

Hakusan Tsurugi Adventure

Discovering Heritage & Nature Exploration

Hakusan City is located at the foot of the sacred Mt. Hakusan which is believed by many to be a special "power spot" and a folk cultural asset.

Please come and feel the power of Mt. Hakusan.

Itinerary Overview:

- 09:15 – 09:30 Departure from the pick-up point, commencing a scenic 40-minute journey towards Hakusan.
- 10:15 - 10:45 Immerse yourself in the enchanting ambiance of Little Tsurugi town, delving into its human essence by visiting the local shop, and visit the renowned Tsurugi Train Station featuring the Shichikayousui irrigation system.
- 10:45 - 11:05 Delve into the cultural richness of Shirayama Jinja.
- 11:15 – 12:00 Ascend to the awe-inspiring Shishiku Highland via the Shishiku Gondola, capturing the mesmerizing vistas of Hakusan Geopark.
- 12:00 Marvel at a captivating the scenery around the geopark ride before relishing a delightful lunch at our designated spot.
- 12:30 – 13:15 Lunch
- 13:30 Tour end

UIGI KANAZAWA

A TOUCH OF NATURE MAKES US KIN

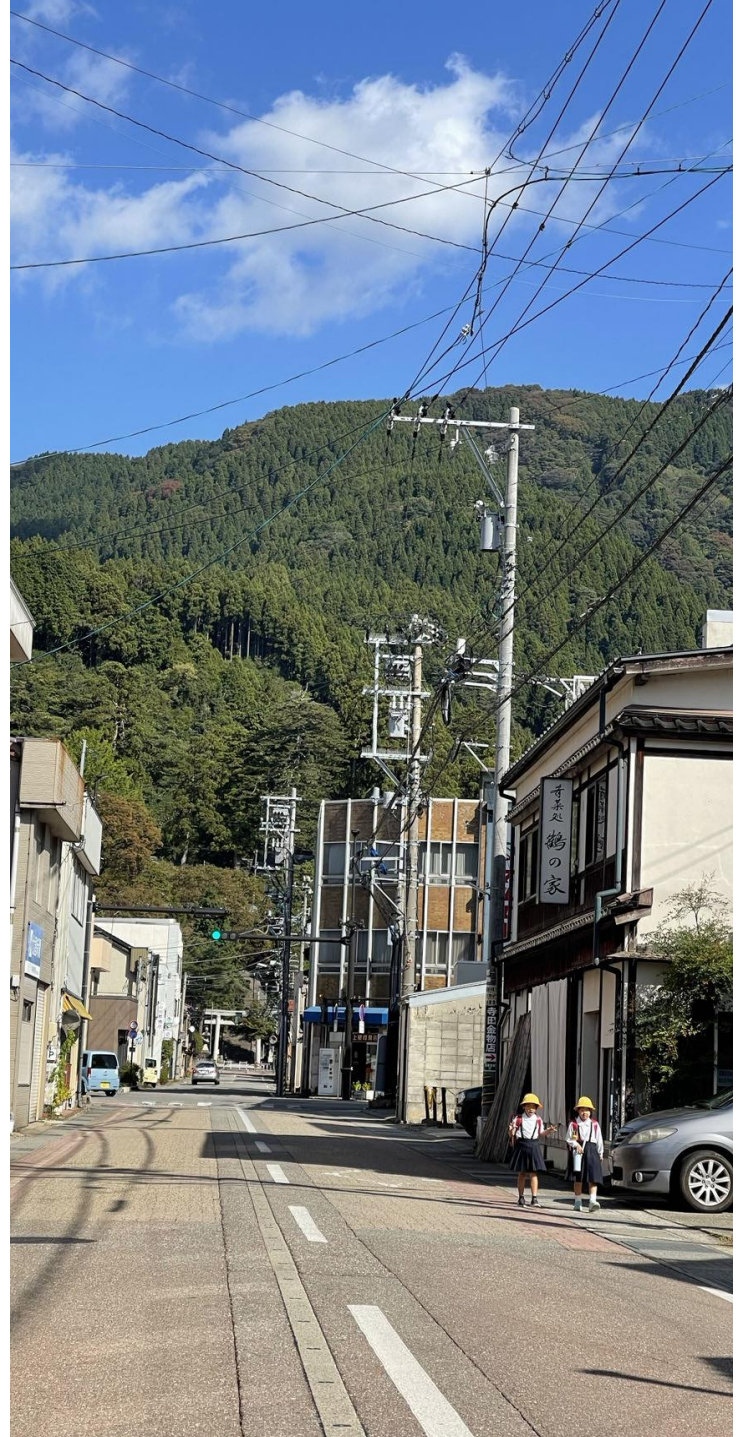
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Townscape of Tsurugi

As the location of Shirayama Hime Jinja Shrine, the Tsurugi area has kept its old traditions alive. There are many fermented-product businesses, such as sake breweries and soy-sauce manufacturers. You can enjoy strolling in an atmosphere of traditional culture.

Tsurugi is a town built around the Kinkengu Shrine, one of the four main shrines of Hakusan. The town is full of various things to see and do, with many traditional crafts and practices remaining. Cafes, restaurants, sake breweries and various shops line the streets. The local train station, Tsurugi Station, provides easy access from Kanazawa. Visitors can stroll around the town freely, or rent a bicycle from the Hakusan City Tourism League near the station.

During the Middle Ages the name of the town, Tsurugi, used to be written with characters which mean 'sword' 剣. However, due to the high number of fires during the Edo Period, the characters were changed to the current 鶴来, which mean 'coming cranes' due to the auspicious nature of the birds, in hopes of bringing luck to the town. From then, a lodging station was built along the route into town, and a thriving sake and soy sauce brewing industry was developed utilizing the rich underground water source.



Discover the Heart of Tsurugi in Hakusan: Crafting Miso and Amazake with Care

Blessed with high-quality underground water from Mount Hakusan, Tsurugi is an area flourishing in brewing industries like sake, soy sauce, and vinegar. The key ingredient for such fermented foods is "koji (malted rice)," cultivated using this superior water.

Here in this shop's enduring legacy from the Edo period is evident in its thick, sturdy beams, exuding a sense of tradition.

But what is "koji,"

Koji refers to a fermentation starter made by cultivating koji mold (*Aspergillus oryzae*) on steamed rice. It's used in various dishes like amazake (sweet sake) or shio-koji (salted rice malt). With the recent fermentation food trend, it has become a highly sought-after product!

The main steps of koji making involve four processes, conducted in an underground stone chamber:

1. Washing the rice
2. Steaming the rice and cooling it
3. Sprinkling the koji mold evenly
4. Allowing it to ferment (at a temperature of 38-40°C and 80% humidity)

After a natural fermentation period of 8-10 hours, the koji is ready! Wooden containers called "itaore" hold the koji. Approximately 4,500 "itaore" of koji are produced annually.

Koji mold is a living organism. Depending on the rice quality, temperature, and humidity, its behavior varies, so we need to adjust the environment daily. Engaging in this work means continuous experimentation and learning every day.

"Each batch is unique; it responds to the effort put in. That's the fascinating aspect of craftsmanship."

Freshly made koji emits a pleasant fragrance akin to chestnuts—a delightful aroma that makes you want to try it! Observing koji up close, you'll notice tiny, cotton-like structures densely covering the rice grains. This appearance, resembling flowers blooming on rice, inspired the character for "koji" in kanji, written as "米" (rice) and "花" (flower).



Shirayama Hime-jinja Shrine

Purification rituals and ancient trees at a 2,100-year-old shrine

Visit beautiful Shirayama Hime Jinja Shrine, which has long been regarded as a base for Mt. Hakusan worship.

Shirayama Hime-jinja is a 2,100-year-old shrine dedicated to the sacred Mt. Hakusan. It serves as a base for people who make the holy pilgrimage up the mountain. Its tree-covered grounds include an 800-year-old cedar and a trio of cedars planted by Emperor Showa (1901–1989). Zelkova, maple, and cedar trees line a path up to the shrine.

Since ancient times, Mt. Hakusan (2702m), risen over Ishikawa and Gifu prefecture, has been the object of faith as one of the three holy mountains as well as Mt. Fuji and Mt. Tateyama. People used to climb the mountain as religious trip, and Shirayama Hime Jinja Shrine was the base point of the climbing.

The shrine is also known as spiritual power spot today, and people often come and visit all the way outside Ishikawa prefecture. Climbing the stairs of front approach, lined with hundreds years old trees, naturally makes you feel calm and humble.

What to see at Shirayama Hime-jinja Shrine

1. Omote-Sando; known as the healing walk.

The 250-meter-long omote-sando main walkway is lined with sugi cedar, zelkova, and maple trees, for beautiful walks all throughout the year.



2. Biwa-Taki Falls: These waterfalls flow into the clear stream that runs along the omote-sando main walkway, and their refreshing sound helps purify the mind.



3. Old Sugi Cedar Tree (Sacred tree), This tree is located by the temizuya along the omote-sando main walkway, and has a thick shimenawa rope wrapped around it. The base of this 800-year-old tree is 12 meters around, its trunk is about 10 meters around, and it rises to a height of some 42 meters.



4. Three Sugi Cedar Trees: These sugi cedar trees were grown from seeds planted by Emperor Hirohito, then replanted here as sacred trees once they grew into saplings.

Misogi-Sha & Misogi-Ba: The location of a ritual held to cleanse participants of sin and impurities. At Misogi-Ba, a solemn atmosphere surrounds a water source fed by an underground stream from Mt. Hakusan.



Proper Manners when Paying Your Respects at Shrines



R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Always respect the shrine's buildings and grounds– not only for religious reasons but also because they are usually hundreds of years old, or even a thousand! Many Japanese bow when entering (and leaving) at the torii gate, then proceed walking the path to the shrine on either side, as the center of the shrine path is considered to be where God walks.

How to Wash Your Hands: Purify yourself before prayer at the water trough

1. Wash your left hand with water from the ladle held in your right hand.
2. Switch hands and wash the other hand.
3. Rinse the ladle by holding it vertically so the water runs down the handle, and return it to its perch above the water trough.



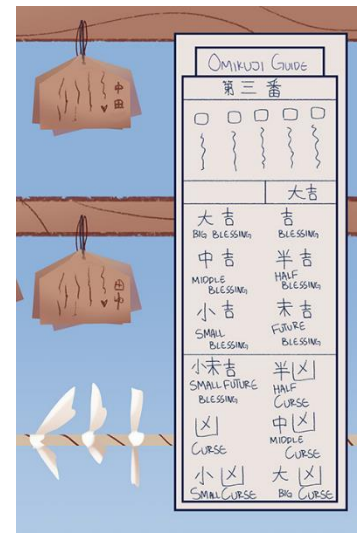
How to Pray:

After you go up the stairs to the main shrine, these are the steps to pray:

1. Make an offering of any amount of coin
2. Bow deeply twice, follow by Clap twice.
4. Pray or make your wish, silently with hands clasped.
5. Bow once more before leaving.

Fortunes

Lastly, paper fortunes called “Omikuji” can be a fun way to enjoy shrines (usually written in Japanese only, usually 100 yen), but be aware that you always have a chance of getting a reminder fortune as well! When you get a reminder fortune (please refer to the kanji explanation in the picture), you can tie your reminder fortune to a tree branch or structure provided to try to ward off the bad luck. The wooden votive tablets called “ema” (usually 500 -1000 yen) are also available to write a wish or message on, and then hang in the provided area at the shrine.





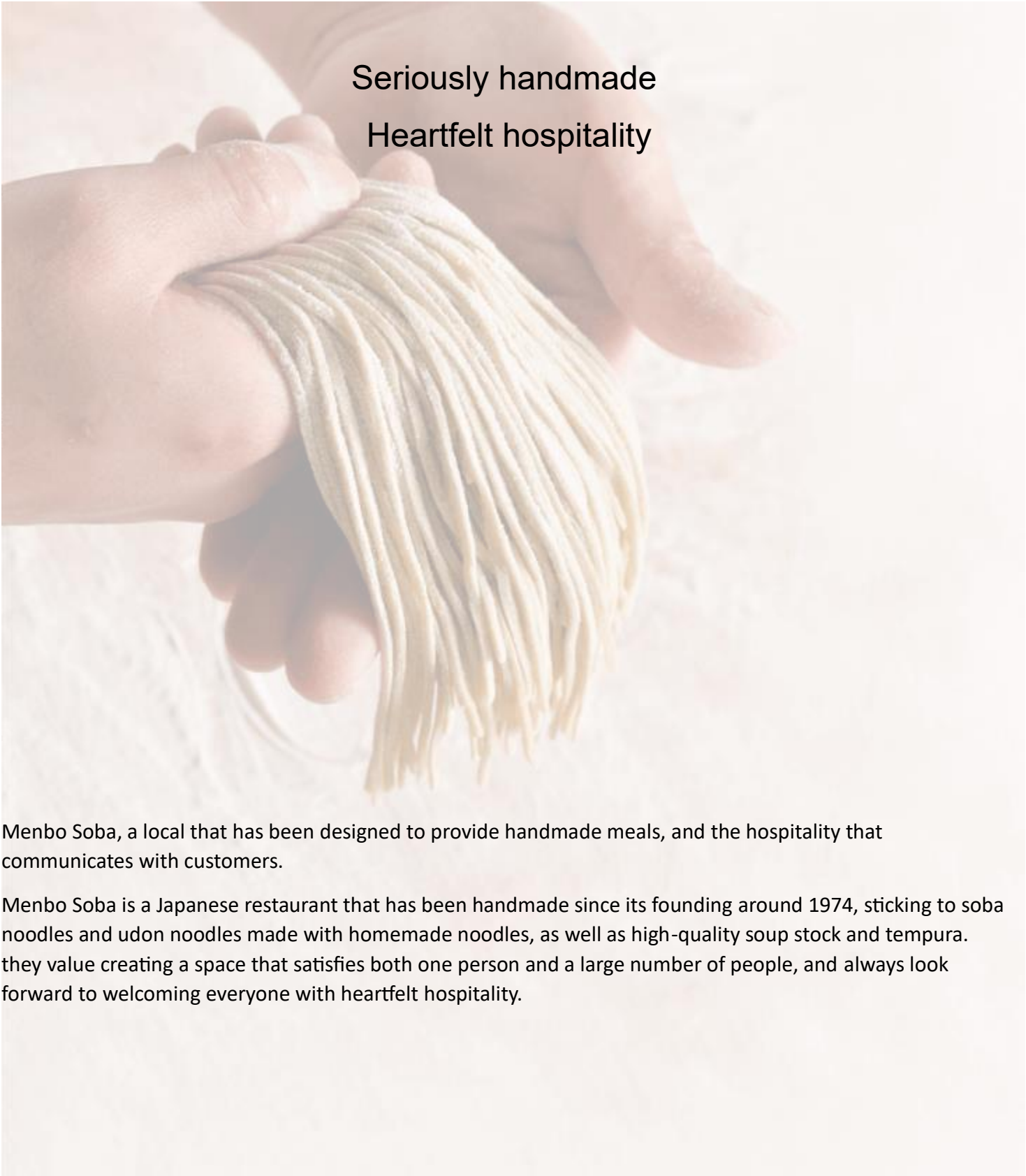
Shishiku Kogen Highland

Tedorigawa River, the largest river in Ishikawa Prefecture, originates from Mt. Hakusan and flows into the Sea of Japan. Since many stones flow into Tedorigawa River from the upstream, it was called “Ishi-kawa”, which means stone and river in Japanese. This is the origin of the name of Ishikawa Prefecture.

Five-minute gondola ride bring you to the Shishiku Kogen Highland to get the amazing view of the Tedorigawa River flowing through the plain and pouring into the Sea of Japan in the distance.

In 717 A.D., a monk named Taichou became the first monk to pilgrimage to Mt. Hakusan. On his way to the mountain, it is said that he rested near the current location of the Shishiku Highlands. Hence, the name Shishuku ‘resting place’ stuck to the area, which eventually became the current Shishiku.

Although the highland is accessible by hiking up a trail on Mt. Okushishiku (650m elevation), the most popular and quickest option is riding the suspended gondola to the summit. The gondola, which operates from April to November, provides a fantastic bird’s eye view of the mountains and river. At the summit the great expanse of the Tedoru River Alluvial Fan can be seen in its entirety, including the island-like villages spread out between thousands of rice fields.



Seriously handmade
Heartfelt hospitality

Menbo Soba, a local that has been designed to provide handmade meals, and the hospitality that communicates with customers.

Menbo Soba is a Japanese restaurant that has been handmade since its founding around 1974, sticking to soba noodles and udon noodles made with homemade noodles, as well as high-quality soup stock and tempura. they value creating a space that satisfies both one person and a large number of people, and always look forward to welcoming everyone with heartfelt hospitality.

thank you

Thank you for embarking on our "Hakusan Tsurugi Adventure: Discovering Heritage & Nature Exploration" with UIGI Kanazawa. Your presence truly enriched the moments we shared.

At UIGI, our motto "有意義な瞬間を" ("Uigi: Creating Meaningful Moments") guides our journey. As we explored the cultural treasures and natural wonders together, we aimed to make every moment count, resonating with our belief that meaningful experiences shape our lives.

"A Touch of Nature makes Us Kin." This phrase encapsulates the essence of our adventure a shared connection with nature and each other. We hope this experience has provided a new perspective on travel, allowing you to savor the beauty of Hakusan while fostering meaningful connections with friends and family.

We encourage you to cherish these moments, taking your time to reflect and imbue them with significance, whether through shared conversations or simply absorbing the serene surroundings.

Thank you once again for being part of our journey. Let's continue to explore and create meaningful moments together.

*Warm Regards,
Team UIGI Kanazawa*