

Osaki Wonder Museum

Open-air Museum of
People and Nature

Field Museum Map

大崎耕土
世界農業遺産



**OSAKI
KOUDO**

GLOBALLY IMPORTANT
AGRICULTURAL
HERITAGE SYSTEMS



Osaki Wonder Museum

～ Open-air Museum of People and Nature ～

Osaki Koudo exhibits a coexistence of people and the harsh natural environment of the land based on the wisdom and hard-working efforts of those who came before.

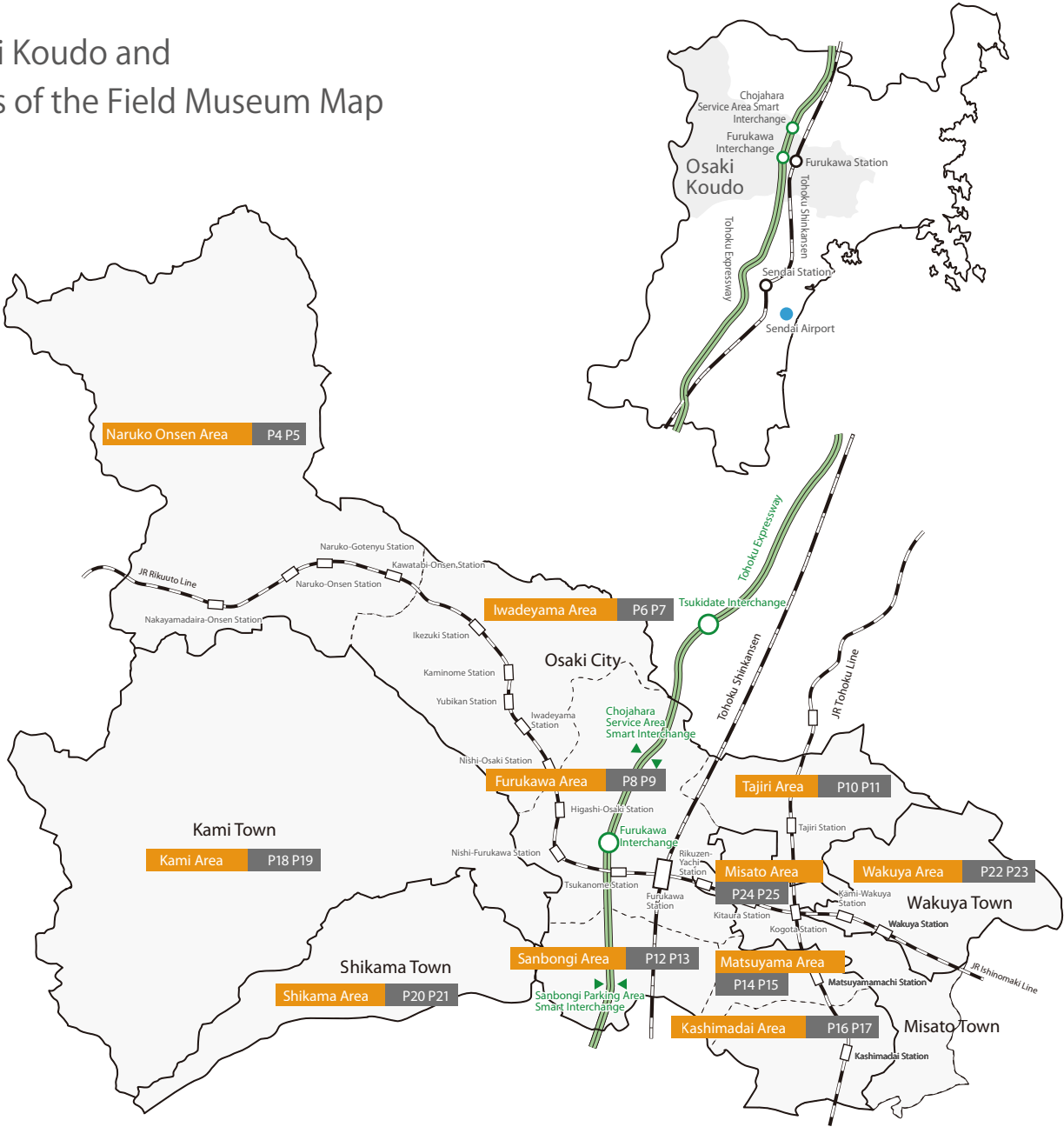
TThe region's ingenious water management system, abundant crops, traditional farming culture, harmonious coexistence with living creatures, and distinctive landscape which have all been inherited through the years, and the interrelationship of these elements are precisely what make up the wonders of Osaki Koudo.

Osaki Wonder Museum showcases these wonders that embody the relationship between man and nature as a vast field museum.



Osaki Koudo has been recognized in 2017 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System under the name of “Osaki Koudo’s Traditional Water Management System for Sustainable Paddy Agriculture.” It is a living heritage that merits being handed down to the future.

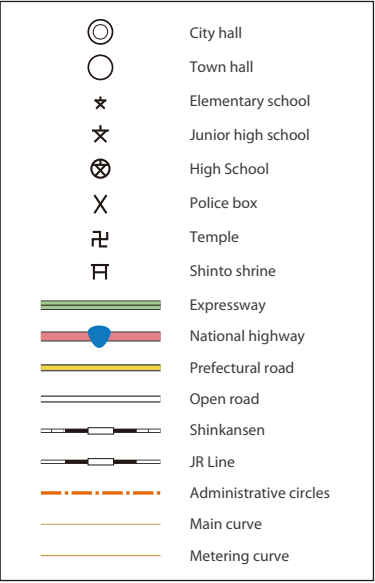
Osaki Koudo and Areas of the Field Museum Map



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When viewing the area map, please refer to the following (legend)



Selection Criteria
and Local Resources

The Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System of Osaki Koudo comprises the five criteria specified by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). In this Field Museum Map, local resources in each area are categorized according to these criteria and introduced in detail to create a comprehensive picture of what Osaki Koudo is all about.

Ingenious
water management
system

Paddy agriculture has been made possible by intake weirs and tunnels for securing irrigation water, flood control basins, and technologies against cold temperature damage, among others. This category includes local resources that are representative of Osaki Koudo's water management system, wisdom, and ideas.



Minamihara weir See p. 5 1 for details.

Sustainable
farming and foods

Sasanishiki and Hitomebore rice varieties have been developed in this region and support the local agricultural industry that is primarily centered on rice farming. A diversity of crops, including beans and traditional vegetables, is also produced and supplied from Osaki Koudo. Local resources representative of these crops are included in this category.



Taro See p. 13 5 for details.

Traditional
farming culture

Farming rituals and folk performing arts that are performed in prayer or in appreciation of a bountiful harvest have always been an integral part of farmers' lifestyles, and a rich food culture has taken shape that includes mochi and fermented foods such as sake, miso and soy sauce. Local resources representing the traditional farming culture of Osaki Koudo are included in this category.



Kasedori See p. 19 8 for details.

Biodiversity

The paddy fields and land surrounding the fields are home to diverse living creatures, including various fish species, frogs, spiders, and herons. From autumn to winter, greater white-fronted geese, designated a Natural Monument, winter in Osaki Koudo. Representative living creatures and other such local resources are included in this category.



Greater white-fronted goose See p. 9 3 for details.

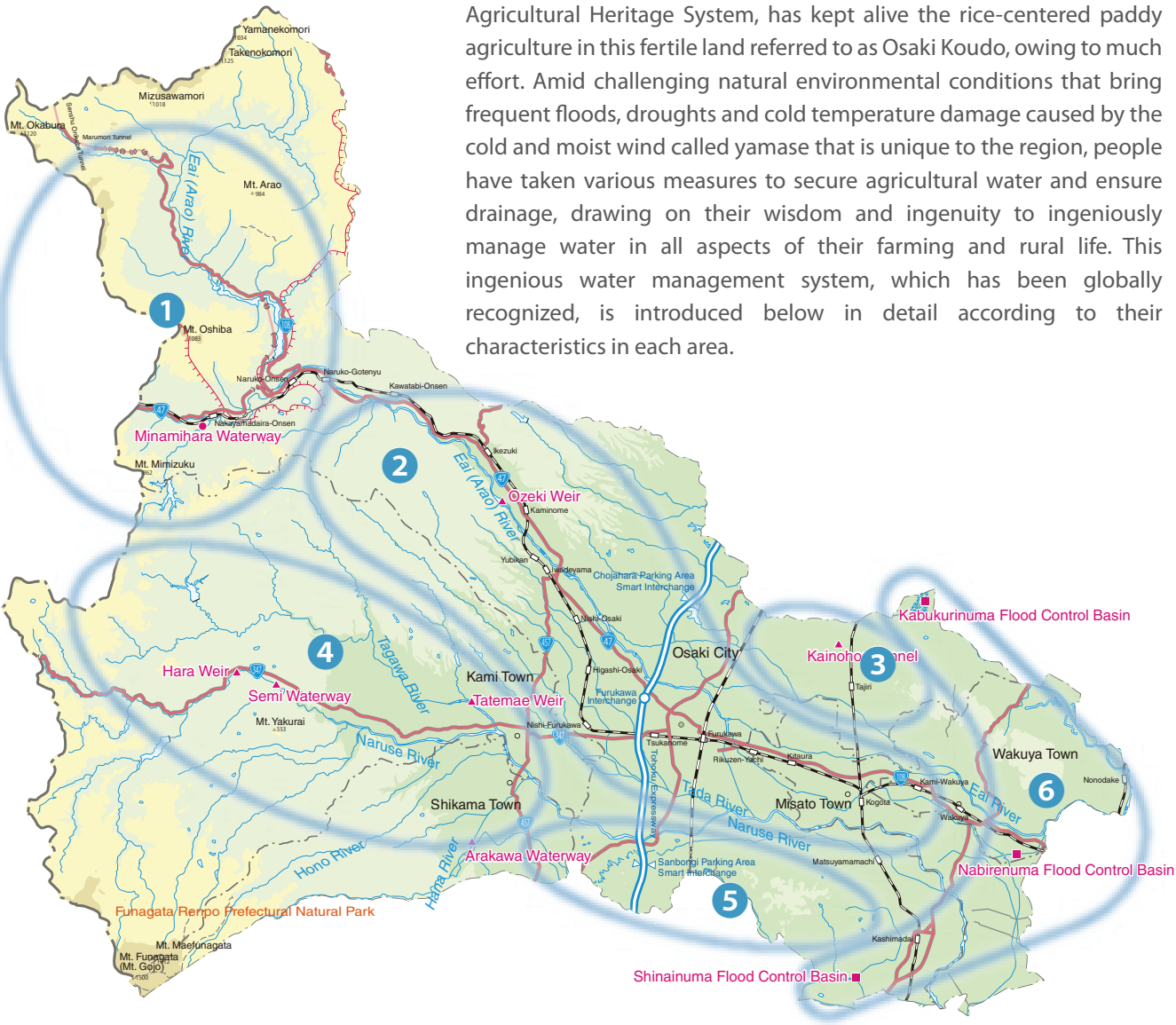
Landscape

Woodlands planted around houses, called igune, protect farmers' homes from winter northwesterly winds and floods. These igune, together with paddy fields and water channels, create a tapestry that forms the distinctive landscape of Osaki Koudo. Representative examples of this landscape and other such local resources are included in this category.



Mt.Kagobou See p. 11 4 for details.

Features of the Water
Management System



"Osaki Koudo's Traditional Water Management System for Sustainable Paddy Agriculture," which has been designated a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System, has kept alive the rice-centered paddy agriculture in this fertile land referred to as Osaki Koudo, owing to much effort. Amid challenging natural environmental conditions that bring frequent floods, droughts and cold temperature damage caused by the cold and moist wind called yamase that is unique to the region, people have taken various measures to secure agricultural water and ensure drainage, drawing on their wisdom and ingenuity to ingeniously manage water in all aspects of their farming and rural life. This ingenious water management system, which has been globally recognized, is introduced below in detail according to their characteristics in each area.

Classification of Osaki Koudo's ingenious water management system

	Features of water management	Wisdom incorporated in the system
Eai River Basin	① Irrigation water is secured and warmed through warming channels in a mountainous area (Naruko Onsen)	The terrain is surrounded by mountains, making it difficult to take water from the rivers. Thus, irrigation water is secured by drawing water through a tunnel excavated in the mountain. Additionally, because water taken from the river is cold, it is diverted through a warming channel, pond or paddy to warm it to a moderate temperature before it reaches the paddy fields.
	② Water is managed through a network of naturally flowing water channels in a gently sloping area (Iwadeyama, Furukawa)	Water is taken from the rivers and allowed to flow naturally down to supply water to the area. As the amount of irrigation water must be adjusted throughout the area in times of drought, the bansui system of controlling water distribution on a rotating schedule is continued today by mutual agreement of all local parties concerned.
	③ Tunnels are used to both secure and drain water in a wetland area (Tajiri)	Swamps scattered throughout this low-lying area blocked by hills made water drainage difficult. Tunnels were therefore excavated to drain the swamps and reclaim them as paddy fields. As more paddy fields were reclaimed, irrigation water was secured by passing a tunnel through to an upstream swamp.
	⑥ Water is managed by using paddy fields as flood control basins in a low-lying flatland area (Tajiri, Kashimadai, Wakuya, Misato)	The terrain in the lower reaches of Eai River and Naruse River has an extremely gentle gradient of around 1/2500. As such, the area is prone to large-scale floods following typhoons and local heavy rainfalls. To mitigate flood damage to local villages, river water is temporarily drawn and stored in the paddy fields at times of large-scale floods, as rice farming can tolerate inundation to a relatively large degree.
Naruse River Basin	④ Water is managed using weirs, reservoirs and a water recycling system in an alluvial fan area (Shikama, Kami)	Water is taken via weirs installed along rivers, tunnels, and reservoirs in this area. A water recycling channel is also installed to dam the drainage channel and re-use drainage water.
	⑤ Water is managed using a network of tunnels to distribute water to the fields and reservoirs in a hilly area (Sanbongi, Matsuyama)	TReservoirs provide an important source of water, but the water catchment area here had been small, so water needed to be supplemented when there was not enough water in the reservoirs. To solve this problem, a water channel roughly 33km long was created along the slope of a hill to direct water to the reservoirs. The water channel and the reservoirs fed by this water channel are both still used today as important sources of water supply.

The above icons are also used in the Osaki Koudo website, on local information boards, and other public resources.



Information boards and panels are installed in major locations where local resources of Osaki Koudo are found. You can view a video about the area simply by scanning the QR code printed on them.



Osaki Koudo website
URL : <https://osakikoudo.jp>



*The design of the website may change without notice.

Rice Farming and the Toji Hot-spring Healing Culture in the Mountains

In this mountainous area where securing irrigation water posed a challenge, people exercised originality and ingenuity in installing water channels to secure and draw water into the paddy fields after diverting it through a lukewarm water channel to warm it. Naruko Onsenkyo Village boasts an ample supply of hot water of excellent spring quality, and inherits a farming culture representative of the Tohoku region, along with traditional crafts such as the Naruko kokeshi wooden dolls and Naruko lacquerware.



1 Minamihara Anazeki Channel



The mountainous Minamihara area posed a challenge in securing irrigation water for rice farming, because water could not be taken from the rivers. To solve this issue, Yuza Heizaemon Noritsugu, the village headman during the Edo Period (1603-1868), hand-dug an irrigation channel over a distance of 1,880 meters along the steep slopes of the mountains in the Shoho Years (1644-1647). The channel has been managed by local people through the generations and still contributes to supplying precious water for agricultural and household use in the mountainous area.

Location 54-1 Minamihara, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City (includes private land)

2 Warming Water Channels



Cold water drawn from the mountains would adversely affect the growth of rice plants if it is fed directly into the paddy fields, so it is diverted through a warming channel to warm it to a moderate temperature before it reaches the paddy fields. This is a farmers' invention unique to the mountainous area of Naruko. In addition to warming channels, ponds and paddies are also used to divert and warm water.

Location 29 Minamihara, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City (includes private land)

3 Naruko Dam



May, carp banners are set up in conjunction with the release of sudare.

Naruko Dam was built to serve a number of purposes, namely for flood control of Eai River, hydroelectric power generation, and supply of irrigation water. It is the first large arch dam in Japan built solely by the Japanese, and has been selected as a JSCE Civil Engineering Heritage Site. The sights of water being released from the dam during Golden Week and the dam surrounded by autumnal leaves during the fall foliage season are breathtaking.

Location 2-8, Iwabuchi, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City

4 Gandosawa Dam



Gandosawa Dam supplies ample agricultural water to the paddy fields of Osaki Koudo. The vast reservoir of the dam suddenly pops into view when emerging from a tunnel as a sight that can be seen nowhere else. The surface of the reservoir is a mystic canvas of the four seasons, reflecting the fresh green colors of new leaves in spring, the blue sky in summer, and the autumnal leaves in autumn.
*Closed during winter

Location Oudake, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City

5 Onikobena Greens



Onikobena greens are a traditional vegetable that acquires a unique pungency only when grown in the soil and environment of Onikobe. By pickling it in salt, it can be eaten whole, including its stems, leaves, and roots, and has long garnished meals as a non-perishable food during the harsh winters until springtime. It has become a rare vegetable that is cultivated by only a few farmers today.

Location 43-1Hara, Onikobe, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City (location of a signboard)

6 Yukimusubi Mountain-grown Rice



Yukimusubi is a variety of cold weather-resistant rice produced by the Naruko Rice Project, which was launched to protect agriculture in the mountainous area that is struggling with depopulation. By promoting visible exchanges with urban consumers, the project has realized a scheme of community-supported agriculture (CSA) in which farmers and consumers mutually support each other.

Location 77-84 Hoshinuma, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City (sales outlet Musubiya)

7 Toji Hot-spring Healing Culture



The hot-spring healing culture of toji developed from local people's custom of enjoying an extended stay at Naruko Onsenkyo Village after harvesting rice to recover from the fatigue of working the fields in a harsh natural environment. The unique culture of allowing the blessings of nature in the form of a hot spring to heal the mind and body is attracting widespread attention from foreign tourists.

Inquiry Naruko Onsenkyo Tourism Association 0229-82-2102

8 Onikobe Kagura Dance and Music



The date of origin of Onikobe Kagura is not known, but it was performed when samurai warriors from the Saikyo and Kanto regions visited the Ou region, and was said to be introduced to the Onikobe district by way of Iwate Prefecture and Kurihara City in Miyagi Prefecture. Today, it is performed at festivals held at Araogawa Jinja Shrine and other such occasions, and has been designated an Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Osaki City.

Inquiry Osaki Board of Education, Cultural Property Division 0229-72-5036

9 Fermented Food Culture



Sweet, sour, and fragrant doboroku homemade from Yukimusubi rice

In 2004, Naruko was designated a Doburoku Special District within the Naruko Onsenkyo Special District for Tourism, and the unrefined sake called doboroku, which people used to make at home in ancient times, is now served at farmers' restaurants as a revival of Naruko Onsen hospitality.

Local Shops
Naruko Onsen Brewery, Kawatabi Onsen Ryokan Yusa

10 Minamihara Firefly Village



The lush rural landscape that spreads across the mountainous area near Minamihara Anazeki Channel is home to swarms of fireflies that only live in clear waters. The Minamihara Reservoir, in particular, fosters a symbiosis of Genjibotaru, Heikebotaru, and Himebotaru fireflies which are rarely seen even within Japan. Best season: Late June to late July

Location 189 Minamihara, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City

11 Bogake Rice Drying



Bogake is a traditional method of drying harvested rice by hooking bundles of rice stalks cylindrically around a vertical pole and exposing them to strong northwesterly winds and the sun. Drying rice stalks slowly in this way has the advantage of yielding quality rice with few cracked grains. It can be seen commonly in the low upland area of Naruko during rice harvesting season.

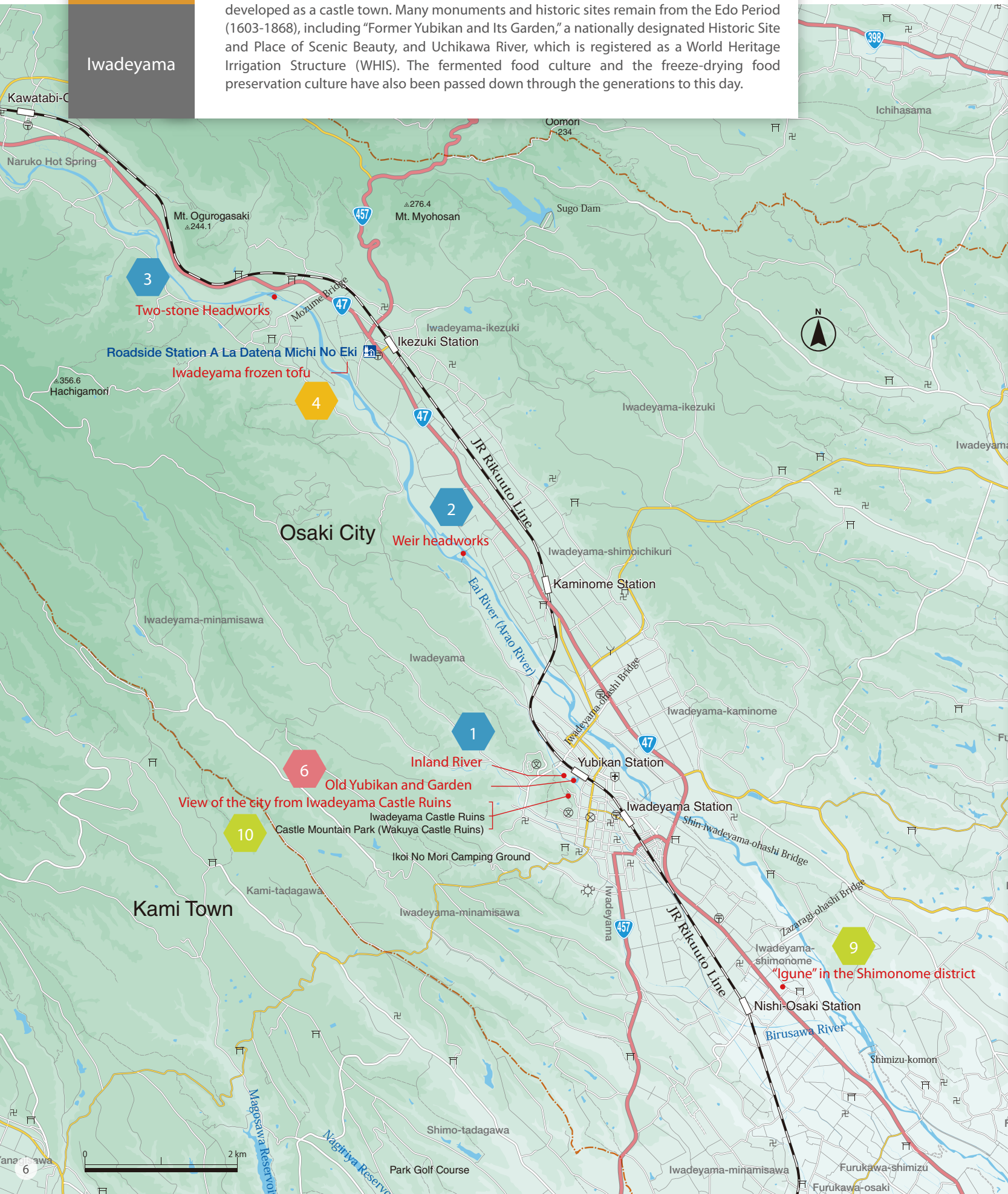
Location Around Omoridaira, Onikobe, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City



Uchikawa River and Fermented Food Culture in a Castle Town

Iwadeyama is where Date Masamune took up residence during his youth, and which later developed as a castle town. Many monuments and historic sites remain from the Edo Period (1603-1868), including "Former Yubikan and Its Garden," a nationally designated Historic Site and Place of Scenic Beauty, and Uchikawa River, which is registered as a World Heritage Irrigation Structure (WHIS). The fermented food culture and the freeze-drying food preservation culture have also been passed down through the generations to this day.

Iwadeyama



1 Uchikawa River



Uchikawa River was artificially made by Date Masamune more than 400 years ago to secure agricultural water and to protect the castle as a moat. It was named Uchikawa, literally meaning "inner river," because it flowed on the inner side of a wall named Ichinoko. The river was registered as a World Heritage Irrigation Structure in 2016

Location 7 Kamikawamachi, Iwadeyama, Osaki City

2 Ozeki Toshuko Weir



Ozeki Toshuko Weir has its beginnings as a wooden sluice gate built by Date Masamune to divert water from Eai River as a flood control measure and for securing irrigation water. The diverted water flows through the center of Iwadeyama as Uchikawa River. Today, Ozeki Toshuko Weir is an important irrigation facility that supplies water to an area spreading over 3,300 hectares of land.

Location Ushinose, Iwadeyama Shimoichikuri, Osaki City

3 Futatsuishi Toshuko Weir



The name Futatsuishi, literally meaning "two rocks," comes from the two large rocks that were lodged near the water intake. Records indicate that the weir existed since the Edo Period (1603-1868), and is today operated as a facility that feeds irrigation water to an area of 600 hectares in the middle basin of Osaki Koudo. Part of the rock that gave the weir its name is preserved onsite.

Location Kamimiyakusaimae, Iwadeyama Iketsuki, Osaki City

4 Iwadeyama Freeze-dried Tofu



Iwadeyama freeze-dried tofu is a representative taste of the area. It was introduced to Iwadeyama in the late Edo Period (1603-1868) by Saito Shogoro as a winter cash crop and as a precious source of protein. It has been passed down to this day through repeated improvements to its production method to better match the climate and culture of Iwadeyama.

In 2018, it was registered under the Geographical Indication (GI) system which aims to protect local foods that are products of the culture and tradition of their places of origin.

Location 4-1 Shimomiyamichishita, Iwadeyama Iketsuki, Osaki City (sold at A-La-Datena Michinoeki Road Station)

5 Fermented Food Culture



As a former castle town, Iwadeyama has inherited and passed down the fermented food culture that continues to represent Osaki Koudo today. Three of the four manufacturers in the Osaki region that make koji, the rice malt indispensable to brewing sake, miso and soy sauce, are located in Iwadeyama.

Local Shops
Koizumi Kojiya, Kikuchi Kojiya, Ishida Kojiya, Natori Misoshoyuten, Moritami Shuzoten

6 Former Yubikan and Its Garden



Yubikan was a school founded by the Iwadeyama Date Clan in the Edo Period (1603-1868). The main building was likely built in as early as 1677 as a retreat for Munetoshi, the second head of the Date Clan. Yubikan has been designated a national Historic Site and Place of Scenic Beauty in 1933.

Location 6 Kamikawamachi, Iwadeyama, Osaki City

7 Iwadeyama Okura School of Noh Songs



The founder of the Yumura Clan who became head of the Okura School of Noh songs enjoyed favorable treatment by the Date Clan upon returning to Iwadeyama after studying and mastering the art in Kyoto. Inherited by the local people of Iwadeyama, the Iwadeyama Okura School of Noh songs continue to be preserved today by devotees, and has been designated an Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Osaki City.

Inquiry Osaki Board of Education, Cultural Property Division 0229-72-5036

8 Living Creatures in the Paddy Field Environment



A vast 30,000 hectares of paddy fields spread across Osaki Koudo and provide a habitat for a diversity of living creatures living in symbiosis with agricultural activities. River-fed water channels in Iwadeyama are home to dragonflies and cherry salmon that favor clean water, and maintain an environment suited to water buttercups.

Location 4-1 Shimomiyamichishita, Iwadeyama Iketsuki, Osaki City

9 Igune Woodlands in the Shimonome District



Former Shimonome Village, traversed by former Kitauzen Kaido Road, is an area where the traditional rural landscape has been well conserved. In fact, the names of 29 residences recorded in Anei Fudoki, a topographical description of the Sendai Domain compiled in the Edo Period (1603-1868), still exist to this day. Particularly impressive is the igune homestead woodland around the Okigawara residence of the Chiba Family, befitting its status as a family of village officials during the Edo Period.

Location Around Okigawara, Iwadeyama Shimonome, Osaki City

10 Townscape Seen from Iwadeyamajo Castle Ruins



In 1591, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi administered the Oshu Saishiki Punishment to powerful warriors in Oshu for the second time, Date Masamune relocated his castle from Yonezawa to Iwadesawa, which he renamed as Iwadeyama. The site where the castle had stood commands a panoramic view of the erstwhile castle town of Iwadeyama and Uchikawa River, and is now a place of respite as a park.

Location 42-2 Shiroyama, Iwadeyama, Osaki City

See here for detailed information via a digital map



"Birthplace of Sasanishiki and Hitomebore Rice

Furukawa occupies the central area of Osaki Koudo. It is not only a center of agriculture but also home to numerous manufacturing companies. The people of Furukawa have engaged in rice farming since the Yayoi Period (ca. 300 BC-300), and the area has become a major granary today. It leads Japan in the development of new rice varieties and drives Japan's rice culture. Kejonuma Pond, registered as a Ramsar Convention wetland, is within easy reach and an ideal venue for viewing migratory birds.



1 Sanchome Toshuko Weir



Sanchome Toshuko Weir has its roots in the Sanchome Dam that was built in the middle basin of Eai River, and is a historic weir mentioned in the Anei Fudoki, a topographical description of the Sendai Domain compiled in the Edo Period (1603-1868). Today, it is a central irrigation facility in the Eai River Basin, supplying water to roughly 4,000 hectares of paddy fields. The irrigation water can be observed flowing from Eai River to Gotoe Water Channel.

Address Narita Kitanarita, Furukawa Shimizu, Osaki City

2 Gotoe Tunnel



Gotoe Irrigation Channel flows approximately four kilometers from the Sanchome water intake in the middle basin of Eai River to Minamikobayashi. Gotoe Tunnel accounts for roughly 100 meters along the middle segment of the channel below the hill where Ryukoin Temple stands. It is said that the name Gotoe comes from Goto Magobe Nobuyasu, who resided in Miyazawajo Castle during the Keicho Years (1596-1615).

Location Sanchome Kadera, Furukawa Shimizu, Osaki City (includes private land)

3 Bansui Water Supply Rotation System



The middle basin of Osaki Koudo tends to run short of the necessary amount of water needed to farm the entire paddy field area. Therefore, the traditional water management method called bansui is still employed today, in which farmers take turns drawing water into their paddies by inserting a weir board in the irrigation channel to raise the water level.

Location 194 Shinko, Furukawa Osaki, Osaki City (location of a signboard)

4 Kejonuma Dam



Kejonuma is a naturally made pond surrounded by hills in the plains of Furukawa. It was named Kejo, which literally means "a woman who transforms," after a daughter of a wealthy man who used to apply makeup using water from the pond. Today, it has been developed as a facility for controlling floods and securing agricultural water, and is annexed to the Kejonuma Dam Tourism Museum that provides information about the dam.

Location 2-2 Tosawa, Furukawa Kono, Osaki City

5 Furukawa Agricultural Experiment Station



Furukawa Agricultural Experiment Station is a branch of Miyagi Prefectural Agricultural Experiment Station. Since its establishment in Furukawa Suwa, Osaki in 1921, it has presented society with brand-name varieties of rice produced in Miyagi, including Sasanishiki, Hitomebore and Sasamusubi. Its history of rice development is introduced via information panels exhibited in the facility.

Location 88 Fukoku, Furukawa Osaki, Osaki City

6 Sasamusubi Rice



Sasanishiki used to be called the mightiest rice in the east. However, when record cold weather in 1993 brought severe damage to Furukawa, many farmers gave up farming in rapid succession. To keep local agriculture alive, Furukawa Agricultural Experiment Station developed Sasamusubi as an improved variety of Sasanishiki and succeeded in promoting the light-tasting rice as a brand-name rice of Osaki.

Inquiry Osaki Industry and Economy Department, Agriculture and Forestry Promotion Division 0229-23-7090

7 Mochi Culture of Osaki Koudo



Mochi tops the list of foods that are considered a "gochiso" (pronounced "gottso" in the local dialect), or a feast, in Osaki Koudo. There are as many as 46 different ways to enjoy eating mochi. Among them, ebi-mochi (mochi served with freshwater shrimp) and fusube-mochi (mochi served with loach) are particularly unique to this region. The mochi is an important source of protein to farmers and a by-product of the ingenious water management system that embodies the blessings of the paddy fields.

Local Shops
Mochibe, Aonuma Mochiten

8 Fermented Food Culture



There are a number of long-established sake dealers in Furukawa. The Matsumoto Family in Matsuyama, Osaki commenced its business (known as Ichinokura today) in 1755. The Tanaka Family in Nakaniida, Kami commenced its business (known as Tanaka Shuzoten today) in 1789, and the Sasaki Family in Furukawa, Osaki (known as Hachihei Shuzoten today), in 1790.

Local Shops
Yoneki Honten, Chubachi Misoshoyuten, Kanbai Shuzo, Asakan Shuzoten, Hachihei Shuzoten

9 Furukawa Farmers' Market



Suzuki Izumi Motonobu, who was placed in charge of Furukawajo Castle by Date Masamune, launched a market to bring economic stability to Furukawa's war-weary citizens. The market has continued for some 400 years since the end of the Warring States Period (1467-1615), and has passed its baton to Road Station Osaki, which opened in 2019. The market is held from April to July, on days ending with 3 or 7.

Inquiry Road Station Osaki 0229-25-7381

10 Ramsar Convention Wetland of "Kejonuma Pond"



Kejonuma Pond was registered as a Ramsar Convention wetland in October 2008. It is an important wintering place for waterfowl including bean geese, greater white-fronted geese, and Canada geese. As many as 20,000 such birds gather at the most during the best viewing season from November to January. The area also blooms with flowers of the four seasons, such as irises and day lilies.

Location Around Tosawa, Furukawa Kono, Osaki City

11 Igune Woodlands in the Sawada District



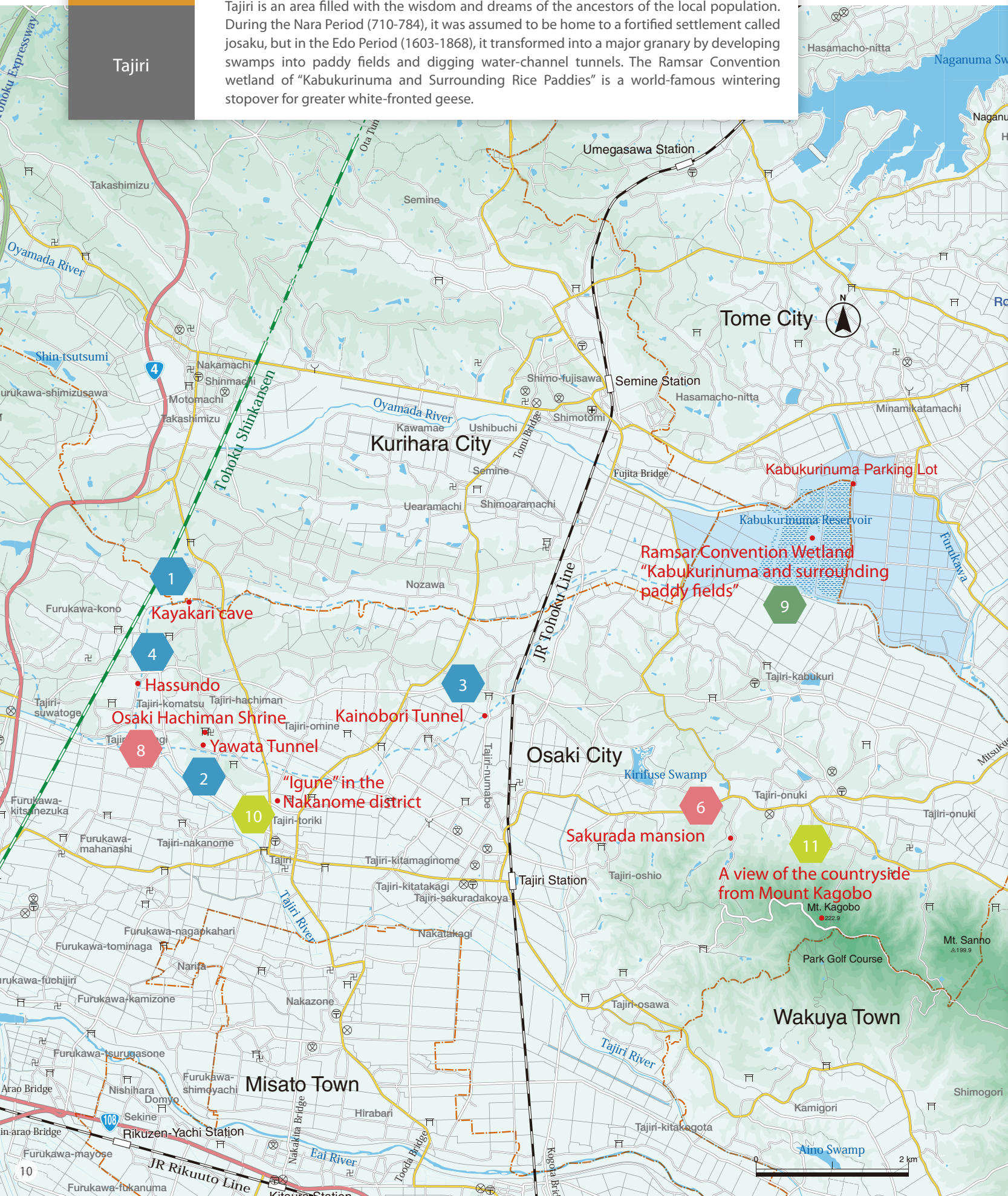
The Sawada District, in close proximity to the central area of Osaki Koudo, retains beautiful landscapes of igune homestead woodlands. In the screening for designation as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), this area was rated highly for the role of the igune in protecting farmers' homes from the northwesterly winds of winter and for the distinctive landscape they create.

Location Around Furukawa Sawada, Osaki City



Rice Farming in Harmony between Migratory Birds and People

Tajiri is an area filled with the wisdom and dreams of the ancestors of the local population. During the Nara Period (710-784), it was assumed to be home to a fortified settlement called josaku, but in the Edo Period (1603-1868), it transformed into a major granary by developing swamps into paddy fields and digging water-channel tunnels. The Ramsar Convention wetland of "Kabukurinuma and Surrounding Rice Paddies" is a world-famous wintering stopover for greater white-fronted geese.



1 Kayakari Tunnel



Kayakari Tunnel is a 1,121-meter drainage tunnel that was dug manually from 1684 to 1690, to convert a large pond called Osaki Pond into paddy fields. It comprised the core of the paddy development project that spread from Kejonuma Pond to Kabukurinuma Pond. The tunnel is still today connected to Kayakari River, providing drainage to the grain production area.

Location Takashimizu Kayakari, Kurihara City

2 Yawata Tunnel



Yawata Tunnel is an irrigation and drainage tunnel that was dug from 1688 to 1743, to supply irrigation water that was deprived by the reclamation of Yawatanuma Pond. It connects the many ponds in the area, large and small, and is an important water management facility for the development of new paddy fields in Tajiri, along with Kainohori Tunnel.

*The dotted line in the map shows the original drainage channel. The ponds no longer exist, but a fertile field spreads in its place.

Location Gotenzaka, Tajiri Yawata, Osaki City

3 Kainohori Tunnel



Kainohori Tunnel comprises two lower holes and one upper hole. The lower holes provide drainage to Kainohori Swamp, and the upper hole is used for both irrigation and drainage. Development of the 130-hectare Kainohori Swamp was a major achievement, commemorated by the construction of a monument of virtue and Saga Jinja Shrine in Kaihori by the hands of volunteers.

Location Kainohori, Tajiri Numabe, Osaki City

4 Hassundo Channels



Square channels measuring 24 centimeters on each side, called hassundo, were built in drainage channels where the upstream and downstream flows meet, to restrict the amount of water that flows downstream when a flood occurs. These channels embrace the wisdom of the local people who attempted to devise a region-wide flood management system that would mitigate the concentration of flood damage downstream by allowing water to also inundate the upstream area.

*Boundary between Tajiri and Furukawa

Location Near 1-2 Doteshta, Tajiri Komatsu, Osaki City (location of a signboard)

5 Winter Rice Paddies



In Tajiri, rice paddies are filled with water even during the winter in a practice called fuyumizutanbo. This provides a roosting place for greater white-fronted geese and other waterfowl, protects the local ecosystem that embraces a diversity of living creatures such as aquatic worms and frogs, and thereby helps to produce good-quality rice without using pesticides or chemical fertilizers.

Inquiry Tajiri Honamikosha 0229-38-1021

6 Sakurada Residence



Sakurada Residence is an old folk house built some 250 years ago. Judging from the architectural structure of the kitchen and drawing room in the annex building, it is presumed to have been the residence of a retainer of the Wakuya Date Clan. It is unique in that an anteroom and small room is attached to the main drawing room. There is also a six-kilometer walking path to and from Sakurada Residence and the summit of Mount Kagobo.

Location 4 Sakurada, Tajiri Onuki, Osaki City

7 Shunto School of Noh Songs



The Shunto school of Noh songs was inherited by Noh performers of the Sendai Clan, and it thereafter took root as a tradition in Onuki Nitano, a village governed by the Wakuya Date Clan. Today, the organization Hachinokikai is the sole inheritor of the Shunto school of Noh songs, designated an Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Osaki City.

Inquiry Osaki Board of Education, Cultural Property Division 0229-72-5036

8 Osaki Hachiman Jinja Shrine



Osaki Hachiman Jinja Shrine is an old shrine with a history of a thousand years, and the main branch of all other Osaki Hachiman shrines. The Osaki Hachimangu Shrine in Sendai City is said to have been transferred to Sendai by Date Masamune when he founded Sendai. Recent archaeological surveys suggest that the precincts of the shrine had been the site of the fortified settlement of Nittasaku created in 737 under the government of the Yamato Imperial Court based on the Ritsuryo code.

Location 16 Tonosaka, Tajiri Hachiman, Osaki City

9 Ramsar Convention Wetland of "Kabukurinuma and Surrounding Rice Paddies"



Kabukurinuma and its surrounding rice paddies were registered as a Ramsar Convention wetland in November 2005. The site's most salient attraction is the large flock of greater white-fronted geese that winter here from October to January. They rest in the pond during the night and spend the daytime feeding on fallen rice husks and grass in the paddies after harvest. More than 100,000 geese at the most take flight all at once in the early morning and fly back to roost in the evening.

Location Around Onuma, Tajiri Kabukuri, Osaki City

10 Igune Woodlands in the Nakanome District



Along the Tajiri River, which has enriched the Tajiri area you can see the unique rural scenery of this area. Environmentally friendly agriculture and consumer exchange are thriving. In "Igune", there are many red dragonflies, such as nutcrackers, that grow in the rice fields.

Location Near Nakanome, Tajiri, Osaki City

11 A view of the countryside from Mount Kagobo



The summit of Mount Kagobo, at an altitude of 224 meters, commands an extensive view of the paddy fields of Osaki Koudo and Igune homestead woodlands that are scattered throughout the area. On a clear sunny day, the vast area from Sendai City to Ishinomaki City can be enjoyed in 360-degree panorama. The area near the summit is said to be the former site of Kagoyama Kokka Anrajuji Temple, built by Emperor Tenmu.

Location 178-1 Kagomineyama, Tajiri Osawa, Osaki City



A Historical Town Emanating the Traditional Sake Brewing Culture

During the Edo Period (1603-1868), Matsuyama prospered as a castle town governed by the Moniwa Clan, which served the Date Clan as chief retainer and acted as the leading force in the Sendai Clan's development of new paddy fields. The local people achieved a great feat in working the barren land near mainstream Naruse River that had mostly been fields and swamps. The area retains the erstwhile townscape, traditional culture and customs, and sake brewing culture to this day.



1 Reservoirs and Recycled Water Use



Numerous reservoirs were created as means for securing irrigation water in the middle and lower reaches of Naruse River where water tends to run short, such that there are as many as 1,152 reservoirs in Osaki Koudo as a whole. In addition to recycling water by raising the level of water in drainage channels, other ingenious water management methods are in place to secure irrigation water.

Location 52 Shinkurandobashi, Matuyama Sengoku, Osaki City (location of a signboard)

2 Lateral Levee and Suzunegoro Drainage Pump Station



A lateral levee had been constructed where the distance between the embankment of Naruse River and the mountains narrowed, to block the overflow of water and protect downstream town in the face of a flood. This had made the upstream area of the levee prone to inundation, but the situation greatly improved with the construction of the Suzunegoro Drainage Pump Station in 1989.

Location Suzunegoro, Matsuyama Shimoibano, Osaki City

3 Matsuyama Seri Parsley



Matsuyama Seri is a traditional vegetable characterized by a distinct scent and crispness. Cultivated and seeded through the years by farmers, it has been a common ingredient for soups, pickles, and processed fermented foods. It has also played an important role in providing food during the long harsh winters and in nurturing the area's rich food culture.

Inquiry Osaki City Matsuyama General Branch Office, Regional Promotion Division 0229-55-2112

4 Fermented Food Culture



Matsuyama is home to one sake brewery and one miso and soy sauce brewery. It is also an area where brewers rice is made. The brewing industry largely contributes to increasing the added value of rice and soy beans produced in Osaki Koudo.

Local Shops
Sendai Miso Shoyu, Ichinokura

5 Moniwa Gozen Set Meal



Moniwa Gozen is a modern-day arrangement of the set meal which the fourteenth master fisherman of the Moniwa Clan made for Date Masamune, to whom members of the clan served as chief retainers over many generations. Befitting Matsuyama as a place where the fermented food culture has taken root, it is made using fermented foods and local specialties in abundance.

Local Shops
Kappo Edogawa, Hananokura

6 Kanatsuryu Matsuyama Lion Dance



Kanatsuryu Matsuyama Lion Dance is performed by singing and dancing to the beat of a drum carrying sasara bamboo on the back and wearing a lion's mask. It used to be performed on the premises of Matsuyamajo Castle until the early modern period and became extinct for a while after that, but it was revived in 2003. The dance is performed as a prayer for the repose of ancestral spirits, warding off evil spirits, and bountiful harvests, and is being handed down to future generations as a religious performance offered at annual festivals held by local shrines.

Inquiry Osaki Board of Education, Cultural Property Division 0229-72-5036

7 Furusato History Museum



Furusato History Museum exhibits a collection of artifacts excavated from tumulus burials in the area, ancient armors and swords, and other such traditional artifacts and antiques. The history room, in particular, is a showcase of historical materials ranging from the prehistoric period to today, with a focus on materials related to the Moniwa Clan, a family that served as chief retainers to the local feudal lords of the Sendai Clan.

Location 428 Matsuyama, Matsuyama Sengoku, Osaki City

8 Museum Hananokura



TA white-walled building resembling a sake cellar showcases an array of materials related to sake, such as tubs and barrels used to make sake, the history of sake, and the types and characteristics of sake. A video corner provides a showing of an animated film themed on the legend of the "Slaying of the Yamata no Orochi serpent dragon," containing various trivia about sake.

Location 242-1 Matsuyama, Matsuyama Sengoku, Osaki City

9 Living Creatures in the Paddy Field Environment



In the Matsuyama area, brewers rice, the fundamental raw ingredient of sake, is cultivated by methods that minimize or completely eliminate the use of agricultural chemicals. Owing to makers of brewers' rice and other concerned parties who are committed to conserving the natural environment and its living creatures, red dragonflies whose population is decreasing nationwide, can be seen in many paddy fields in Matsuyama.

Location Around Matsuyama Sengoku, Osaki City

10 Rural Landscape Seen from the Ruins of Sengokujo Castle in Gohonmaru Park



Sengokujo Castle was the place of residence of the Moniwa Clan, from Moniwa Yoshimoto, the first lord of the clan who took up residence in Matsuyama in 1603, until the clan transferred to Uwanodate. The observatory provides a panoramic view of the rural landscape of Osaki Koudo, and the outermost perimeter of the site has been transformed into a garden of cosmos flowers, attracting many visitors in autumn.

Location 6 Honmaru, Matsuyama Sengoku, Osaki City

11 Sunset Seen from along Naruse River



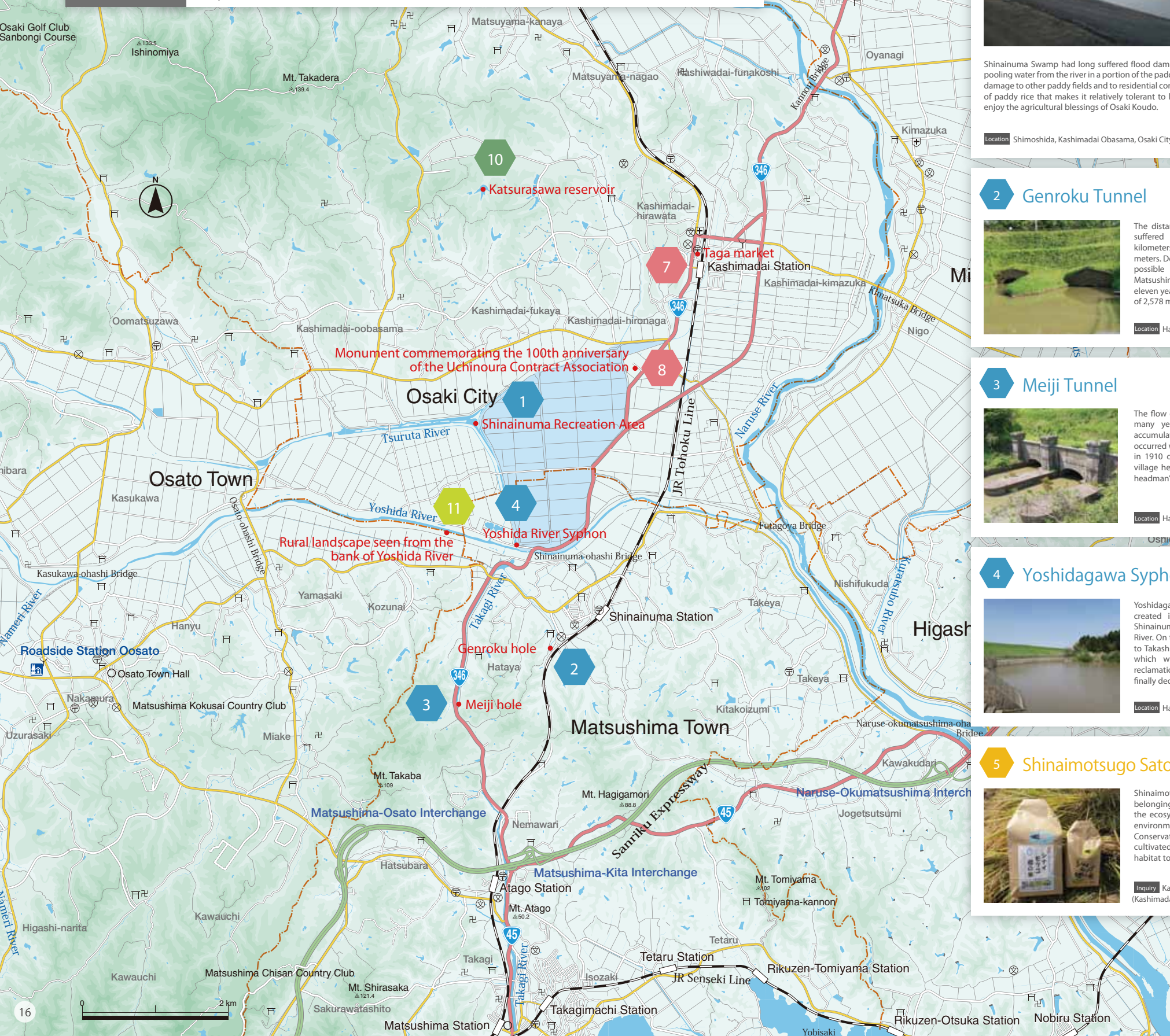
Prefectural Road 32, running atop the embankment of Naruse River, offers a clear view of Mount Funagata, a mountain known for an extremely rare form of religious faith called "Mount Funagata worship," in which shrines in the mountain and at the foot of the mountain are worshipped as gods of agriculture. A sublime scene unfolds when the setting sun reflects on the long strip of Naruse River that traverses Osaki Koudo as it sets behind Mount Funagata.

Location Around Suzunegoro, Matsuyama Shimoibano, Osaki City



History of Flood Control and Drainage through the Life of a Straw-Saddled Village Headman

The Kashimadai area in the lower basin of Osaki Koudo had long suffered flood damage due to its flat terrain. However, a foundation for agricultural production has been created and flood control basins have been installed under the national project for reclamation of Shinainuma Swamp, and fertile land has consequently been gained through a flexible water management system. The area is known for its production of a brand of tomato named Delicious Tomato, and has become a center of information about the branding of agricultural produce.



1 Shinainuma Flood Control Basin



Shinainuma Swamp had long suffered flood damage, but this has been corrected by temporarily pooling water from the river in a portion of the paddy fields (372ha) in the event of a flood to mitigate damage to other paddy fields and to residential communities. This takes advantage of the properties of paddy rice that makes it relatively tolerant to large-scale floods, while also allowing people to enjoy the agricultural blessings of Osaki Koudo.

Location Shimoshida, Kashimadai Obasama, Osaki City

2 Genroku Tunnel



The distance from Shinainuma Swamp, which has long suffered flood damage, to Matsushima Bay is 7.4 kilometers, with a difference in elevation of a mere two meters. Despite this small height difference, it has become possible for water from the swamp to flow into Matsushima Bay owing to a difficult project that ran for eleven years from 1693, to dig two tunnels over a distance of 2,578 meters.

Location Hatayamyojin, Matsushima-cho, Miyagi-gun

3 Meiji Tunnel



The flow of water in Meiji Tunnel had become poor over many years after its construction, hindered by the accumulation of dirt and sand, such that flood damage occurred with each heavy rain. A new tunnel was thus built in 1910 owing to the efforts of Kamata Sannosuke, the village headman affectionately known as "straw-saddled headman" for his humbleness.

Location Hataya Izumigahara, Matsushima-cho, Miyagi-gun

4 Yoshidagawa Syphon Intersection



Yoshidagawa Syphon is a two-level river intersection created in 1940. Tsuruta River, which flows through Shinainuma Swamp, drains water by passing under Yoshida River. On the other side of Yoshida River, its name changes to Takashiro River and connects to Meiji Tunnel through which water drains into Matsushima Bay. A major reclamation project that lasted for some 200 years was finally declared completed in 1977.

Location Hataya Kengyo, Matsushima-cho, Miyagi-gun

5 Shinaimotsugo Satonomai Rice



Shinaimotsugo is an endangered species of fish belonging to the carp family. It lives in clear waters where the ecosystem is well conserved. To protect the natural environment, the Society for Shinaimotsugo Conservation has developed a brand-name rice cultivated using water from reservoirs that provide a habitat to the shinaimotsugo.

Inquiry Kashimadai Shinaimotsugo Satonomai Tsukurite no Kai (Kashimadai Society of Shinaimotsugo Satonomai Rice Farmers)

6 Delicious Tomato



Some 30 varieties of tomato alone are cultivated in Osaki Koudo, representing a diversity in agriculture. In particular, the Delicious Tomato brand of tomatoes that is produced as a specialty of Kashimadai is a challenge to cultivate, but it has succeeded in winning high acclaim as a brand-name crop of Kashimadai for its scarcity and sweetness.

Major producers
Delicious Farm, Marusen Farm

7 Tagaichi Market



Tagaichi Market has its beginnings in 1910, when the village headman Kamata Sannosuke enshrined the deities of fourteen village shrines in Kashimadai Jinja Shrine. He took the occasion to embark on improving the welfare of the village people by selling agricultural produce and processed goods produced them. It is a traditional market and the largest in Tohoku.

Dates Spring: April 10-12 Fall: November 10-12

Inquiry SOsaki City Kashimadai General Branch Office, Regional Promotion Division 0229-56-7111

8 100th Anniversary Monument of the Uchinoura Keiyakukai Mutual Aid Association



Uchinoura Keiyakukai is a mutual aid association established in 1914. It has maintained livelihoods in the area that has suffered repeated floods and poverty by reclaiming wastelands, engaging in cooperative agriculture, and promoting mutual support in daily living. The monument is a testimony of their efforts and achievements.

Location Uchinoura, Kashimadai Hironaga, Osaki City

9 Hishi Water Chestnut



Previously, hishi water chestnuts grew profusely over the entire surface of Shinainuma Swamp, and a hishi collecting song used to be sung while harvesting them. The collected hishi were mixed with rice to make a simple but tasty dish similar to chestnut rice. Hishi cultivation is making a gradual comeback along with activities for the protection of the fish called shinaimotsugo.

Inquiry Society for Shinaimotsugo Conservation

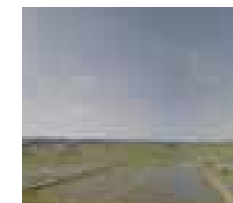
10 Katsurasawa Reservoir



In 1993, the shinaimotsugo, a species of carp that was thought to be extinct, was discovered for the first time in sixty years in Katsurasawa Reservoir. The reservoir was selected among the 500 Important Wetlands in Japan by the Ministry of the Environment under the name of "Former Shinainuma Swamp and Surrounding Reservoirs." Pond draining and other such activities are implemented to conserve the favorable environment. *Please keep out of the reservoir.

Location 1 Higashizenigami, Kashimadai Hirawata, Osaki City

11 Rural Landscape Seen from Yoshidagawa Levee



A sweeping vista of agricultural land spreads in every direction as far as the eye can see. It is a sight filled with the painstaking efforts of the ancestors of the local population who conquered the trials of repeated flood damage throughout the flat Kashimadai area, which only has a gradient of around 1/2500 (elevation difference of 1m per 2500m), by reclaiming and draining the land.

Location Around Hataya Kengyo, Matsushima-cho, Miyagi-gun



Semizeki Weir, a Solution to the Challenge of Taking Water from Naruse River

Located upstream of Naruse River, Kami has traditionally faced the struggle of securing agricultural water. Yet, it is now an area that supplies ample water to Osaki Koudo from near the border with Yamagata Prefecture. It is home to Yakurai Resort, and is also known for the Hibuse Tiger Dance that has a history of some 650 years, and as the birthplace of the rare kirikomiyaki ceramicware.



1 Harazeki Weir



Harazeki was built as an intake weir under the orders of Date Tsunamura, the fourth head of the Date Clan, taking as many as ten years to complete since commencement of its construction in 1670. A stone monument is inscribed with a passage to the effect that the weir "has turned wasteland into a land of fertile paddies." It still continues to feed water to fields in the Onoda area of Kami.

Location Kadosawa Yajita, Kami-machi, Kami-gun

2 Semizeki Weir



Semizeki Weir was built as an intake weir under the orders of the Ishimoda Clan, which ruled the Miyazaki area of Kami today. Begun in 1660 and completed roughly ten years later, it was a difficult construction, such that the child of the field supervisor was supposedly offered as a human pillar in prayer for the successful flow of water. The child has been enshrined as an Enkirijizo deity (literally, "bond severing deity").

Location Matsuda, Kami-machi, Kami-gun

3 Tatemae Ozeki Weir



Tatemae Ozeki is an intake weir that was built over a period of twelve years from 1267, to take water from Tagawa River, a tributary of Naruse River, for irrigation. Today, it supplies water to the Nakanida area of Kami. Water used for irrigation is drained into Tagawa River via Semizeki Weir and reused as the source of water for Tatemaezeki Weir.

Location Kamikawara, Komeizumi, Kami-machi, Kami-gun

4 Kamikawara Toshuko Weir



Kamikawara Toshuko Weir was originally built along mainstream Naruse River in 1640. However, it was transferred to Tagawa River, a tributary of Naruse River, because its management and repair required an enormous amount of money and manpower, and is thus also called Tagawazeki Weir. Today, it is operated as Kamikawara Toshuko Weir at the confluence of Naruse River and Tagawa River.

Location Nishikawara, Kami-machi, Kami-gun

5 Kozena Daikon Radish



Kozena daikon radish is a traditional and rare variety of vegetable that is only grown by a few farmers today in the Koze district of Kami. It is said that those grown outside of the Koze district do not have the same soft leaves as those grown in the district. Unlike the Japanese daikon radish, the leaves are eaten instead of the root, and they are commonly pickled and preserved as non-perishable wintertime food.

Location 1-76 Ajigafukuro Yakuraihara, Kami-machi, Kami-gun

6 Fermented Food Culture



Three of the ten sake breweries in Osaki Koudo are located in Kami. These three breweries are clustered within a few hundred meters of each other in the Nakanida district. They comprise the western center of fermented food culture in Osaki Koudo along with a miso and soy sauce brewery and a manufacturer of rice malt.

Local Shops
Tanaka Shuzoten, Nakayu Shuzoten, Yamawa Shuzoten, Konno Jozo, Sato Kojiya

7 Kirigome no Hadaka Kasedori Festival



Kirigome no Hadaka Kasedori is a festival held on Koshogatsu day (January 15 of the lunar calendar) in prayer for protection against fire and against misfortunes during a yakudoshi, or unlucky age. It is characterized by men in a waistcloth with soot painted on their faces visiting homes in the area. When the festival was once terminated, seven fires broke out in a single year. Thus, it was thereafter revived and continues to be held today. It is designated an Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Miyagi Prefecture.

Location Kirigomeichiban, Miyazaki, Kami-machi, Kami-gun

8 Former Satake Residence



Presumed to be built in the late Edo Period (1603-1868), the Satake Residence features a main building with a hip roof and principal living quarters consisting of four rooms including a reception hall. It is a typical farmers' house of this period in the Kami area. The house is open to the public as an invaluable building that provides a glimpse of what life was like back then.

Location 70 Kirigomeniban, Miyazaki, Kami-machi, Kami-gun

9 Sweetfish and Naruse River



The clear flow of Naruse River is home to diverse types of fish, from migratory fish that migrate between the rivers and sea, to freshwater fish, such as sweetfish, salmon, and Japanese lamprey. The sight of many people coming to fish freshwater trout in the rich natural environment of Naruse River is a seasonal tradition.

Location 101 Ipponsugi, Kami-machi, Kami-gun
(location of a signboard)

10 Buzzards in Paddy Fields



The paddy fields are alive with diverse living creatures such as frogs and dragonflies. Among them is the buzzard, a type of hawk. Buzzards breed in the woods, on cliffs, and also in igune homestead woodlands, and prey on rats, frogs, and snakes living in paddy fields.

Location 1-76 Ajigafukuro Yakuraihara, Kami-machi, Kami-gun

11 Yutorinuma Swamp and Tetsugyo Fish



Yutorinuma Swamp is surrounded by a virgin beech forest. Until the early Edo Period (1603-1868), houses next to the swamp raised tetsugyo, a species of fish belonging to the carp family, in large numbers as sources of protein during wintertime. Yutorinuma Swamp was designated a national Natural Monument in 1933, and the tetsugyo was specified as a Critically Endangered and Endangered (CR+EN) Species of Miyagi Prefecture.

Location 2-70 Kirigome, Miyazaki, Kami-machi, Kami-gun
(location of a signboard)

12 Igune Woodlands in the Komeizumi District



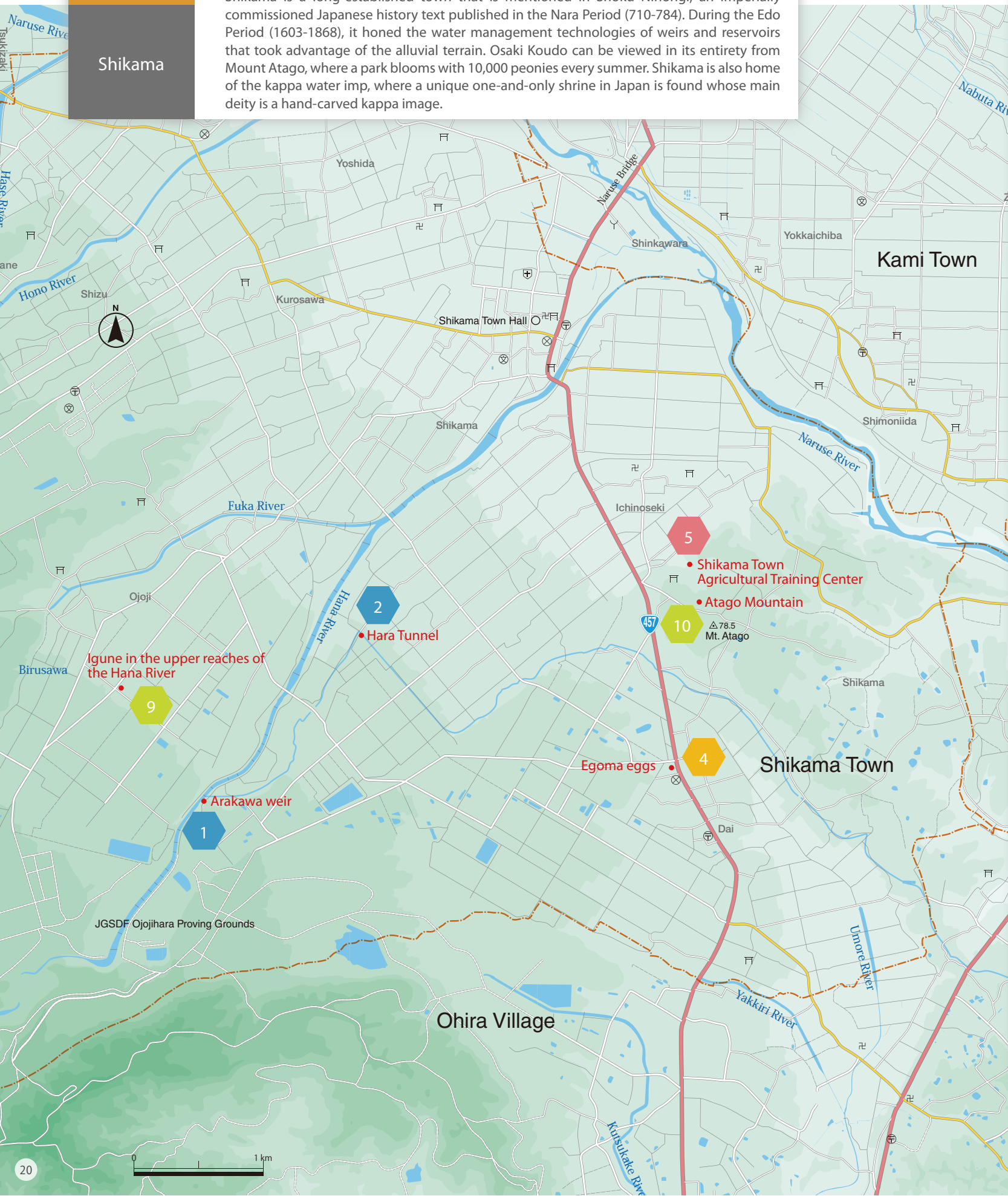
The Komeizumi District is known for igune homestead woodlands which drew water into residential sites via a water channel. It is also home to a tree named "Saikachi Tree of the Takahashi Family," presumed to be more than 300 years old and designated a Natural Monument of the town. The tree was said to be planted in prayer for recurring victory by the Takahashi Family, retainers of the Osaki Clan who returned to farming after the Osaki Kasai Uprising (1591).

Location Takadahara, Komeizumi, Kami-machi, Kami-gun



Mount Funagata Worship and the Landscape of Igune Woodlands Across Its Foothills

Shikama is a long-established town that is mentioned in Shoku Nihongi, an imperially commissioned Japanese history text published in the Nara Period (710-784). During the Edo Period (1603-1868), it honed the water management technologies of weirs and reservoirs that took advantage of the alluvial terrain. Osaki Koudo can be viewed in its entirety from Mount Atago, where a park blooms with 10,000 peonies every summer. Shikama is also home of the kappa water imp, where a unique one-and-only shrine in Japan is found whose main deity is a hand-carved kappa image.



1 Arakawazeki Weir



Arakawazeki Weir is built on Arakawa River (Hanagawa River today), which is fed by water from the Funagata Mountain Range, and supplies water to Arakawazeki Irrigation Channel that stretches a distance of 33 kilometers to Sanbongi in Osaki City. It was originally founded by Date Munenori, the son of the second head of the Sendai Clan Date Tadamune, to reclaim the fields and swamp spreading over some 100 hectares in Shikama.

Location Ojoji Shimokawara, Shikama-cho, Kami-gun

2 Harakuguri Tunnel



Harakuguri Tunnel (aqueduct tunnel) is located upstream of the twelve tunnels along Arakawazeki Irrigation Channel. The water channel bends at a right angle at Harakuguri Tunnel, changes direction eastward, and stretches toward the hilly terrain that is home to an archaeological site that dates back to the Paleolithic Period. The term "anazeki," meaning "tunnel," still exists in the vicinity today as a place name.

Location Shinkamishinden, Shikama, Shikama-cho, Kami-gun

3 Egoma Perilla



Egoma, a plant of the Lamiaceae family, is cultivated for food and for its oil. It is also called Junen, meaning "ten years," because it is said that one can live ten years longer by eating egoma. In the mochi culture of Osaki Koudo, egoma is commonly mashed and flavored to make a dish called Junen-mochi (zunemochi).

Inquiry Shikama-cho Sangyo Kaihatsu Kosha (Shikama Industrial Development Corporation)

4 Egoma Eggs



Egoma eggs are a local specialty produced by adding the local bumper crop of egoma to chicken feed. A bowl of rice topped with raw egoma egg can be had at JA Kami Yotsuba's farm stand Mana House. Refills of both rice and egg are free.

Location 158-2 Kamishinmachi, Shikama-cho, Kami-gun

5 Shikama-cho Nogyo Denshukan (Shikama-cho Agricultural Learning Center)



Located in Atagoyama Park, Shikama-cho Nogyo Denshukan provides a display of items related to Noh performances and ceramicware, and holds special exhibitions on the Arakawazeki Weir and igune woodlands that have been recognized as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System. It also has learning facilities equipped with the latest audiovisual equipment, and provides comfortable lodging accommodation as well.

Location 1-40 Higashihara, Shikama, Shikama-cho, Kami-gun

6 Mount Funagata Worship



Mount Funagata, the source of the water that feeds Naruse River, has been worshipped by local residents since ancient times as a sacred mountain dedicated to the gods of the mountain, water, and paddy fields. A shrine called Funagatayama Goshu Jinja erected at its summit enshrines the Suiko Benzaiten deity. The custom of visiting the shrine after rice planting, called Gogatsumairi, is still observed today.

7 Kiyomizu Kagura Dance and Music



Kiyomizu Kagura is a common type of kagura performance called satokagura, which is performed without any dialogue. Derived from Nanbu Kagura, it is composed of some twenty songs. A votive plaque at Kiyomizu Kannondo Hall mentions a Kagura that was offered in 1900 and provides an image of the erstwhile performance.

Inquiry Shikama-cho Kominkan (Shikama-cho Community Center) 0229-65-3110

8 Suzunuma Swamp



Suzunuma Swamp is located around ten minutes on foot from Shikama Otaki Waterfall at the starting point of the Shikama path up Mount Funagata. Surrounded by a virgin beech forest that changes its colors from green to red/yellow and vice versa with the changing of the seasons, it is a mystical swamp where bushes floating on the water surface appear as though bonsai trees are lined up on loose rocks.

Location Yakushido, Koguriyama, Shikama-cho, Kami-gun (location of a signboard)

9 Igune Woodlands Upstream of Hanagawa River



A rural village spreads across the flatland of the alluvial fan formed by Hanagawa River (Arakawa River in olden times), which supplies water to Arakawazeki Irrigation Channel. It is an area where igune homestead woodlands characteristic of Osaki Koudo are preserved in excellent condition.

Location Yatsuhara, Ojoji, Shikama-cho, Kami-gun

10 Mount Atago



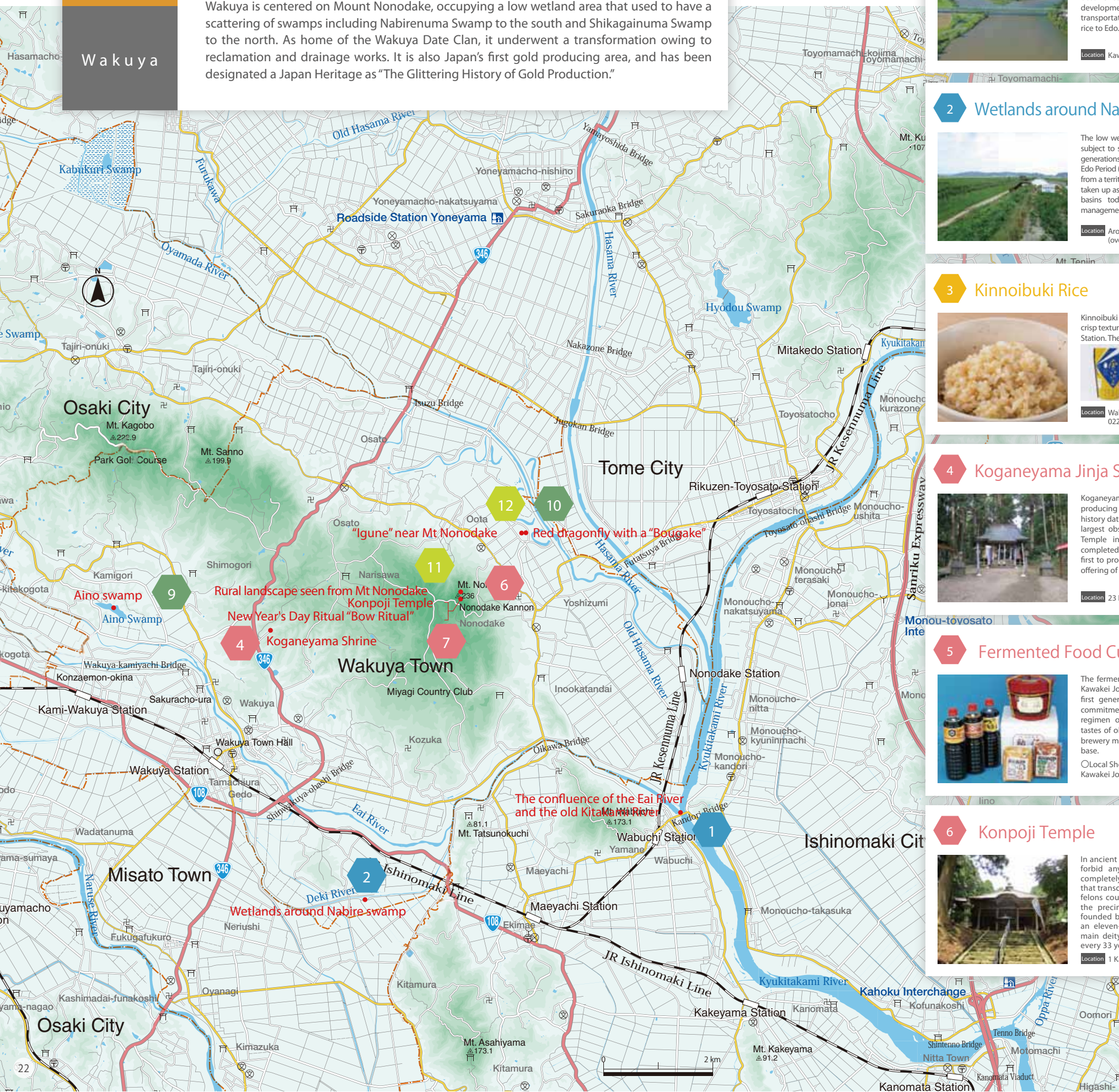
Mount Atago is a small mountain commanding a view of Osaki Koudo and its many igune homestead woodlands. Atagoyama Park offers a feast for the eyes through the seasons, blooming with cherry blossoms in April, peonies from late May to early June, hydrangeas in July, and crepe myrtle blossoms from September to mid-October.

Location 1-12 Higashihara, Shikama, Shikama-cho, Kami-gun



Traditional Farming Culture Centered on Konpoji Temple

Wakuya is centered on Mount Nonodake, occupying a low wetland area that used to have a scattering of swamps including Nabirenuma Swamp to the south and Shikagainuma Swamp to the north. As home of the Wakuya Date Clan, it underwent a transformation owing to reclamation and drainage works. It is also Japan's first gold producing area, and has been designated a Japan Heritage as "The Glittering History of Gold Production."



1 Confluence of Eai River and Former Kitakami River



Wakuya is an area symbolic of the renovation of Kitakami River. Owing to diversion work involving today's Kyu-kitakami River, Kyu-hazama River, and Eai River by Kawamura Magobe, a retainer of Date Masamune, the occurrence of flood damage decreased dramatically, the development of new paddy fields progressed, and a water transportation route was established for the transport of rice to Edo.

Location Kawahara, Wabuchi, Ishinomaki City

2 Wetlands around Nabirenuma Swamp



The low wetland area around Nabirenuma Swamp has been subject to stagnant water elimination work implemented by generations of the Wakuya Date Clan since the beginning of the Edo Period (1603-1868). The Kanbun Incident which developed from a territorial dispute was an episode famous enough to be taken up as a Kabuki program in Edo. The use of flood control basins today originated from such a history of water management.

Location Around Shin-nabire, Wakuya-cho, Toda-gun (overflow levee)

3 Kinnoibuki Rice



Kinnoibuki rice is a variety of brown rice that has a slightly crisp texture, produced by Furukawa Agricultural Experiment Station. The germ portion of the rice is three times larger than regular brown rice and is rich in nutrients such as GABA and Vitamin E. Its characteristic golden color coincides perfectly with the image of Wakuya as Japan's first gold producing town.

Location Wakuya-cho Agriculture and Forestry Promotion Division 0229-25-8511

4 Koganeyama Jinja Shrine



Koganeyama Jinja, ensconced in Japan's first gold producing region, is a shrine with a long and distinguished history dating back to 749. At a time when money was the largest obstacle to building the large Buddha of Todaiji Temple in prayer for peace, Koganeyama Jinja was completed without trouble owing to the region being the first to produce gold in Japan and being able to make an offering of 900 ryo (approx. 13kg) of gold.

Location 23 Koganemiyamae, Wakuya, Wakuya-cho, Toda-gun

5 Fermented Food Culture



The fermented food culture of Wakuya is represented by Kawakei Jozo, a brewery that was founded in 1909 by the first generation Kawana Keiji. It is well known for its commitment to producing products through a strict regimen of quality management while preserving the tastes of olden days. On to its sixth generation today, the brewery manufactures and sells miso, soy sauce, and soup base.

Local Shops
Kawakei Jozo

6 Konpoji Temple



In ancient times, Konpoji Temple was a sacred place that forbid any killing of living creatures and that was completely off limits to women. It was governed by rules that transcended local control, such that it was said even felons could not be captured once they set foot inside the precincts. According to legend, the temple was founded by Sakanoue Tamuramaro in 807. It enshrines an eleven-faced Kannon image (hidden image) as its main deity, which is unveiled to the public only once every 33 years.

Location 1 Kaguraoka, Nonodake, Wakuya-cho, Toda-gun

7 New Year's Ritual of Oyumi Shinji



Oyumi Shinji is a fortune-telling ritual held in January to foretell the year's climate and crop yield by having a child shoot an arrow. Passed down through hundreds of years based on traditional rules, it is a New Year's ritual that is unique even throughout Japan, and has been designated an Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Miyagi Prefecture.

Location 1 Kaguraoka, Nonodake, Wakuya-cho, Toda-gun

8 Nonodake Hakusan Honen Odori Dance



Nonodake Hakusan Honen Odori is a ceremony that used to be held when people from throughout the Tohoku region gathered in Wakuya to exchange seed rice. It is a revival of the Kagura music and dance performance that used to be offered in ancient times under the name of Tanemomi Kagura. A preservation society has been organized to keep the tradition alive by performing the dance in celebration of a plentiful harvest of rice.

Inquiry Wakuya-cho Lifelong Learning Division 0229-43-3001

9 Ainonuma Swamp



Ainonuma Swamp is surrounded by cherry trees that come into full bloom in spring, and fills with lotus flowers in summer around mid-August. From autumn to winter, it provides a wintering place for swans and other migratory birds.

Location Ainonuma, Kamigori, Wakuya-cho, Toda-gun

10 Bogake Rice Drying and Red Dragonflies



Farmers in Wakuya actively engage in environment-friendly agriculture, and air-dry rice stalks by a method called bogake. The sight of red dragonflies made familiar by a popular children's song flitting around the bogake bundles of rice against Mount Nonodake in the background is reminiscent of the virgin landscape of autumn in Japan.

Location Around Dotezoe, Ota, Wakuya-cho, Toda-gun

11 Rural Landscape Seen from Mount Nonodake



Mount Nonodake, in the center of Wakuya, is a small mountain only 236 meters high, but its summit offers a spectacular vista unblocked by anything else. It commands a view not only of the landscape of igune homestead woodlands across the vast terrain of Osaki Koudo, but also as far as the mountains of Oshika Peninsula in Iwate Prefecture and even Kinkasan Island in the Pacific Ocean.

Location 1 Kaguraoka, Nonodake, Wakuya-cho, Toda-gun

12 Igune Woodlands around Mount Nonodake



Many residences in Osaki Koudo are surrounded by woodlands called igune. They are strategically arranged to protect farmers' homes from winter northwesterly winds and floods. In addition to artificially planted vegetation, various types of plants grow in the igune from seeds carried by birds and the wind, creating a habitat for diverse animals.

Location Dotezoe, Ota, Wakuya-cho, Toda-gun



Flexible Water Management via Nabirenuma Flood Control Basin

Misato is a low-lying area in Osaki Koudo, downstream of Naruse River and Eai River. It has transformed into a major agricultural region as a result of projects to reclaim and drain Nabirenuma Swamp and other marshes, and a flexible water management system is in place that draws water into paddy fields at times of floods. Kogota is an area that has thrived as a center of traffic since olden days, and is known for the local cuisine of suppokojiru soup.



1 Nabirenuma Flood Control Basin



Nabirenuma Swamp used to flow into Eai River, so the area around the swamp suffered frequent floods whenever the river level rose and water could not be drained. Today, it has transformed into paddy fields owing to reclamation work, and a flexible water management system is in place that utilizes the fields as a flood control basin (150ha) to pool water in times of floods.

Location Around Osawatsutsumishita, Neriushi, Misato-machi, Toda-gun

2 Kuratsubo Tunnel



Kuratsubo Tunnel (aqueduct tunnel) was dug at the bottom of a small hill to drain the water of Kuratsubo River, which flows through Misato north to south into Naruse River. It was completed in 1698. Owing to this tunnel, new fields have been developed, such that the area is now a flat and excellent farming land.

Location Nishifukuda Nagamine, Higashimatsushima City

3 Miyagi Shirome Soy Bean



Soybean production is a thriving industry in Osaki Koudo. Misato is one such area within Osaki Koudo, where Miyagi shirome is endorsed by the prefecture as a main variety. Because it is suited to processing, it supports the food culture of Osaki Koudo as an ingredient for miso, soy sauce, natto, and other such processed foods.

Inquiry Misato-machi Industrial Promotion Division
0229-58-2374

4 Fermented Food Culture



There is one each of a sake brewery and a miso and soy sauce brewery in Misato. Kamata Shoyu is the oldest miso and soy sauce brewery in Osaki Koudo, founded in 1830. Kawakei Shoten has won the Gold Prize in the Nationwide New Sake Competition for fifteen consecutive years.

Local Shops
Kamata Shoyu, Kawakei Shoten

5 Local Cuisine of Suppokojiru Soup



Suppokojiru soup is a local cuisine that has been passed down since ancient times. It was originally a dish prepared for domestics who have helped serve a meal in a Buddhist service, and contains seasonal vegetables, fried bean curd, chicken meat, konjac and warm noodles, thickened with kudzu starch.

Local Shops
Uenoya, Koraku, Kagetsushokudo, Sobadokoro Daimyo, etc.

6 Yamanokamisha Shrine



Since the era of clan administration, Yamanokamisha has been widely known in the Tohoku region as a shrine for safe childbirth, and regularly receives crowds of people who come to pray. The worshipped deity is a goddess who protects the mountain and produces objects from the mountain, and who also garners strong worship as a goddess who answers prayers regarding marriage, pregnancy, smooth childbirth, and child raising.

Location 37 Ushikaisainodai, Misato-machi, Toda-gun

7 Fudodo Kagura Dance and Music



Fudodo Kagura, deriving from Nanbu Kagura, was introduced to Misato in 1899. It strongly retains its original distinctive flair, from the abundance of programs and vigorous motions to the energetic rhythm of drums and voices. It is designated an Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Misato.

Inquiry Misato-machi Kindai Bungakukan
(Misato Museum of Modern Literature) 0229-33-3030

8 Swans of Naruse River



Naruse River is a stopover for swans, and particularly tundra swans. During the winters, they make Naruse River their roost and feed on the surrounding paddies and fields. The sight of the birds taking to the sky and flying back to roost in the mornings and afternoons and their beautiful cries are a seasonal attraction every winter.

Location Around Tenjinbara, Oyanagi, Misato-machi, Toda-gun

9 Rural Landscape Seen from Narusegawa Churyuzeki Weir



Narusegawa Churyuzeki Weir is an important water supply facility that was made to secure agricultural water to feed 3,500 hectares of land on the right bank of Naruse River and to control flood damage in the Naruse River Basin. From the weir, a 360-degree panoramic view of the expanse of Osaki Koudo can be seen, with Tajiri to the north, Wakuya to the east, Kashimadai to the south, and Furukawa to the west.

Location Around Ipponyanagi, Misato-machi, Toda-gun

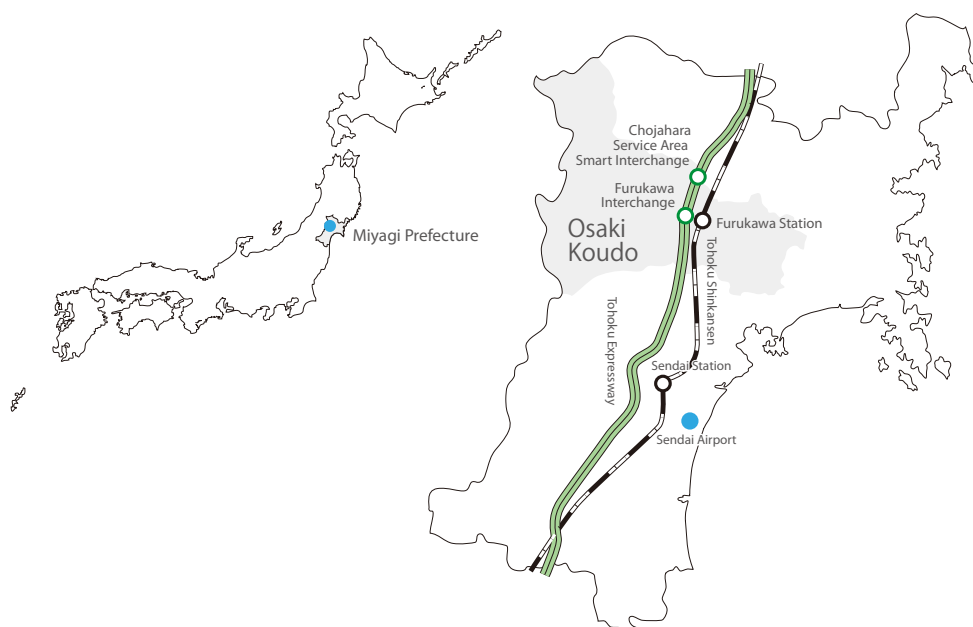
10 Rural Landscape Seen from Kimazuka Juozan Park



Juozan Park, situated on a small hill in the Kimazuka district, is home to a 750-some-year-old Japanese zelkova tree that stands proudly as a landmark of the park. Cherry trees and azaleas planted on the grounds also provide visitors from in and outside the town a nice respite particularly during the spring flower viewing season.

Location 15-1 Juozan, Kimazuka, Misato-machi, Toda-gun





How to get to Osaki Koudo

JR (Shinkansen/local trains) ➡ Furukawa Station

From Tokyo Station: approx. 2 hours

From Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto Station
approx. 3 hours 30 minutes

From Sendai Station approx. 15 minutes

From Sendai Airport Station approx. 1 hour

Expressway ➡ Furukawa Exit

From Urawa Toll Gate approx. 4 hours 45 minutes

From Sendai Miyagi Exit approx. 35 minutes

Airplane (domestic) ➡ Sendai Airport

From Shinchitose (Sapporo) approx. 1 hour 10 minutes

From Narita approx. 1 hour 10 minutes

From Nagoya (Chubu) Approx. 1 hr. 10 min.

From Komatsu approx. 1 hour

From Itami (Osaka) approx. 1 hour 20 minutes

From Kansai (Osaka) approx. 1 hour 20 minutes

From Hiroshima approx. 1 hour 30 minutes

From Fukuoka approx. 2 hours

From Okinawa approx. 3 hours

大崎耕土
世界農業遺産



**OSAKI
KOUDO**

GLOBALLY IMPORTANT
AGRICULTURAL
HERITAGE SYSTEMS

Osaki Region Committee for the Promotion of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems

SSecretariat: GIAHS Promotion Division, Osaki City Industry and Economy Department, Miyagi Prefecture

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Kami-machi Industrial Promotion Division

Phone: 0229-63-3408

Wakuya-machi Agriculture and Forestry Promotion Division

Phone: 0229-25-8511

Misato-machi Industrial Promotion Division

Phone: 0229-25-3329

*The information is current as of April 2021.