up to 20:00 - 3 days in advance.</i>	(Shigaraki Work Centre) 494-1 Kouyama, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2198	https://www.asoview.com/item/activity/pln3000005922/
Shigaraki Sauna (Two Unique Sauna Rooms with a Shigaraki Feel)	- Experience Japan's first earthbag sauna, built sustainably with local clay from Shigaraki pottery kilns, blending the warmth of a wood stove with the natural breathability of earthen walls. - Relax with the aroma of 1200-year-old Asamiya tea infused in every steamy pour, surrounding you with the rich scents of Japan's oldest tea. - Reconnect with the land, history, and nature through a sauna experience found only here.	<i>Bookings Essential and can be made online</i>	457 Shimoasamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 077-564-3133	https://shigaraki37.jp/



Shigaraki Washi Making (Paper Making)



Shigaraki Sauna



Sawazwen Shiawase Taikenkan - Tanuki Making



Shigaraki Tougei Mura - Tanuki Making



Sawazwen Shiawase Taikenkan - Ceramic Painting



Okuda Eizan Gama Pottery Wheel Lesson



Shigaraki Tougei Mura - Entrance

Cafe & Restaurants

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Cafes/ Casual Dining					
Pine Cone	Hearty Omi beef Hamburgers! The beef used is 100% Omi beef. Restaurant surrounded by rice fields and has spectacular views of the surrounding mountains. Indoor and Outdoor seating.	11:00 - 15:00 (L.O: 14:30) (Closed on Thu)	607 Kinose, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-60-4362	https://pinecone-shigaraki.com/index.html
Coffee World	Small coffee shop located along-side route 307. Coffee, bread, light meals, and set meals, provide a daily lunch menu that focuses on balanced nutrition.	9:00 - 18:30 (Closed on Sat)	1620-1 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0960	
Yamamoto en With Tea	Operated by the long-established tea brand "Yamamotoen," renowned for its 1200 years of traditional flavour and aroma of "Asamiya Tea." Enjoy a variety of beverages, including sencha, matcha, black tea, coffee, and even light snacks to Omi beef steak. Outdoor dining is also available.	11:00 - 17:00 (L.O at 16:30) (Closed on Mon and 4th Tue of each month, if a Pub.Hol, then will close the following day)	178-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-84-0014	https://www.asamiyacha.com/
Chanomi Yagura	An Agricultural Production Corporation located in Asamiya that grows, processes and sells Asamiya tea. Famous for freshly baked roll cakes, created from the best ingredients and tea from the company plantations.	10:00 - 1800 (Closed every third Tue. Confectionary section is closed on Tue and every third Wed)	39-1 Shimoasamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-84-0405	https://chanomiyagura.com/
Noborigama Cafe Shigaraki Togei Mura	A unique cafe experience with instagram appeal. Enjoy a break while exploring the Kilns of Shigaraki. Reservations essential. Food and beverage is served inside the firing chamber of a 80 year old Noborigama kiln. Great experience. Open for Lunch or Dinner as well	Cafe time: 10:00 - 16:00 (Closed during year-end and New Year holidays) Dinner: Start between 18:00 and 19:00 (May 8th to August 31st)	1131 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0522	https://tougemura.jp/
Shigaraki Share Kitchen	Located in the centre of Shigaraki, this is a share space for artists and there is a share kitchen that serves lunches and changes on a regular basis.	11:00 - 16:00 (Irregular holidays)	1140-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0690	https://sss-shigaraki.com
Peach Valley (Located inside MIHO MUSEUM)	Located inside the architectural renowned MIHO MUSEUM. Specially selected ingredients that have been organically grown are used in all of the menu options. *Operates only during the opening hours of MIHO MUSEUM.	11:30 - 15:00 (L.O 14:30) (Closed on Mon or the following business day if Mon is a Pub.Hol)	300 Tashiro Momodani, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-3411	http://www.miho.jp/
Marupota sha	A modern cafe with a warm, wooden interior. Homemade pudding, handmade cakes, and lunch. Original blend coffee, brewed one cup at a time using hand-drip methods. Parfaits and Omelette Rice are well loved.	11:00 - 17:00 (Closed Wed and Thu, with occasional irregular closures)	1198-5 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 080-2475-1512	https://www.instagram.com/marupotasha/
Cafe Restaurant La Mancha	Cozy interior resembles a mountain cabin, atmosphere completed with a wood burning stove. Popular dishes include beef stew, hamburger steak, and pork cutlet, all made with home-made demi-glace sauce. Rich and creamy soft-serve ice cream made with fresh milk. Generous servings and delicious food.	Lunch: 11:00 - 15:00 (L.O at 14:30) Dinner: 17:30 - 21:00 (L.O at 20:30) (Closed on Wed)	1492 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0975	https://www.facebook.com/Laman-cha.sigaraki/
Kama-to Mori	Kama-to no Mori is a cafe and gift store hidden inside what was a large tunnel kiln area at the back of a working factory. It offers a surprising interior, a delightful cafe menu, and a unique experience right down to winding your way through the operational factory to reach the toilet. It's a great place for a memorable lunch or dessert treat.	Apr to Oct: 10:00 - 17:00 Nov to Mar: 10:30 - 16:30 Sat, Sun, and Holidays: 10:30 - 17:00 (Closed on Tue)	1361-4 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-69-5466	https://www.kama-to.jp/
iro + iro Deli and Kitchen	Specialising in bento boxes, side dishes, and smoothie. Colourful variety of deli dishes and bento boxes prepared by a nutritionist. Simplistic modern space.	11:00 - 18:00 (Closes when sold out) (Open Fri, Sat, Sun.)	855-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0126	https://www.instagram.com/iro.toiro/?hl=ja
Cafe & Gallery Tōen	Enjoy meals and beverages in an atmosphere surrounded by over 200 ceramic pieces. Gallery and exhibitions held.	9:00 - 17:00 Lunch: 11:00 - 16:30 (Closed on Thu)	883-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1495 Fax: 0748-82-1019	https://www.facebook.com/people/%E5%96%AB%E8%8C%B6%E3%83%AC%E3%82%B9%E3%83%88%E3%83%A9%E3%83%B3%E3%82%AE%E3%83%A3%E3%83%A9%E3%83%AA%E3%83%BC%E9%99%B6%E5%9C%92%100063561759248/

Cafe & Restaurants



MIHO MUSEUM Peach Valley Restaurant



Mutsumian - Delicious Shigaraki Rice



Musashi - Kushikatsu

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Cafes/ Casual Dining					
"Ogama" Meizan Kiln's Café Shop, and Gallery	An integral part of the Kiln exploration trail, located on the Rokuro Slope. The symbol of Ogama is an imposing climbing kiln. "Ogama," is a dynamic space that combines a café, shop, pottery classes, and even lodging.	10:00 - 16:30 (Cafe L.O at 16:00) (Open on Wed, Thu and Pub.Hol.)	947 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-8066	http://www.meizan.info/ogama
Chatoran	Thatched-roof restaurant nestled in a small forest glade. The lunch menu includes a choice between roast beef and fish. Cafe sells chiffon cakes and side dishes.	11:00 (Closed on Mon)	15 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-70-2921	https://www.instagram.com/_chatoran_/
Yama to Omusubi Gingetsusha	Cafe with a tranquil atmosphere nestled within Togei no Mori. At lunch onigiri (rice balls) cooked in Shigaraki-yaki pottery pots, served with various soups. A selection of sweets, with a focus on hojicha (roasted green tea) are also served.	10:30 - 15:00 Lunch Hours: 11:00 - 16:00 (Closed on Mon if Mon is a Pub. Hol., Closed on the following Tue)	2188-7 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-2882	https://gindawara.co.jp/pages/gingetsusha/
Donabe Gohan and Cafe Mutsumian	The owners of Mutsumian have been involved in pottery production and rice cultivation for many years. The homemade dishes receive great acclaim and are made with seasonal vegetables and ingredients unique to Shigaraki. The restaurant building has a distinct ambience and presence resonating with its location in a pottery town.	11:00 - 15:30 (L.O 14:30) Open weekends and Pub.Hol. 10:30 - 16:00 (L.O: 15:00) (Closed Fri and during year-end and New Year holidays.)	401 Kouyama, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-3460	https://www.mutsumian.jp/
Gindawara	Delicious tei shoku meals or bento boxes using Shigaraki rice that has been cooked in locally produced earthenware. Popular local restaurant.	11:00 - 20:00 (Open year round)	1396 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-8016	https://gindawara.co.jp/
Sushi					
Sushi Kappo Kokorozashi	Values seasonal ingredients and offers a leisurely dining experience.	Lunch: 12:00 - 14:00 Dinner: 17:00 - 21:00 (Closed every Thu and 1st and 3rd Wed)	1365-4 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1767	
Shokujitokoro Eiwa	Popular mackerel sushi made from mackerel sourced from Yaizu. A variety of other options including sushi, noodles, rice bowls, set meals, and more.	11:00 - 17:00 (Closed on Mon, open on Pub.Hol.)	581-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-3250	

Cafe & Restaurants

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Eel					
Uoki	Generous portions. Speciality is eel, cooked so it has a crispy skin and tender flesh, making it a delicious treat. Group Lunches: Group lunches from ¥2,000 (Prior reservations accepted)	11:00 - 20:00 (Closed on Tue, open on Pub.Hol)	1411-1 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-1130	
Omi beef/ Sukiyaki					
Uomatsu Shigaraki Branch	All-you-can-eat Matsutake mushrooms and specially selected Omi beef. 80 years of history as a Matsutake mushroom specialist. A luxurious sukiyaki experience that only we can provide.	11:00 - 20:00 (Closed on Mon, No closures from September to December)	1795 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-1525 Fax: 0748-83-1526	http://www.uomatsu.co.jp/english.html
Restaurant Gyushi	Omi beef speciality restaurant, focused on delivering the very best Omi beef. Private room available for families with elementary School children.	Lunch: 11:30 - 14:30 (L.O) 14:30 Dinner: 16:30 - 19:30 (L.O 14:30) (Closed on Wed)	444-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2600 Fax: 0748-82-2756	http://www.gyushi.com/
Hutte Chukichi-yama	Hutte Chukichi-yama offers a luxurious Sukiyaki experience featuring Omi beef and matsutake mushrooms. Sukiyaki or Matsutake Mushroom Hunting & Sukiyaki	9:30 - 17:00 (Open continuously during the mushroom season from Sep 25th to Nov 15th)	2103 Miyamachi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-8039	https://www.cyu-kichi.com/
Creative Japanese Restaurant Isuian	Enjoy a tranquil atmosphere and creative seasonal cuisine, including dishes like Marbled Omi beef teppanyaki and Black Wagyu sukiyaki. Private tatami rooms for up to 60 guests and riverside seating for up to 200. Don't miss highly praised matsutake mushroom dishes in the fall.	Lunch: 11:00 - 15:00 Dinner: 17:00 - 21:00 (Closed on irregular days - Make reservations at least 2 days in advance.)	150-3 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2800 Fax: 0748-82-3173	http://1suian.com/
Sawazen Shiawase Shokuji Kan	Omi Shamo brand chicken is used to create a delicious chicken sukiyaki. The hamburgers are also delicious. Groups can be catered for.	11:30 - 16:00 (Closed on Wed)	607 Kinose, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-60-4362	https://sukiyaki-restaurant.business.site/
Okonomiyaki/ Teppanyaki					
Okonomiyaki, Teppanyaki Te Chan	Te chan is a small restaurant, a counter and two 4-seat tables in a cosy setting. In addition to okonomiyaki and yakisoba, the menu offers a variety of teppanyaki dishes and izakaya (Japanese pub) options.	16:00 - 22:00 (Closed on Mon)	374 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1477	
Takoyaki					
Shigaraki's Jumbo Takoyaki Takoichi	Located within the premises of Yamagami Pottery, this restaurant is located in a old train carriage. Delicious Oversized Takoyaki.	11:00 - 17:00 (Open on Weekends and Pub.Hol. - closed on weekdays)	1620-1 Hosohara, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 090-1960-7000	https://www.instagram.com/takoichi_shigaraki/
Pork Specialist					
Pork Restaurant Sora	Carefully selected pork dishes. Please enjoy delicious meals in a comfortable setting	Lunch: 11:00 - 14:00 Dinner: 17:00 - 21:00 (Closed on Tue evenings and Wed)	595-1 Nakano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1230	https://sora-shigaraki.com/
Kushikatsu					
Kushikatsu Musashi	Osaka style kushikatsu, real deal. Popular with locals great place to meet artists. Central location. Lunch: Selection of bento boxes. Dinner: Enjoy hot and crispy kushikatsu at the counter	Lunch: 11:30 - 13:00 (Ends when Lunch boxes run out) Dinner: 18:00 - 23:00 (Closed on Tue and Sun)	1180-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-8164	https://kushikatsu-musashi.com/
Japanese Sweets					
Ocha no Dou no En Dou no En Warabimochi	Zenzai (sweet red bean soup), Warabimochi (bracken starch dumplings), and shaved ice. Unique offerings like Matcha Zenzai also available.	10:00 - 17:30 (Last Order at 17:00) (Closed on Wed)	249-1 Kamiasamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-84-0115	https://horanoen.business.site/
Kashikichi Funagawa Masters of Traditional Japanese Sweets	130 years of history, cherished for over a century. 20 types of creative Japanese sweets, including pesticide-free strawberry daifuku.	9:00 - 17:00 (Closed Wed, Thu)	494-4 Nishi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-3110	*Sweet making experiences also available.



Chatoran - Cafe Restaurant (Thatched Roof Kominka)

Cafe & Restaurants

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Japanese Sweets					
Shigaraki Saryou Uzukumaru	Selection of Japanese sweets on sale, local Asamiya Tea used in the production of some of the confections. Also the creator of the famous Tanuki Manjyu.	9:00 - 17:00 (Open Tue to Sun, closed on irregular days.)	584-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0924 Fax: 0748-82-2087	http://www.uzukumaru.co.jp/
Multi Genre					
Rose Village Golf Club Restaurant	The Rose Golf Club is near Shigaraki Tougei no Mori and the Restaurant offers an expansive lunch menu, with a variety of dishes for everyone. BBQ packages are also available. Craft Beer also available.	Morning Menu: 7:30 - 9:00 Lunch Menu: 9:00 16:00 (Open on Sun, Pub. Hol. and New Years Day, however may close if bad weather) Seating for 56 people.	1532-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0031 Fax: 0748-83-1048	https://www.rose-golfclub.com/
Creative Japanese Restaurant Isuian	Enjoy a tranquil atmosphere and creative seasonal cuisine, including dishes like Marbled Omi beef Teppanyaki and Black Wagyu Sukiyaki. Private tatami rooms for up to 60 guests and riverside seating for up to 200.	Lunch: 11:00 - 15:00 Dinner: 17:00 - 21:00 (Closed on irregular days - Make reservations at least 2 days in advance.)	150-3 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2800 Fax: 0748-82-3173	http://1suian.com/
Okuda Chuzaemon Gama Shigaraki Tougei Mura	Menu features Omi beef, groups accepted.	9:00 - 17:30 (Entry until 15:30 for pottery classes) Open Year-round	146 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0522	https://toungeimura.jp/
Oshoku-dokoro Asamiya	"Oshoku-dokoro Asamiya" is a branch of the "Botan Nabe Asamiya," a specialist in Botan hot pot where the owner, with over 40 years of experience as a hunter, carefully selects high-quality wild boar meat and proudly serves it.	11:00 - 19:00 (L.O) 17:30 (Closed Thu or the following day if Pub. Hol.)	852-1 Kamiasamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-84-0343 Fax: 0748-84-0131	https://www.botannabe-asamiya.com/asamiya_2
Yakitori					
Sakaba Sei	Offers seasonal dishes made with care, using fresh, locally sourced ingredients of the day. Friendly owner greets you with a variety of one-dish meals and delicious sake. <i>*Note that reservations are required for hot pots and kaiseki courses and bento box delivery service available.</i>	17:00 - 23:00 (Closed on Thu)	178-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2200	
Yaki Niku					
Yakiniku Manda	Yakiniku (Japanese barbecue) restaurant. Offering carefully selected meats, including Omi beef, and grilling them over charcoal for the best flavor. Located on the access route to the centre of Shigaraki from the Shigaraki Interchange. Access by car or taxi.	10:00 - 14:00 16:00 - 22:00 (L.O: 21:00) (Closed on Tue)	1404-5 Maki, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-0429	https://www.yakinikumanda.com/
Bakeries					
Yakume Bakery	Yakume Bakery bakes bread using 8 different types of dough, which is rare for an individual bakery.	10:00 - 18:00 (Closed when sold out) Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays	516-18 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 090-3943-4018	https://www.instagram.com/yakume-bakery
Miho Bakery	Miho Bakery is located inside the reception building at MIHO MUSEUM and sells a wide selection of breads and pastries made from organic ingredients.	11:30 - 15:00 (Closed on Mon or the following business day if Mon is a Pub.Hol)	300 Tashiro Momodani, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-3411	http://www.miho.jp/
543. Bread Style	This bakery takes pride in using local ingredients and providing a unique selection of bread. Please note that they may close when they run out of their baked goods, and they have irregular closures on Sundays and Mondays.	11:00 - 17:00 (Until sold out) (Closed on Mon, Tue, Sat, and Sun. It's open only on Wed, Thu, and Fri.)	1527 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 080-1469-0213	https://www.instagram.com/543.breadstyle/
Bakery Nanapan	Nanapan opened in 2022 and is one of Shigaraki's newest bakeries. Nanapan is located in the Kamiyama area of Shigaraki, access is best by car. Reservations for bread are accepted.	9:00 - 16:00 (Until sold out) (Closed Tue, Wed, Thu)	597-1 Kouyama, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Contact via instagram	https://www.instagram.com/nanapan_shigaraki/?hl=ja



Mutsumian - Popular local restaurant that has an extensive menu of lunches, and an interactive dining experience

Cafe & Restaurants

Name	Details	Hours	Address	Contact	Website
Noodle Restaurants					
Tanukiya Bunpuku Store	Udon freshly made each morning and cooked as ordered. The Restaurants original "Tanuki Udon" is served in a tanuki shaped bowl. Bukkake udon with original broth.	Restaurant: 11:00 - 17:00 (Last Order 16:30) (Closed on Thu)	2376-3 Chokushi, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-83-1645	https://www.bunpuku-tonchinkan.com/
Soba Ichi no Se	Restaurant specialising in hand-made soba (buckwheat noodles) and Japanese cuisine.	Lunch: 11:30 and 13:00 (Closed on Thu)	185-3 Miyajiri, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-60-6510	https://www.instagram.com/explore/locations/740432949494511/
Kotani Touki "Kirakuya"	The owner of Kotani Touki fell in love with udon and trained in Marugame, Kagawa Prefecture, the home of Sanuki udon. With a strong passion, they use Shigaraki-yaki pottery extensively and aim to serve delicious Sanuki udon not only to tourists but also to the local community in Shigaraki.	11:00 - 17:00 (Closed on Mon - Excluding during events and Pub.Hol.)	1248-1 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2201, Fax: 0748-82-0551	http://www.kotanito-ki.com/
Fuuraibou (Ramen)	Fuuraibou specializes in homemade chashu and a soup enriched with vegetables and fruits. They take pride in their original homemade noodles.	Lunch: 11:30 - 14:30 Dinner: 17:30 - 21:00 Pub.Hol.: 11:30 - 21:00 (Closed on Thu)	623-5 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-2627	
Kurodaen Handmade Soba and Asamiya Tea Shop	A soba restaurant located in a renovated traditional Japanese farmhouse that was relocated from Fukui Prefecture. Domestically sourced buckwheat flour is used by skilled artisans and hand-made Kyuichi soba every day. Locally produced Asamiya tea can also be enjoyed. Very popular dining option.	11:00 - 17:00 (L.O 16:30) (Closed on Mon and 1st and 3rd Tue of the month) *Serving ends when soba runs out	271-1 Kami Asamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-84-0485	http://kurodaen-shigaraki.com
Handmade Soba Gen'an Nobu	The soba flour used at Gen'an Nobu is 100% stone-ground soba flour, Meticulously selected ingredients.	11:30 - 14:30 (Closed Mon, Tue, 1st Tue of Jan to Feb)	Tashiro Kogen no Sato, 212 Tashiro, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1313	
Juwari Sobaya "Shinonome"	Enjoy high-quality juwari soba, carefully selected sake, and side dishes inside stunning traditional Japanese architecture. Enjoy a different type of ambience in Shigaraki. Located inside the expansive grounds of Oogoya.	10:30 - 16:00 (Closes when the soba runs out) Dates closed for month listed on website.	947 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 070-2322-2220	http://www.oogoya.co.jp/
Kaiseki					
Ryori Ryokan Ogawa Tei	Cater to various dining occasions, whether it be for tourism, celebrations, or commemorations. Group Lunch: Shigaraki Bento from 3,465 yen (incl tax) Banquets: Courses featuring tableware by renowned artists from 6,000 yen (incl tax) Omi beef Shabu-Shabu: 8,000 yen (incl tax) Botan Nabe (Wild Boar Hot Pot): 7,000 yen (incl tax) Kiji Nabe (Peasant): 7,000 yen (incl tax)	Lunch: 11:30 - 14:30 (Reservations Required) Hours: 11:30 - 21:30 (Irregular Holidays) (Reservations required in advance at least by the day before.)	876 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0008 Fax: 0748-82-0868	https://www.shigaraki.co.jp/dining.html
Kouchu - an	Specializes in the art of tea and serve a delicious tea theme kaiseki meal with accommodation. Tea Ceremonies can be arranged. Also features a pottery workshop and kiln and luxury boutique accommodation.	(Reservations Only)	703 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-1133 Mob: 090-1242-3000	http://kochu-an.com/
Restaurant Yamabiko	Large restaurant located in Asamiya, suitable for group usage. Specialize in Japanese Kaiseki style meals and charcoal grilled foods. Parties can be catered for and Bento lunch boxes also supplied.	Lunch: 11:30-14:00 Dinner: 16:00-22:00 (Closed Tue)	351 Shimoazamiya, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-84-0358	https://www.r-yamabiko.jp/
"Suenobe Ryori Uosen" Seafood Restaurant Uosen	Traditional Japanese cuisine and sushi. It is suitable for individuals and groups and is conveniently located in the Nagano district of Shigaraki. Fourth generation owner/chef.	Lunch: 11:30 - 14:00 Dinner: 16:00 - 21:30 (L.O at 21:00) (Closed on Mon, open on Pub.Hol., closed the following Tue)	1334-2 Nagano, Shigaraki Cho, Koka City, Shiga, Japan	Tel: 0748-82-0049 Fax: 0748-82-0643	http://uosen.net/

Koka City & Shiga

Koka City

On October 1, 2004, the cities of Mizuho, Totsukawa, Koka, and Konan merged to form the city of Koka. At the same time Shigaraki became part of Koka City. The centre of Koka city is quite close to Shigaraki and along with the neighbouring district of Minakuchi, the centre of Koka City plays an important role in the daily lives of people living in Shigaraki.

For visitors to Shigaraki, especially those that plan to spend a few days in Shigaraki experiencing pottery culture, the central part of Koka city and some of the surrounding areas also provide a lot of interesting sightseeing and cultural activities that are unique but also significant in Japan's history as a nation.

The city's landscape is a harmonious blend of approximately 70% forested areas and about 10% arable land. In the east, the awe-inspiring Suzuka mountain range, with peaks exceeding 1,000 meters, stretches across the horizon. In contrast, the central and southwestern parts of the city are graced with gentle hills and the Shigaraki Mountains, whose elevations range from 500 to 700 meters. These natural features provide a stunning backdrop for outdoor enthusiasts and admirers of nature.

The Suzuka mountain range to the east is predominantly composed of robust rock formations, including mudstone and chert. Here, layers of sediment yield a treasure trove of marine fossils, from shells and crabs to remnants of prehistoric creatures like whales, dolphins, and seals. These discoveries shed light on the region's maritime history, reaching back approximately 17 million years.

On the western front, the Shigaraki Mountains are largely formed of granite and are home to the ancient Biwako Group of mountain ranges, the mountains in this part of the city are celebrated for their high-quality clay deposits. This clay has played a pivotal role in the city's ceramics and pottery production. The city's topography, determined by the location of settlements and traditional access routes, like the Tokaido Road. The topography has also played a pivotal role in the development of ceramics and pottery production.

Koka City has received national recognition with the dual designation of "Koka Ninja" and "Shigaraki Pottery" as Japan Heritage sites in 2017. The city is rich in cultural and historical treasures, featuring national historic sites like the "Shigaraki Palace Ruins", "Taru-saio Don-gu," "Koka-gun Soi-seki Group," and the "Minakuchi Okayama Castle Ruins."

Koka is also known as a post town on the famous "Tokaido Route" and for the spiritually significant "Ibukiyama," and a plethora of local festivals and year-round events. The city is also home to numerous architectural and artistic gems, reflecting Japan's cultural legacy through temples and shrines, as well as valuable Buddhist sculptures that are venerated both as objects of faith and as artistic treasures.

Tokaido Trading Route Post Towns

The route of the ancient Tokaido was altered several times due to changes in the capital's location. During the reign of Emperor Kanmu, a route from Koka to Iga became the Tokaido, but in the Heian period, it was again rerouted to pass through Koka. During the Nara period, construction materials for the renovation and expansion of Todai-ji Temple and Ishiyama-dera Temple were sourced from Koka. This operation was overseen by the Koka magistrate's office, which was also responsible for the forested areas in Koka. These developments during the Nara period, especially those related to Shigarakinomiya Palace and the Tokaido route, significantly contribute to Koka's historical importance.

Visitors can walk through the streets of the old post towns in Koka city adding a depth to a visit to Japan not available in other areas. The architecture has been maintained and provides a stunning backdrop for a walk.



Discover Koka-Ryu Ninja

In the past, practitioners of Koka-ryu often had backgrounds as farmers and merchants. They would discreetly gather information from various sources and, when needed, engage in covert operations. Their skills were renowned for their cunning and expert use of deception.

Koka-ryu excelled in handling medicinal substances among the many ninjutsu schools. This rich history of pharmaceutical knowledge continues to influence the area, with numerous pharmaceutical companies thriving in Koka.

Koka is famous for having female Ninja practitioners, an intriguing aspect of its heritage. When Koka was under the rule of the Rokkaku clan during the late Muromachi period and the middle of the Sengoku period (15th to 16th centuries), it had a unique and progressive system in place. The local samurai formed a "so" (group) and made decisions through majority voting, a consensus system in all matters concerning the district, highly unusual, regionally and nationally. In return for their autonomy, Koka's samurai collaborated with the Rokkaku clan during any conflict, gaining recognition and earning the moniker "Ninja" in later years.

Tokugawa Ieyasu, while fleeing through Iga passed through Koka. Koka samurai, led by Yamaguchi Mitsuhira and many others, accompanied Ieyasu, guarding his route in response to a request from Hasegawa Shuichi, a retainer of Oda Nobunaga.

Ninja Attractions



Koka-ryu Real Ninja Museum

The Koka-ryu Real Ninja Museum is one of the best places to learn about Ninja in Koka City. Entrance fee is free of charge and there is a variety of fun Ninja experiences.

Address: 600 Ryuhoshi Konan Cho Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-70-2790

Fax: 0748-70-2659

Hours: 10:00 to 16:00

Closed: Mondays and during the year-end and New Year holidays (from December 29 to January 3)

Website: <https://www.real-Ninjakan.com>

Koka's Ninja House (Ninjutsu Yashiki)

Close to 300 years old and used to be resided in by Ninja. It appears like an ordinary house from the outside; inside however, it is equipped with many ingenious traps and devices, designed to prevent intruders and to provide a means of escape in times of need. Visitors are allowed to explore the house and discover its various trapdoors and secret passages.

Address: 2331 Ryuhoshi Konan Cho Koka Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-86-2179

Fax: 0748-86-7505

Hours: 9:30 to 17:00 (Last entry at 16:30)

Closed: Year-end and New Year holidays (from December 27 to January 2)

Website: https://www.kouka-Ninja.com/la_en/info/

Koka Ninja Village (Kōka no Sato Ninjutsumura)

A remote village compound housing a collection of old dwellings in a forest. In one of the houses, a staff demonstration is given to illustrate its various trapdoors and hidden compartments and there are various Ninja activities.

Address: 600 Ryuhoshi Konan Cho Shiga Japan

Tel: 0748-88-5000

Hours: 10:00 to 17:00 (Last entry at 16:00)

Closed: Mondays and Sunday

Website: <https://koka.ninpou.jp/>

Koka City and Shiga Information

Koka City Tourism Information

Koka City Tourism Information

There are four official tourism information centers for Koka City, the contact details are listed below for further information on what to do in Koka City.

Website: <https://koka-kanko.org/>

Koka-ryu Real Ninja Museum (Tourist Information Center)

600 Ryuhoshi, Konan-Cho, Koka City, Shiga Prefecture

Tel: 0748-70-2790

Hours: 10:00 - 16:00

Closed: Mondays (Open on public holidays) and during the year-end and New Year holidays

Koka City Hito-Machi Street Exchange Center

7-4 Yasaka, Mizukuchi-Cho, Koka City, Shiga Prefecture

Tel: 0748-70-3166

Hours: 9:00 - 17:00

Closed: Mondays (If Monday is a public holiday, closed on the following Tuesday) and during the year-end and New Year holidays

Koka City Tourism and Community Development Association Office (Public Interest Incorporated Association)

810 Noda, Konan-Cho, Koka City, Shiga Prefecture

Tel: 0748-60-2690

Hours: 8:30 - 17:15

Closed: Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, and during the year-end and New Year holidays

Minakuchi Castle Museum (Minakuchi Castle Ruins)

Honmaru, Minakuchi-Cho, Koka City, Shiga Prefecture

Tel: 0748-63-5577

Hours: 10:00 - 17:00

Closed: Thursdays and Fridays (If a national holiday falls on these days, closed on the first non-holiday after the national holiday) and during the year-end and New Year holidays.

Useful Downloads

A variety of different tourist pamphlets and guides can be downloaded from the link below.

Ninja Map in English

Website: <https://koka-kanko.org/flyer-download/>



Koka Ryu Real Ninja Museum - Ninja Attraction and Information

Other Nearby Attractions

Outlet Mall:

There is a Mitsui Outlet Mall in Ryuo, a neighboring city, for those that wish to shop for a wide range of branded fashion items before heading onto the next destination.

Website: <https://mitsui-shopping-park.com/mop/shiga/english/>

Omi Hachiman:

Omi Hachiman is located on the shores of Lake Biwa in Shiga Prefecture, that is known for its nicely preserved old town and canal district, where visitors can enjoy traditional boat cruises through the historic townscape.

Website: <https://www.omi8.com/>

La Collina:

Opened in 2015, La Collina is the flagship store of Taneya Club Harie. La Collina has been designed, so that visitors can experience new discoveries every time they visit. Buildings covered in grass and paths leading to the forest and small creatures in the rice fields, find your own favorite La Collina.

Website: https://taneya.jp/la_collina/

Ishiyama-dera:

Ishiyama-dera, founded in 747, is the head temple of the Tendai Shingon sect in Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture. Known for its association with literary works like "The Pillow Book" and "The Tale of Genji," it sits near Lake Biwa, featuring a main hall on the significant Ishiyama Temple Keigaisaki rock. Despite historical challenges, the temple holds several cultural treasures.

Website: <https://www.ishiyamadera.or.jp/>

Lake Biwa:

Lake Biwa feels akin to entering a living postcard. Close to Shigaraki and Kyoto, there are a multitude of places to see and visit around the lake. Lake Biwa, an idyllic haven for outdoor enthusiasts and water lovers alike.

Website: <https://en.biwako-visitors.jp/>



Ishiyamadera Temple



Omi Hachiman - Baiyun Bridge

Image: Biwako Visitors Bureau



Discover
信楽
 SHIGARAKI
 JAPAN

www.e-shigaraki.org

SHIGARAKI TOURISM ASSOCIATION

E-mail: info@e-shigaraki.org

Postcode: 529-1851

1203 Nagano Shigaraki Town Koka City Shiga Prefecture Japan.
(Inside - Shigaraki Traditional Industries Hall)

Tel: 0748-82-2345

Fax: 0748-82-2551



This Travel Professional Guide is Published in March 2024 Document and has been created by Shigaraki Tourism Association.

All information is current as at March 2024, however is subject to change.

Contact Shigaraki Tourism Association for further information and for updates.