

WELCOME TO SUWA NAGANO

ENGLISH

Breathtaking beauty in the land
where gods reside



visit
SUWA
NAGANO



Suwa is said to have prospered during the Jomon Period, which dates from around 14,000 BCE. Many significant archeological finds have been unearthed in the area, and the unspoiled nature allows you to imagine what might have been present centuries ago.



Suwa Taisha is one of the oldest shrines in existence, dating back more than a millennium. The deity, who is revered by locals, presides over wind, water, agriculture, and hunting.



Built in 1598, Takashima Castle stands near the banks of Lake Suwa. It is surrounded by a moat and gardens, and has commanding views of surrounding areas from its keep. It is also a splendid place to view cherry and wisteria blossoms.



The azaleas (*tsutsuji*) that bloom in spring in Okaya Tsurumine Park blanket the hills in a riot of color, attracting flower enthusiasts from afar.



During summer, Suwa City puts on magical fireworks displays over Lake Suwa. Lights reflect off the water and fire flowers bloom over the lake. Some 800 fireworks are set off every day in August, with the grandest display, featuring 40,000 fireworks, held on the 15th.



This pretty temple, established in 1649, comes ablaze with brilliant color in autumn. The 300-year-old path leading up to Choenji is lined with cedar trees that turn red in fall, and the colors are reflected in the temple's pond.



The traditional Onbashira Festival is held only every six years. In spring, massive fir trees from the forest are felled and then, with brave young men astride, are pushed down the slope at terrifying speeds.



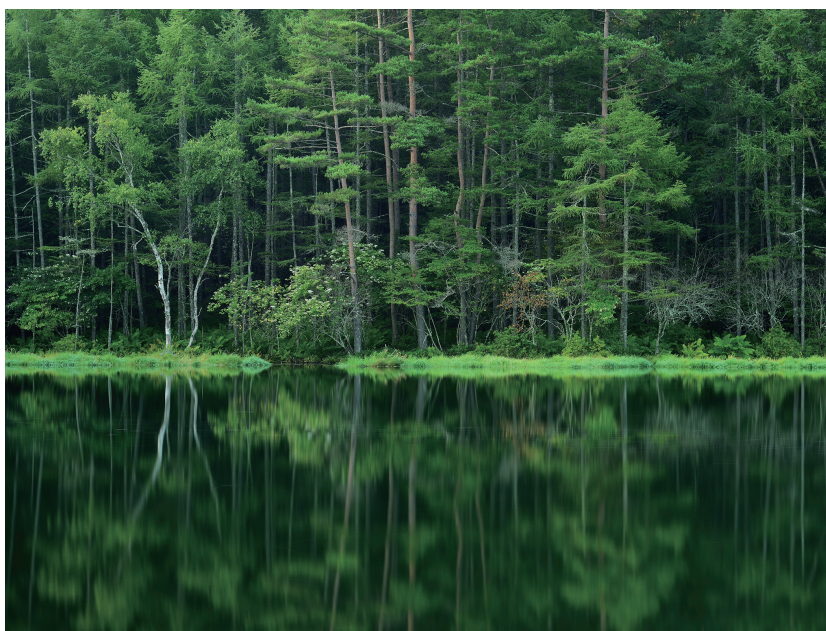
Suwa is nestled in the heart of mountainous Nagano, one of the most famous mountain regions in the country. The volcanic mountain range of Yatsugatake is good for alpine hiking, crisp air, and sweeping views.



Winding through the highlands of Tateshina and Kurumayama, the Venus Line is a sightseeing route with stunning views, beautiful backdrops, and plenty of places to stop and experience the natural wonders on offer.



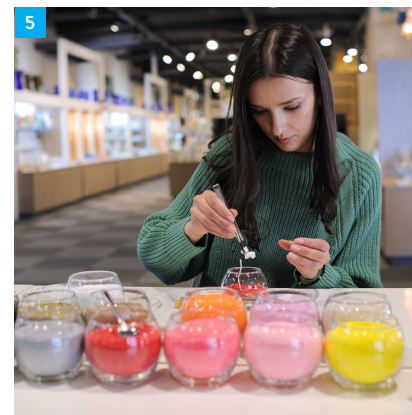
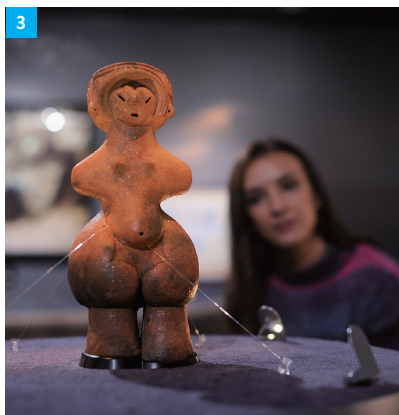
In October, Hara Village holds its Harvest Festival. Against a fetching pastoral background, guests enjoy locally made products such as handmade butter and croquettes. They also carve pumpkins, play games, and watch alpenhorn performances.



Mishaka Pond is spectacular in all seasons. The shining surface of the pond reflects the stunning natural surroundings: the night sky, fall colors, ice-slicked winter, and lush greenery of spring and summer.



The snow-covered trees on Yatsugatake in winter are a pretty sight, but higher up the slopes where there is greater snowfall, they take on a more mysterious look – and earn themselves the eerie epithet of Tateshina Snow Monsters.



1. Experience Suwa's silk history at Silk Factory Okaya, where guests can get up close with silkworms, see exquisite fabrics, watch machines in action, and even create silk souvenirs.
2. Curio collectors will enjoy a trip to Suwanone, a music box museum that offers a workshop where visitors can make their very own music box to take home, with a choice of 700 songs.
3. Archaeology buffs can explore Japan's prehistoric Jomon Period at the Togariishi Museum of Jomon Archaeology, featuring clay figurines that have been designated the oldest national treasure in Japan.
4. Takasugi-an, the curious "too-high" treehouse is built on the trunks of chestnut trees and stands more than six meters tall. Accessible by ladder, the structure acts as a kind of hermit teahouse in the woods.
5. At Suwa-Garasunosato, 10,000 glass pieces are on display in the art glass museum. Downstairs, visitors have a chance to craft beautiful glass baubles such as paperweights and beads.
6. Try an all-you-can-eat outing at the Suwako Strawberry Farm. The delectable strawberries, grown from January to June, are ruby jewels to devour, drowned in ribbons of condensed milk.
7. Nagano is famous for buckwheat, and the toothsome soba noodles made by hand from local buckwheat flour are delicious. After kneading, rolling, and cutting with the pros, you can eat your reward.





1_ A fun way to see the vistas is by “skycart.” These self-driving carts trawl highland paths, allowing passengers to see the sights without having to pay attention to the road.



2_ What better way to appreciate the majestic mountains than to be suspended among them? The Kita Yatsugatake Ropeway climbs to an altitude of 2,237 meters and offers unmatched views.



3_ Active individuals will revel in a chance to explore the pristine nature of the area on two wheels. Several outlets offer a wide variety of bicycle rentals, complete with local recommendations.



4_ The Yashima Wetlands provide the perfect place for a day hike, with a highland marsh that is a designated natural monument. Hear the songs of frogs and see flowers bloom along the paths.

5_ Perhaps you prefer to see the sights from the water? A nature canoe tour will allow you to float along the surface of the deep blue Lake Shirakaba, the perfect place for a dreamy reverie.

6_ Suwa is a prime spot for winter sports such as skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing, with a mix of high elevations, gentle slopes, and cross-country courses for daredevils and beginners alike.

7_ At the traditional drum factory Osuwa Taiko, visitors can see taiko drums being made, learn about their history in the museum, and practice drumming.





1_ Suwa's onsen, or hot springs, range from warm to super hot, and offer superb and varied scenic views year-round.

2_ Located around Suwa, the natural hot spring footbaths provide a few minutes of relaxation and the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings.

3_ Dotted around picturesque Lake Suwa are several onsen ryokan, or traditional hot spring inns, which offer panoramic views from their open-air natural baths.

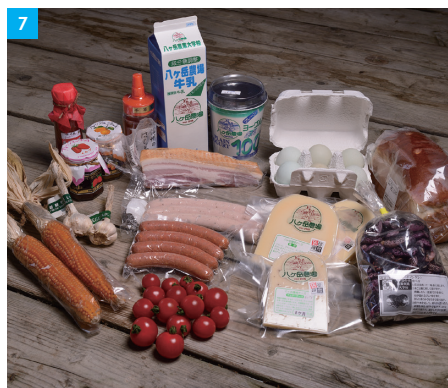
4_ The city of Okaya abounds with unagi, or eel, restaurants. The freshwater eel is a local specialty around Lake Suwa, and is best eaten broiled with salty-sweet sauce.

5_ Japan's kaiseki ryori, or seasonal gourmet cuisine, is best enjoyed at ryokan in the Suwa area. Bursting with local delicacies, savor it with sake.

6_ Miso is one of Suwa's most famous products, and the prized regional version of ramen — the famous noodle dish — is made with locally crafted miso. Don't forget to slurp!

7_ Yatsugatake farmers' market, run by a local agricultural university, offers a generous bounty of area produce in a charming, rustic setting.

8_ Head to one of the izakaya (dining bars) for fresh, hearty food washed down with beer and sake. Try locally caught fish or venison.



One Day in Suwa

Itinerary for exploring Nagano's lakeside city

There is so much to do in Suwa, and you can easily fill a day trip – or more – exploring the area. We offer a few area highlights with a focus on Japanese history and culture as a sample one-day itinerary. This trip can be easily made on foot or with a rental bicycle, and starting locations are near Shimo-Suwa Station.



1. Suwa Taisha, near the banks of Lake Suwa, is one of the oldest shrines in Japan. The shrine areas are surrounded by thick trees and a serene atmosphere. Shimosha is accessible both on foot and by bicycle.



2. Suwa is well suited for exploration on two wheels. Its rich nature and moderate temperatures make an ideal environment for riders to enjoy the fresh air while cycling, and locales are sufficiently close to be convenient.



3. Stop off at the Gishodo Watch and Clock Museum, where you can take a workshop, led by a certified technician, to make a watch or clock as a souvenir.



4. Walk along the lake for ten minutes toward Kami-Suwa Station, where five local sake breweries – Masumi, Maihime, Reijin, Honkin, and Yokobue – await. All offer sake tasting.



5. Whistle wetted, the next step is Maruyasu-Tanakaya for a popular local treat – cheesecake made from Yatsugatake milk and the area's natural cheese, for a creamy sweet baked dessert made on the premises.



6. At the Honjin Iwanamike (Old Samurai House), see a beautifully preserved traditional Japanese residence and VIP accommodation complete with a classic garden. It's a perfect place for a few minutes' rest.



7. After a day of activity, it's time to unwind at your ryokan, where good food, Japanese hospitality, and soothing hot spring baths await.

Access to Suwa



INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ACCESS

If you are traveling from overseas, here are simple directions from some main airports to the nearest connection points.

Haneda International Airport

- **To Shinjuku:** Keikyu-Kuko Line to Shinagawa; Yamanote Line from Shinagawa to Shinjuku – 70min.

Narita International Airport

- **To Shinjuku:** JR Narita Express (90min) or Keisei Skyliner to Nippori; Yamanote Line from Nippori to Shinjuku (70min)

Chubu Centrair International Airport

- **To Nagoya:** The Meitetsu μ-SKY Limited Express train toward Meitetsu Nagoya – 30min

DOMESTIC AIRPORT ACCESS

Shinshu Matsumoto Airport in Nagano serves domestic flights. There are three airports in Japan connected to Shinshu Matsumoto Airport.

- **Osaka Airport*:** Flight time – 60min
- **Sapporo Airport:** Flight time – 90min
- **Fukuoka Airport:** Flight time – 110min

Shinshu Matsumoto Airport to Suwa City

- **By car:** 40min
- **By public transportation:** Limousine bus (from Shinshu Matsumoto Airport to Matsumoto Station) and train (from Matsumoto Station to Kami-Suwa Station) – 1.5-2hr

*Only available in summer

BY TRAIN

Suwa City is located on the JR Chuo Line, providing easy access from Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya. Reserved seating and Green Cars (first class) are available. Tickets should be purchased in advance, but there are often open seats for same-day purchasing.

From Tokyo

JR Chuo Line
(Limited Express Super Azusa) 2.2hr
Shinjuku ————— Kami-Suwa

From Osaka

JR Chuo Line
Shinkansen 1hr (Limited Express Shinano) 2.5hr
Shin-Osaka ————— Nagoya ————— Shiojiri ————— Kami-Suwa
20min

From Nagoya

JR Chuo Line
(Limited Express Shinano) 2.5hr
Nagoya ————— Shiojiri ————— Kami-Suwa
20min

BY BUS

Bus routes are slightly cheaper and slightly longer in duration than train routes.

- **From Tokyo:** Shinjuku ▶ Chino, Kami-Suwa, Shimo-Suwa, or Okaya Stations, Express bus 3-4hr
- **From Osaka:** Osaka (Umeda) ▶ Okaya, Kami-Suwa or Chino Stations, Express bus – 6-9hr

BY AIRPORT TAXI

For the ultimate convenience, there are two companies offering a direct taxi service from Haneda International Airport, Narita International Airport and Chubu Centrair International Airport to the Suwa area.

- **Alpico Taxi Company:** from Haneda International Airport and Chubu Centrair International Airport:
<http://www.alpico.co.jp/taxi/en/airport/>
- **Chuo Taxi Company:** from Haneda International Airport and Narita International Airport:
<http://chuotaxi.co.jp/publics/index/10/>

Tourist Center 1-1-18 Suwa, Suwa City, Nagano

E-mail: info@suwakanko.jp • <http://visit-suwa.com>

Business Hours : 9:00-18:00 (Closed on December 31 and January 1)

Limited Hours : 9:00-15:00 (December 30 and January 2)

