

Travel Guide

～ Koshinetsu Region ～

The Koshinetsu region comprises three prefectures (Yamanashi, Nagano and Niigata prefectures) in the central area of the Honshu main island of Japan, and its name is derived from the initial kanji characters of their old names. The “ko” comes from the first character of the Land of Kai, which is now Yamanashi prefecture; “shin” comes from the first character of the Land of Shinano, now Nagano; and “etsu” comes from the first character of the Land of Echigo, now Niigata.

Yamanashi prefecture is a typical mountain province surrounded by Mt. Fuji to the south, the Akaishi Mountains (Southern Alps) to the west, Mt. Yatsugatake to the north, and the Okuchichibu Mountains to the east. Although it is surrounded on all sides by mountains, it is often joked that a homonym of the prefecture’s name means “prefecture with no mountains.” Many locations in the prefecture offer spectacular views of Mt. Fuji, including the upside-down Fuji① that is reflected on the surface of Lake Motosuko, one of the Fuji Five Lakes, and the renowned views from Oshino Hakkai, the eight springs created by the melting snow from Mt. Fuji, from Lake Kawaguchi hot springs, and from the Shosenkyo Gorge that is known for its beautiful yet peculiar rock formations. The prefecture boasts Japan’s largest production of grapes and peaches, and is also famous for the wineries located in Kiyosato and other wine production sites. There are many distinguished historical sites in the prefecture, including the national treasure Daizenji Temple (also called Budo-dera, or Grape Temple) and Erinji Temple, which is associated with Takeda Shingen, who was a powerful daimyo in feudal Japan.

Nagano prefecture is the fourth-largest prefecture in Japan. It is a mountain prefecture that is home to the Northern Alps, represented mainly by the Mt. Hakuba foothills and Mt. Yatsugatake. The prefecture’s most popular tourist spots include natural landscapes such as the Kamikochi, Norikura, Kurohime and Shiga highlands, the area around Lake Suwa, which is referred to as “Japan’s Switzerland,” the famous summer resort of Karuizawa and the nearby Shiraito Falls. Famous historical sites such as Matsumoto Castle, designated a national treasure, and Zenkoji Temple, with its more than 1,300-year history, offer glimpses into Japan’s past, while Kids’ Ninja Village in Togakushi, the legendary home of the ninja, provides athletic facilities and enjoyment for children and adults alike. The famous Suwa Onbashira Festival held every seven years is a spectacular religious ritual of sliding massive logs down the steep slopes of the mountain.

Niigata prefecture is situated facing the Sea of Japan, and receives the largest amount of snowfall in Japan. As a production region of the Uonuma koshihikari and various other brands of rice, the prefecture abounds with many traditions and culture related to rice, such as the production of Japanese sake and senbei crackers that are made with rice, the rice terraces in Joetsu and Kashiwazaki cities, and the *hasagi* trees for hanging cultivated rice to dry in Manganji and Natsui. Also blessed with abundant seafood, the fish market in Teradomari receives large numbers of tourists seeking to buy fresh crabs. The prefecture is home to such cultural attractions as the Nagaoka Fireworks Festival, which is one of the three largest fireworks festivals in Japan; Iyahiko Shrine, known for its large torii gate; and Senami hot springs along the coast. Sado is known as a sanctuary for the crested ibis, designated a special natural treasure; and the gold mine that boasted Japan’s largest production of gold and silver in the past. Its rich natural environment and local performing arts are a must-see for tourists.

たび 旅のしおり

— 甲信越地方 —

本州中部の3県（山梨県、長野県、新潟県）で構成されるこの地域の呼び名は、甲斐、信濃、越後という昔の地名の頭文字からなっています。

山梨県：南に富士山、西に赤石山脈(南アルプス)、北に八ヶ岳、東に奥秩父山地と四方を山に囲まれ「山があるのにやまなし県」と冗談も言われる典型的な山国です。富士山を臨む絶景ポイントが多く、富士五湖の本栖湖の湖面に映る逆さ富士、富士山の雪解け水でできた忍野八海、河口湖温泉、奇岩奇石が美しい昇仙峡などからの眺めも定評があります。ぶどうや桃は日本一の生産量を誇り、清里などのワイナリーが有名で、国宝の大善寺（別名ぶどう寺）や、武田信玄ゆかりの恵林寺も名高い史跡です。



①逆さ富士

長野県：日本の都道府県の中で4番目に面積が大きく、白馬山麓、八ヶ岳に代表される北アルプスがそびえる山国です。上高地や乗鞍、黒姫、志賀など自然観光に恵まれた多くの高原、日本のスイスと呼ばれる諏訪湖周辺や、避暑地として有名な軽井沢は近くの白糸の滝とともに人気の観光地です。国宝の松本城、1,300年以上の歴史を持つ善光寺の観光名所の他、忍者の里・戸隠にあるチビッツ忍者村はアスレチックなどもあり大人も楽しめます。7年毎に行われる諏訪御祭祭は、大木を山から落とす勇壮な神事で有名です。

新潟県：日本海に面する新潟県は、降雪量が日本一。「魚沼産コシヒカリ」などの米どころで、日本酒やせんべいの他、上越市や柏崎市の「棚田」、稲を乾燥させるための「はさ木並木」（満願寺や夏井など）など、お米にちなんだ風物が数多くあります。魚介類も豊富で、寺泊の魚市場では、カニを目当てに多くの観光客が訪れます。日本三大花火大会である長岡の花火大会、おとりい ゆうめい いやひこじんじや かいがん ぞ せなみおんせん じょうちよ 大鳥居で有名な弥彦神社、海岸沿いの瀬波温泉も情緒があります。特別天然記念物トキと、かつて金銀の産出が日本一だった金山とで知られる佐渡は、豊かな自然と郷土芸能が見所です。