

Ise-Shima National Park

Ise Jingu, a site where a long, splendid, multifaceted history unfolds. Satoyama and Satoumi, a land of enrichment interweaved with the workings of people and nature.

Through centuries, people have worshiped the sun as a deity. Ise Jingu is placed at the center of this belief, and the majority of the property of the Ise Jingu is situated in the national park.

Starting with Ise Jingu, you can get to know about the traditional and sustainable Japanese lifestyle on SATOYAMA and SATOUMI.

Ise-Shima National Park locates in Mie Prefecture, and it occupies a vast area of nearly 60,000 hectares. This national park is broadly divided into two areas. One is the inland area where the Ise Jingu is located. It is surrounded by forests. The other is the coastal area where numerous coves and points along the coastline as generally seen in a ria coast.

The greatest part of Ise-Shima National Park, is the scenery of SATOYAMA and SATOUMI that harmonizes people's life with nature by accepting the nature blessings.

SATOYAMA

SATOYAMA is a lower mountain area (YAMA) behind villages (SATO) where people regularly come for their everyday life such as logging trees, picking edible wild plants and gathering leaves for leaf manures. The forests have been taken care of by people for long time, creating a unique ecosystem and a scenery where you can only find here.

SATOUMI

SATOUMI is the ocean (UMI) near fishing villages (SATO), where livelihoods of people coexist with the ocean with high biodiversity and productivity. SATOUMI coasts are spawning grounds and habitats for fish species. Therefore, it is very important to maintain good conditions of SATOUMI for the conservation of marine lives.

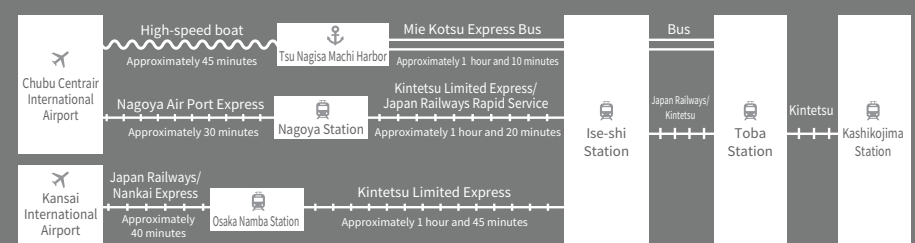
The connection between SATOYAMA and SATOUMI

The nutrition from the forests and farms on SATOYAMA is carried by rivers and flows down into the ocean of SATOUMI, enhancing productivity and diversity of the ocean.

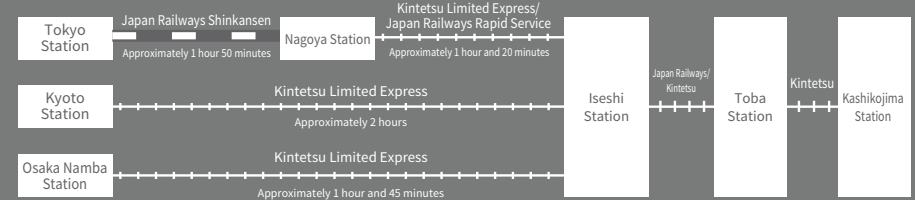
Access to Ise-Shima National Park



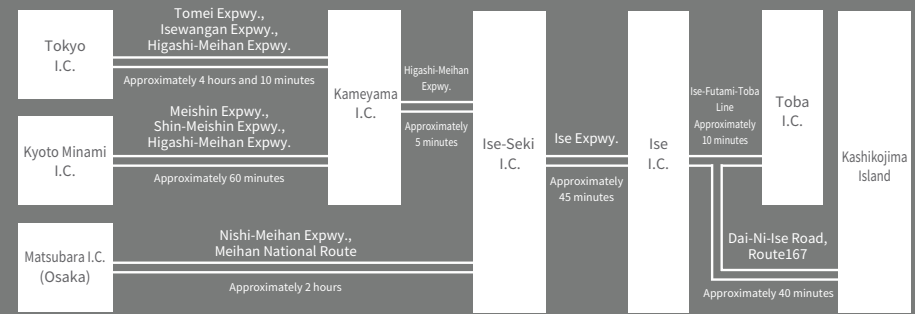
From the airport



By train



By car



Inquiry

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TEL 052-955-2135 <http://www.chubu.env.go.jp/>

The Association of the Ise-Shima National Park <http://www.ise-shima.or.jp/>

Yokoyama Visitor Center <http://chubu.env.go.jp/nature/yokoyama/>

Ise-Shima National Park website <https://www.env.go.jp/park/iseshima/>

Ise-Shima National Park Instagram https://www.instagram.com/nationalpark_iseshima/

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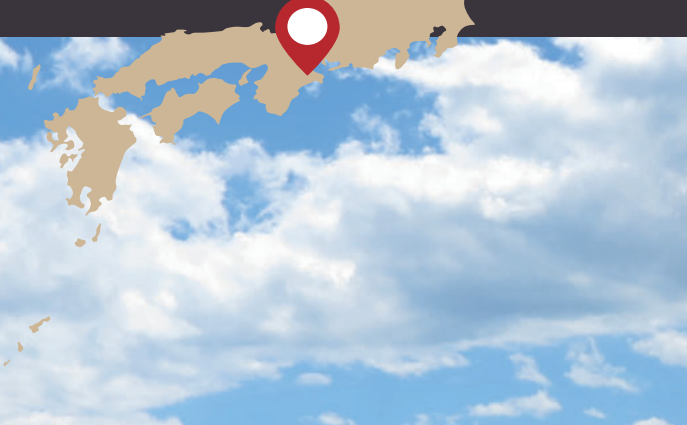
National Parks of Japan



その自然には、物語がある。
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Ise-Shima National Park

Mie Prefecture



A national park where people and nature coexists.

Japan is a small yet densely populated country, and its limited land has been carefully managed and used for various purposes since the ancient times. For this reason, Japan has adopted a Regional Natural Park System that has designated certain areas, regardless of private ownership, as part of the system.

Among the 34 national parks in Japan, the Ise-Shima National Park has an extremely high proportion of privately owned land (over 96%). One of the most exciting features of visiting this park, is the opportunity to come in close contact with locals. Visitors can take in the beautiful landscape and also provides the chance to see first-hand how people and nature can coexist.

Japanese sustainable lifestyle culture on "SATOYAMA and SATOUMI".

"SATOYAMA and SATOUMI", where people and nature coexists. Biodiversity of habitats, "SATOYAMA and SATOUMI", are the places enriched by local people

Ise Jingu, a site where a long, splendid, multifaceted history unfolds. Satoyama and Satoumi, a land of enrichment interweaved with the workings of people and nature.



神の森

Ise Jingu A site where people have been praying for peace from 2,000 years ago 5,500 hectares of sacred forests behind it

Ise Jingu, located at the entrance of the Ise-Shima National Park, has 2,000 years of history and is one of the most famous shrines among Japanese people.

In the 5,500 hectares of sacred forests (KYUIKIRIN) behind the Ise Jingu, about 850 species of flora have been found. Ise Jingu carries 1,300 years of history of SHIKINSENGU. Pine trees grown in KYUIKIRIN forests are the important wood materials for SHIKINSENGU. The ongoing silvicultural management is not only to help sustain the rich forest ecosystems but also help preventing floods and other natural disasters.

SHIKINSENGU is a complete relocation and rebuilding of shrines to adjacent site every two decades. This whole process has been continued to offer deities new and clean shrines. Also, this process helps inherit the tradition and the skills of Japanese ancient architecture.

The forests of Ise Jingu Once threatened to be deforested after the wars The birth of national park

In August of 1945, when the World War II ended, people were in need of woods to rebuild their houses. At the time, the sacred forests of Ise Jingu was threatened to be deforested. Ise-Shima region was designated as a national park in November 1946, to protect the Ise Jingu and its forests, and other natural and cultural assets of this region.



Futamiura

Historically, people have believed a visit to Futamiura cleansed their bodies before they went to Ise Jingu. The two different sized rocks found in Futamiura are called "Meotoiwa", or the Married Couple. Married Couple Rocks. Wonderful to witness, the sun rises between the two rocks from May to July.



Mt. Asamayama

During the Edo era (1603-1868) it was common to visit Kongousyouji temple located on the top of Mt. Asamayama after an Ise Jingu visit. The temple was believed to protect Ise Jingu from bad spirits. Currently, there are hiking trails and a foot-bath with views of the mountains.



Shofukuji temple on Mt. Aonominesan

This Buddhist temple has many followers among members of the local fishing community, who visit to pray for safety at the sea. Nature trails are maintained to the top of the mountain.



Dried-bonito factory tour

Dried-bonito is a type of SHINSEN foods. It is important to maintain the natural environment of such as Ubame oak forests and the good sea breeze from the ocean to make dried-bonito in the traditional style. You can feel the pride and humbleness of traditional craftsman at the dried-bonito factory tour.

Sacred meals offered to the deities and sustainable lifestyle

SHINSEN, a sacred meal offered to the deities of Ise Jingu, follows the principle of self-sufficiency. SHINSEN contains rice, fish, seaweed, vegetables, fruits, salt, water and sake, which all are indispensable for washoku (traditional dietary culture of the Japanese). The self-sufficiency lifestyle of the Ise Jingu teaches us to take diligent care of things and not to waste resources.



There are many secondary forests in the Ise-Shima region as people have been living in the region since the ancient times. However, you can find old-growth forest in a part of KYUIKIRIN with ever-green trees such as Japanese beeches, types of *Castanopsis* trees and others remain. These healthy forests are important habitats for many species such as deer, wild boar, macaque monkey and Japanese giant flying squirrel.

SATOYAMA plays an important role in the circulation of natural resources. Water evaporates from the ocean, rains down on the mountains, carries the nutrition from the farms and forests to the rivers, and eventually flows into the oceans. The rich nutrition from SATOYAMA supports lives of many creatures in the ocean.

The gifts from the forests of SATOYAMA supports the ocean



里山の恵み



Phot by Atsushi Kobayashi (Instagram: atsushi.k.photography)

The healthy SATOUMI ocean supports local industries

The oceanic areas of the Ise-Shima National Park are characterized by the calm bay areas and the rough open sea areas in the Pacific Ocean. This variety of habitats makes this area famous for seafood. Also, since the ocean current from the south makes the area good for growing citrus fruits.



The blessing of nature has been supporting the fishery, farming, and tourism of the Ise-Shima region. It is also famous for the origin of pearl cultivation by Kokichi Mikimoto; the founder of the world-renowned jewelry brand "MIKIMOTO". The sceneries of pearl farming rafts in bays are other characteristics of Ise-Shima region.

See the view, enjoy the food

You can enjoy a variety of fresh seafood including abalones, oysters, Japanese Ise lobsters, tuna fish, and red sea bream in Ise-Shima region. It would also be a good experience to enjoy the foods while seeing the scenery of the mountains and oceans where they were grown and raised.



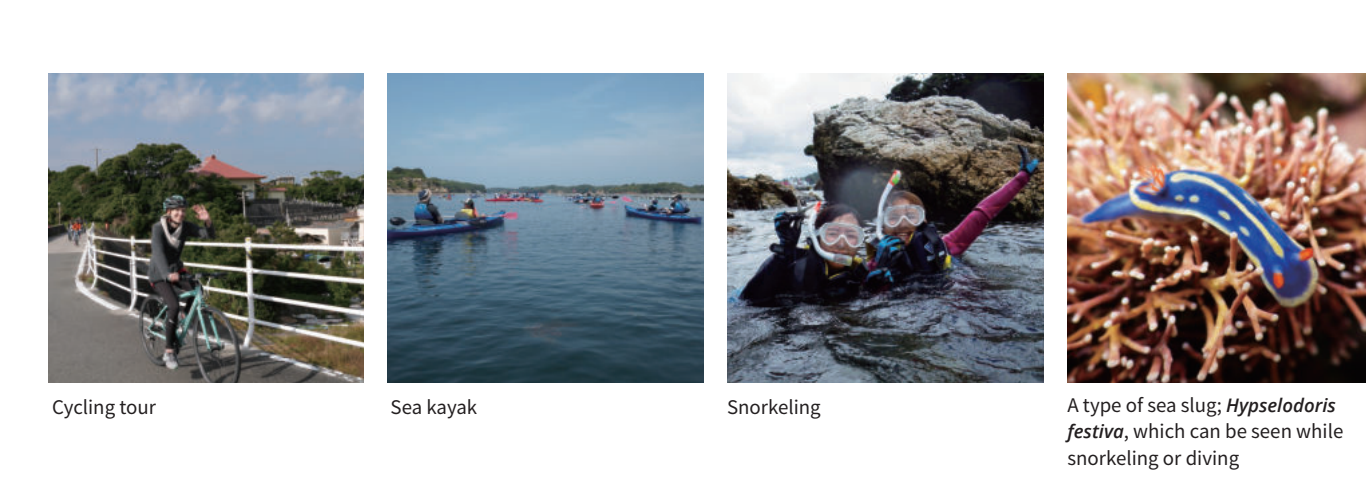
Fishing experience (Minami-Ise Town)

Experience feeding on red sea breams and fishing in the ocean



YAKATABUNE Cruise

YAKATABUNE is a Japanese traditional shipboard restaurant. Enjoy seafoods such as abalone and Ise lobster on the lunch or dinner cruise.



“Live with nature”, enjoy ecotourism of the area

Historically, local people have been careful on keeping a sustainable fishery by setting rules such as catch limits on small abalones. That mindset has been handed over to the ecotourism to maintain the natural environment. You can enjoy swimming, fishing, sea kayaking, and many more marine activities in the Ise-Shima National Park. Join the snorkeling tour and meet dozens of sea creatures.



AMA hut (Toba City and Shima City)

AMA hut is a place where AMAs rest and warm themselves in between dives. Enjoy chatting with AMAs, wearing traditional white diving clothes, as they serve seafood barbecue.

The park also offers a variety of cycling tours and town walking tours to enjoy seeing the natural and cultural sites of Ise-Shima region.

When walking the nature trails and the cycling courses along the coastline, you can witness the energetic fishing harbor, AMAs (female fisheries divers) diving, cultivation of sea lettuce and oysters, and many more of local cultures and lifestyles. Local residents will welcome you with warm hearts when you say “hi” to them.

Currently, about half of the AMAs in Japan are in the Ise-Shima region. With more than 3,000 years of history, the skills and knowledge of AMA fishery inherited which tells us about the importance of the blessings of the nature today.



The scenery where people and nature coexist The area with the highest number of AMA



Modern day AMAs harvest shellfishes wearing wetsuits



Yokoyama Visitor Center Ministry of the Environment

Your base for information to enjoy Ise-Shima National Park

The Yokoyama Visitor Center features video footage and panel displays that explain about the natural environment, the traditional culture centered on the Ise Jingu, and the fishery industry represented by the AMA (female divers) of Ise-Shima National Park in an easy-to-understand manner.

The Yokoyama Observatory is 550 meters away from the Visitor Center. From the observatory, you can enjoy a superb view woven by the deeply indented ria coastline of Ago Bay, the islands, and the pattern of the pearl culture rafts.



Open : 9:00 - 16:30
Closed : Tuesdays (if Tuesday falls on a national holiday, the next day is closed) and end of the year and New Years' holidays (December 29th - January 3rd)
Free Admission
Some of the exhibits are available in foreign languages 1. Movies of Ise-Shima region: in English, Korean, Simplified and Traditional Chinese 2. Written exhibits of Ise-Shima region: in English, Korean, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, German, French, Italian and Russian
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