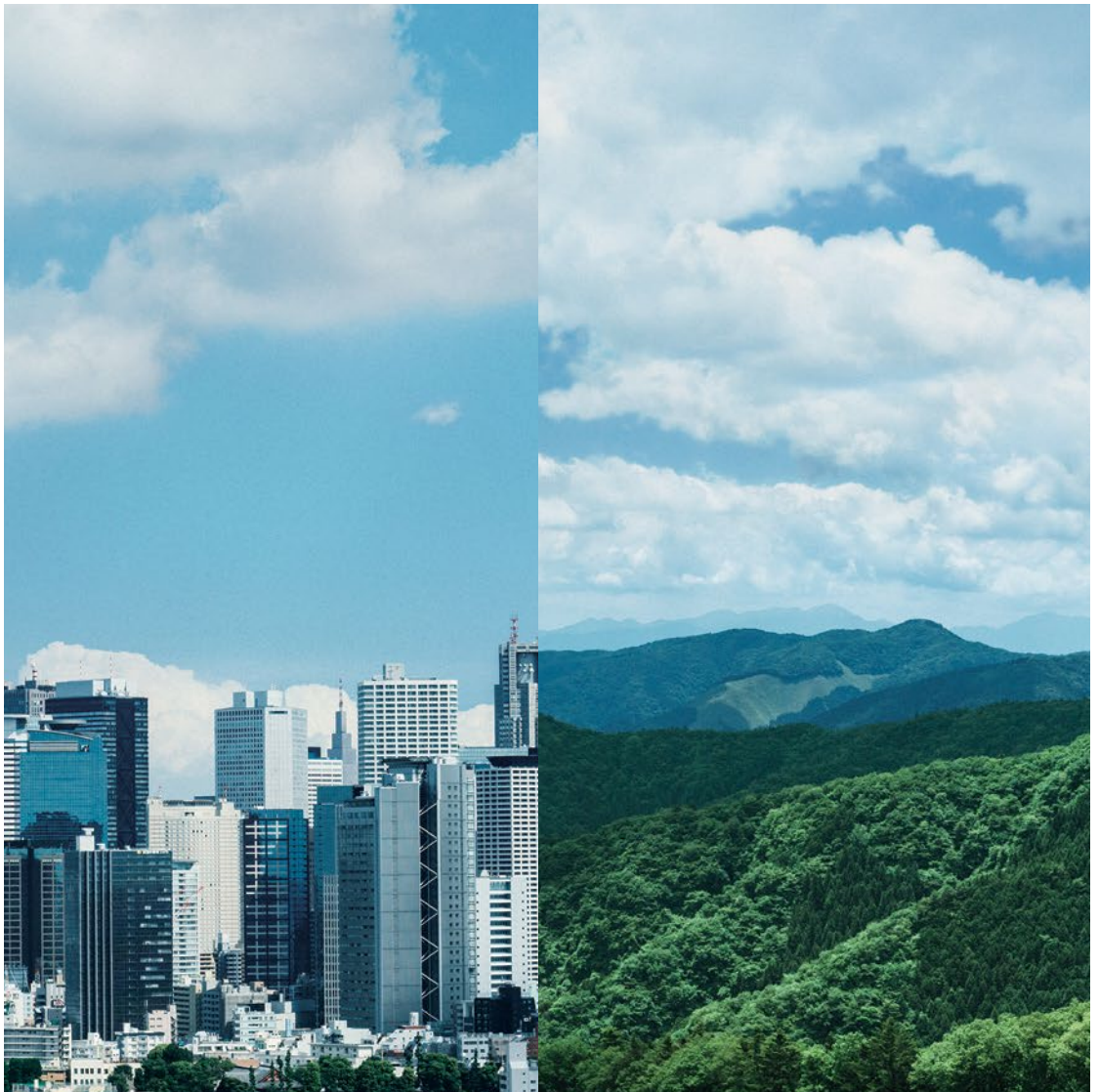


# One city. Two worlds.

Recharge yourself. Explore the mountains,  
forests and islands of Tokyo.



TOKYO'S  
NEW  
LUXURY



TokyoTokyo

Welcome to Tamashima,  
perhaps Tokyo's best-kept secret.

“Tama” refers to the wild mountains, forests and lakes that span the picturesque Tama region, just west of the city center.

“Shima” – meaning “island” in Japanese – relates to a scattering of scenic volcanic islands in waters south of the city (known as Tokyo islands), popular spots for swimming, hiking, star gazing and hot spring bathing.

## One city. Two worlds.

Tokyo. The name often brings to mind images of the ultimate modern megalopolis, with its iconic skyscraper skyline, nocturnal neon and fast-paced futurism.

But there is another side to the Japanese capital. Visitors willing to explore beyond its central urban landscape will quickly discover that Tokyo, despite possible expectations, is also nirvana for all things nature.

Picture the misty silhouettes of mountain peaks, dense forests, sparkling waterfalls, ancient shrines and hidden temples – all just a short train ride west from the city center. Not to forget the clear waters, sweeping beaches, dramatic ravines and open-air hot spring bathing that span Tokyo's islands, an idyllic volcanic archipelago just south of the mainland.

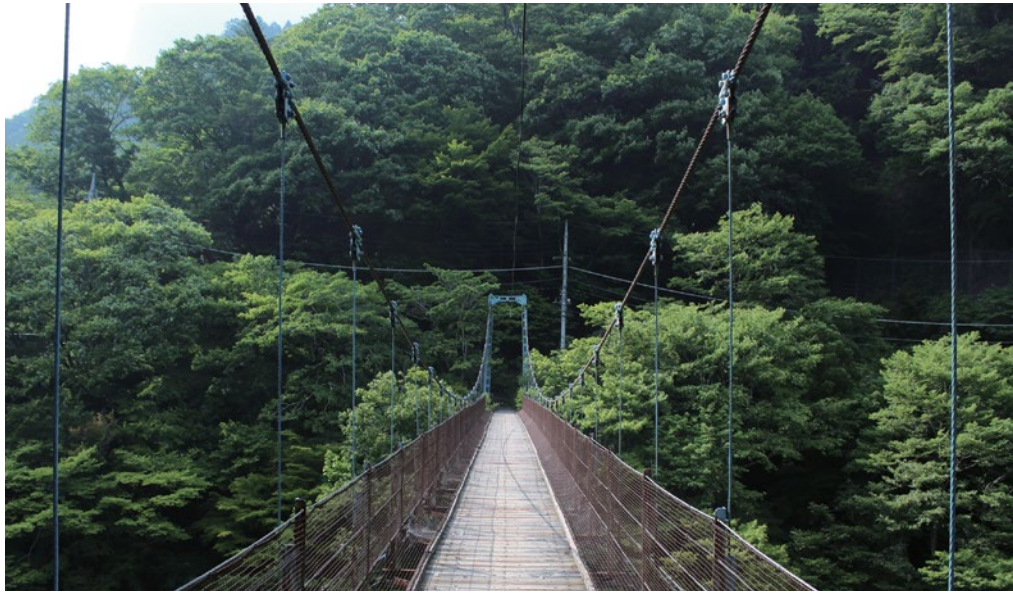
The capital's natural escapes cast a scenic light on another world entirely from its more famous urban cityscape – and offer visitors the perfect opportunity for a quick, convenient and deeply restorative year-round retreat into Tokyo's world of nature.





# Highlights

The Tama area is a hidden wonderland of green forests, clear rivers and mountain trails. The natural landscape is one of surprises – and is guaranteed to leave a deep impression. Come and recharge in the embrace of nature in Tama.



1

## Just two hours from central Tokyo

Picture tranquil scenery and a rich natural environment that will make you wonder if you are really in Tokyo – this is the sight that greets visitors to the scenic Tama area of western Tokyo. Looming tall are majestic mountains where huge trees have taken root, powerfully flowing rivers, dramatic ravines: in short, a bucolic landscape that feels somehow nostalgic. Best of all? It's easily accessible, just two hours by train or car from the central Tokyo. The Tama area is also a place where visitors can gain insight into the deep-rooted importance of nature in Japanese daily life. With mountains covering nearly two-thirds of the nation's entire landscape, Japan is one of the most richly forested countries in the world. As a result, the Japanese have long lived in harmony alongside nature, as reflected throughout centuries of its culture – with clues found in its sensitivity to the seasons, activities such as forest bathing (*shinrin yoku*) and exquisite nature-inspired cuisine.



2

1. Shidakura Hanging Bridge on the Okutama Mukashi-Michi Trail (Okutama-machi) 2. Mount Mitake Rock Garden, a riverside hiking trail lined with moss-covered rocks (Ome-shi)



3



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4

## Wild nature

There are many places where you can directly feel the power of nature in the Tama area. Wander along pathways among rocks and clear streams, and be open to discovering huge reservoirs, dramatic waterfalls, ancient shrines and mysterious limestone caves.

3. Lake Okutama (Okutama-machi) 4. Nippara Cave (Okutama-machi), the largest limestone cave in the Kanto region 5. Hossawa Waterfall (Hinohara-mura)

## Seasonal beauty

Surrounded as it is by mountains, the seasons in Tama are very distinct. Look out for the fresh greens of spring, autumn leaf shades, snowy landscapes in winter and bright summer flowers. Shifting scenery that evolves throughout the year is one of Tama's many charms.



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6. Negaramimae Paddy (Hamura-shi), where nearly 350,000 tulips bloom in full glory 7. Shiofune Kannonji Temple (Ome-shi), home to 17,000 azaleas 8. Weeping cherry tree at Baiganji Temple (Ome-shi) 9. Akigawa Ravine (Akiruno-shi) decked out in fall colors



# Activities

Nature is all around in the Tama area. There are countless activities to enjoy while soaking up the vibrant green scenery, many not typically found in cities.



1

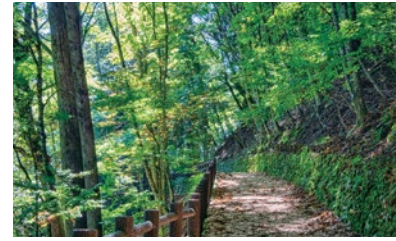


2

## Mountain adventures

There are few more dynamic natural activities than canyoning – an activity which involves descending a fast-flowing mountain stream using an array of special tools and techniques. The recommended time of year to try this out is between April and October.

1. Waterfalls in Tama enjoyed as natural waterslides 2. Try exhilarating rafting down the wild and wonderful Mitake Gorge in Ome-shi



3



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## Action-packed activities

Activities such as hiking and fishing are recommended for those keen to enjoy a slower tempo while soaking up the surrounding nature. Thrill-seekers are also spoilt for choice, with more dynamic options ranging from bouldering to rafting.

3. Many trails have been developed for trekking and running 4. Mitake Ravine in Ome-shi, a popular place for bouldering 5. There are lots of fishing spots where rainbow trout and landlocked salmon can be found 6. Relaxing activities such as kayaking or stand-up paddling at the Lake Shiromaru in Okutama-machi 7. A refreshing bike ride in Tama's nature 8. Segway tours are a popular way to explore the flora and fauna of SHOWA KINEN PARK (Tachikawa-shi / Akishima-shi)

## Forests, waterfalls, rivers

The natural world in Tama has the power to give visitors a feeling of liberation. It's a place where towering skyscrapers, busy crossings and urban crowds can be swapped for mountain forests, serene hiking trails and peaceful riverside walks. It doesn't take long for visitors to discover that there is one main protagonist in Tama: nature, in all its restorative glory.

There are many ways to have fun in Tama. Hiking and trekking through forests are key attractions for many visitors. Others like to savor Tama's abundant water, with countless exhilarating activities such as mountain stream fishing, canoeing, kayaking, rafting and canyoning. Nature in Tama accommodates all levels of fun, from beginners and young children all the way through to experienced adventurers. One recommended tip? Enjoy a relaxing riverside barbecue after a day of activities.



7

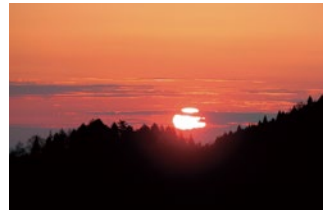


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# Culture

Tama is home to a bucolic landscape where time appears to stand still. The region is rich in traditions – from local festivals to the ancient rituals of everyday life in mountain communities that live on today.



## Tama's mountain magic

Wrapped in mountains for thousands of years, the Japanese have long been sensitive to the power of nature – both the benefits and the dangers. As a result, mountains are regarded with respect and awe alike. This is reflected in the nation's ancient Shinto beliefs, which regard all elements of nature – the mountains included – as sacred. Mount Mitake, which rises above Ome-shi, is one such mountain. It has long attracted worshippers as one of the Kanto region's most sacred peaks.

Musashi Mitake-jinja Shrine, located on the summit, is a symbol of the mountain's sacred heritage. The shrine was founded in 91 BC and it is said that in 736, the monk Gyoki chose this spot to enshrine a statue of Zao Gongen, as a prayer for peace and tranquility. Today, it is a place that embodies Japan's deep spiritual ties to its mountains.

During the Kamakura period (1185–1333), when Shintoism became widespread, Mount Mitake attracted widespread devotion and was visited by numerous *shugenja* – mountain ascetics who secluded themselves in nature to perform rites, such as waterfall purifications of mind and body. During the Edo period (1603–1867), increasing numbers of everyday Japanese people started to visit the shrine. The approach, often bustling with crowds, was lined with lodgings for pilgrims.

Even now, as a still-popular spot for mountain climbing, Mount Mitake retains an aura of the sacred. It's a place where visitors can tap into the timeless power of Japan's mountains.

1. The centuries-old architecture of Musashi Mitake-jinja Shrine, at the top of Mount Mitake 2. Izuna Gongendo Hall at Yakuoin Temple on Mount Takao 3. Visitors hang up *ema* – small wooden plaques – depicting their written wishes and prayers to the gods 4. Sunrise seen from Mount Mitake 5. Okunitama-jinja Shrine (Fuchu-shi), home to the guardian deity of Musashi Province 6. The main hall of Jindajiji Temple (Chofu-shi) enshrines a sacred Buddha statue

## Pilgrims, waterfalls and purification

Japan's mountain ascetic culture, including ritual cleansing in waterfalls, continues today on Mount Mitake. Inns lining the approach to the shrine were once used as lodgings for mountain ascetics, but today are open to tourists. The proprietors of the inns are also Shinto priests at Musashi Mitake-jinja Shrine. As a result, visitors can try a range of unique and sacred experiences, from purification and prayers to rituals such as waterfall cleansing.



7. Shinto priests at Musashi Mitake-jinja Shrine 8. Guest room at a pilgrim's lodge, with views of Mount Mitake 9. Ritual cleansing in the sacred Ayahiro-no-Taki Waterfall (Ome-shi). Visitors can arrange ritual cleansing in waterfalls at pilgrim's lodges and at Musashi Mitake-jinja Shrine



## A sense of history

Exploring the Tama area is a little like stepping back in time, with its idyllic rural landscape and historic architecture. Picture fields of rice and vegetables, statues of travelers' guardian deities standing by the side of the road, ornate temple gates and cultural facilities in renovated wooden houses.

10. The temple gate of Kotoku-ji Temple (Akiruno-shi), which was built in the mid-Edo Period 11. Owadabashi Bridge above the scenic Akigawa River (Akiruno-shi)

## Local festivals

Some lucky visitors might catch a local festival during their visit. These colorful events, which date back to ancient times, involve intricate portable shrines and floats being paraded through the streets, surrounded by lively crowds.

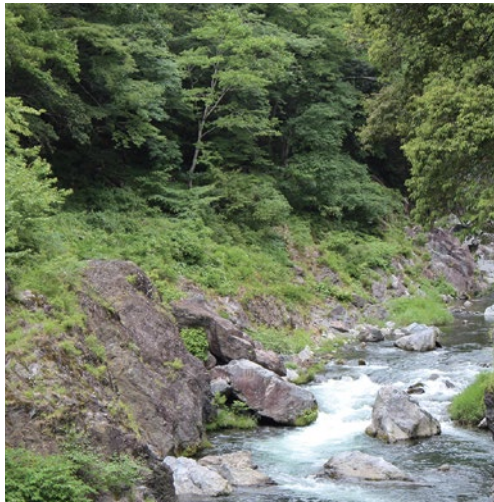


12. 13. 14. Three major festivals, held in Akiruno-shi in September every year 15. The Phoenix Dance, a traditional performance at the Hirai Festival in Hinode-machi



# Food

The Tama area is a treasure trove of delicious seasonal food, with highlights ranging from *wasabi* and wild mountain vegetables to *soba* noodles. The high quality of the local produce is attributed to the pure water and fertile soil.



## Pure and clear water

The root of Tama's food culture lies in the purity of its water.

The Tama area is famously home to countless rivers, the chief ones being the Tama River and its major tributary, the Akigawa River. Their waters flow through the natural filtration system of the mountains. This is why the water in Tama's rivers is extremely clear and guaranteed to be of high quality. People living in Tama have, since ancient times, been grateful for the benefits brought by its water and cultivated its food culture around this resource. As a result, many of Tama's specialty foods and local products such as *sake*, *konnyaku*, and *tofu* are associated with good water.

Tama's mountains are another key factor behind its rich food culture. Home to a thriving ecosystem, the mountains provide a cornucopia of food ingredients. When the snows melt in spring, buds start sprouting all around, and the abundance of produce continues into the autumn. Wild vegetables and mushrooms are key highlights for visiting food-lovers.



1. The Tama River flows through rugged Hatonosu Gorge (Okutama-machi) 2. A lush green wasabi field 3. Freshly picked wasabi root 4. River fish such as char, trout and landlocked salmon are abundant in Tama's clear rivers



## A taste of Tama

One famed local Tama product is *wasabi* – Japanese horseradish – which often accompanies traditional cuisine such as *sushi* and *soba* noodles. The plant thrives in locations such as Tama, where the water quality is pure and pristine.

## All things wasabi



Wasabi pickles



Wasabi-flavored oil

## Tama's Wild Vegetables

**1 Mizu**  
Often found growing near mountain streams, this crisp green vegetable has a high water content.

**2 Fukinoto**  
Known as Japanese butterbur, this faintly bitter vegetable is prepared *tempura*-style or served in stewed dishes.

**3 Zuiki**  
The stalk of *taro*, it has a vibrant red color when raw and a crisp texture.

**4 Udo**  
Delicious raw or boiled, it resembles asparagus, with a pleasant texture and fragrant aroma.

**5 Kogomi**  
The small uncoiled fronds of leafy ferns, it is often found in shady forests.



Some ingredients are subjected to change depending on the season.

**6 Yurine**  
The edible bulb of a lily plant, it is highly nutritious and long valued for medicinal purposes.

**7 Taranome**  
The young buds of Japanese Angelica trees, this popular wild spring vegetable has a slightly bitter taste.

## What are sansai?

Wild vegetables – known as *sansai* in Japanese – herald springtime in Tama's mountains. Growing wild in forests and streams, they have long been enjoyed in traditional rural cuisine. Expertly prepared wild vegetable dishes can be savored at countless places across the Tama region, including the hot spring *onsen ryokan* Mitosanso in Hinohara-mura.

## Local treats

Tama's specialty foods include *soba* noodles, *konnyaku*, *tofu* and *sake*. As these are all made with simple ingredients, purity of the local mountain water has a big impact on flavors and quality.

**Tofu**  
Countless local *tofu* shops produce delicious *tofu* from water-soaked soy beans, using traditional techniques.

**Fish**  
Fish in Tama is often simply grilled with salt – the perfect way to savor its pure flavors.

**Sake**  
Ingredients for *sake* – known as *nihonshu* in Japan – typically include rice, water, *koji* mold and yeast – and the more pure the water, the tastier the *sake*.

**Konnyaku**  
Popular as a health food, it can be served in an array of forms – from thinly sliced *sashimi konnyaku* to grilled skewered chunks topped with a *miso* sauce, known as *miso dengaku*.

**Soba**  
The Tama area has many famous *soba* noodle restaurants. While in-house specialties vary among establishments, one thing they all share is the good quality water with which they are prepared.

**Tea**  
Tokyo Sayama Tea is cultivated in places such as Mizuho-machi. The taste balances between sweetness and astringency.



# Wellness

**Soothing green forests, seasonal blossoms, hot spring onsen bathing and peaceful birdsong: immersion in Tama’s natural landscape is perfect for recharging both mind and body.**

## Forest Bathing

It’s all about forests in the Tama region, making it a hotspot for one particularly popular practice: “forest bathing” – known as *shinrin-yoku* in Japanese. The phrase *shinrin-yoku*, first coined by Japanese government officials in the 1980s, refers to the practice of fully immersing oneself in nature, resulting in a raft of scientifically proven health benefits – from boosting immune systems and enhancing brain health to lowering stress hormones.

And there are perhaps few better spots to try some restorative forest bathing than Tama, a region famously home to some of the biggest trees in Japan. In particular, Okutama-machi, in westernmost Tama, was found to be home to as many as 891 giant trees in a 2001 government survey – the highest number in the country.

Those keen to boost their health while soaking up Tama’s natural scenery can follow a number of designated walking trails known as “therapy roads” or try out a range of forest therapy health programs.



1



2



3

Willow tit



Kingfisher



© Okutama Visitor Center

## Birds spotted in Tama

1. Kurasawa-no-Hinoki (Okutama-machi), the largest cypress tree in Tokyo, which stands 34 meters tall 2. Around 200 cherry trees fringe a pond in Inokashira Park (Musashino-shi/Mitaka-shi) 3. A forest yoga class, one of a number of therapy activities available

## Inhale, exhale

Slowing down in modern times is perhaps the ultimate luxury. In the Tama region, there is plenty of time and space to simply enjoy the present moment – from meditation at pilgrim’s lodges and stargazing to wandering along forest trails and watching fireflies dance in the night skies during the summer months.



4



5

4. Meditation room in a pilgrim’s lodge  
5. Activities in Tama include overnight tours to enjoy stargazing



6

## Hot spring healing

The best way to relax after a day in nature? Take a restorative soak in one of the countless hot spring *onsen* bathing facilities scattered across the Tama region. Many facilities have outdoor open-air bathing areas, where visitors can rest their post-trekking muscles in hot water while enjoying views of the surrounding natural landscape.

6. Open-air bath at Okutama Onsen Moegi-no-Yu (Okutama-machi), where you can enjoy the view of each season

## Traditional architecture

*Kabuto-zukuri* is a traditional style of architecture often found in private houses in the Tama area. Its name relates to the shape of the thatched roof, which resembles a warrior’s helmet, which is called *kabuto* in Japanese. The Tama area has many old houses in a range of architectural styles, offering an atmospheric setting for rest and relaxation.



7



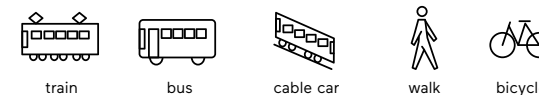
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7, 8. Kabutoya Ryokan in Hinohara-mura is a *kabuto-zukuri* structure, combining the steep, thatched roof of the *gassho-zukuri* style with the hipped and gabled roof of the *irimoya-zukuri* style. A building where silkworms used to be raised is now used as an inn



# Four Ways to Explore Tokyo's Tama Region

From colorful flowers and beautiful autumn leaves to aromatic trees and soothing birdsong, all the sights, sounds and scents of the changing seasons can be found within a few hours from central Tokyo. Here are four ways to get the best out of exploring the natural side of Tokyo's Tama region.



## Cherry blossoms and bicycles

Fussa-shi • Hamura-shi • Mizuho-machi

Enjoy a bicycle ride along the Tama River, known as Tokyo's Garden. The riverside area is famed for its cornucopia of seasonal flowers, which peak in beauty in spring. A highlight? Its cherry blossoms.

### Fussa Station

↓ 5 minutes

#### Cherry blossom magic

Leisurely cycle ride along the Tama River takes you to an avenue of cherry blossom trees. Depending on the time of the year, you may also see some tulips.



#### All about tulips

Enjoy colorful sweeps of thousands of tulips, which bloom in Negaramimae Paddy's rice fields every April, ahead of rice planting season – the largest tulip field in the Kanto region.

↓ Return bicycle



↓ 25 minutes

#### Rare violets

Head to Sayama Katakuri-no-Sato and try your luck at finding a rare white dogtooth violet: There's usually only one among tens of thousands of the standard purple variety.

↓ 10 minutes



↓ 8 minutes

#### A taste of spring

Learn about all things sake at Ishikawa Brewery. Here, visitors can explore the history of sake making and tour the historic brewery – or simply sit back and sip local sake and craft beer along with some seasonal dishes.



[Sake brewery tours are available only on certain days. Reservations are accepted on the website (reservations are required and charged)].

## Rivers, waterfalls and hot springs

Akiruno-shi • Hinohara-mura

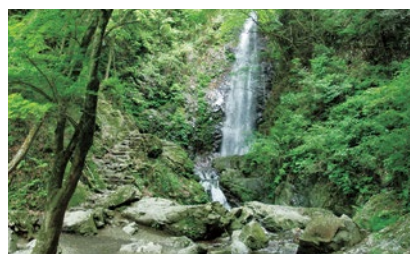
A place where mountains and forests meet the purest of water, explore this dramatic gorge in the heart of nature.

### Musashi-Itsukaichi Station

↓ 30 minutes

#### A rushing waterfall

Take a bus to Senzoku and hike through forest trails to Tengu Falls and Hossawa Falls – two atmospheric waterfalls famous for the purity of their crystal clear waters.



#### Vegetable paradise

Stop for lunch near Hossawa Falls – and savor the delicious taste of local vegetables cultivated with pure stream water.



↓ 10 minutes

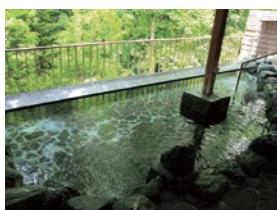


↓ 25 minutes

Tip: Don't miss Ishibune Bridge, a hanging rope bridge suspended across Akigawa Gorge, near Seoto-no-Yu Spa – an exhilarating way to soak up dramatic gorge views.

#### Blissful bathing

The best way to finish a trek through nature? Rest tired muscles in the restorative hot spring waters of the outdoor bath at Seoto-no-Yu Onsen, home to spectacular views across Akigawa Gorge.



## Spiritual mountain peaks

Ome-shi • Hinode-machi

Explore nature-drenched Mount Mitake and Mount Hinode, important centers of spiritual worship since ancient times.

### Mitake Station

↓ 10 minutes 6 minutes

#### Hike Mount Mitake

Start hiking to the 900-meter peak from Mitakesan Station. Along the way, look out for the Tengu Rock – a boulder resembling the long-nosed goblins of Japanese legends known as *tengu*.

#### Mystical shrine

Musashi-Mitake shrine has been the focus of Japan's ancient tradition of mountain worship for centuries. Absorb the mystical atmosphere of one of the most spiritual spots in the Kanto region.



#### Rest among rocks

Refresh yourself at the Rock Garden, a serene and purifying waterside spot in the forests with moss-covered rocks and a waterfall ravine.

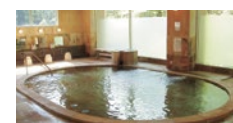


#### Peak panorama



The fatigue of hiking will quickly dissipate upon arrival at the summit of Mount Hinode – as the exquisite views across mountains, valleys and forests unfold before you. Tip: Descend via Agokake Rock and Mitsuzawa.

#### Hot spring magic



Finish the hike with a deeply relaxing soak at Tsuru-Tsuru Onsen, a traditional establishment cocooned in nature.

## Lakes, caves and forests

Okutama-machi

A lush national park filled with forests fringes the northwestern edge of Tokyo – the perfect place for a full immersion in nature, complete with an expansive lake and a famous limestone cave.

### Okutama Station

↓ 35 minutes 30 minutes

#### Cool cave

Follow a trail of colored lights that lead the way through the narrow rock passages of Nippara Limestone Cave. With average temperatures around 11 degrees Celsius, it's cool in summer and balmy in winter.

↓ 45 minutes



Explore Nippara Limestone Cave

#### Lake walks

Unwind with a stroll around Lake Okutama, a popular hiking spot. Savor the shifting shades of nature – from the blue-green surface of the water to surrounding mountains and the changing forest foliage (autumn's fiery leaves are a highlight).

Tip: Start at Okutamako bus stop and take the Okutama Ikoji-no-Michi path.

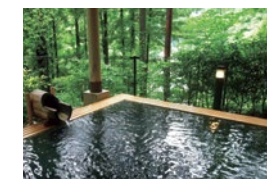
↓ 20 minutes



↓ 10 minutes

#### Nature bathing

Outdoor baths at the hot spring resort Moegi no Yu are the perfect place to relax – and enjoy the views of surrounding nature, from forests to streams.









# Highlights

**Clear blue waters. Volcanic rock formations. Rare flora and fauna. Sparkling night skies. Escape from the Japanese capital's urban landscape – and enjoy the natural peace and serenity that goes hand in hand with a visit to Tokyo's islands.**



© Ogasawara Village Tourism Bureau



## Easy access from the city

The closest to the capital are the Izu Islands, a cluster of nine inhabited islands, each with its own unique environment and culture: Oshima, Toshima, Niijima, Shikinejima, Kozushima, Miyakejima, Mikurashima, Hachijojima and Aogashima. Further afield are the Ogasawara Islands, around 1,000km south of Tokyo, which include the main islands of Chichijima and Hahajima, plus a scattering of around 30 other islands.

## Slow tempo island life

It's a side of Tokyo that is perhaps hard to imagine. Instead of skyscrapers, fast trains and urban crowds, picture expanses of empty beaches, deep blue waters, volcanic trails, forest hiking and, perhaps best of all, a deliciously relaxed island tempo. Welcome to the world of Tokyo's islands – made up of both the Izu Islands and the more farflung Ogasawara Islands (also known as the Bonin Islands), both areas of which are, perhaps unexpectedly, part of Tokyo.

Separated from the main island of Honshu by the ocean, these islands have evolved their own unique cultures and ecosystems. And so picture expanses of pristine blue ocean, virgin forests which are home to rare flora and fauna plus food, arts and crafts rooted firmly in island culture – making them unlike any other place on the planet.

There are countless ways to enjoy a visit to the islands – from diving, swimming, cycling and hiking to stargazing, enjoying local cuisine and soaking up nature with a soak in hot spring *onsen*. Whatever the itinerary, a visit to Tokyo's islands is sure to become a treasured lifelong memory.



1. Ogi Pond, a beautiful beach with fine coral sand on Minamijima, a small island off Chichijima 2. Nanbara Senjojiki Beach on Hachijojima, a rocky coastline formed from solidified lava 3. Izu-Misaki ("Izu Point") Lighthouse on Miyakejima, a popular spot for sunset and stargazing 4. The crater of the active volcano Mount Mihara, located at the heart of Oshima

## Island flora and fauna

The islands are home to verdant jungles where subtropical plants flourish. These jungles are filled with countless rare plants, such as tree ferns known as *Cyathea spinulosa* and *Cyathea mertensiana*, plus pandanus trees with sprawling octopus-like roots above the ground. Prepare to explore an ecosystem which feels entirely different from those found on the Japanese mainland.



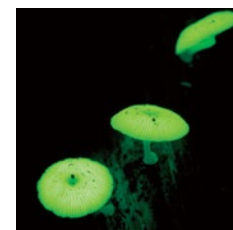
5. Japan's largest chinquapin tree, found on Mikurashima 6. The maruhachi (*Cyathea mertensiana*), a unique evergreen tree fern native to the Ogasawara Islands 7. Oshima and Toshima are known as "the camellia islands" due to their abundance of camellia bushes 8. Hibiscus, a classic island flower 9. Aogashima, the southernmost of the Izu Islands, is home to one of the world's few double volcanoes – a small volcano inside the crater of a larger one



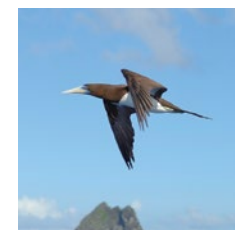
## Far-flung natural beauty

The Ogasawara Islands have never been physically connected to the Asian continent or the main Japanese islands – resulting in a rare ecosystem, with numerous indigenous animals and plants evolving in isolation. UNESCO listed the islands as World Natural Heritage Sites in 2011, in recognition of the region's global value due to its unique natural environment.

10. Chibusayama, a mountain on Hahajima, is a treasure trove of plants and animals unique to the Ogasawara Islands



Glowing mushrooms, known locally as Green Pepe



Brown booby seabird



Green sea turtle



Shells of extinct Mandarin luhuana snails



# Activities

Visitors are spoilt for choice when it comes to choosing activities on Tokyo's islands. From diving and snorkeling in clear blue seas to hiking rugged mountains and subtropical jungles, the islands offer a wealth of opportunities for a memorable time in nature.



1



2

## Ocean wonders

Board a ship in the city – and watch the color of the ocean gradually lighten while moving toward the islands. Shimmering and translucent, the blue seas around Tokyo's islands are famously beautiful – as reflected in nicknames such as “Bonin Blue” for waters around the Ogasawara Islands (also called the Bonin Islands) while “Hachijo Blue” refers to the sea around Hachijojima.

Perhaps best of all, the island waters are home to a vast playground of living creatures: sea turtles, rainbow-bright tropical fish, whales and dolphins. Swimming with dolphins and whale watching from ship decks are among a string of popular activities visitors can enjoy.

1. The waters around Hachijojima are also home to sea turtles
2. Swim with dolphins off Mikurashima or the Ogasawara Islands
3. The ocean around the Ogasawara Islands is Japan's finest for whale watching



3



4



5

4, 5. Learn about local plant life from hiking guides on the Ogasawara Islands 6. Fishing in the blue ocean waters that fringe the islands is another popular activity 7. More recently, road biking on Oshima has become popular



6



7

## Inland adventures

The islands offer more than just marine adventures. They are also home to a full range of land-based activities, such as hiking, road biking, bouldering and rock climbing. Enjoy these experiences against a natural backdrop which is unique to the islands – from subtropical jungles and forested mountains to abstract volcanic ash formations.

## Clear waters

In addition to swimming with dolphins and whale watching, the seas around the islands offer many other pleasures – such as bodyboarding, sea kayaking and swimming in beautiful inlets. The islands are home to a number of schools with pro teachers supporting visitors.



8

8. The Akasaki Promenade is a scenic hiking trail carved into the rocky shores of Kozushima. Don't miss the diving platform, for plunging directly into the sea 9. Niijima, a popular destination for surfing



9



# Culture

Underpinning life on Tokyo's islands is a rich and unique culture, with countless crafts, many inspired by the natural landscape, developed over centuries – and still thriving today.



## Natural inspiration

Each island has its own distinct culture and identity, as painstakingly created by local communities over centuries, in the face of often overwhelming natural forces.

Among many examples of nature-inspired culture on the islands are the famous camellia flowers of Oshima and Toshima, whose fruits and petals have long been used to produce a variety of signature products, from beauty goods to souvenirs.

Meanwhile, Hachijojima is renowned for its crafts heritage, in particular its unique textiles known as *kihachijo*, which are produced by local artisans using a plant that grows wild across the island.

The region also bears the scars of the power of nature. Traces of volcanic eruptions can be spotted on Oshima, Miyakejima, and Aogashima, while the ruins of entire communities buried in eruptions can be seen on Miyakejima – offering a poignant insight into how the islands' identities have evolved in such close proximity to nature.

The end result are unique island landscapes with powerful cultures reflecting the beauty and harmony between humans and nature.



## Camellia connection

The vivid red blossoms of the camellia flower are a symbol of Oshima and Toshima islands. On Oshima, about 3 million camellia shrubs grow wild, while the blooms cover about 80 percent of Toshima. Camellias are an integral part of daily life for the islanders, who use them in countless ways – from oil making to dyeing with petals.

## Flower power



Looking for the perfect island souvenir? Pick up some body oil, haircare products and soaps containing camellia oil – or perhaps handkerchiefs dyed with camellia petals.

1. Camellias growing on Oshima 2. A wide range of camellia flowers can be found on the islands 3. A camellia oil refinery on Oshima 4. The Camellia Festival, held around February to March every year, on Oshima



## Volcanic energy

The Tokyo islands are home to countless volcanoes – from the rare double volcano on Aogashima to Mount Mihara on Oshima and Miyakejima's Mount Oyama. There are many ways to experience the islands' wild volcanic landscapes – from walking trails that meander past the remains of lava flows to museums teaching visitors about all things related to island volcanoes.

5. Urasabaku in Oshima, Japan's only actual desert, covered in tiny black granules known as "scoria" 6. Nearby are the reddened rock expanses of Akadare – also known as Mihara canyon 7. Nippna Shinzan, which juts out to sea near Miyakejima, was formed overnight by an undersea explosion



8. Taiko drumming at Hattori Yashiki on Hachijojima, performed by musicians in *kihachijo* kimono 9. Items made of *kihachijo* are popular souvenirs 10. *Kihachijo* Meyu Kobo, a *kihachijo* workshop, where artisans can be seen at work



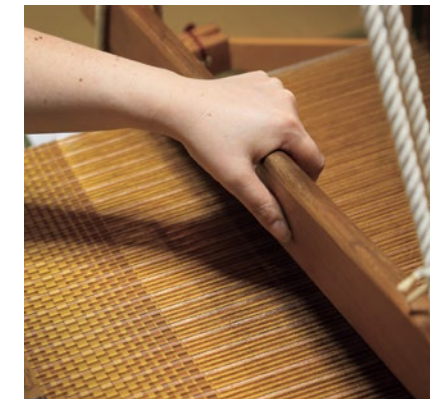
## Island artisans

Hachijojima is famed for *kihachijo*, a silken fabric produced using craftsmanship traditions handed down from generation to generation since the Heian period (794-1185). The textile is renowned for its distinct warm color scheme – created using dyes from wild island plants – as well as its high quality craftsmanship. Visitors can watch *kihachijo* being crafted by local artisans at workshops on the island in addition to buying textile items to take home.



## Christian landmark

At the Arima Lookout on Kozushima is a large white cross. Known as "Julia's Cross," it was erected in memory of Otaa Julia, a Christian who was exiled to Kozushima in the 17th century, a time when Christianity was banned in Japan.





# Food

Island life goes hand in hand with food which is memorable, fresh and unwaveringly tasty – from a year-round wealth of fresh seafood to tropical fruits and seasonal vegetables.



## Seafood paradise

Top of the menu on the islands is deliciously fresh seafood. An abundance of sea treats can be savored – many as rare as they are tasty, such as alfonsino and blackthroat seaperch. Many restaurants also use recipes rooted in traditional island cooking methods.

## Unique island flavors

Bearing in mind their far-flung locations and unique climates, it's perhaps little surprise that each island has its own food culture. Highlights range from fish caught in nearby waters to seasonal fruits and vegetables grown locally. But the region's most well-known dish is perhaps island-style *sushi*.

This seafood specialty is thought to have originated on Hachijojima, before gradually spreading across the region. The use of a style of rice known as *shari* adds a touch of sweetness, topped with fresh local fish.

Another highlight is the distilled liquor “island *shochu*” – perfect to take home as a souvenir or for sharing with islanders. Locals refer to the distinct drink as *Shimachu* or *Shimazake* (island liquors). Merchants exiled to Hachijojima first taught the local people how to brew it, before it spread throughout the Izu Islands to become a longstanding local specialty. Among many other delicious local treats to try is *kusaya* – a traditional method of preserving fish. Mackerel scad, flying fish and other varieties are preserved in a brine called



*kusaya-eki* before being dried. The unusual flavor of *kusaya* is often a surprise to first-time visitors – but many quickly acquire a taste for its rich and complex flavors.

1. *Bekko-don* is made by soaking fish in peppery *bekko* soy sauce and placing it on top of a bowl of rice 2. *Teriyaki* mackerel sandwich, made with mackerel caught off Miyakejima 3. A typical dish, not to be missed: island-style *sushi* 4. *Pokedon*, made with local fish 5. *Kusaya* is a preserved food long enjoyed on the Izu Islands

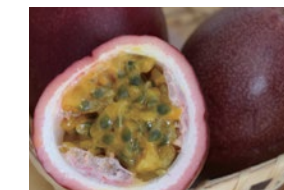
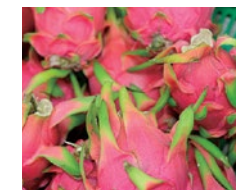
## Fruit fantasy

Islanders take advantage of the warm climate to cultivate several varieties of tropical fruits, such as lemons, passion fruits and dragon fruits. Many kinds of sweets and other food products are made from these fruits.



## Local produce

Every island tells its own unique story. While visiting the Izu Islands, don't miss the opportunity to try *ashitaba*, a leafy herb which grows wild across the landscape and has long been a feature of local cuisine (it's as popular as it is nutritious and healthy). Coffee is also grown on the Ogasawara Islands on a small-scale basis. One of the few coffee-producing regions in Japan, visitors should not miss the opportunity to try a delicious locally-grown island coffee.



## Island drinks

A range of alcoholic beverages are produced on Tokyo's islands. Oshima, Niijima, Kozushima, Miyakejima, Hachijojima and Aogashima all produce a drink known as island *shochu*. Rum and liqueurs are also produced on the Ogasawara Islands.



6. Locally-grown coffee served in a café on the Ogasawara Islands 7. Coffee bean plants cultivated on the islands 8, 9. A leafy green herb known as *ashitaba*, often cooked *tempura*-style 10. Hachijo lemons from Hachijojima are famed for their tasty and edible non-bitter rind 11. Sweet and nutritious dragon fruits 12. Fragrant passion fruits are also grown on the islands 13. Passion fruit candy and lemon jam, made from island fruits 14. A range of alcoholic drinks, created with different island ingredients



# Wellness

Surrounded by serene expanses of blue seas, with a mild climate and a pristine natural landscape, there are few more restorative and refreshing escapes than Tokyo's islands.



## Island hot springs

As a volcanic archipelago, Japan is home to more natural hot springs, known as *onsen*, than anywhere else in the world – and the Tokyo islands are no exception. Seven of the Izu Islands (Oshima, Niijima, Shikinejima, Kozushima, Miyakejima, Hachijojima, and Aogashima) have their own unique *onsen* facilities.

The islands' *onsen* are attractive for their unique locations as well as the restorative quality of their waters. It's easy to lose track of time while soaking in hot waters, soothing mind and body, before timeless views of rugged rocks or endless blue ocean. Jinata Onsen on Shikinejima is an outdoor thermal spring surrounded by rocks right next to the sea. Since the water bubbles up out of the ground at 80°C (176°F), bathers seek out the areas where the hot water mixes with seawater to find a temperature that suits them. This is the kind of *onsen* experience that can only be found on an island.

A major highlight of the islands' *onsen* culture is that many facilities allow you to bathe at any time. During the day, savor a moment soaking in an outdoor *onsen* with views of the vast ocean or the gold light of sunset. And after dark? Enjoy a hot nocturnal bath beneath a dizzying sky of stars.



2



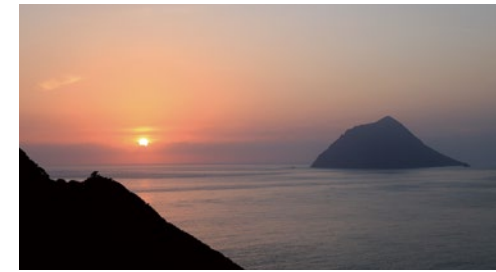
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1. Jinata Onsen on Shikinejima, a natural open-air onsen surrounded by cliffs 2. Yu-no-Hama Outdoor Spa on Niijima, modeled after an ancient Greek temple 3. Mamashita Onsen on Niijima offers hot sand baths

## Forest wellness

Luxuriant green expanses of subtropical forest found across the islands are also famed for their natural healing properties for both mind and body. Walk through a forest trail, surrounded by waterfalls, pure streams of cool water and the songs of birds – and many visitors will find their stress levels quickly drop.

4. The Uramigataki Trail on Hachijojima, which leads to a mysterious waterfall in the middle of a forest 5. The Hego Trail on Hachijojima takes you through a landscape where hego (tree ferns) flourish



6



7

## Island relaxation

The islands offer a multitude of options for relaxation – both outside in nature, perhaps watching the sunset over the sea, or indoors, being pampered by staff at a unique hotel or inn. Lodging options range widely, from simple *minshuku* (family-run inns in private homes) to luxurious resort hotels and remodeled traditional houses.

6. Sunset viewed from the Osaka Tunnel Observation Site, one of Hachijojima's eight official best views 7. Tokyo Vone Ten Guest House on Oshima is a lodging facility in a remodeled traditional house, with a contemporary Japanese interior



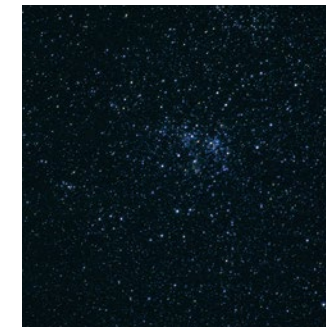
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## Starry skies

There's only one place to look after dark: up to the sky. The islands are famous for their skies transforming into a sea of stars every night. The view of the night sky varies from each island – particularly in the absence of neon lights, skyscrapers or air pollution. For the best night sky experiences, it's worth taking part in stargazing tours, sponsored by local astronomy clubs.



8



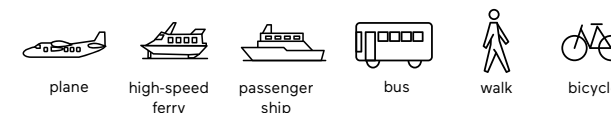
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8, 9. Night skies brimming with brilliant stars. Stargazing tours enable visitors to see the sky through telescopes or lie down to enjoy the starry views while listening to music



# Three Ways to Explore Tokyo's islands

There are many ways to savor the magic of Tokyo's islands, scattered in the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean south of the capital – from swimming and diving to forest trekking and hot spring *onsen* bathing. Succumb to the slow tempo of island life with these three itineraries.



## Volcanoes, hot springs and flowers

### Oshima

Oshima is the largest of the Izu Islands and the closest to Tokyo. Although reachable on a day trip from the city center, a one-night stay is perfect for exploring the island. Soak up its otherworldly landscape of volcanic sand, hot springs and vibrant camellias.

**Day 1**  
Leave Takeshiba Terminal in Tokyo at 8:35 AM

↓ 1 hour 45 minutes

Arrive at Oshima at 10:20 AM

↓ 25 minutes

#### Lava field

Behind Mount Mihara lies the Urasabaku Lava Field, which was formed by flows from the active volcano. Often dubbed Japan's only desert, the vast, arid expanse of black sand is as unique as it's atmospheric.

[Get off at the "Mihara-sanchoguchi" bus stop and trek to the Urasabaku Lava Field.]



#### Oshima Onsen Hotel

↓ 20 minutes

↓ 10 minutes

#### Tour the Izu Oshima Volcano Museum

↓ 20 minutes

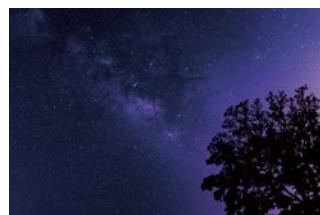
#### Sunset soak

Relax body and mind at Hama-no-yu Open Air Hot Spring, by soaking in hot waters as the sun lowers into the ocean, turning skies a vivid shade of red.



#### Starry nights

With few lights on the island after dark, Oshima's skies are nirvana for stargazers. Don't forget to look up and enjoy the night skies after the sun sets.



#### Day 2

#### Flower power

One key highlight of the island's winter calendar is its annual Izu Oshima Camellia Festival – with a colorful showcase of millions of the blooming flowers, known as *tsubaki* in Japanese (normally from January to March).



The main venue is Oshima Park, plus various events held across the island.



Leave Oshima at 2:35 PM



↓ 1 hour 45 minutes

Arrive at Takeshiba Terminal, Tokyo at 4:20 PM

## Beaches, bikes and surfing

### Niijima / Shikinejima

The idyllic island of Niijima is heaven for surfers, while Shikinejima is filled with jagged coastal inlets, beautiful coves and wild hot springs. Take a two-night trip and explore the natural beauty of these islands.

**Day 1**  
Leave Takeshiba Terminal, Tokyo at 10:00 PM

↓ 10 hours 35 minutes

**Day 2**  
Arrive at Niijima at 8:35 AM



#### Cycle to the sea

Hire a bicycle and explore on two wheels the countless white sand beaches that fringe the island. Breathe in the fresh air and stop for a swim in sparkling blue waters.

[Highlights include Honson Maehama Beach, with lunch nearby. The view from Ishiyama Observatory is also worth seeing, before heading for Habushiura Coast.]



#### Beach break

Take a break and lose track of time at Habushiura Coast, a white sweep of beach stretching about six kilometers in length.



#### Sunset spa

Take a dip in the volcanic hot waters of Yunohama Hot Spring, a spa designed to resemble an outdoor temple, overlooking the ocean – the perfect spot for a sunset soak.



**Day 3**  
Leave Niijima at 8:45 AM

↓ 20 minutes

Arrive at Shikinejima at 9:05 AM



Explore Shikinejima by bicycle  
[Besides exploring the beaches and hot spring spas, check out views of the island from Gunjiyama Observatory.]



#### Hidden cove



Surrounded by rocks, Tomari Beach is a scenic hidden cove in the shape of a fan. The peaceful spot has also been named one of Japan's top 88 most pleasant beaches for swimming.

#### Secret springs

For a wild soak in nature, head to the secluded Matsugashita Miyabi-yu hot spring onsen. Here, visitors can bathe outdoors in restorative reddish waters, with views of both mountains and sea. Don't forget your swimwear: the baths are mixed gender.



Leave Shikinejima at 1:15 PM



↓ 1 hour 45 minutes

Arrive at Takeshiba at 4:20 PM

## Ocean, mountains and sunsets

### Hachijojima

Escape to a subtropical island paradise and enjoy Hachijojima's vivid landscape of bright flowers, volcanic rocks and mountains – plus its famously clear "Hachijo Blue" ocean waters.

**Day 1**  
Leave Takeshiba Terminal in Tokyo at 10:30 PM

↓ 10 hours 25 minutes

**Day 2**  
Arrive in Hachijojima at 8:55 AM

#### Water Paradise

Swimming, snorkeling, surfing and diving: waters sports lovers are spoiled for choice in Hachijojima, home to blue waters filled with bright tropical fish (look out for sea turtles too).



#### Explore by bicycle

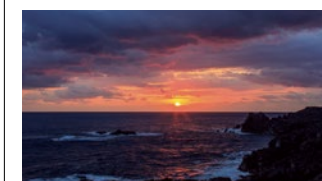
[Check out Hachijo Botanical Park and the Ozato Tamaishi Walls – where round stone walls mark the remains of a former shogunate HQ – before heading for Nanbara Senjojiki Beach.]



Tip: take it easy by renting an electric bicycle.

#### Ocean sunset

Watch the sun set over the ocean from the dramatic lunar-like landscape of Nanbara Senjojiki Beach, formed by lava from Hachijo Fuji volcano.



#### Day 3



#### Ocean view hot spring



Miharashi-no-yu hot spring onsen sits just by the Pacific Ocean, with a scene-stealing open-air outdoor bath – the perfect post-cycling relaxation.



#### Hidden waterfall

Walk behind Uramigataki waterfall – and enjoy views of cascading water, surrounded by forests.



#### Island life

Explore the restaurants, cafes and boutiques of the Okago area.



Leave Hachijojima Airport at 5:30 PM



↓ 60 minutes

Arrive at Tokyo's Haneda Airport at 6:30 PM



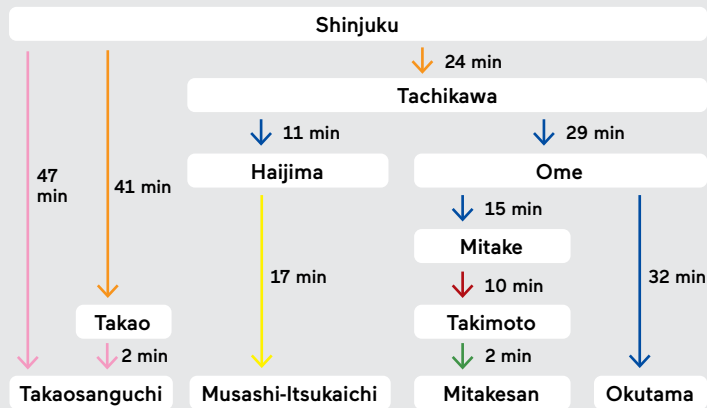
# How To Get There

Both the mountains of the Tama region and the islands are easy to access from central Tokyo, by train or boat. And the journeys are as scenic as the destination, from train windows framing dense mountain scenery to expansive Pacific Ocean views from ship decks.

## TAMA

To visit Tama from central Tokyo, take a train heading west from Shinjuku Station.

- JR Yamanote Line
- JR Chuo Line
- JR Ome Line
- Keio Line
- JR Itsukaichi Line
- Nishi Tokyo Bus
- Mitake Tozan Railway



Tourist information site for the Tama area and Shima islands of Tokyo



TAMASHIMA.tokyo

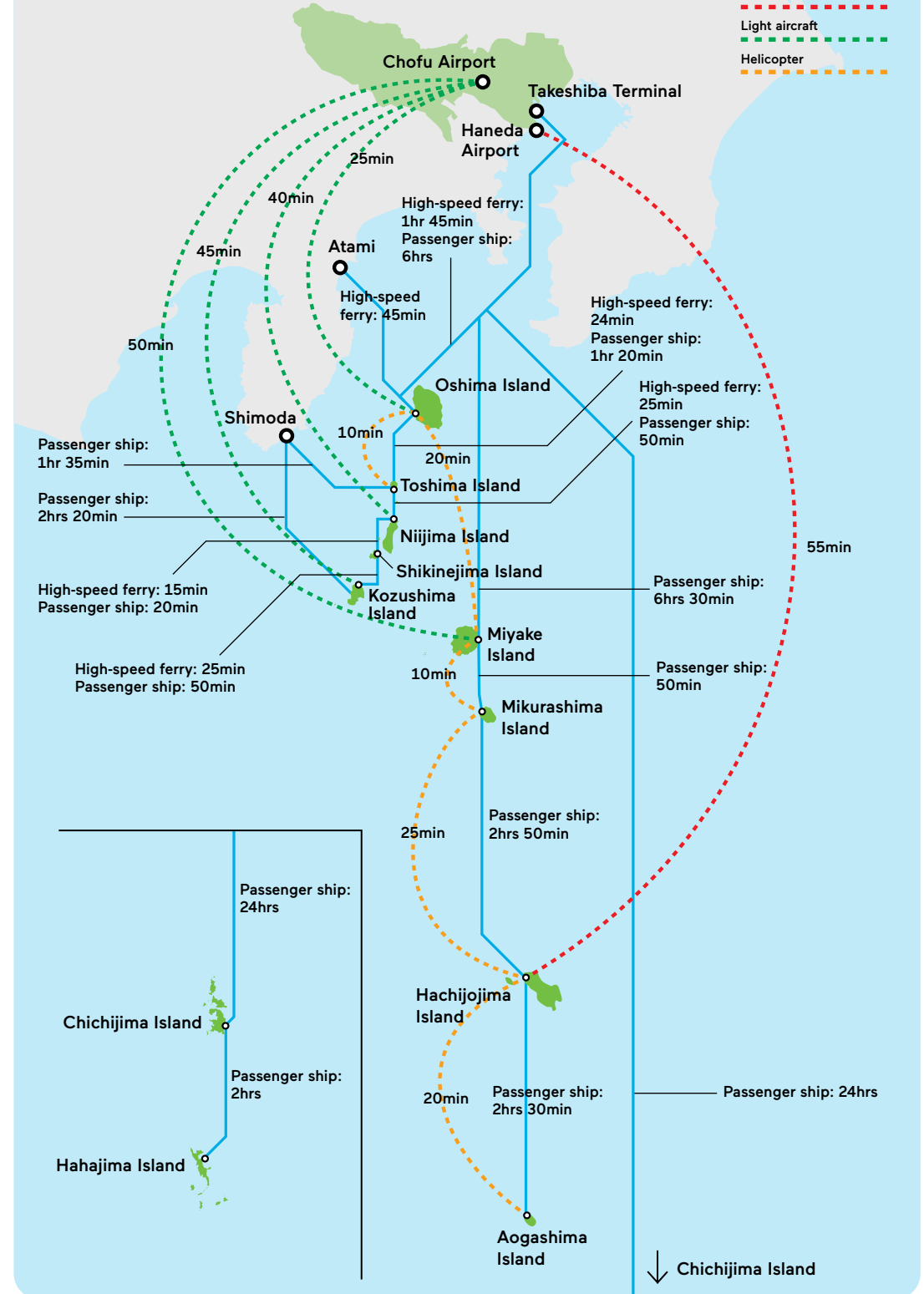
\*Estimated rail travel times are standardized and may vary. \*The information contained in this publication is accurate as of the end of July 2023. Since this information may change, we recommend confirming the details before setting out on your trip. Please be aware that we will assume no responsibility for any damages arising from the information contained in this publication. \*The following Japanese terms are used in the geographical names in this publication: -shi "city," -machi "town," -mura "village," and -shima or -jima "island."

Registered No. (2)234

## SHIMA

To visit the islands from central Tokyo, either take a boat from Takeshiba Terminal, or fly from Chofu Airport or Haneda Airport.

- High-speed ferry, Passenger ship
- Jet aircraft
- Light aircraft
- Helicopter







TOKYO  
METROPOLITAN  
GOVERNMENT

**TCVB**

Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau