

World Heritage

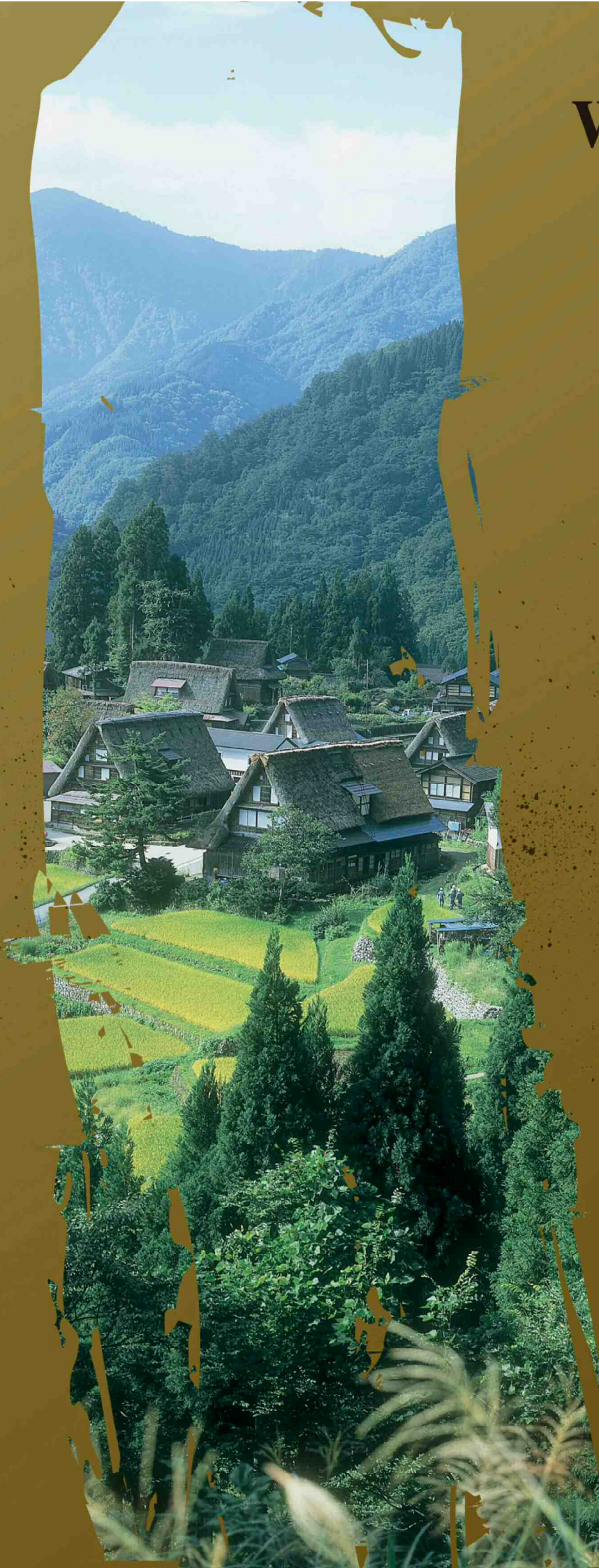
五箇山



Gokayama

The best season to visit Gokayama  
is every season.

Nanto City, Toyama Prefecture



# GOKAYAMA THROUGHOUT THE FOUR SEASONS

The gassho-zukuri of Gokayama, a World Heritage site, presents a different face in each of the four seasons.



春 Spring

## Colors of spring

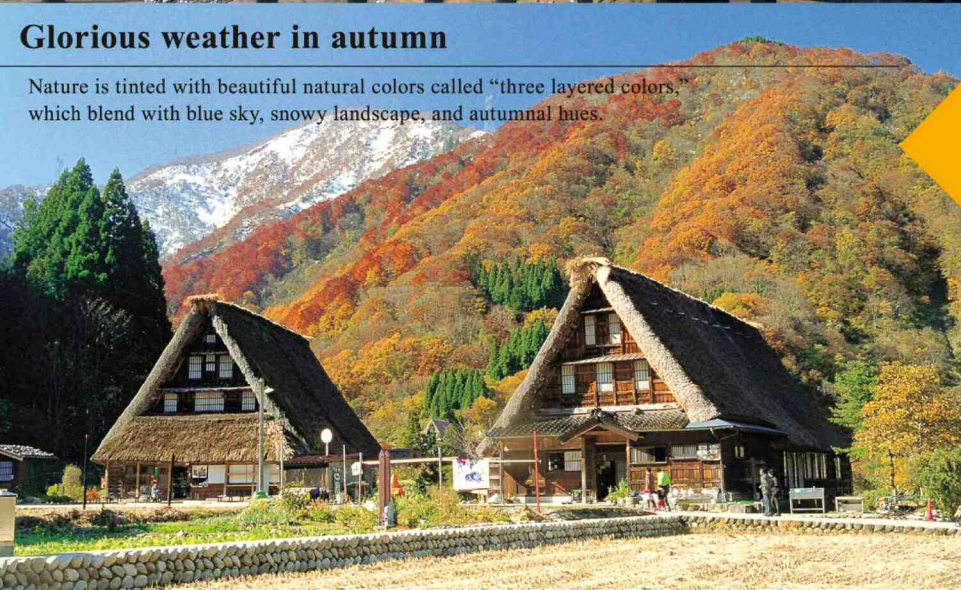
Around cherry blossom time, with the spring thaw, the area takes on the air of spring.



夏 Summer

## Verdant landscape of early summer

The mountain village is colored with the vivid and brightening green of mountains and rice paddies.



秋 Autumn

## Glorious weather in autumn

Nature is tinted with beautiful natural colors called "three layered colors," which blend with blue sky, snowy landscape, and autumnal hues.



冬 Winter

## Snow gleam

Shapes in the snow—blending silence and beauty.



寛 Relaxed



安 Comfortable



静 Quiet



躍 Dynamic



気 Spiritual



覚 Memorable



手 Handcrafted



Gokayama Gassho-zukuri Village,  
a World Heritage Site

# 歴史 HISTORY

The arts and crafts of the past live on

Gokayama remains unchanged in appearance since the Edo period. Whether going into the mountains to gather woodland delicacies or working in the village gardens and fields, life in Gokayama remains today much as it was in the past.



The roof thatching of *gassho-zukuri* is one of the seasonal events in Gokayama.



*Gassho-zukuri* are constructed using only rope and timber; no nails or metal fittings are used.



Gokayama Gassho-zukuri Village,  
a World Heritage Site

# 文化 CULTURE

Traditional Japanese songs and dances



Kokiriko



Mugiya-te-odori (dance of woman)



A springtime tradition: the Chinese lion dance

## The “Gassho-zukuri Village of Gokayama,” a World Heritage Site

This village was registered on UNESCO’s World Heritage List in December 1995 as a cultural property. There are 20 *gassho-zukuri* (traditional thatched-style) houses in Ainokura and nine in Suganuma, and most of them are about 100 to 200 years old. Some of them are said to have been built 400 years ago. With a roof pitch of 60 degrees and the vertical section being nearly a perfect triangle, these houses have a shape designed to allow snow to easily slip down the roof. This is a rational architectural design with a robust structure that can endure the rigorous nature of deep-snow regions—a design that combines living and working spaces. *Gassho-zukuri* can be considered a great invention, created by everyday wisdom.

Ainokura and Suganuma are national historic sites and Cultural Property Protected Areas, registered on the World Cultural Heritage List.



Mugiya kasa-odori (hat dance of a man)

Gokayama has many traditional Japanese songs and heartwarming dances which have long been handed down from generation to generation.



Clearing snow from the roof



Working in a vegetable garden

It’s as if you’d gone back in time.

## Come see the lifestyle of the people who live in the *gassho-zukuri* village of Gokayama, a World Heritage Site

Gokayama Gassho-zukuri Village,  
a World Heritage Site

# 食事 DISH -Cuisine-

Cuisine which has remained unchanged from the past

The flavorful mountain vegetables and freshwater fish used in this traditional cuisine satisfy your craving for a memorable meal. Relive the traditions of ages past by sitting around an *iroiri* (open hearth) and enjoying great conversation with your meal.



Gokayama tofu



Tochi-mochi



Ho'onko cuisine

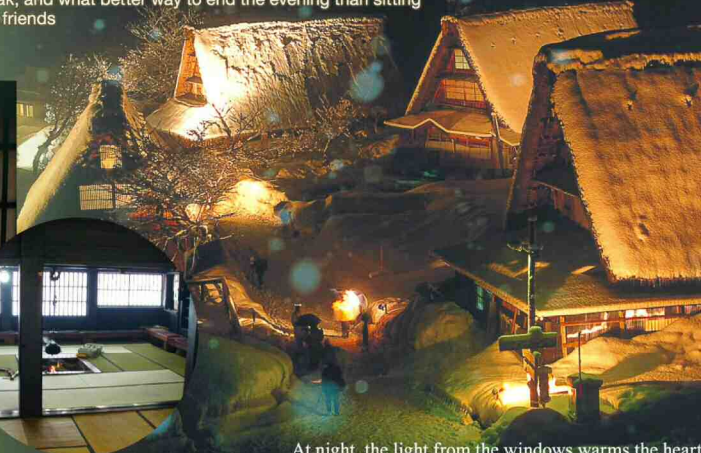
A ho'onko is a ritual event, which is also known by the name “Honko-sama” or “Oko-sama.” This traditional cuisine is prepared by using ingredients unique to mountainous regions, such as red beets and black bamboo shoots.

Gokayama Gassho-zukuri Village,  
a World Heritage Site

# 宿泊 STAYING -Accommodations-

Stay overnight at a *gassho-zukuri* inn in a World Heritage Site

If you are tired from traveling, stay overnight in one of the *gassho-zukuri* inns. There are also hot springs in Gokayama where you can enjoy a leisurely soak, and what better way to end the evening than sitting around a real open hearth fire with friends partaking of locally brewed sake.



At night, the light from the windows warms the heart.

Char (trout) sake

# Leisurely touring the villages of *gassho-zukuri* houses

## The *gassho-zukuri* Village of Suganuma, a World Heritage Site

National Historic Site & Important Traditional Building Preservation Areas



### 6 Gokayama Gassho-no Sato

This is a space for introducing the traditional lifestyles in Gokayama. Among the facilities in this space, the Life Style Museum of Gokayama uses 3D models and computer images to introduce the life and culture unique to Gokayama, which have been cultivated in the natural conditions in the deep mountains.

Open: 9:00 - 16:00 (Life Style Museum of Gokayama)  
Closed: Open 7 days/week (except in winter)  
Fee: Adults: 300 yen, Elementary/junior high school students: 150 yen



### 6 Gokayama Folklore Museum

This museum was created by remodeling the interior of the oldest *gassho-zukuri* house in Suganuma, and it exhibits approximately 300 items regarding people's lifestyles and the industries in this area, such as materials on the process and tools for potassium nitrate production, Japanese paper-making, and sericulture.

Open: 9:00 - 16:00 Closed: Open 7 days/week  
Fee: Adults: 300 yen Elementary/junior high school students: 150 yen  
\* Pass for Gokayama Folklore Museum and Ensho no Yakata (Hall of Potassium Nitrate)



### 7 Goyotokuji-Temple

Open: 9:00 - 17:00  
Closed: Open 7 days/week (open from early April to late November)  
Fee: Adults: 200 yen, Elementary/junior high school students: 100 yen

### 7 The Iwase Residence

National Important Cultural Properties

The Iwase Residence is the largest *gassho-zukuri* house in Gokayama. It is said to be 300 years old, and is a private house which integrates living and work spaces for sericulture, potassium nitrate production, Japanese paper-making, welcoming guests, and using as a residence. The house was inhabited by 35 people, both family members and servants, just after its completion. It features the most advanced style of *gassho*-style private house in such aspects as size, structure and finish from the latter Edo period.

Open: 8:00 - 17:00 Closed: Open 7 days/week  
Fee: Adults: 300 yen, Elementary/junior high school students: 150 yen

Driving down Route 156, you will see a *gassho-zukuri* village on the right bank of the Shogawa River among the trees. The whole village is an Important Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings, which was designated as a national historic site, and was registered on the World Heritage List in 1995, along with two *gassho-zukuri* villages of Shirakawago and Ainokura. It is said that some of the old existing *gassho-zukuri* buildings were built before the Tempo period (1830 - 1843).



### 7 Michinoeki (Roadside Station) Kamitaira Sasara-kan

This roadside station sells the area's specialties such as pickled red beets and woodwork. Visitors can enjoy mountain vegetables to their heart's content in this facility.



### 6 Kuroba Hot Spring Resort

Open: 10:30 - 22:00 (November - March: 11:00 - 21:00)  
Fee: 600 yen  
Closed: Tuesdays (the following day, if Tuesday is a holiday)

### World Heritage *gassho-zukuri* Village of Suganuma

Donation for cultural property conservation

Standard vehicle	500 yen
Small-/medium-sized bus	2,000 yen
Large-sized bus	3,000 yen

Tokai Hokuriku Expressway to Tonami & Kanazawa (Fukumitsu I.C.)  
Gokayama I.C.

to Lake Katsura  
Nishiakao  
to Nagoya & Gifu (Shirakawago I.C.)



### 4 Gokayama Tourist Information

This is a thatched-style general information desk located along Route 156 next to the Murakami Residence in Kokiriko-no Sato. Providing sightseeing information in addition to general information of the area, the Gokayama Tourist Information also provides information on the Echū-Hida Tourism Area. This facility also displays materials on folk songs in Gokayama.



### 4 Gokasan-so Hot Spring Resort

Located near such tourist facilities as the Murakami Residence, Kokiriko Hall, and the exile hut, this inn is popular as a place to stay for sightseeing in Gokayama. Gokasan-so features a spacious Japanese-style lobby, and an open-air bath, which commands a wonderful view of an environment full of rural beauty.



### 6 The Murakami Residence

National Important Cultural Properties  
Open: 8:30 - 17:00  
Closed: Wednesdays (Open if Wednesday is a holiday)  
Fee: Adults: 300 yen, Elementary/junior high school students: 150 yen

This is a single-tiered, four-story thatched-roof residence 10.96 m high, 10.74 m wide, and 20.37 m deep. This is a typical *gassho-zukuri* house in Gokayama, built during the Tenso period (1573 - 1591). The house was built using no metal fittings, such as clamps, in the thatched roof. With the old-style structure from the past remaining as it was in the old days, the building was designated as a National Important Cultural Property. In the Edo period, the major industries in Gokayama were the production of potassium nitrate and Japanese paper-making. In this facility, more than 1,000 folk materials are exhibited, such as materials for the production of potassium nitrate and tools for Japanese paper-making.

### World Heritage *gassho-zukuri* Village of Ainokura

Donation for cultural property conservation

Standard vehicle	500 yen
Two-wheeled vehicle	100 yen
Small-/medium-sized bus	2,000 yen
Large-sized bus	3,000 yen

to Johana & Fukumitsu  
Higashinakae



### 4 Rukei-goya (exile hut)

Cultural Properties designated by the prefecture  
The first exile by the Kaga Domain to Gokayama was in 1667 and the full-fledged exile system to this area is said to have started in 1690.

**Important points to note**  
People still live in the *gassho-zukuri* villages, World Heritage Sites. Please refrain from entering the residences and crop fields. Also, since the roofs of *gassho-zukuri* houses are highly combustible, smoking in the village is prohibited.

## The *gassho-zukuri* Village of Ainokura, a World Heritage Site

National Historic Site & Important Traditional Building Preservation Area



Ainokura village is located on a terrace a short distance from the Shogawa River, spreading across a long and narrow plateau gently sloping down to the northeast. Among the 32 houses in this village, 20 are *gassho-zukuri* houses. Many of the existing *gassho-zukuri* houses in Ainokura village were built in the period from the end of the Edo period to the Meiji period, the oldest of which is considered to date back to the 17th century. The historic site includes not only these private houses but also crop fields, surrounding mountains and forests, ponds, roads leading to the houses, fields called "kayaba" where the Japanese torreyia necessary for thatching is gathered, and "yukimochirin" groves intended to protect the village from snowslides. When visiting Ainokura, you will see a beautiful landscape woven by the village and the surrounding environment.



### 1 Gokayama Washi-no-Sato

Open: 8:30 - 17:00  
Closed: December 29 - January 3



### 1 Shin-Gokayama Hot Spring Yuu-raku

This is a popular hot spring resort along the Shogawa River, which commands a view of a lake created by a dam on the river. With open-air baths and a sauna, the hot spring offers a refreshing experience for your mind and body. The weak alkaline water is beneficial for neuralgia and chronic skin diseases.

Open: 10:00 - 22:00  
\* Closes at 21:00 from November to March.  
Closed: Wednesdays (the following day, if Wednesday is a holiday)  
Fee: 500 yen  
Access: 10 min. from Okuzushima Bus Stop



### 3 Ainokura Folklore Museum

This museum exhibits daily living utensils from the old days and tools used in sericulture and paper-making, the main industries in this area since feudal times. Visitors can gain an appreciation of the lifestyle of the people of Gokayama.

Open: 8:30 - 17:00  
Closed: Open 7 days/week  
Fee: Adults: 200 yen, High school students: 100 yen, Elementary/junior high school students: 50 yen



### 2 Gokayama-Washi

Closed: May 1 - November 30:  
Closed on Tuesdays  
December 1 - April 30:  
Closed on Sundays and holidays  
Open: 8:30 - 17:00



寛  
Relaxed



安  
Comfortable



静  
Quiet



躍  
Dynamic



氣  
Spiritual



覚  
Memorable



手  
Handcrafted



# Souvenirs from Gokayama

Inherited techniques of handicrafts...  
Bring their warmth back home

## Sasara noisemakers

Sasara noisemakers are used in Kokiriko-odori, and are among the most popular gifts from Gokayama.



## Traditional Japanese paper from Gokayama

Japanese washi paper from Gokayama is one of "Echu Province's goods," which was even described in the ancient documents of the Shosoin Treasure Repository in Nara. This ancient tradition lives on, proudly in this area.

## Gokayama tofu

Gokayama *tofu* preserves the traditional taste of *tofu*, which is made from home-grown soy beans.



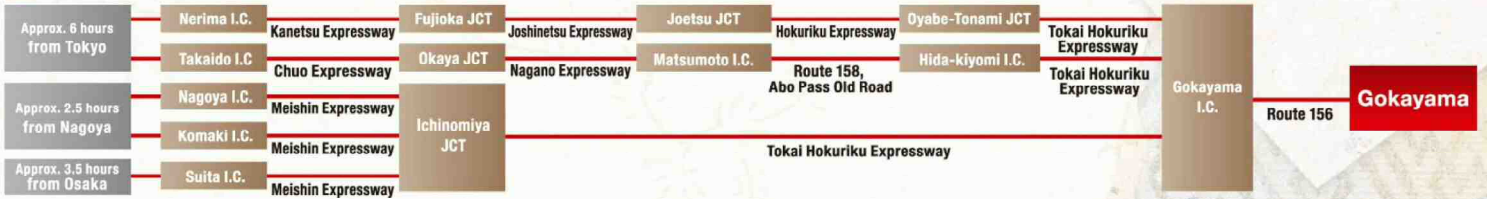
## Seishu (clear sake) Sanshoraku

An old man once said, "Sake is oil for the body." Sanshoraku is a superior brand of sake, brewed with spring water from a place deep in the mountain, and features a refreshing aftertaste.



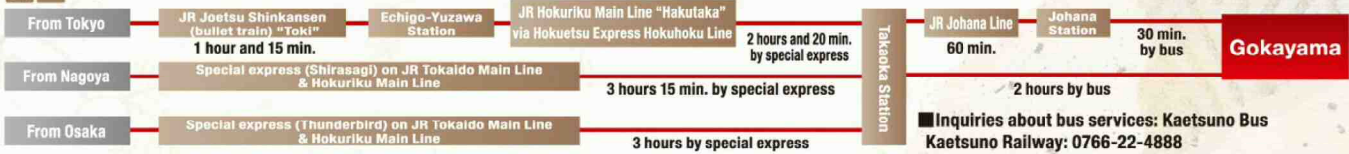
# ACCESS INFORMATION

## By car



Japan Road Traffic Information Center—Information on the Hokuriku & Tokai-Hokuriku Expressways: 050-3369-6767; Information on the Chubu region & Aichi: 050-3369-6623

## By JR train and bus

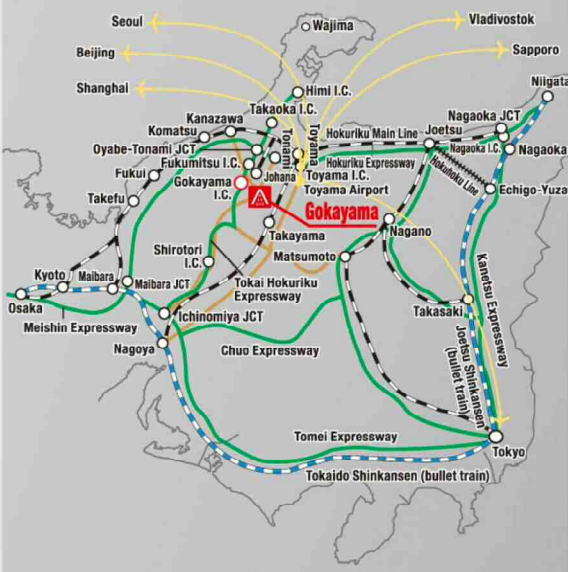


Inquiries about bus services: Kaetsuno Bus  
Kaetsuno Railway: 0766-22-4888

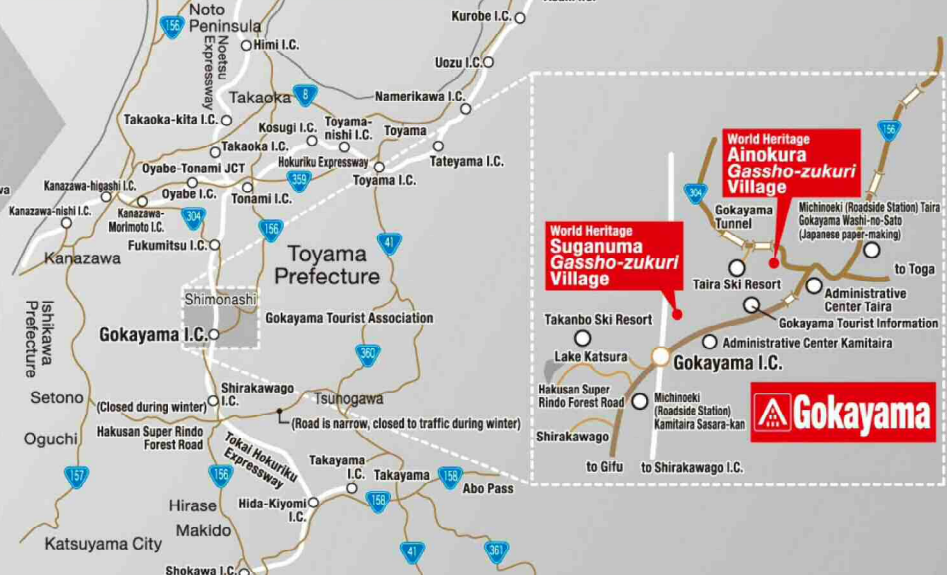
## By airplane and rented car



## Wide area railway map



## Nanto & Tonami area enlarged view



Website of Gokayama: <http://www.gokayama-info.jp> (Japanese)

## Inquiries

**Gokayama Tourist Information:** Tel: 0763-66-2468, Fax: 0763-66-2469  
754 Kaminashi, Nanto City, Toyama Prefecture 939-1914 Reception hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
**Nanto City Tourist Association:** Tel: 0763-62-1201, Fax: 0763-62-1202  
1046 Johana, Nanto City, Toyama Prefecture 939-1892

Road Traffic Information Center  
Information on Toyama  
☎ 050-3369-6616