

**Seishini Temple Festival**  
A popular spot among tourists, Seishini Temple is also famous for its cherry blossoms—and the Seishini Temple Matsuri takes place when the cherry blossoms are in full bloom. Events include a procession of mendicant priests and dedicatory shows put on by local residents, as well as a Buddhist service featuring a reading of the Kannon Sutra.

**Mihara Satsuki (Azalea) Festival**  
Held in Miyajima Park when the azaleas, the city's official flower, are in full bloom, the Mihara Satsuki Matsuri is a nursery rhyme-themed festival closely associated with Toshiko Takeuchi, a Hiroshima native famous for writing the nursery rhyme "The Seagull Sailors." With a wide variety of events including a flea market, this festival is very popular among locals.

**Sankeien Garden (Flower Festival)**  
Located near Hiroshima Airport, Sankeien Garden is a Japanese-style garden where one can enjoy various flowers—plum blossoms, cherry blossoms, peonies, water lilies—throughout the four seasons of the year. During the Flower Festival held each June, the entire garden is filled to the brim with some 10,000 hydrangeas.

**Mihara Yassa Festival**  
Taking place over three days in August, the Mihara Yassa Matsuri centers on the famous "Mihara Yassa Odori" dance, which is said to have originated as a dance performed by sailors to celebrate the completion of Mihara Castle. A fireworks show on the third and final day attracts crowds of spectators from near and far, bringing the festival to its grand finale.

<p><b>Chin-Kon-Kan</b> (Designated Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Hiroshima Prefecture and the City of Mihara)</p> <p>Chin-Kon-Kan is the name of a dedicatory dance performed at a yearly festival held at Ushi Shrine (Uoguchi Shrine) in Mihara's Shinkura District. Wearing red costumes and demon masks, dancers in the guise of large demons holding small <i>hamayumi</i> (ceremonial bows) and small demons holding <i>rokushabou</i> (long staffs) dance powerfully to the beat of large and small <i>taiko</i> drums.</p>	<p><b>Sagishima Triathlon</b></p> <p>Each year, around 300 athletes gather on Sagishima Island to compete in the Sagishima Triathlon. Most of the island's residents participate as volunteers as the entire island is transformed into a triathlon course covering 1.5km of swimming, 4km of cycling and 10km of long-distance running.</p>	<p><b>Miyaza (Shrine Parish) "Kui-Inari Shrine Oto"</b></p> <p>In this traditional Shinto ritual, the parishioners of the shrine slice fresh sea bream into sashimi using only knives, without touching it by hand, before dining on it together. This longstanding ritual is mentioned in historical documents dating back 400 years. The skill of the knife wielders as they fillet the sea breams is truly a sight to behold.</p>	<p><b>Kui! Sawayaka (Refreshing) Highlands Festival</b></p> <p>The Kui Sawayaka (Refreshing) Highlands Matsuri recreates the Kui District's historic heyday as a livestock market for cattle and horses. The festival's main event is an exciting cow sled race (pictured) that is often neck and neck.</p>
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<p><b>Minara Ukishiro (Floating Castle) Festival</b>          Taking place around JR Mihara Station and Mihara Port, the Minara Ukishiro Matsuri is a festival that recreates the lively hustle and bustle of the old castle town. The main event is a parade of the armored garrons who served the shogun Tokuyakawa, featuring a procession of floats of about 30 meters. On the evening of the 1st, a daylong farmer's market where crowds of people come to freshen local vegetables.</p>	<p><b>Mihara Shinmei Ichi (Market)</b>          A harbinger of spring along the old Sanyo Highway, the Mihara Shinmei Ichi is a festival steeped in tradition from a long history that stretches back more than 440 years. With over 500 stalls open for business during the festival, the streets are thronged with a great many visitors. The town's "Omori" Shrine, Sogami Shrine (Bodhidharma) Dharma" is on display throughout the festival.</p>	<p><b>Utsuku-Birakasa (Naked Festival)</b>          In the Naked Festival, hundreds of scantily dressed men from all over Japan gather at Kuri-Nami Shrine to vie for red (representing shadow) and white (representing light) flags representing <i>okunagi</i> (literally: the tree of happiness). It is said that whoever carries the tree of happiness will be blessed with good luck for the rest of the year.</p>	<p><b>Noji Spring Festival Futon Danjiri</b> (Designated Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Hiroshima Prefecture)          Featuring epic dashes between drier (decorated portable shrines—pictured), the Noji Spring Matsuri is a thrilling spectacle held at Tokiwa Shrine, which houses the local Shrine guardian deity of fishing. One who loses the festival gets the title of "fisherman" and the winner who wins the festival and this child then makes a doll called a "deco"—and our visits to the shrine at night—"metamora"</p>
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Hachigamine Taisai (Grand Festival)	Early April	Daiva Genki Festival	3rd Sunday in October
Okasaka (Mitsuki-Hachimangu Shrine Spring Cherry Blossom Festival)	2nd Sunday in April	Hiroshima Sky Day: Autumn Fureai Festival	Mid-October
Seishiji Temple Festival	Mid-April	Mihara Airport Chamber of Commerce and Industry Festival	Late October
Mihara Satsuki (Azalea) Festival	Weekend of Last Saturday in May	Kui Sawayaka (Refreshening) Highlands Festival	Late October
Sankelen Garden Hana Festival (Flower Festival)	Early June	Buttsuji Temple Special Viewing	Late October
Handon Night Market	Every Saturday from June to First Sunday in August	Lake Hakuryoku Fureai Green Marathon	Early November
Shosai (Sunami Beach Park Season Opening Festival)	First Saturday in July	Sankelen Garden Momiji (Maple Leaf) Festival	Early November
Gion Festival (Yaegaki Shrine Festival)	Sunday Closest to July 15th	Mihara Ukishiro (Floating Castle) Festival	2nd Sunday in November
Nuta-Hongo Summer Festival	Saturday Closest to July 23rd	Mitsuki-Hachimangu Shrine Autumn Festival	2nd Sunday in November
Yahata Fire Festival (Mitsuki-Hachimangu Shrine)	Last Saturday in July	Popolo Winter Illumination	Around December
Hongo Nuta River Ayu (Sweetfish) Festival	Early August	Kui District Winter Firefly Illumination	December to January
Mihara Yassa Festival	Weekend of 2nd Sunday in August (Friday to Sunday)	Mihara Shinmei Ichi (Market)	Weekend of 2nd Sunday in February (Friday to Sunday)
Chin-Kon-Kan	August 16th	Ofuku-Birakasi (Naked Festival)	3rd Saturday in February
Sagishima Triathlon	Last Sunday in August or First Sunday in September	Noji Spring Festival (Futon Danjiri)	Weekend of 4th Sunday in March

●For further details about events, event dates and other event information, please visit the Mihara City Website or the Mihara Tourism Association Website

**Takayama Kobayakawa Tour Course**

Recommended for those who want to see the natural beauty of Miura!

Recommended for those who want to see the natural beauty of Miura!

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Stop Number	Location	Distance	Approx. Time
1	Mihara Castle Remnants	0.3km	~Approx. 5 Minutes on Foot
2	Funairi (Boat) Turret Remnants	15km	~Approx. 30 Minutes by Car
3	Mitsuki-Hachimangu Shrine	15km	~Approx. 30 Minutes by Car
4	Kui-Inari Shrine	18km	~Approx. 35 Minutes by Car
5	Seishinji Temple	20km	~Approx. 40 Minutes by Car
6	Takayama & Ni-Takayama Castle Remnants	5km	~Approx. 10 Minutes by Car
7	Beisanji Temple		
8	Mt. Fudekage & Mt. Ryuo	17km	~Approx. 33 Minutes by Car
9	Byosenji Temple Carved Rock Buddha Relief Image on Mt. Shirakati	15km	~Approx. 30 Minutes by Car
10	Funaki Gorge	2km	~Approx. 5 Minutes by Car
11	Jō'o no Taki Waterfall	1km	~Approx. 3 Minutes by Car
12	Bakusetsu no Taki Waterfall	1km	~Approx. 25 Minutes by Car
13	Lake Hakuryoku	23km	~Approx. 45 Minutes by Car
14	Kui Block Field		

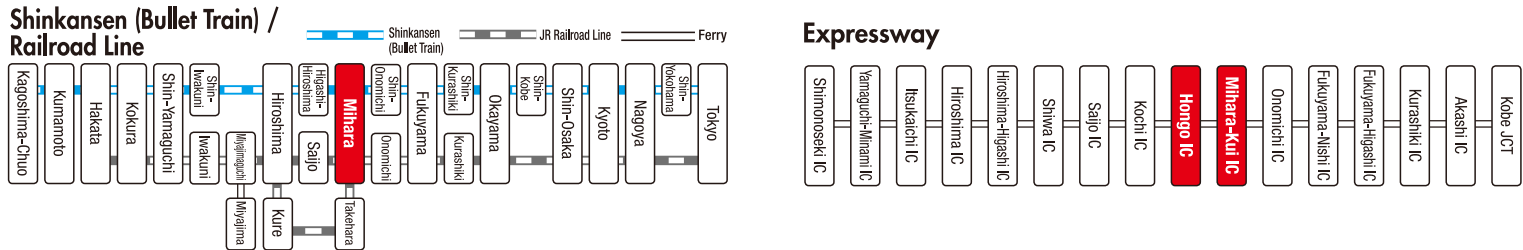
**Hiroshima Prefecture**

**Legend:**

- Sanyo Expressway
- Cross-Chugoku Expressway, Onomichi-Matsue Route (Chugoku Yamanami Expressway)
- Toll Road from Miyoshi-Kisaki IC to Matsue-Tamatsukuri IC
- Toll Road from Onomichi JCT to Onomichi Route Toll Gate
- Sanyo Shinkansen (Bullet Train)

**Key Locations and Routes:**

- Hiroshima Station** (Main Station)
- Hiroshima Airport**
- Hiroshima JCT**
- Hiroshima IC**
- Hiroshima-Higashi IC**
- Higashi Hiroshima Station**
- Higashi-Hiroshima / Kure Expressway**
- JR Sanyo Line**
- JR Kure Line**
- Hongo IC**
- Mihara-Kui IC**
- Mihara Station**
- Shin-Onomichi Station**
- Onomichi IC**
- Onomichi JCT**
- Onomichi-Kita IC**
- Sera IC**
- Konnu IC**
- Kisa IC**
- Mirasaka IC**
- Chugoku Transverse Expressway**
- Nishi-Seto Expressway**
- Innoshima Island**
- Ikuchijima Island**
- Sagishima Island**



**By Air**

Domestic Flights	International Flights
Sapporo (Shin-Chitose) All Nippon Airways Japan Airlines	Mihara – Habu (Innoshima Island) Mihara – Shigei (Innoshima Island) Mihara – Setoda (Ikuichijima Island) Sunami – Sawa (Ikuichijima Island)
Sendai Japan Airlines Ibex Airlines	
Tokyo (Haneda) All Nippon Airways Japan Airlines	
Okinawa (Naha) All Nippon Airways	
Tokyo (Narita) All Nippon Airways Ibex Airlines Spring Airlines	
Seoul (Incheon) All Nippon Airways Asiana Airlines	
Dalian All Nippon Airways Air China	
Beijing All Nippon Airways Air China	
Shanghai (Pudong) Japan Airlines China Eastern Airlines	
Chengdu China Eastern Airlines	
Taipei China Airlines	

**Sightseeing Tour Guide Inquiry Information** ※ Please feel free to contact any of the following organizations for a consultation about your intended date/duration of stay, number of participants and budget, etc.

<p><b>Azalea Guide Office</b>          Part of the Mihara Tourism Association          ☎ (0848) 63-1481</p>	<p><b>Sagishima Enthusiast Volunteer Guide</b>          Part of Sagiura Community Center          ☎ (0848) 87-5004</p>	<p><b>Hongo Tourism Association</b>          [Available Weekday Mornings Only]          ☎ (0848) 86-5717</p>
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Mihara City Hall, Hongo Branch Office, Mihara City Hall, Daiwa Branch Office, Community Promotion Section  
 URL <http://www.city.mihara.hiroshima.jp>  
 3-5-1, Minato-machi, Mihara, Hiroshima Prefecture 〒723-8601  
 ☎ (0848) 67-6014  
 ☎ (0848) 63-1481 ☎ (0848) 67-5877 ☎ (0848) 86-5717 ☎ (0847) 33-1875



MIHARA

三原

Official Mascot of Mihara City



やっさだるまん

A City where the Sea, the Mountains, the Sky and Dreams unfold before you.

Yassadaruman






<p><b>Miyaura Arts and Culture Center</b>  <b>"Popolo" (G-4)</b>          "Popolo" holds a wide variety of events with a strong connection to the local community, including annual Winter Illumination and much more.</p>	<p><b>Sunami Beach Park</b> (G-5)          Sunami Beach Park features everything from a kids' pool to full barrier-free accessibility, making this multipurpose beach facility fun for the whole family—from small children to seniors.</p>	<p><b>Miharashi Onsen (Hot Spring)</b> (G-6)          Boasting spa temperatures of up to 45.1, Miharashi Onsen is one of the hottest natural hot springs in all of Hiroshima Prefecture. In addition to its variety of unusual baths such as the "Ravishing Beauty Bath," another big draw is its sweeping views of the Seto Inland Sea.</p>	<p><b>Hiroshima Prefecture Chuo Shinrin Park</b> (D-3)          Located near Hiroshima Airport, Chuo Shinrin Park is a perfect place for nature hiking and also features a cycling path. Classes, nature walks and other events are also held here.</p>
<p>2-1-1 Miyaura, Mihara          ☎ (0848) 81-0886</p>	<p>1-7-1 Sunami-Nishi, Mihara          ☎ (0848) 67-0277 (During Summer Only)</p>	<p>1-1-1 Sunami Heights, Mihara          ☎ (0848) 69-1611</p>	<p>1315 Hongo Kamikitagata, Mihara          ☎ (0848) 86-9101</p>

<p><b>Seishinji Park Auto Campground</b> (D-3)</p> <p>With campgrounds and multipurpose grounds where the whole family can experience the joys of nature together, this is the perfect place to enjoy all of the natural beauty that Seishinji Park has to offer.</p> <p>315-1 Hirasaka, Daiwa-cho, Mihara 075-75-2767</p>	<p><b>Kajitsu no Mori (Fruit Forest) Park</b> (D-3)</p> <p>At this tourist-friendly orchard, visitors can pick various different types of fruit throughout each of the four seasons. Various sweets made using fruits from the orchard are also very popular among visitors.</p> <p>75-28 Ogu, Daiwa-cho, Mihara 075-75-2767</p>	<p><b>Lake Hakuryoku Orchard Park</b> (D-2)</p> <p>In addition to picking strawberries, pears and other types of fruit, another popular activity for visitors is playing a round of park golf while enjoying the natural beauty of the park's surroundings. The park also features thatched-roof rest areas where visitors can barbecue.</p> <p>398 Ogu, Daiwa-cho, Mihara 075-75-2767</p>	<p><b>Daiwa Cycling Terminal</b> (D-1)</p> <p>Daiwa Cycling Terminal is fully stocked with around 100 rental bicycles so that you can enjoy cycling while getting in touch with nature.</p> <p>2046-2 Kurume, Daiwa-cho, Mihara ☎ (0847) 33-0099</p>
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<p><b>Mt. Une Astronomical Observatory</b> (F-1)          This astronomical observatory sits atop Mt. Une, the highest peak in the Bingo Region. Visitors can enjoy stargazing using powerful refracting and reflecting telescopes or catch a planetarium show. 370-29 Yoshida, Kui-cho, Mihara          ☎ (0847) 32-7145 Weekdays; ☎ (0848) 64-2137</p>	<p><b>Mihara Municipal Mt. Une Family Vacation Village</b> (F-1)          Mt. Une Family Vacation Village offers camping gear rentals so that the whole family can enjoy the great outdoors together with ease. 385-4 Yoshida, Kui-cho, Mihara          Operating Days: ☎ (0847) 32-7891</p>	<p><b>Winter Firefly PET Bottle Illumination</b> (F-2)          Held each year from early December to early January, this major event lights up winter nights in the Kui District with colorful light sculptures made out of PET bottles and LEDs. Yoshida, Kui-cho, Mihara          ☎ (0847) 67-6014</p>	<p><b>Onoura Beach</b> (G-5)          Onoura Beach is a great place to experience the natural beauty of Saghisima and also features nearby facilities where visitors can enjoy camping, barbecuing and more. Sunami, Sagura-cho, Mihara          ☎ (0848) 87-5004</p>
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### Sunami Port Shop

**Takoyaki (Octopus Dumplings)**  
Made with fresh octopus delivered directly from local fishing boats, you can savor the rich umami flavor of its octopus to your heart's content. Pack of 8 for ¥260 Yen  
1-2-1 Sunami-Machi, Mihara  
☎ 0848-43-4275

### Kura (Diner)

**Octopus Ponzu Vinegar**  
Made with 100% octopus chips that have been pickled for 60 days, their finely aged ponzu vinegar features a mellow octopus stock. (780 Yen)  
1-1-14 Minato-cho, Mihara  
☎ 0848-44-3201

### Isihida Masazo Shoten

**Whole Octopus**  
Whether made into octopus rice or grilled and eaten as a snack, this local specialty goes together perfectly with beer or sake! (1,500 Yen)  
5-1-1-23 Honmachi, Mihara  
☎ 0848-62-3588

### Kodama

**Jumbo Octopus Tempura**  
One bite of Kodama's jumbo octopus tempura and you'll be hooked! This local Mihara specialty is made by battering and frying an octopus leg whole. (510 Yen)  
1-2-1 Shin-machi, Mihara  
☎ 0848-43-4275

### Urabe Seafood Processing "Octopus Rakuten"

**Octopus Rice Mix**  
Bursting with rich umami flavor, this mix combines the taste of fresh octopus from the Seto Inland Sea with skipjack tuna from Yakuhi and Kofu from Hidaka. (2 Pouches for 436 Yen)  
1-1-2 Enchi-cho, Mihara  
☎ 0848-62-3218

### Mihara Local Specialties

### Michi no Eki (Roadside Rest Area) Yoganos Yakuryu

**Shimodeirdori Chicken Smoked Pizza**  
Enjoy using Shimodeirdori Chicken, Mihara's renowned local specialty, Shimodeirdori Chicken Smoked Pizza will warm your taste buds with the smoky flavor of its pizza and the savory flavor of its Shimodeirdori Chicken. (1,900 Yen)  
652-3 Waki, Daiwa-cho, Mihara  
☎ 0847-35-3022

### Hattendo

**Melon Bread**  
This popular treat will excite your taste buds with its combination of crisp bread on the outside and subtly sweet cream on the inside. Available in 6 different flavors: custard, green tea, red bean and chocolate buns. (220 Yen)  
1-2-20 Minato-cho, Mihara  
☎ 0120-102-040 (Customer Hotline)

### Suishin Yamane Honten

**Suishin Pure Ginjo Sake**  
Brewed using traditional Suishin techniques, this pure ginp sake features a rich, full-bodied and delicious flavor. (1,442 Yen)  
☎ 0848-62-3251

### On the Rocks Unprocessed Sake

Thou shalt sweat and easy to drink when mixed with soft water, this crisp sake is best enjoyed in the summer on the rocks.  
Available Only in Summer (1,350 Yen)  
1-2-58 Hase-machi, Mihara  
☎ 0847-32-8330

### Café & Dining Ciao

**Orange Gateau Chocolat**  
Made with plenty of only the freshest ingredients, this rich gâteau chocolat is topped with seasonal fruits, making it a deliciously aromatic treat for refined taste buds. (800 Yen)  
2-1-11 Miyuki, Mihara  
☎ 0848-44-9700

### Shiki Four Seasons

**Apple Pie**  
An apple pie that looks just like a pie! With a crisp, flaky crust and a sweet fragrance, this homemade apple pie is an unusual dish that gives apple pie a new and interesting texture. (280 Yen per slice)  
35-3-18 Hongō-machi, Mihara  
☎ 0848-36-4467

### Etoile Oike

**Hakuryu Dora Dora**  
This wonderful treat consists of coarse anko (sweet red bean paste) and fresh cream sandwiched between two layers of cake similar to sponge cake. (175 Yen)  
1530-1 Waki, Daiwa-cho, Mihara  
☎ 0847-34-0301

### Senchan Farm

**Japanese Van Ice Cream**  
Containing chunks of fresh yam, skin and all, this vanilla ice cream is quite nutritious. Thanks to its refreshing flavor, it is also a popular choice among locals. (300 Yen)  
21-42 Nemakoshi, Ku-cho, Mihara  
☎ 0847-32-8330



# A Castle Town Associated with the Kobayakawa Clan: History & Historical Sites



**Mihara Castle Remnants (National Historic Site)** (G-4)  
Built by Takakage Kobayakawa, the third son of Motonari Mori (a samurai general of the Warring States Period made famous in the parable "The Lesson of the Three Arrows"), in 1567, Mihara Castle was constructed by connecting several small islands on the Seto Inland Sea. This gives the castle the appearance of floating on the sea, earning it the nickname "Ukishiro" (Floating Castle). It is said that when the great Hideyoshi Toyotomi and Ieyasu Tokugawa stayed in Mihara, they were struck with wonder at the marvelous layout of the castle. Today, one can still see the remains of the castle walls and moat as well as the teshudai (castle keep), the funai (boat turret) and the central gate of the honmaru (castle keep). [Image at Right: Colored Portrait of Takakage Kobayakawa on Silk (Beisanji Temple Collection)]



**Funai (Boat) Turret Remnants** (G-5)  
Long ago, Takakage Kobayakawa built Mihara Castle by connecting large and small islands on the Seto Inland Sea. Among the extant remains of the castle, the funai (boat turret) is a very important stone wall structure, as it best represents the castle's distinctive features as a castle on the sea.

**Beisanji Temple** (E-5)  
Twenty Heijon Pagoda (pictured) stand in an orderly row on the grounds of Beisanji Temple, conjuring up images of bygone days as they silently mark the final resting place of generations of the Kobayakawa Clan—from the first feudal lord and patriarch, Sanheira, to the seventeenth, Takakage. Beisanji Temple's collection also houses a colored portrait of Takakage Kobayakawa on silk, which has been designated as a National Important Cultural Property.

**Takayama Castle & Ni-Takayama Castle Remnants** (National Historic Site) (E-4)  
The remnants of the home castle of the feudal lord Takakage Kobayakawa, Takayama Castle sits on the east bank of the Nuta River while Ni-Takayama Castle can be seen just across the river on the west bank. As an excellent docking location for riverboats, Ni-Takayama Castle was a useful base for the activities of Motonari Mori's naval forces.



**Ryusenji Temple Carved Rock Relief Image of the Buddha on Mt. Shirataki** (E-4)  
While atop the peak of Mt. Shirataki, Ryusenji Temple is said to have been founded by the Buddhist Priest Gyoki. The first thing to catch your eye upon entering the temple grounds is sure to be the image of the Buddha flanked by two Bodhisattvas, painstakingly carved into the rock of a sheer cliff. One can clearly see the seated Buddha (Gardener) and his two standing attendants, the Bodhisattvas Kasyapa and Ananda, who are all three riding atop clouds.

**Baikihira Kofun** (Burial Mound) (Hiroshima Prefecture Historical Site) (E-4)  
Baikihira Kofun is known as the largest "horizontal" stone chamber burial mound in Hiroshima Prefecture. There are numerous other kofun scattered around the same area, suggesting that people settled here in ancient times and have been living on this fertile land for millennia.

**Mitoshiro Kofun** (Burial Mound) (Hiroshima Prefecture Historical Site) (D-4)  
Said to have been built around the end of the Kofun Period, this kofun features an open entrance facing south and is divided into two separate chambers—a fore chamber and a rear chamber—making it a rarity among all of the kofun in Japan. The stone polishing techniques used to create its highly refined sarcophagi are also among the finest examples known in all of Japan.

**Seishinji Temple & Seishinji Park on Mt. Okai** (D-3)  
Established by Sanheira Dohi and his son, Tohira, this ancient temple has a strong association with the Kobayakawa Clan. The temple's collection houses statues of the Twenty-Eight Attendants of Senju-Kannon (Buddhist Goddess of Mercy) with 1,000 Arms, which are collectively a designated important cultural property of Hiroshima Prefecture.



**Kurotani Kofun** (Burial Mound) (Hiroshima Prefecture Historical Site) (C-2)  
Dating from the late sixth to early seventh century, this round burial mound features a horizontal stone chamber with an open entrance facing southwest. It also houses a stone shelf—a rarity not seen in any other kofun in Hiroshima Prefecture.

**Kui-Inari Shrine** (F-1)  
Built in 938, Kui-Inari Shrine is the oldest branch shrine of Fushimi Inari Taisha in all of Japan. The shrine's collection also houses "1570 Volumes of the Great Buddhist Canon Sutra Written in Ink on Paper," which were donated by Takakage Kobayakawa himself.

**Mitsuki-Hachimangu Shrine** (G-3)  
It is said that Mitsuki-Hachimangu Shrine was founded in 769, when the Buddhist Nun Hokin was exiled to what is now Mihara, bringing the deity of Utsu-hachidango Shrine with her. The shrine is home to wooden komainu (guardian dogs) donated by none other than Yoshimasa Ashikaga, the eighth Shogun of the Muromachi Period.

**Buttsuji Temple** (F-3)  
As the main temple of the Buttsuji branch of the Rinza Sect of Zen Buddhism, Buttsuji Temple is widely known as one of the most beautiful autumn leaves in all of Hiroshima Prefecture.



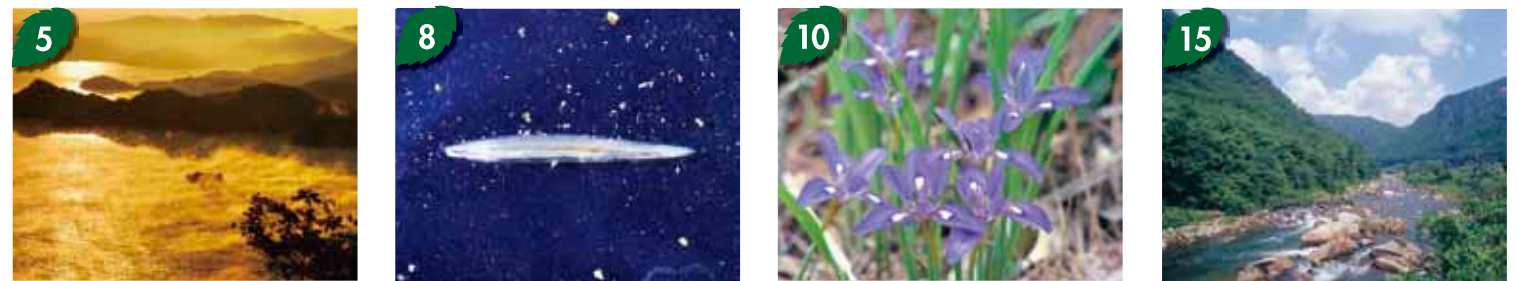
# Breathtaking Views & Lovely Islands to Captivate You: Nature & Seto Inland Sea



**Setonaikai National Park Mt. Fudekage / Mt. Ryuo** (F-5, G-5)  
The sight of some 2,000 sakura (cherry trees) in full bloom in the spring is an overwhelming treat for the eyes. Mt. Fudekage and the adjacent Mt. Ryuo are widely known for providing some of the absolute best views of the Seto Inland Sea and, especially, the view overlooking the lovely islands of the Seto Inland Sea with blossoming cherry blossoms in the foreground is definitely worth seeing at least once in a lifetime.

**Kui Block Field** (National Natural Monument) (G-1)  
At the foot of Mt. Une, the highest peak (638.9m above sea level) in the Binan Region, sits one of Japan's largest block fields. Large (1 – 7m in diameter) and unusually shaped rocks pile up as they flow like rivers down through three gently sloping valleys at the foot of the mountain, creating scenery that is at once peculiar and magnificent.

**Saint Jizo Carved Rock Relief Image** (Hiroshima Prefecture Important Cultural Property) (E-5)  
At high tide, this unusual statue of Saint Jizo is submerged up to its shoulders. Painstakingly carved into the rock surface facing the sea, this image of the seated Saint Jizo is said to have been carved by the master Buddhist sculptor Nenshin at the request of a local temple in the year 1300. Even today, the extremely refined carving work is still clearly visible.



**Umigiri (Sea Fog)** (F-5, G-5)  
This natural phenomenon can be seen from late autumn through winter. The sea fog is most likely to appear early in the morning on clear, cold days. The scene that the fog creates is truly magical.

**Lancelet Natural Habitat** (National Natural Monument) (F-6)  
Inhabiting the coastal area off the Town of Saizaki and belonging to a special subphylum called "cephalochordates," lancelets are an invaluable resource for researching animal evolution as they retain the features of the most primitive vertebrates.

**Nuta Nishi "Iris Rossii" Southernmost Natural Habitat Zone** (National Natural Monument) (E-5)  
Nuta Nishi is where Iris Rossii were first discovered in Hiroshima Prefecture. As their southernmost natural habitat zone, this area has been designated as a National Natural Monument. Visitors can view the Iris Rossii only during certain periods when the area is open to the public.

**Funaki Gorge** (D-4)  
The breathtaking scenery created by the large and unusually shaped rocks scattered throughout the area is so beautiful that Funaki Gorge has been called the "Arahanjima of the Aki Region." Funaki Gorge is also a treasure trove of fresh, natural ayu (sweetfish) known as "golden ayu" for their exceptional taste.



**Sankeien Garden** (D-4)  
The motif of this traditional Japanese garden is the three types of scenery that best represent Hiroshima Prefecture: Village, Mountain and Sea. With highlights including a three-step waterfall and Chikentei, a tea-house built in the sukiya style according to Fong Shui principles, Sankeien Garden also attracts visitors with the beauty of its trees and flowers throughout the four seasons.

**Jo'o no Taki Waterfall** (D-3)  
Jo'o no Taki Waterfall was featured as the title background during the opening credits of the NHK Taiga Historical Drama about Motonari Mori. The area around the waterfall is also a hiking course that is popular for its beautiful natural surroundings.

**Bakusetsu no Taki Waterfall** (D-3)  
Also known as "Seishinji no Taki Waterfall," this 30m waterfall is an upstream part of the Nuta River. On the west side of the river, there is a large Zen Meditation Rock that is said to have been used as part of the ascetic training of the Busho Zenji, the founder of Enryakuji Temple.

**Lake Hakuryoku** (C-2)  
The shores of Lake Hakuryoku are lined with sakura (cherry trees), so that the cherry blossoms in full bloom can be seen reflected in the tranquil surface of the water. During the cherry blossom viewing season, the lake is also lit up at night, making it a perfect place for nighttime cherry blossom viewing as well.



**Ashida River Source** (C-1)  
The surrounding area is also the cradle of several of the major rivers in Hiroshima Prefecture, including the Ashida River, the Gono River and the Nuta River. There is great demand for far and wide for natural mineral water made using the spring water that originates here.

**Sukunajima Island** (G-5)  
Sukunajima Island was the setting for the 1960 movie "The Naked Island," directed by the late, great master of Japanese Cinema, Kaneto Shindo. Later, Shindo would scatter a part of the ashes of his late wife, the actress Nobuko Ohta, in the sea around the island in remembrance of her performance in the film.

**Tonomine Thousand Sakura (cherry trees)** (G-5)  
This is the best site to view the sakura (cherry trees) on all of Sagishima Island. Over 1,000 sakura cover the face of a small mountain (Tonomine). When the cherry blossoms are in full bloom, one can see a "tunnel of sakura" in the form of the road that encircles Tonomine.

**Melitaea Scotosia**  
This butterfly has actually been designated by the Ministry of the Environment as "one of the most highly endangered organisms" and can now only be found within Hiroshima Prefecture, making it a truly precious creature.