

Phenology Calendar

Ibusuki

Almanac of Nature and Life's Bounty



Traveling to Ibusuki

● **Traveling to Ibusuki & Cape Sata**

- 1 Kagoshima Airport**
Expressway bus (approx. 40 min)
- 2 Kagoshima-Chuo Sta.**
JR (approx. 56 min)
- 3 Ibusuki Sta.**
Taxi (approx. 10 min)
- 4 Ibusuki Port**

● **Driving times from Ibusuki station**

- Ibusuki Onsen Approx. 6 min
- Lake Ikeda Approx. 25 min
- Nishi-Oyama Sta. Approx. 16 min
- Chiringashima Island ... Approx. 15 min
- Mt. Kaimondake Approx. 20 min

Nature & Sights



Mt. Kaimon

Perhaps this looks familiar? Nicknamed the Mt. Fuji of Satsuma (the former name for Kagoshima), Mt. Kaimon bears a striking resemblance to Japan's most famous conical mountain. A hiking trail winds its way up to the 924-meter peak, offering panoramas of the surrounding mountains, lakes, sea, and islands.



Lake Ikeda

The largest volcanic crater caldera lake in Kyushu, Lake Ikeda is 15 kilometers in circumference and 233 meters deep. Water sports rule on the lake, with kayak tours, wakeboarding, wakesurfing, and much more. Just watch out for Isshy, Lake Ikeda's legendary monster!



Sunamushi Onsen (Steam Sand Bath)

Get buried in sand and steam away your troubles at Sand Bath Hall Saraku and Sand-Steamed Hot Spring Sayuri, where yukata-clad guests are covered in hot spring-heated sand. After you have been enveloped in the healing sands, shower off and relax in the waters of a traditional hot spring *onsen*.



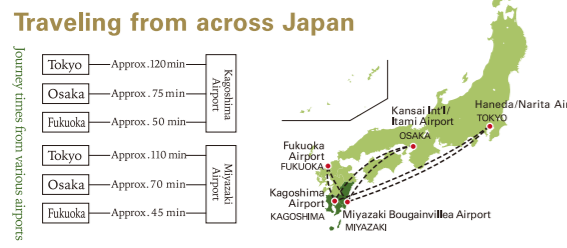
Lake Unagi & Unagi Onsen

Lake Unagi (eel) is a volcanic lake named because of the giant mottled eels fished there. Unagi Onsen is a historical hot spring resort on the lake that has been around since the Edo period and is known as a place where Saigo Takamori had lodged.

Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park | Overview

One of Japan's first national parks features diverse volcanic and sea landscapes, including the Kirishima mountains, Sakurajima volcano, and Kinkowan Bay, created by massive calderas. It is also a place where visitors can enjoy the rich local culture, nature's gifts such as hot springs and food, extraordinary history, and mythologies.

● Terrestrial area: 36,624 ha ● Designation: March 1934
 ● Related municipalities (two prefectures, eight cities, and three towns)
 Miyazaki Prefecture: Miyakonojo City, Kobayashi City, Ebino City, and Takaharu Town.
 Kagoshima Prefecture: Kagoshima City, Taramizu City, Kirishima City, Aira City, Yusui Town, Ibusuki City, and Minami-Osumi Town.



How Ibusuki's bounty relates to people's lives

Ibusuki area has various local specialties that utilize the unique terrains facing Kagoshima Bay entrance and a climate peculiar to the volcanic locality.



Premium Honkare Hombushi | Ibusuki's bonito flakes

Kagoshima Prefecture produces 70 percent of the bonito flakes made in Japan, with the Yamagawa area accounting for 30 percent of the nation's share. The Yamagawa district prospered in the old days as the trading port with the Ryukyu Kingdom and as a deep-sea fishing base in modern times. The area attracted bonito boats from 1907, and bonito flake producers moved from Tosa, Iyo, and Nagasaki and began making bonito flakes. The premium bonito flakes Hongare Hombushi from Kagoshima Prefecture account for 80 percent of the nation's share. It is made by repeating the process of applying mold spores and sun-drying to drain the bonito of its juice and using much skill to put the bonitos through many processes for over six months to bring out its excellent aroma and umami.

Tokko Watermelon

An article in *Sangoku Meishozu'e* (a series of books describing the notable sites and scenery in the Satsuma domain, compiled by the Satsuma clan in the late Edo period) describes Yamagawa's watermelon's reputation for its deliciousness. The watermelon is still a people's favorite, known today by its brand name Tokko Watermelon, and its secret lies in Mt. Kaimondake. The thick layers of volcanic ejecta such as scoria and volcanic lapilli accumulated around Mt. Kaimondake make the soil well-ventilated and permeable, relatively easy to control the amount of applied nutrient, and able to retain heat. These conditions are ideal for growing watermelons. Tokko Watermelon is regarded as the Phantom Watermelon due to its high sugar content, crispy texture, and less availability.



Cape Nagasakibana

The cape juts out at the southernmost tip of the Satsuma Peninsula. It has an arched sandy beach to the west with the soaring Mt. Kaimondake at the end. Yakushima, Takeshima, and Iojima are visible across the southward sea on a clear day.



Kawashiri Beach and olivine

The gemstone olivine is also known as peridot, and large ones in the area can exceed 2mm. It is contained in Mt. Kaimondake's ejecta and can be found particularly along Kawashiri Beach.



Yamagawa Saltery ruins

The area had a salt processing business using Fushime Beach's hot spring heat for about 20 years from 1943. The sandy Fushime Beach below has hot fumaroles spouting steam.



Yamagawa Harbor

The naturally-formed bay created by a volcanic eruption was already bustling as an international trading port in the age of provincial wars. The historical harbor is described in *The First European Description of Japan*.

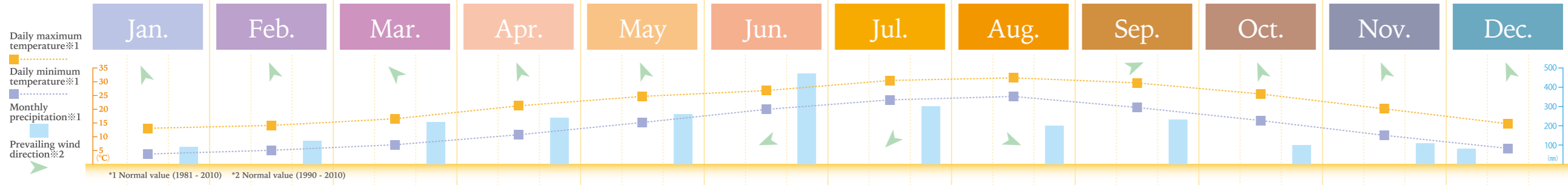
Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park Ibusuki Area Information Center

Ibusuki Tourism Information Center
 JR Ibusuki Station, 1-1-1, Minato, Ibusuki, 891-0405
 TEL: 0993-22-4114 Hours: 9:00 - 17:00 Open all year
<https://www.ibusuki.or.jp/>

Kaimon Sanroku Fureai Park
 626, Kaimon-cho, Ibusuki, 891-0603
 TEL: 0993-32-5566 Hours: 8:30 - 21:00
 Closed every Tuesday (excl. Golden Week, summer, year-end, and New Year holidays)
<https://www.ibusuki.or.jp/tourism/play/kaimonpark/>

Ibusuki Almanac of Nature and Life's Bounty

The Ibusuki district has nurtured a distinctive culture that capitalizes on its unique terrains formed by several volcanic eruptions and various gifts produced by its climate. The Phenology Calendar (almanac) conveys the region's seasons through its nature and people's activities throughout the year. Ibusuki Almanac of Nature and Life's Bounty introduces the delights and gifts of nature in all its seasons and the lives of the locals enjoying them.



Chiringashima Island

A bridge of sand | Chiringashima Island and Chiririn Road (at low tide)

Sands accumulate on the seafloor as the warm Black Current flowing from the East China Sea and the slightly colder current flowing out into the sea collide, creating a seafloor path. Chiringashima Island sits on the border of these two currents, and the submarine path appears at low tide during spring and mid tides, creating an 800-meter long bridge of sand. The bridge stays for up to four hours, and according to statistics, it appears for over an hour 190 days a year and about 86 days a year when it stays for over two hours. Between March and October is an excellent time to cross the bridge, as sands get washed away in the winter by the heavy surf.

Gifts from the land

Peas

Mi'Endo (peas)
Mi'Endo (peas) is Kagoshima's designated brand, and a variety called Mamekoko (named by a local high school student) is sweet enough for children to enjoy.

Broad beans
Ibusuki produces the most volume of broad beans in Japan, and it is Kagoshima's designated brand. Freshness is crucial, so they are best eaten quickly after picking.

Okras
Ibusuki City is Japan's largest producer. Many farms are now applying the people and environment-friendly IPM (Integrated Pest Management) farming method.

Tokko Watermelon
The region's well-drained rudaceous soil makes the watermelon exceptionally sweet. The Phantom Watermelon is hard to come by.

Mangos
Mango is Kagoshima's designated brand. It has become a very popular choice for Furusato Nozei (hometown donation system).

Yamagawazuke
AKA Karazuke hints at Yamagawa Port's history as an international trading port in the old days.

Sweet potatoes
Ibusuki is the place where sweet potatoes were brought into Japan. The potatoes tend to be sweeter, thanks to the region's favorable climate and excellent soil.

Sugar snap peas
Ibusuki City is Japan's largest producer. The sugar snap peas have a characteristic crispy texture and sweetness.

Gifts from the sea

Japanese spiny lobsters
Widely enjoyed as a symbol of longevity, the delicacy is served at celebrations. It can be eaten in a variety of ways, including sashimi, grilled, and miso soup.

Jade nori harvest
Jade nori is grown on seaweed beds in a sandy area with mild waves close to Kandelia obovata colonies. It is used in miso soup and clear broths.

Bonito and Ibusuki's bonito flakes
Kagoshima Prefecture is Japan's largest producer of bonito flakes. Senji made from the liquor produced in making bonito flakes is a delicacy connoisseurs enjoy. Another famous dish is called Binta (made with bonito's head).

Ibusuki's Nanohana greater amberjack
Kagoshima Prefecture produces the largest amount of farmed greater amberjack. Ibusuki's farmed greater amberjack is distributed under its brand name, Ibusuki Nanohana Kampachi.

Indo-Pacific sailfish
The fish enjoyed by the people of Kagoshima Prefecture as Akitaro is an autumn delicacy. Prefecture residents feel autumn's arrival when they hear the news of the year's first Indo-Pacific sailfish catch.

Local wildlife

Rapeseed blossoms
The flowers bloom from late December to early February.

Cherry blossoms
About 1,000 Yoshino cherry trees bear blossoms in the spring on Mt. Uomidake.

Sago palms (flowering)
Mt. Takeyama and Cape Nagasakibana are sago palms' northernmost habitat.

Sea turtles (egg laying)
Sea turtles lay eggs on the beaches of Chiringashima Island and Cape Nagasakibana. They go on land to lay eggs between June and July.

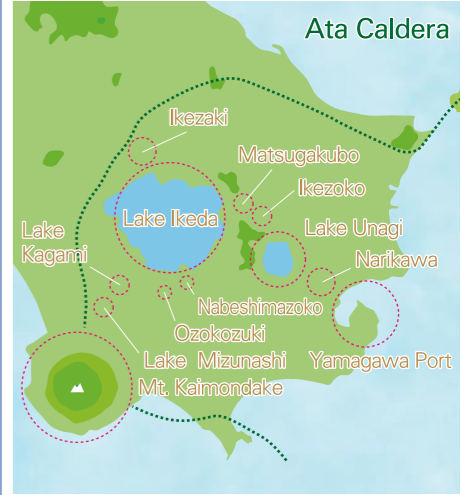
Vicia amurensis
Northern flora *vicia amurensis* and southern sago palms can be seen simultaneously in the Mt. Takeyama area.

Northernmost colonies of Kandelia obovata (Kiire & Ibusuki)
Kandelia obovata is a mangrove-like evergreen, and Kiire-cho is its northernmost habitat.

Annual events

- Ibusuki Nanohana Marathon (early Jan.)**
Japan's first city marathon of the year is held on the second Sunday of January each year.
- Mendon (mid-Jan.)**
Performers in masks chase spectators and blacken their faces with soot-laden daikon radishes in Yamagawa-Toshinaga's traditional event.
- Ibusuki Nanohana March (late Jan.)**
Participants walk through fields of yellow rapeseed flowers, feeling the breath of early spring.
- Kyushu Vintage Car Festival in Ibusuki-Kaimon (late Apr.)**
Vintage cars and motorbikes assemble at Kaimon Sanroku Fureai Park. The event attracts many families.
- Tonno Motzi (mid-May)**
Toki-no-Mochizuri. A net is spread across the village border to pray for a state of perfect health in this traditional event. It is held only in the Unagi district today.
- Ibusuki Shrine Hamakudari (late May)**
The Hawai'ian event heralds the arrival of early summer in Ibusuki, the city of Aloha.
- Yamagawa Minato Festival (early Jun.)**
- Ibusuki Hula Festival (early Jun.)**
- Kaimon Summer Festival (mid-Aug.)**
The festival is held to pray for safety at sea and a good catch at the naturally formed Yamagawa Port.
- Ibusuki Onsen Festival (late Sep.)**
The time-honored festival began shortly after World War II. People offer gratitude for the gifts hot springs bring and pray for the continued replenishment of the source.
- Hirakiki Shrine Kamimai (Oct. 14/annual festival on 15 & 16)**
Hirakiki Shrine's kamimai, passed down for generations, has been inherited by a local youth club, and is held on the eve of the annual festival on October 14.
- Ibusuki Market (early Dec.)**
The year-end fair is held at two venues of Yamagawa Port.
- Yamagawa Furusato Year-End Fair (late Dec.)**

Terrains created by several volcanic eruptions



The volcanic cluster comprising Kyushu's largest caldera lake Ikeda, Matsugakubo, Ikezoko, Lake Unagi, Narikawa, and Yamagawa Port, which stretch almost in a straight line from south to east, is believed to have formed by subsidence that occurred during a massive eruption about 5,700 years ago. Mt. Kaimondake, which became volcanically active in the late Jomon era, lies to Lake Ikeda's south-southwest. There are also volcanic craters such as Lake Kagami, Lake Mizunashi, Ozokozuki, and Kozokozuki between Mt. Kaimondake and Lake Ikeda. Since most of Ibusuki is in Ata Caldera, the city is indeed a museum of volcanoes.

Ibusuki Specialties

Ibusuki is a real gourmet paradise. Sample the smoky aroma and flavor of *katsuo-no-tataki*, seared skipjack tuna, or sip the local *shochu* sweet potato spirit Satsuma-style—diluted with hot water and served in *kurojoka*, traditional black Satsuma pottery.



Somen nagashi at Tosen Gorge

The gorge is the birthplace of a unique way of eating noodles. Enjoy somen noodles prepared and served in the Kyoden spring water, certified as one of Heisei's top 100 springs.



Lake Unagi

Tucked into the mountains four kilometers southwest of Ibusuki City, Lake Unagi is home to a unique form of cooking: *sume ryori*. Sume are cooking apparatuses that harness the power of volcanic fumaroles to steam everything from potatoes to chicken and eggs.