The aroma of the Onsen has been healing travelers since its inauguration 1300 years ago.

Tourist map of Yamanaka Onsen and Hokuriku area

Access to Yamanaka Onsen

To JR Line Kaga Onsen Station
- Tokyo – Hokuriku Shinkansen (Kagayaki or Hakutaka) – Kanazawa – Hokuriku line express (Shirasagi or Thunderbird) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 2 hours 15 minutes
- Tokyo – Tokaido Shinkansen (Hikari) – Maibara – Hokuriku line express (Shirasagi) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 3 hours 10 minutes
- Kyoto – Hokuriku line express (Thunderbird) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 1 hour 45 minutes
- Osaka – Hokuriku line express (Thunderbird) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 2 hours 30 minutes
- Nagoya – Tokaido Shinkansen (Hikari) – Maibara – Hokuriku line express (Shirasagi) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 1 hour 45 minutes
- Kanazawa – Hokuriku line express (Shirasagi or Thunderbird) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 2 hours 15 minutes
- Approx 24 minutes from Kaga Onsen Station by taxi
- Time calculated for the fastest trains available

Hokuriku Shinkansen running between Kanazawa and Tokyo was put into service on March 14th 2015. Hokuriku Shinkansen made it 1 hour and 20 minutes faster to travel from Tokyo to Kanazawa.

To Komatsu airport
- From Haneda Approx 1 hour
- From Narita Approx 1 hour 20 minutes
- From Sapporo Approx 1 hour 45 minutes
- From Sendai Approx 1 hour 10 minutes
- From Fukuoka Approx 1 hour 30 minutes
- Approx 30 minutes by Car Bus from Komatsu airport to Kaga Onsen.
- Approx 30 minutes by taxi from Komatsu airport to Kaga Onsen.

Via Hokuriku Expressway Kaga I.C.
- Tokyo – Kanetsu highway – Hokuriku Highway – Katayamazu I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 6 hours 15 minutes
- Tokyo – Tomei highway – Meishin highway – Hokuriku highway – Kaga I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 6 hours 30 minutes
- Osaka – Meishin highway – Hokuriku highway – Kaga I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 3 hours 30 minutes
- Nagoya – Meishin highway – Hokuriku highway – Kaga I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 3 hours 10 minutes
- Kanazawa – Hokuriku highway – Katayamazu I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 2 hours 40 minutes
- Shinkansen – Tokai Hokuriku highway – Hokuriku highway – Katayamazu I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 1 hour
- Tokyo – Tomei highway – Hokuriku highway – Katayamazu I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 1 hour 45 minutes
- Takayama – Tokai Hokuriku highway – Hokuriku highway – Katayamazu I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 2 hours 15 minutes
- Tateyama/Kurobe – state road No 6 – Hokuriku highway – Katayamazu I.C. – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 2 hours 30 minutes
- Echigo – state road No 364 – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 2 hours 45 minutes
- Echigo – state road No 880 – Yamanaka Onsen Approx 2 hours 15 minutes
- Approx 30 minutes by taxi from Komatsu airport to Kaga Onsen.

Train
- Tokyo – Hokuriku Shinkansen (Kagayaki or Hakutaka) – Kanazawa – Hokuriku line express (Shirasagi or Thunderbird) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 2 hours 15 minutes
- Tokyo – Tokaido Shinkansen (Hikari) – Maibara – Hokuriku line express (Shirasagi) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 3 hours 10 minutes
- Kyushu – Hokuriku line express (Thunderbird) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 1 hour 45 minutes
- Osaka – Hokuriku line express (Thunderbird) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 2 hours 30 minutes
- Nagoya – Tokaido Shinkansen (Hikari) – Maibara – Hokuriku line express (Shirasagi) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 1 hour 45 minutes
- Kanazawa – Hokuriku line express (Shirasagi or Thunderbird) – Kaga Onsen station Approx 2 hours 15 minutes
- Approx 24 minutes from Kaga Onsen Station by taxi
- Time calculated for the fastest trains available
- Transportation services available from Kaga Onsen Station.
- 20 minutes from Kaga Onsen Station by taxi

Yamanaka Onsen Tourist Association / Yamanaka Onsen Ryokan Cooperative

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www.yamanaka-spa.or.jp
The Legendary Onsen and its 1300 years of history.

Part of the Hot Spring complex known as Hokuriku-Kaga-Onsen-kyou, the Yamanaka Onsen is surrounded by the serenity of the Hakusan Mountain Range and has a long history of 1300 years. It is said it was discovered during the Nara Period by a famous high priest named Gyouki, who built a small shrine from a log which was dedicated to the Healing Buddha Yakushi, the hot spring's protector. It is said that many who visited Yamanaka had their illnesses cured and fatigue healed in the hot spring. Due to the conflicts of the subsequent turbulent age, the hot spring was in ruins for a period of time.

During the Jishō era at the end of the Heian Period, Hasebe Nobutsuba - military commander of the Noto Peninsula manor - was hunting with falcons when he found an egret healing wounds on its legs in a stream on the shady side of a mountain. When Nobutsuba excavated the site, a 15-centimeter statue of the Buddha of Healing and Medicine was found, and water started bubbling out of the spring. It is said that Nobutsuba built 12 palaces there, which marked the beginnings of the Yamanaka Onsen.

Yamanaka was praised by the famous haiku poet Basho as one of the 3 most renowned hot springs in Japan.

Master of the poetic form known as ‘haiku’, Matsuo Basho went with his disciple Sora on a trip known as Narrow Road to the Deep North. During the trip, he visited Yamanaka Onsen in the second year of the Genroku Period. There he wrote a poem praising Yamanaka as one of the three most renowned hot springs in Japan, along with Arima and Kusatsu.

"At Yamanaka No need to pick chrysanthemums The aroma of the hot springs"

A passage of the Noh chant "Kikujidou" says those who drink the drops of a chrysanthemum will achieve longevity. The poet Basho cites the passage saying that in the springs of Yamanaka you can achieve longevity without having to drink the drops. He supposedly appreciated the Yamanaka Onsen very much, and spent a total of 9 days here.

Strolling in the city of Yamanaka Hot Onsen, you can follow the steps of the poet walking by the stone monument "Kuhi" inscribed with a haiku poem, the Basho Palace and Temple and its Kikunoyu Onsen, among other places he visited a long time ago.
Cuisine, art and kindness. A warmhearted welcome.

Yamanaka Onsen brings to the world an absolute commitment to Japanese cuisine.

Some chefs born and currently active in Yamanaka Onsen represent the highest degree of Japanese cuisine’s refinement. Growing up in the constant competition among the Japanese-style “ryokan” hotels, these chefs’ abilities go beyond Japanese cuisine, giving birth to free original ideas that are highly praised by visitors from all over the world. This absolute commitment to Japanese cuisine is honored by all the people who make a living in Yamanaka Onsen. Visitors can get a glimpse of this through the heartwarming welcome displayed during events such as the service “Oonabeno Furumai” (Big Pot) which uses home-grown ingredients.

Fully enjoy the fresh seafood from the Sea of Japan

Even though located in the mountains, unbelievably fresh seafood is delivered here from the nearby Kaga City and Hashitate Gyoukou Port near the Sea of Japan. Enjoy the deliciousness even more so during winter when the crabs “zuwaigani” and “koubakogani” present us with their mouthwatering taste. As Hashitate Gyoukou Port is near to the crab fishing grounds, fresh seafood can be savored on the very same day it was caught. Visitors can also enjoy “buri” (Japanese amberjack or yellowtail) and “amaebi” (deep-water shrimp) to their heart’s content.

Refined skill and instruments are used to prepare the most delicious food that is served in the magnificent Japanese lacquer ware and Kutaniyaki porcelain. From ancient times travelers from distant places who came to Yamanaka to heal in the splendid effervescent waters have experienced the warmth and refinement of our cuisine.

Cuisine, art and kindness. A warmhearted welcome.

If you come to Yamanaka, having lunch at Kakusenkei Gorge Promenade is a must. Enjoy the scenery and the real taste of Japan. The Japanese-style “ryokan” hotels and restaurants throughout the city offer lunch boxes that display their chefs’ superb skills. Visitors can make advance orders for “kawadoko” lunch boxes at every shop in Yamanaka.

(please confirm at your hotel the locations in which you can make the reservations).
Ayatori-hashi Bridge
The name of this bridge comes from a traditional Japanese game called "Ayatori" (Cat's Cradle). Designed by Hiroshi Teshigahara, a Japanese film maker and son of the founder of the Sogetsu school of Ikebana, it measures 80 meters in length and its "S" shape mimics the form of a dragon rising into the sky. At night, the bridge is lit up, offering a different yet equally impressive view of the gorge that visitors come back every year to see.

Kurotanibashi Bridge
In the past, this imposing, arched, stone bridge, reminiscent of Taisho Era architecture (1912-1926), served as the gateway into the Yamanaka area. Feel the warmth of the autumn colors as they engulf this magnificent bridge.

Kohrogi-bashi Bridge
This beautiful bridge, constructed entirely from Japanese Cypress, is one of Yamanaka Onsen’s most famous sightseeing spots. Enjoy the magical winter scenery while admiring the expert craftsmanship of the bridge.

Kakusenkei Kawadoko
Close to Ayatori-hashi Bridge, this is a popular spot next to the river where you can see with your own eyes the clearness of the river water and the rich colors of the plant life lining the gorge. It is open from April to October and features Japanese sweets.

Kakusenkei Gorge Promenade
This must-see attraction in Yamanaka Onsen was once said to have inspired the poet Matsuo Basho to write the poem, "Here the joy of a good outdoor walk". Enjoy a leisurely stroll while appreciating the beauty of the waterfalls and the unique rock formations accentuating the deep blue pools of water.

The four the scenery for you to explore.

Spring

Autumn

Summertime

Winter
The thread of tradition.

Home of culture and art.

Hometown to lacquer ware with the biggest production quantity in all Japan

Lacquer ware is an original Japanese product. It is called “Japan” in English for that reason. Among all lacquer ware production areas, Yamanaka lacquer ware is known to be high standard. Since the Edo period to modern times, this area has given birth to famous woodwork craftsmen. High-level techniques in decorative and delicate woodcarving have been passed down from generation to generation, making Yamanaka into the biggest production area of wood turned products in Japan.

Yamanaka lacquer ware traces its history back to the Aruchi Momoyama period. It is believed that in the Tenro period (1573-1592) a woodwork master moved from the mountain region of Echizen to Masago village upstream of Yamanaka town and imparted the skills and technique of woodturning. At first, woodenware was made using only the beauty of the wood from zelkova, cherry birch and horse-chestnut trees. Later on with the coming of Edo period, lacquer techniques and makie techniques (lacquer with inlaid gold or silver) were introduced, and it is how Yamanaka lacquer ware has remained till nowadays.

If you would like to try the traditional techniques specific to Yamanaka you should go to “Rokuro-no-sato” (Wheel town) where the craftsmen’s workshops stand side by side. It’s about 5 minutes by car from Yuge road. It is a spot famous among tourists because there one can not only see exhibitions of local woodwork craftsmen’s works, but also try cutting wood, applying lacquer to it and shaping it on a spinning wheel, the last being a famous traditional technique in Yamanaka.

Yamanaka theater: incorporating the style of Yamanaka lacquer ware techniques.

Two buildings that dynamically reflect the beauty of Yamanaka lacquer ware craft are the Chrysanthemum hot spring (the ladies section) and the Yamanaka theater. These two building, opened in November 2002, are a product of the combined efforts of 200 woodwork, 1200 lacquer work, and 500 gold-and-silver lacquer work masters.

Zelkova wood pillars covered with lacquer and bright gold-and-silver lacquer coffered ceiling paintings are a concentration of high-level techniques that have been passed down between the craftsmen for many years.

Yamanaka theater, possessing an elegant stage made of cypress and a back panel featuring a drawing of a pine tree, conducts performances of the “Yamanaka melody dance of four seasons” every Saturday, Sunday and National Holiday. Many tourists attend these shows, as they are known to be a good chance to experience the refined songs and dances of Yamanaka geisha.
Sightseeing around Yamanaka Onsen

The Kokubunzan loji temple and the "Picture Scroll of Origins of Yamanaka Onsen" that show the looks of Yamanaka Onsen in days of yore.

Appreciate the atmosphere left by the famous haiku poet Basho “The Basho Museum”

There’s still a lot more to enjoy in Hokuriku if you stretch your legs

Stroll freely wearing a light yukata kimono

The Yuge road

This road runs from the Chrysanthemum hot spring to the Kidoguchi Bridge, and passes through the Yamanaka Onsen town center. Here the Yamanaka lacquer ware and Kozan pottery shops stand next to each other, along with cafes and restaurants.

Apart from restaurants and cafes, and shops with delicious sweets, one can take a relaxed stroll and find huge cauldrons with soup prepared at “Machibito Tabibito Tei” (“A Restaurant for Townspeople and Travelers”) and also the Hashi shrine commemorating the famous warrior of the Middle ages called Hasuo Nebuzuru.

Kokubunzan Ioji temple, which name in turn means “The temple of the King of Medicine.”

This temple is the local place of prayer for healing of all sicknesses.

Close every Wednesday.

White earthen walls and metal doors give this building a distinctive appearance. This is the famous haiku poet Basho “The Basho Museum”

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