

Setting for the serial television drama *Scarlet*

Shiga pref.

まっふる

Koka is here!

Lake Biwa
Shiga
Prefecture
Koka City

Koka
city

Secrets to Enjoying Koka

Festivals and Events

Delicious Cuisine in Koka

Having Fun in Koka

Post Stations along
the Old Tokaido Road

Experience the World of Ninja

Traveling around Koka by Car

Learn about Shigaraki Ware

Tour Filming Locations

Walking Tour of Shigaraki

この先忍者が
とひたす要注意
高野区

東山窯
KOKA



Take a stroll through the old-fashioned townscape

C Nagano's Board Fence-lined Streets

The narrow streets lined with board fences have a nostalgic air

MAP P.18 A-4

Many old-style narrow streets still remain in Shigaraki. Please be sure to stroll down these streets, lined on both sides with board fences, to enjoy the unique, pottery-town atmosphere.

The largest-scale climbing kiln in Japan still in use since the Edo period

D Sotoen Kiln

MAP P.18 A-4

The climbing kiln is still in operation and continues to produce good old-fashioned ceramics. Reservations are required, but visitors can tour the climbing kiln and the production process, conducted hands-on by the potters, and participate in ceramic art workshops.

Featuring a climbing kiln built up the mountain slope

☎ 0748-82-0316

🕒 8:30 am - 5:30 pm

🚫 Not fixed

📍 1423-13 Shigaraki-cho Nagano, Koka-shi

🚶 Walk from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (20 min)

🅑 Free



About the Koka brand

The Koka brand is designed to introduce people around the world to exciting things and products found only in Koka that will leave lasting memories. Among the unique Koka products and facilities featured in this guide, those bearing this mark have been awarded the Koka brand certification.



Japan Heritage cultural assets are marked with the logo shown above. See the back cover for more information about Japan Heritage.

Enjoy a relaxing stroll along these charming streets.

The Pottery Quarter

MAP P.18 A-4

Along the quiet old path that leads to Shingu Shrine you'll find a climbing kiln, old hibachis piled one on top of another and ceramic signposts that take you back to a simpler time. Walk down Rokuro-zaka, Hirotsubo-zaka, and Kamaba-zaka lanes where you'll find art galleries, cafes, and guest houses.

Follow the ceramic tiles that are embedded in the streets.



There are visitor-friendly signposts here and there.

Koka City Offers Drama

Walking Tour of Shigaraki

The sightseeing area Shigaraki, famous for ceramic production, also served as the setting for the serial television drama *Scarlet*, which was actually filmed here on location. You can enjoy strolling around the town visiting pottery workshops and spotting ceramic tiles embedded in the roads and tanuki ornaments.



Shingu Shrine, the Primary Shrine in Shigaraki
This ancient shrine was built in 715. The precinct features guardian dogs made from Shigaraki ware.

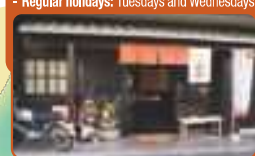
"Scarlet Shopping Area"

A product shop operated by the Council to Promote Koka through *Scarlet*.

• Opening hours: Mon. - Fri. 11:00 am - 4:00 pm

Sat., Sun. and holidays 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

• Regular holidays: Tuesdays and Wednesdays



Large Tanuki in Front of Station

Due to a play on words between tanuki (raccoon dog) and ta wo nuku (outstanding), tanuki ornaments are often crafted in Shigaraki as good luck charms for business prosperity. In Shigaraki, you can encounter a variety of unique tanuki all throughout the town.



A long-standing pottery workshop producing Shigaraki ware, which conveys the warmth of the clay

A Yamabun Pottery Workshop, Tanikan Kiln, Uzan Kiln

MAP P.18 A-4

Yamabun Pottery Workshop which continues to produce hibachi charcoal braziers, also sells saucers and mini-sized braziers. Tanikan Kiln operates out of a relocated former lecture hall from a Meiji-period teachers' training school, which now houses a workshop and gallery. Uzan Kiln produces and sells a variety of ceramics in line with modern lifestyles, including ceramic light fixtures, etc.



The charming slope between the three pottery workshops

Visitors can receive cute-looking o-mikuji (fortune-telling slips)

B Shingu Shrine, the Primary Shrine in Shigaraki

This ancient shrine, founded more than 1,300 years ago, is deeply revered by many as the home of the local guardian deity of Nagano, Shigaraki-cho. During the Fire Festival, torches are carried from this shrine to the Atago, Toki and Akiba Shrines located atop Mt. Atago as offerings.

MAP P.18 A-4



☎ 0748-82-0078

🕒 The precinct is open to the public; Shrine shop: 10:00 am - 4:30 pm (reception hours)

🚪 Open daily

📍 1151-1 Shigaraki-cho Nagano, Koka-shi

🚶 Walk from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (8 min)

🅑 Free

EVENT

Lots to do in spring, summer and fall. Enjoy Shigaraki even more by coming to events!

Late July

Shigaraki Fire Festival

Roughly 700 giant torches are carried as offerings each year.

Torches were actually built on-location and filmed together with local extras.



Autumn

Shigaraki Ceramic Art Market in Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park

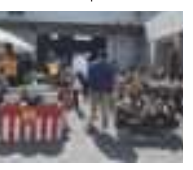
Potters and other artists living and working in the prefecture sell high-quality, personally-created works of art under the theme of "meeting art and meeting the artists."



Mid October

Shigaraki Pottery Festival

Attractive ceramic items from Japan's leading ceramic-producing area are available at reasonable prices. It's fun to shop around for bargains or items you like.



🕒 Hours 🚪 Days closed 📍 Admission 📍 Address 🗺️ Directions 🅑 Parking

Pictogram Legend



Koka City

Koka City has been the setting for popular television dramas and films!

Tour Filming Locations

Koka City is also well-known as a filming location.

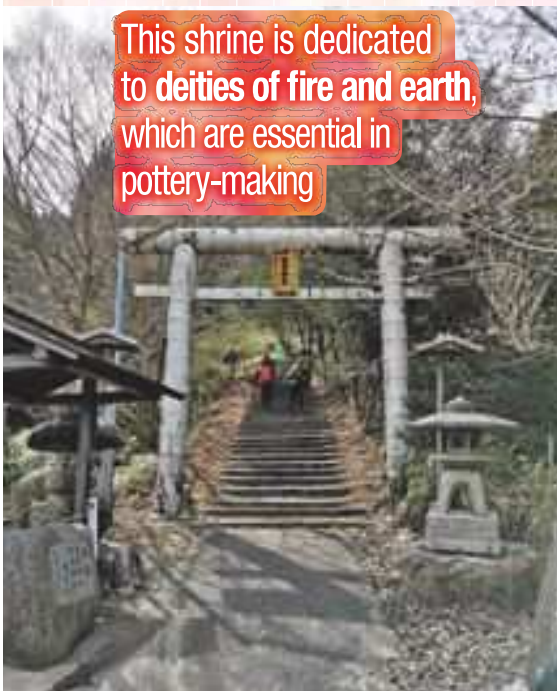
Be sure to drop by filming locations that remind you of thrilling television dramas and interesting historical dramas you've seen and that have also been visited by your favorite stars.

Front Approach to Toki Shrine

MAP P.18 B-3

Toki Shrine, together with Atago Shrine, is located atop Mt. Atago, and during the Fire Festival, giant torches are carried here as offerings. Visitors can see ceramic torii gates and guardian dogs, which are unique to pottery towns.

This shrine is dedicated to deities of fire and earth, which are essential in pottery-making



Title: "Scarlet"

Legendary Cedar Tree on the Bank of Iwao Pond

Solitary Cedar Tree on Iwao Pond

MAP P.18 C-3

When the monk Saicho was constructing Enryaku-ji Temple on Mt. Hiei, he came to this region for lumber. It is said that, at the time, he jabbed his chopsticks into the ground after eating, at which point the chopsticks immediately sprouted roots and grew into a massive cedar tree. Sugitani Shinden, Konan-cho, the location of the solitary cedar tree, was selected as one of the 100 Best Villages in Japan.



Title: "Scarlet" and other works

Known for its spectacular crimson foliage in fall when the entire mountain is tinged red

The summit provides a panoramic view of Koka City



Kotoku-ji Temple (Mt. Koshin) MAP P.18 C-2

This temple was opened by the monk Saicho more than 1,200 years ago, and legends holds that this temple is the birthplace of brass production in Japan. Pilgrims visit here from far and wide. A stone guidepost topped by three monkeys, which dates to the Edo period, stands on the side of the road leading to Mt. Koshin.

Grounds open 24 hours
Open daily
988, Minakuchi-cho Yamagami, Koka-shi
Get off at JR Kibukawa Station, and walk 90 min
Free



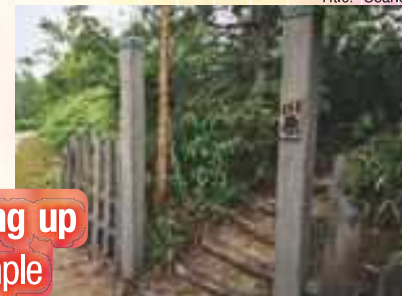
Title: "Scarlet"

Walking Path near Gyokukeiji-Mae Station

MAP P.18 B-3

This path is located near Gyokukeiji-Mae Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway. Gyokukei-ji Temple, which belongs to the Mt. Koya Shingon sect of Buddhism, is also known as Chokushi's Kobo-san or Shigaraki's Kobo-san, in reference to the great priest Kobo Daishi.

Leisurely path leading up to the prestigious temple



Title: "Scarlet"



Daido River runs near the path

Waterfall that appears differently in each season



Title: "Scarlet" and other works

Keimei Waterfall

MAP P.18 B-3

This waterfall, surrounded by the great outdoors, is also a popular spot for photographs.

0748-82-2345 (Shigaraki Tourist Association)

Shigaraki-cho Koyama, Koka-shi Drive 13 km after getting off at the Shigaraki IC on the Shin-Meishin Expressway Free * In some parts, the road is too narrow for cars to pass each other easily.

Minakuchi Kodomo no Mori

MAP P.18 C-2

This park enables visitors to enjoy the rich natural environment in this undeveloped rural area. A variety of television dramas and movies have been filmed here, including the movie Rurouni Kenshin and the television drama Asa ga Kita.

0748-63-6712 (Minakuchi Kodomo no Mori Nature Museum)
9:00 am - 4:00 pm Monday (Tuesday if Monday falls on a holiday)
Admission to nature museum 200 yen 10 Minakuchi-cho Kita-naiki, Koka-shi Take a taxi from JR Kibukawa Station (5 min)
Free



Quaint, small, old-fashioned private residences are used in the filming of historical dramas

Title: "Rurouni Kenshin" and other works



Title: "Nobunaga Concerto" and other works



Features a tower gate with a beautiful corridor often used in the filming of historical dramas

Aburahi Shrine

MAP P.19 D-3

The shrine has been used as a setting for films, including Rurouni Kenshin, Baragaki: Unbroken Samurai, Nobunaga Concerto and A Samurai in Time, as well as TV dramas.

0748-88-2106

Grounds open 24 hours

1042 Koka-cho Aburahi, Koka-shi

Walk from JR Aburahi Station (30 min) Free



The Koka Location Promotion Council website



Information on location support, registration for extras, and an introduction to the location.

0748-69-2198

Koka City Tourism Planning and Promotion Section, Location Promotion Office



<https://www.koka-location.com/>

Learn more about and experience Shigaraki ware!

With this, you will become a Shigaraki expert too!

Shigaraki, one of the Six Ancient Kilns of Japan, features a pottery-themed cultural park and pottery studio where visitors can experience making ceramics. There are also cafés and galleries made using remodeled ancient climbing kilns. The entire town can be enjoyed as one big pottery museum.



Pompoko-chan, the mascot of the Shigaraki Tourist Association. She loves Asamiya tea flavored ice cream and sweets.

The park is divided into four areas.



Park with museums and Shigaraki ware shops

Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park

MAP P.18 A-4

Devoted to the art of pottery, this cultural park features the Museum of Contemporary Ceramic Art, a grass-covered plaza, a training facility for ceramic artists and the Exhibition Hall of Industrial Ceramics. The Exhibition Hall has a cafe and a shop where you can buy Shigaraki ware tanuki figurines.

☎ 0748-83-0909

🕒 9:30 am - 5:00 pm (Last admission to the museum and the exhibition hall is at 4:30 pm.)
📅 Mondays (Tuesday if Monday falls on a holiday. The museum is closed some days in winter.)
🎫 Free admission (fee required to enter the museum)
📍 2188-7 Shigaraki-cho Chokushi, Koka-shi
🚗 Take Shigaraki Kogen bus from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (5 min) and get off at Toge no Mori.
🅑 Free



EXPERIENCE

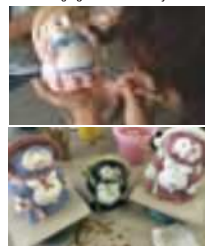
Please apply via the QR code.

Pottery-making and -painting

Shigaraki is said to be the oldest of the Six Ancient Kilns of Japan. Why not try your hand at traditional pottery-making?

● Shigaraki Tourist Association ☎ 0748-82-2345

Shigaraki ware is best known for the raccoon dog statues. Color a raccoon dog figurine and make your own piece.



Making a rice bowl The bottom of the bowl is removed with a thread.

Make your own pottery at a studio nestled in a serene mountainside setting

Shigaraki Kenzo Pottery Art Club

MAP P.18 A-4

This is a pottery workshop facility run by Kenzo Ogawa, a fourth-generation potter. You can try making pottery either by using an electric potter's wheel or by hand, whichever you prefer. Enjoy focusing on craftwork.

☎ 0748-82-2216

🕒 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

📅 Not fixed

💰 5,500 yen (Reservation required: a minimum of 2 persons per reservation) Contact for more information.

📍 755-1 Shigaraki-cho Nagano, Koka-shi

🚗 Walk from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (20 min)

🅑 Free



An item made by potter Kenzo Ogawa



Kenzo Ogawa's pottery studio is located in the Pottery Quarter.

Age-old climbing kilns keep the passion for pottery burning

Ogama Climbing Kiln and Gallery

MAP P.18 A-4



Stop at the cafe and enjoy a cup of coffee or locally produced Asamiya tea.

Employing an abandoned climbing kiln and work shed that have been restored, Ogama operates a relaxing cafe overlooking the climbing kiln on the first floor as well as an art gallery and shop on the second floor featuring figurines and dishes made by Meizangama potters and Shigaraki-based artists.

☎ 0748-82-8066

🕒 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

📅 Wednesday and Thursday

📍 947 Shigaraki-cho Nagano, Koka-shi

🚗 Walk 20 min from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway 🅑 Free



Stop here first for information!



Get in touch with the history of Shigaraki ware

Traditional Crafts Center of Shigaraki

MAP P.18 A-4

Its exhibits include works of Shigaraki ware from the Kamakura period to the modern day and related materials. Special exhibitions spotlighting the work of contemporary artists are also held there.

☎ 0748-82-2345

🕒 9:00 am - 5:00 pm 📅 Thursday (Friday if Thursday falls on a holiday) 🅑 Free

📍 1203 Shigaraki-cho Nagano, Koka-shi

🚗 Walk 3 min from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway 🅑 Free



The building facade features specially-made Shigaraki ware tiles.

The huge climbing kiln you'll see after ascending Rokuro-zaka lane is an amazing sight.



Shigaraki Column Addendum

Learn the epic history of Lake Biwa's ancient layers

Lake Biwa moved to its current location approx. one million years ago as an ancient lake that formed roughly four million years ago near the present-day location of Iga City, Mie Prefecture, continued to shift north. Lake Biwa's ancient layers formed as earth and sand, as well as the remains of plant and animal life, accumulated at the bottom of the lake. Soil gathered from here, which is perfect for use in pottery, is used not only in Shigaraki and Iga ware but in Kyo ware as well.



Geological strata can be seen on hill cliffs, etc.

Even public telephones are shaped like Tanuki!



You will be overwhelmed by the size of this Tanuki

There is a public telephone shaped like a giant Tanuki located in front of Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway.

The Tanuki can be seen dressed differently depending on the season, including ninja and Santa outfits. MAP P.18 A-4

What does Hasso Engi mean?

Tanuki-shaped ceramic ornaments can be seen throughout Shigaraki. There are eight aspects of their appearance that are said to bring luck, and these are collectively referred to as Hasso Engi. It is said that people began to mentally equate Shigaraki ware with Tanuki from 1951, when images of rows of Shigaraki Tanuki lined up along the road holding small flags to welcome Emperor Showa during his visit to Shigaraki were broadcast across the country.



There's more than just pottery! Shigaraki offers numerous attractions



A community-based railway that provides gorgeous views

Shigaraki Kogen Railway

MAP P.18 B-3

The Shigaraki Kogen Railway connects the 14.7km distance between Kibukawa and Shigaraki. From the windows of the train, which runs along the steep slopes of the verdant Shigaraki Highland, passengers can view seasonal flowering plants. The simple yet beautiful natural environment, notably the fresh greenery in spring and the crimson foliage in fall, will melt your heart.

☎ 0748-82-3391

Contact: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

🌐 <https://koka-skr.co.jp>



Enjoy riding on a local train line.

Inviting you to an art museum hidden deep in the woods



MIHO MUSEUM

MAP P.18 B-2

Designed by I. M. Pei, an architect well known for his glass pyramid at the Louvre, this art museum houses collections of ancient art from Egypt, Asia, and China. It also hosts special exhibitions three times a year.

☎ 0748-82-3411

🕒 10:00 am - 5:00 pm (Final admission at 4:00 pm)

The museum may be closed some days. Check the official website for days it is open.

📅 Monday during periods when the museum is open (The following weekday if Monday falls on a holiday)

💰 1,300 yen for adults, 1,000 yen for high school and university students, free for junior high school students and younger

📍 300 Shigaraki-cho Tashiro Momodani, Koka-shi

🚗 Take Teisan Bus from Ishiyama Station on the JR Biwako Line (50 min), get off at Miho Museum 🅑 Free

🌐 <https://www.miho.jp/>

Standing Buddha from late 2nd century Gandhara (height: 250 cm)



Once the capital during the Nara period



Shigaraki Palace Ruins (Temple Area)

MAP P.18 B-2

🚗 Walk 7 min from Shigarakigu-shi Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway

This palace was constructed by Emperor Shomu during the Nara period, and excavations in recent years have determined that it was quite large-scale. It has been designated as a national historic site. In the temple area, an attempt was made to build a massive statue of Buddha years before the construction of the Great Buddha of Nara at the Todai-ji Temple. Here, many foundation stones on which pillars stood still remain. Displays of excavated items and introductory videos can be seen at the Survey Office, located in the palace area.

☎ 0748-83-1919 (Survey Office: Weekdays only 8:30 am - 5:00 pm)
HP: <https://shigaraki-fun.com>



Shigaraki Palace Ruins (Palace Area)

MAP P.18 B-2

🚗 Walk 35 min from Shigarakigu-shi Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway

An abundance of natural light pours through the geometric glass ceiling.

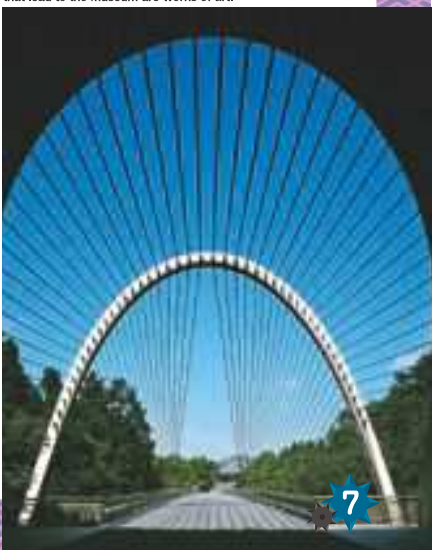


At the restaurant, guests can enjoy deluxe rice ball sets.



The cherry tree-lined street turns pink in spring.

Even the tunnel and suspension bridge that lead to the museum are works of art.



Be a Ninja and Explore Koka

Traveling around Koka by Car

There's so much to see in Koka. Drive a road that meanders through tea orchards and stop along the way to see **Shigaraki tanukis** as well as try some **ninja tricks**. You'll find many shops where you can discover good things to eat and great souvenirs plus more fun places to visit, so explore if time allows.

This is Koka.

Our mascot, Ninjaemon, wants to live up the town together with everyone at the Tourism, Commerce and Industry Association in Koka City. His hobbies are making confectionaries and visiting hot springs. His specialty is hide-and-seek!

1300 years ago, during the Nara period, Emperor Shomu built the Shigaraki Palace. The 13th century Kamakura period saw the birth of Shigaraki ware. During the Warring States (Sengoku) period, Koka ninjas played a key role in the quests of Lords Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Ieyasu to rule the country. Once the 53 Stations of the Tokaido Road were completed under Ieyasu's rule in the Edo period, Minakuchi-shuku and Tsuchiyama-shuku thrived, paving the way to modern-day Koka.

Exiting the tunnel on the Shin-Meishin Expressway, you suddenly find yourself in a **ninja village**.



A ninja standing face-to-face with a special guest, Ninjaemon, in front of the Ninja Trick House at Koka Ninja Village



Fun Detour

Go to the Pottery Quarter if you have extra time. Here you'll find that perfect piece of pottery as well as a cozy cafe. A relaxing stroll should take around 2 to 3 hours. (Go to P. 2)

START

1 Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park Stay time: 1 hour

MAP P.18 A-4
Start at the Museum of Contemporary Ceramic Art before moving on to the Plaza of Star and the Exhibition Hall of Industrial Ceramics where you can take a break at a fashionable cafe and shop. Although the slope is steep, it's lots of fun to walk.

See P.6 for more information.

Spot tanukis along the roadside.

A lush green park dedicated to the art of pottery

Pandas frolicking in front of the Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park museum.

There are many tanukis (raccoon dogs) in Shigaraki

3 Tourist Information Center Koka-ryu Real Ninja Museum Stay time: 1 hour

MAP P.19 C-2
You can discover the history of ninjas and objects associated with them. Have fun using ninja equipment and techniques. The museum shop offers a wide variety of souvenirs.

See P.10 for more information.

2 Hanayakaichi Minakuchi Store (Farmer's Market) Stay time: 20 minutes

MAP P.19 E-4
The shop carries locally grown farm products as well as food products such as miso and pickles. It also has a souvenir section where you can find locally made sweets and liquor.

See P.17 for more information.

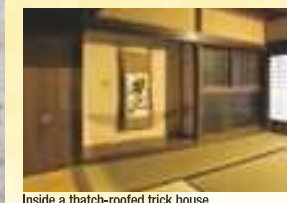
5 Koka Ninja Village Stay time: 1 hour

MAP P.19 D-2
Featuring the Ninja Trick House, Water Spider Pond, Shuriken Dojo, and more, it's a fun place for ninja lovers of any age to spend all day.

See P.10 for more information.

Try the revolving door! You can also rent ninja outfits.

A theme park where you can be a ninja



Inside a thatched-roof trick house

6 Michi-no-eki Aino Tsuchiyama Stay time: 30 minutes

MAP P.19 E-1
Located along National Route 1, this Michi-no-eki (roadside station) offers local specialties, agricultural products, processed foods and souvenirs from Koka City, as well as products from the rest of Shiga Prefecture.

See P.12 for more information.

Open in August 2025



Various animals await you here.

4 Seasonal special gelato is also very popular. Narita Fureai Farm Stay time: 30 minutes

MAP P.18 C-2
Gelato made from raw milk produced at the farm is popular for its natural sweetness and silky texture.

See P.15 for more information.

Enjoy a dessert fresh from the gelateria.

7 Koka Hot Spring Yaponpon no Yu Stay time: 1 hour

MAP P.19 E-2
Equipped with luxurious private baths for families, bedroom baths, and more, it's the perfect place to escape the daily hustle and bustle and just relax.

See P.15 for more information.



The indoor baths use 100% natural hot spring water that leaves your skin feeling soft and smooth. The outdoor baths are spacious and relaxing.

Column

Kamoshika Villa Stay time: 1 hour

MAP P.19 E-1
Set in a tranquil environment, the villa offers creative cuisine made from local ingredients plus spacious and elegant guest rooms for a comfortable stay.

See P.15 for more information.

Enjoy the spacious guest room, hot spring baths, and superb dining.

Where to stay

The year-round natural beauty of the Suzuka Mountains holds a healing power.

Experience the World of the Ninja in Koka

Ninja was an actual profession during the Sengoku and Edo periods. The work of a ninja included gathering information and waging warfare using special tactics. **Koka ninjas had a great knowledge of medicine** and they would sometimes disguise themselves as medicine peddlers. **The legendary Sanada Yukimune** is believed to have been a Koka ninja. Go ahead and immerse yourself in the world of the ninja.

The authentic ninja culture is alive in Koka! Here, you can travel back into the past.

EXPERIENCE

Come to the Koka ninja theme park and turn into a ninja!

On display at the Koka Ninja Museum you'll find ninja equipment, shuriken, and more.

Crossing the Water Spider Pond using water walking shoes

Tourist Information Center Koka-ryu Real Ninja Museum

This is a general tourist information center focusing on Koka ninjas, whose story was recognized as a Japan Heritage. Here, visitors can try the five techniques used by ninjas to escape (goton no jutsu). Recently, a new program was introduced which offers visitors hands-on opportunities to use ninja equipment. The shop in this center offers a wide variety of local specialties and sake.

A ninja painted on the wall is conspicuous.

MAP P.18 C-2
☎ 0748-70-2790
(Koka City Tourism and Community Development Association)
🕒 10:00 am - 4:00 pm 🗓 Monday (Open if Monday falls on a holiday)
💰 600, Konan-cho Ryuboshi, Koka-shi; Located inside Shinobi no Sato Prala
🚶 Walk approx. 20 min from JR Konan Station 🆓 Free

Visitors can play being a ninja dressed in a ninja outfit.

Koka Ninja Village

MAP P.19 D-2

Featuring the Ninja Trick House, Water Spider Pond, Shuriken Dojo, and more, it's a modern-day replica of a ninja village. Stop at the ninja museum to see real ninja gear and learn all about the life of the 53 families of the Koka clan. It is possible to rent a ninja costume and there are outdoor barbecue facilities.

☎ 0748-88-5000
🕒 10:00 am - 5:00 pm (Final admission at 4:00 pm) 🗓 Monday (Tuesday if Monday falls on a holiday) 💰 Admission 2,000 yen ADD 394 Koka-cho Oki, Koka-shi 🚶 Take a taxi from JR Koka Station (10 min) (complimentary bus service available from the station, reservations required) 🆓 Free

Column

Ruins of Koka's unique medieval castles

MAP P.18 C-2

Medieval castle ruins (Archaeological Site of Koka-gun Chuso)

Ruins of Jizen Castle and Murasame Castle, rectangular castles with a single outer wall, a style typical of the Koka area

Koka-gun Chuso was an autonomous organization formed by Koka samurais during the Sengoku period. Medieval castle sites dot the city where you can still see tall mounds, moats, and baileys just as they were ages ago. Five of these castle sites (Jizen, Murasame, Shingu plus its annex, and Takenaka) are designated as National Historic Sites.

Discover the world of the Koka ninja Koka Ninja House

(Former Residence of Mochizuki Izumonokami)

MAP P.18 C-2

The house was built during the Genroku period (1688-1704) as a residence of Mochizuki Izumonokami, the head of the Koka ninjas, consisting of 53 Koka families. Packed with hidden features as well as displays of ninja equipment, it is an authentic ninja house of great historical significance.

☎ 0748-86-2179
🕒 10:00 am - 4:30 pm (9:30 am - 4:30 pm on weekends and holidays) 🗓 Not fixed
💰 750 yen for adults (junior high school students and older), 550 yen for children aged 3 years and older
ADD 2331 Konan-cho Ryuboshi, Koka-shi 🚶 Walk from JR Konan Station (20 min) 🆓 Free

Koka Ninja Training Grounds The Three Sacred Mountains

Mt. Koshin (Kotoku-ji Temple)

MAP P.18 C-2

Mt. Koshin served as a training site for ascetic mountain priests, and it is also said to have been the training grounds of the Koka ninja.

The main hall was rebuilt and restored at the end of March 2017.

🕒 Grounds open 24 hours 🗓 Open daily
ADD 988, Minakuchi-cho Yamagami, Koka-shi
🚶 Get off at JR Kibukawa Station, and walk 90 min 🆓 Free

Ninja's training field

Mt. Iwao (Sokusho-ji Temple)

MAP P.18 C-3

A sacred mountain towering 471 meters high, it was used as a training ground by ninjas and monks. The mountain has sheer cliffs and unusually-shaped rocks with unique names, such as Ouma-iwa, which is shaped like a horse, and Mokugyo-iwa, which makes the sound of mokugyo (wooden fish) when struck. The mountain is also known for its magnificent cherry trees and is a great place to have a picnic.

ADD Konan-cho Sugitani, Koka-shi
🚶 Take a taxi from JR Konan Station (20 min)

Ninja training grounds dotted with odd-shaped rocks

An old shrine on the Koka ninjas' training grounds

Mt. Hando (Hando Shrine)

MAP P.18 C-2

Since ancient times, this shrine has prospered as Omi's leading sacred training grounds, and the monks who came here to lead an ascetic life are said to have greatly influenced the birth of the Koka ninja tradition. The ancient Hando Shrine, situated near the summit of Mt. Hando (664m), was built in the early Edo period. The grounds are covered with rhododendrons which bloom in April and May.

🕒 Grounds open 24 hours 🗓 Open daily
ADD 7 Shigaraki-cho Miyamachi, Koka-shi
🚶 Take a taxi from JR Kibukawa Station (10 min) and walk to the summit (60 min) 🆓 Free

The main hall featuring a thatched roof covered with Japanese cypress bark is a nationally designated Important Cultural Property.

Photos and design by Fujiwara Studio

From left, Statue of a sitting Shaka Nyorai Statue of a sitting Yakushi Nyorai Statue of a sitting Amida Nyorai

Three great Buddhas Three Buddhas of Koka

Serving as a holy site of the esoteric Tendai Buddhist sect since the Heian period, Koka thrived as a sacred place close to the capital. This religious culture was the crucible that shaped the art of the ninja. Koka is a sacred place of Kannon worship.

The three Buddhas of Koka are immense statues of Buddha located in three local temples. Follow the driving route to see these larger-than-life-size statues known as joroku-butsu measuring 2.2 - 2.8 meters high. The grand statues of Shaka Nyorai, Yakushi Nyorai, and Amida Nyorai are sure to amaze you. It is believed that praying to the three Buddhas will bring peace upon the past, present, and future.

Daichi-ji Temple
Statue of a sitting Shaka Nyorai

Rakuya-ji Temple
Statue of a sitting Yakushi Nyorai

Juraku-ji Temple
Statue of a sitting Amida Nyorai

Also known as a spiritual "power spot"

Juraku-ji Temple

MAP P.19 E-2

The temple houses Japan's largest statue of a seated Amida Nyorai, which is its honzon (or principal object of worship), as well as the eleven-headed thousand-armed Kannon and statue of a seated Guze Kannon. Another must-see is the statue of a standing Queen Maya. This temple and Horyu-ji are the only temples with statues of Queen Maya depicted in the same posture in which she gave birth to Gautama Buddha.

Temple located on National Route 1
☎ 0748-68-0364
🕒 9:00 am - 4:00 pm 🗓 Not fixed
💰 500 yen ADD 351 Tsuchiyama-cho Yamanaka, Koka-shi
🚶 Take a taxi from JR Koka Station (20 min) 🆓 Free

Once through the gate, visitors can see the Buddhist temple.

The main hall stands in the center of a huge pond

Daichi-ji Temple

MAP P.19 F-3

A branch of Myoshin-ji Temple, the Rinza sect's Daichi-ji is famed for its Horai Garden, a rock garden believed to have been designed by Kobori Enshu. Legend has it that the temple was founded by Gyoki. It's a great place to view azaleas at their peak from late May until mid-June as well as the beautiful fall foliage.

☎ 0748-62-0396
🕒 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (doors close, varies depending on the season)
🗓 Not fixed 💰 400 yen
ADD 1168 Minakuchi-cho Nasaka, Koka-shi 🚶 Take Koka Community Bus Hiranodai Line from JR Kibukawa Station (25 min), get off at Daichi-ji Temple 🆓 Free

The Treasure House boasts an outstanding collection of Buddha statues Rakuya-ji Temple

MAP P.19 D-3

Rakuya-ji is a Tendai sect temple, which is believed to have been founded by Dengyo Daishi Saicho who carved an image of the eleven-faced Kannon on a live oak tree and enshrined it there. Measuring about 3.3 meters tall, the wooden statue of a seated eleven-faced Kannon, the temple's honzon, is the largest in Japan.

☎ 0748-88-3890
🕒 9:00 am - 4:00 pm (Dates the honzon is open to the public: Apr. 19 - second Sunday of May, Oct. 19 - second Sunday of Nov.)
🗓 Not fixed (Unavailable for viewing from Dec. 17 through Jan. 3)
💰 500 yen, 800 yen (on dates when the honzon is open to the public) ADD 1377 Koka-cho Ichino, Koka-shi
🚶 Take a taxi from JR Koka Station (10 min) 🆓 Free

Learn about people's relationship with medicine and the history of medicine. Kusuri Gakushukan (medicine museum)

MAP P.19 D-3

Drug-making tools, signs and advertisements, as well as other materials dating back to as far as the Edo period are displayed in chronological order in the permanent exhibition room. In the workshop room you can get a hands-on lesson on how to make hyorogan, ninja energy pills (reservation required: in principle, a minimum of 2 persons per reservation: 200 yen per person).

☎ 0748-88-8110
🕒 9:30 am - 5:00 pm 🗓 Monday (Tuesday if Monday falls on a holiday) 🆓 Free
ADD 898-1 Koka-cho Oharanaka, Koka-shi
🚶 Walk 20 min from JR Koka Station 🆓 Free

You can do an herb search, skin diagnosis, and more in the permanent exhibition room.

Located just across from Kafuka Yume no Mori

The god of flaming oil Aburahi Shrine

MAP P.19 D-3

Built at the foot of Mt. Aburahidake, this shrine to several gods stands 700 meters above sea level. The shrine is dedicated to the god of flaming oil and consists of a main hall, a hall of worship, a tower gate, as well as east and west roofed corridors, which are all designated as Important Cultural Properties of Japan.

☎ 0748-88-2106 🕒 Grounds open 24 hours
ADD 1042 Koka-cho Aburahi, Koka-shi
🚶 Walk from JR Aburahi Station (30 min) 🆓 Free

Those working in Japan's oil industry have a special feeling for this ancient shrine.

Stroll down the streets of towns that take you back to the Japan of yesteryear.

Step Back in Time along the Old Tokaido Road

Built by Tokugawa Ieyasu, the Tokaido was one of Japan's major routes in the Edo period. The road connected Edo with Kyoto and had 53 post stations along the way. Among the 53 post stations, Tsuchiyama-shuku and Minakuchi-shuku are located in Koka City. Take a leisurely stroll along these streets where ninjas probably once walked too.

This old building looks exactly as it did back in the Edo period.



A symbol of the Tsuchiyama-shuku post station that accommodated daimyo feudal lords while traveling between their domains and Edo. Formerly the Tsuchiyama-shuku Honjin, a Registered Tangible Cultural Property of Japan.

MAP P.19 D-1
Reportedly, the Tsuchiyama-shuku Honjin was designated as a lodging for Tokugawa Iemitsu, the third shogun of the Tokugawa dynasty, on the occasion of his travel to Kyoto from Edo. Since it is still used as a private residence, a reservation is needed to see the interior. Guest books, visitor signs, crafts, and other precious materials are kept there.

☎0748-66-0007
Reservation required. Not fixed. 500 yen. Add 1628 Tsuchiyama-cho Kita-tsuchiyama, Koka-shi. Take Koka City Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen from JR Kibukawa Station (35 min), get off at Ohmi Tsuchiyama, and walk 5 min. Free.

EXPERIENCE

Enjoy tea-dyeing

Get a photo of yourself dressed as a traveler.

Diorama using 100 Kyoto dolls to portray a daimyo procession

Using an old private residence in Tsuchiyama

An information center replicating Tsuchiyama-shuku

Tokaido Tenmakan

MAP P.19 D-1
Providing information about Tsuchiyama-shuku and the culture that flourished along the Tokaido Road, this facility was originally a private residence built in the late Edo period. It features models and panels showing what Tsuchiyama-shuku looked like in the Edo period as well as a diorama using Kyoto dolls to portray a daimyo procession. You can also try tea-dyeing in the workshop for a fee.

☎0748-66-2770 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Monday and Tuesday. Free. Add 1570 Tsuchiyama-cho Kita-tsuchiyama, Koka-shi. Take Koka City Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen from JR Kibukawa Station (35 min), get off at Ohmi Tsuchiyama, and walk 3 min. Free.



Unified Tokaido signboards are installed in various parts of the two post stations.



A spring shower in Tsuchiyama depicted by Utagawa Hiroshige in his Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido

Carvings in the main hall and the hall of worship are a must-see.



Famed for its magnificent fall foliage

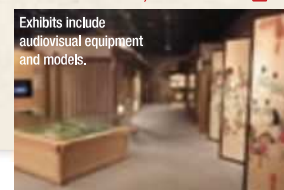
Learn about the history and culture of Tsuchiyama

Tsuchiyama Folk History Museum

MAP P.19 D-1

Like the town itself, "the road" lies at the heart of this museum whose exhibits focus on the history and people of Tsuchiyama. Here you'll see a panel display telling the story of the Saio Princess Procession as well as a video of the Kenketo dance, etc.

☎0748-66-1056 10:00 am - 5:00 pm. Monday and Tuesday. Free. Add 2230 Tsuchiyama-cho Kita-tsuchiyama, Koka-shi. Take Koka City Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen from JR Kibukawa Station (30 min), get off at Tsuchiyama Chiki Shimin Center, and walk 5 min. Free.



Exhibits include audiovisual equipment and models.



A welcome rest stop for people traveling through the Suzuka Pass

Tsuchiyama-shuku

MAP P.19 D-1
The 49th post station along the Tokaido, Tsuchiyamashuku served as a rest stop for people making the arduous journey through the Suzuka Pass. You'll see historical stone markers here and there as you stroll lanes lined with traditional wooden buildings bearing signs indicating what they once were, such as honjin (inns for government officials).

Tamura Shrine

MAP P.19 E-1
This ancient shrine is believed to have been built in 812. The main deity enshrined here is Sakanoue no Tamuramaro, a general and shogun who subdued evil ogres that were harassing travelers along the Suzuka Pass. The shrine grounds command a beautiful view of the Tamura River.

☎0748-66-0018
Grounds open 24 hours (prayers, amulets, etc. offered 9:00 am - 4:30 pm). Add 469 Tsuchiyama-cho Kita-tsuchiyama, Koka-shi. Take Koka City Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen from JR Kibukawa Station (40 min) and get off at Tamura Jinja. Free.



The Tamura Shrine Lantern Festival is a summer tradition.

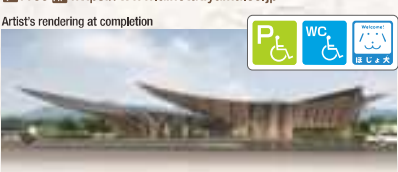
Column

Open in August 2025

Michi-no-eki Aino Tsuchiyama

MAP P.19 E-1
Michi-no-eki Aino Tsuchiyama was reopened after being rebuilt under the concept of "making the Michi-no-eki (roadside station) more attractive to help create a thriving community and happiness for all." For the latest information, please see the website of Michi-no-eki Aino Tsuchiyama.

☎0748-66-1244
Add 505-13 Tsuchiyama-cho Kita-tsuchiyama, Koka-shi. Take Koka City Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen from JR Kibukawa Station (40 min) and get off at Tamura Jinja. Free. https://www.ainotutiyama.co.jp



Artist's rendering at completion



Built to resemble Kyoto's Nijo Castle



Also known for its spectacular view of the cherry blossoms

Shiga Prefecture-designated historic site

Minakuchi Castle Ruins (Minakuchi Castle Museum)

MAP P.19 E-4
Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu ordered Kobori Enshu to build Minakuchi Castle, also known as Hekisui (clear blue water) Castle, so he would have a place to stay during his travels between Kyoto and Edo. Inside the Minakuchi Castle Museum, which is designed to look like the castle's corner tower, you'll find a model of the castle and materials related to Minakuchi-han.

☎0748-63-5577
10:00 am - 5:00 pm. Monday and Tuesday (Open if Monday or Tuesday falls on a holiday). 200 yen. Add 4-80 Minakuchi-cho Honmaru, Koka-shi. Walk 4 min from Minakuchi Jonan Station on the Ohmi Railway. Free.



Women drying kanpyo in Minakuchi depicted by Utagawa Hiroshige in his Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido

A thriving post town that was the most popular stop along the Tokaido Road

Minakuchi-shuku

MAP P.19 E-4
The 50th post station along the Tokaido Road. Characterized by its distinctive three-forked road (called misuji), the town of Minakuchi-shuku sprang up around Minakuchi-Okayama Castle, which was built by order of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The town's streetscapes look the same as they did back in the Edo period.

Column

A seasonal tradition that takes place from July to early August

Drying gourd strips in Minakuchi

Locally grown kanpyo (gourd strips) drying in the sun is a familiar summer scene in Minakuchi just as it was when Hiroshige captured it in his Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido. Kanpyo is a key ingredient of the local specialty, ninja-maki sushi rolls.



Drying kanpyo



The castle's stone wall

Known for its spectacular view of cherry blossoms; the best time for viewing is from early to mid-April

Nationally-designated historic site

Minakuchi Okayama Castle Ruins (Mt. Kojo)

MAP P.19 F-4
This castle was built on Mt. Kojo by order of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The remaining stone walls stand as a reminder of the past. Boasting beautiful views of cherry blossoms in spring, Mt. Kojo is easy to climb even for novices.

☎0748-69-2250
(Koka City Board of Education Historic Cultural Property Department). Add Minakuchi-cho Minakuchi, Koka-shi. Walk 20 min from Minakuchi Station on the Ohmi Railway. Free.



Don't miss the floats' ornate carvings and elaborate decorations.

Shiga Prefecture-designated Intangible Folk Cultural Property

Minakuchi Hikiyama Festival (Minakuchi Shrine)

The Minakuchi Hikiyama Festival, which dates back to the mid-Edo period, features Hikiyama floats from each community parading through the town in tune with the dynamic rhythms of the festival music known as Minakuchi-bayashi. Attracting countless tourists, the festival is the biggest event of the year for Minakuchi Shrine, which is fondly called "Omiya-san" by the locals.

☎0748-62-0231 (Minakuchi Shrine). Add Minakuchi-cho Miyonomae, Koka-shi/Minakuchi Shrine and all around town. Walk 3 min from Minakuchi Jonan Station on the Ohmi Railway. Free. MAP P.19 E-4

The annual Minakuchi Hikiyama Festival takes place on April 20 beginning at 9:00 am with the Hikiyama float parade kicking off at 10:00 am and the procession of portable shrines and children starting at 2:00 pm. Yoimiyi, the celebration held on the eve of the festival, takes place from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm on April 19.



Minakuchi Folk History Museum

The museum provides information about Minakuchi-shuku, its history, folklore, and festivals. Also on display are excavated artifacts from the Kofun period and the actual floats used in the most recent Minakuchi Hikiyama Festival. The museum has a memorial hall dedicated to Iwaya Ichiroku, a native of Minakuchi and one of the three great calligraphers of the Meiji period, and Iwaya Sazanami, the father of Japanese children's literature.

A place for visitors to rest and relax

Koka City Hito Machi Kaido Koryukan

MAP P.19 F-4
Here you can get not only tourist information but also learn all about the history and culture of Koka, with a focus on Minakuchi-shuku, as well as local products. It serves as a crossroads of people just as Minakuchi-shuku did when it was a thriving Tokaido post town.

Located at Minakuchi-shuku along the Tokaido Road



☎0748-70-3166
9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Monday (Tuesday if Monday falls on a holiday). Free. Add 7-4 Minakuchi-cho Yasaka, Koka-shi. A short walk from Minakuchi-Ishibashi Station on the Ohmi Railway. Free.



Golf courses, parks, farms, hot springs for day trip visitors and more

There's so much to do and see in Koka

Come to Koka and relax against an amazing natural backdrop that changes with the passing seasons. Rivers flowing with crystal-clear water and baths filled with natural hot spring water await you.



Each season offers unique attractions to enjoy.

☎ 0748-66-0316

(Tsuchiyama-cho Midori no Furusato Shinkokai)

🕒 Play facilities: 10:00 am - 4:30 pm; Lodging facilities: check-in 2:00 pm, check-out 10:00 am

➡ 101-7 Tsuchiyama-cho Ozuchi, Koka-shi 🚗 Take Koka Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen from JR Kibukawa Station, get off at Omi-Tsuchiyama, switch to the Okawara-sen route, get off at Eco Valley (45 min) and walk 🚶 Free

Ozuchi Dam Eco Valley

Enjoy camping and barbecuing in the heart of nature.

MAP P.19 E-2

Situated on the dam lake, this park is the ideal setting for activities in the natural environment, with camping grounds and log-cabin-style cottages, as well as tennis courts, ground golf and fishing facilities.



The Ugui River and Ozuchi Dam amid pink blossom

The best time to see the cherry blossoms is early to mid-April.

MAP P.19 E-2

Ayukawa's thousand cherry trees

Ayukawa is a village located at the foot of the Suzuka Mountains. Streams of crystal-clear water flow from the mountain valleys into the Ugui River, whose banks are lined with 200 Somei Yoshino cherry trees. Including the trees around the nearby Ozuchi Dam, there are more than 1000 blossoming cherry trees every spring.

➡ Tsuchiyama-cho Ayukawa, Koka-shi 🚗 Drive 10 km after getting off at the Koka-Tsuchiyama IC on the Shin-Meishin Expressway 🚶 Free (Fee charged when cherry blossoms are in bloom)

Kurotaki Yugyojo

MAP P.19 E-2

Enjoy catching fish by hand and barbecuing



Summertime family fun on the river

Hand-catch ayu, charr, satsukimasa salmon, rainbow trout, and other kinds of fish that live in the unspoiled upper streams of the Tamura River. You can barbecue your catch and enjoy it on the spot.

☎ 0748-68-0531

🕒 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

🕒 Open daily 🎫 Admission 500 yen ➡ 466 Tsuchiyama-cho Kurotaki, Koka-shi 🚗 Take Koka Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen from JR Kibukawa Station (42 min), get off at Kurotaki-guchi, walk 15 min 🚶 Free

Enjoy playing golf in Koka, known for its many golf courses.

Koka City has 24 major golf courses, the third most in Japan by municipality. Enjoy a refreshing game of golf on a natural course with beautiful mountain views.



Why not participate in the Koka-e-ikoka (Let's play in Koka)

long-run golf competition open to 5,000 golfers?

Held annually for two months (July and August).

This is a joint golf competition held on the 24 golf courses across Koka City. Prizes for winners include local specialties and free golf tickets (for weekday use).



● Koka City Golf Association <https://www.kokagolf.com>



Tarao Country Club

Golf courses in Koka City

1	Daikoka Country Club Aburahi Course
2	Daikoka Country Club Kami Course
3	Comwood Golf Club
4	Fuji Stadium Golf Club South Course
5	Fuji Stadium Golf Club North Course
6	Century Golf Club
7	Shiga Konan Country Club
8	Meishin-Ritto Country Club
9	Diamond Shiga Country Club
10	Sorei Golf Club Tsuchiyama Course
11	Bear's Paw Japan Country Club
12	Meishin Ryuou Country Club
13	Shiga Golf Club
14	Kyowa Golf Club
15	Asamiya Golf Course
16	Shiga Country Club
17	Maple Hills Golf Club
18	Shigaraki Country Club Sugiyama Course
19	Shigaraki Country Club Tashiro Course
20	Tarao Country Club
21	Daily Shigaraki Country Club
22	Rose Golf Club
23	The Country Club
24	Orange Shiga Country Club

Resort hotel featuring tsubo (ceramic pot) baths and carbonated hot spring baths

Hotel Lake Villa

MAP P.18 B-4

Enjoy relaxing baths, including sumptuous Shigaraki ware ceramic tsubo baths, carbonated hot spring baths, outdoor baths, bed baths, and more. The hot spring water will leave your skin feeling soft and smooth.

☎ 0748-85-0250

🕒 11:00 am - 9:00 pm

🕒 Open daily 🎫 700 yen (weekdays), 1,200 yen (weekends and holidays) ➡ 1 Shigaraki-cho Tarao, Koka-shi 🚗 Take Shiga Bus from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (30 min), get off at Shigaraki Onsen 🚶 Free

🌿 Hypotonic, low alkaline, low temperature spring

* Only residents of Shigaraki-cho and their accompanying persons may use the hot spring without staying overnight.

Relaxing outdoor baths where you can enjoy beautiful natural scenery in all four seasons.

Kamoshika Villa

Hot spring baths with a scenic view of the Suzuka Mountains soothe the body and soul. Kamoshika Villa offers a tranquil setting and creative eat-the-view cuisine. Be sure to try the outdoor garden bath.

☎ 0748-69-0344 MAP P.19 E-1

🕒 Hours vary depending on the season 🕒 Not fixed 🎫 800 yen, 600 yen for citizens of Koka (availability depends on the number of guests staying at the inn) ➡ 1104 Tsuchiyama-cho Okawara, Koka-shi 🚗 Take Koka Community Bus from JR Kibukawa Station (1 hour), get off at Wakamiya Jinja 🚶 Free

Hot spring inn located near the border of Shiga and Mie prefectures

🌿 Hydrogen-carbonate spring / radioactive spring

A hot spring inn amid idyllic surroundings

Miyano Onsen

MAP P.18 C-2

Reputed for making your skin healthier, the hot spring contains sodium and calcium chloride. Take a soothing hot spring bath in a wooden bathtub to relieve stress from your busy life.

☎ 0748-86-2212

🕒 11:00 am - 8:00 pm

🕒 Wednesday (Thursday if Wednesday falls on a holiday) 🎫 1,000 yen ➡ 364-1 Konan-cho Sugitani, Koka-shi 🚗 Take a taxi from JR Konan Station (5 min) 🚶 Free

The main bath is also equipped with a bedrock foot bath.

🌿 Sodium-magnesium-calcium-chloride spring

Elegantly constructed outdoor bath

Family Fun

Meet cows and enjoy quality milk

Yamada Farm

The farm offers fresh milk, ice cream and sweets. Why not spend a relaxing, leisurely day here, away from the bustle of daily life?

☎ 0748-82-2007 MAP P.18 B-3

🕒 Gates open 24 hours. Shop "no-fu" is open from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm (10:00 am to 5:00 pm during the winter months). 🕒 Open daily 🎫 Admission free ➡ 2077 Shigaraki-cho Koyama, Koka-shi 🚗 Drive 10 km after getting off at the Shigaraki IC on the Shin-Meishin Expressway 🚶 Free

Narita Fureai Farm

This farm produces high-quality milk. Here, visitors can meet adorable calves, ponies and goats up close. The hand-made waffle is also recommended.

☎ 0748-86-3341 MAP P.18 C-2

🕒 Gates open 24 hours, Gelateria 10:00 am - 4:00 pm 🕒 Monday (Open if Monday falls on a holiday) 🎫 Admission free ➡ 696 Konan-cho Shinji, Koka-shi 🚗 Take a taxi from JR Konan Station (5 min) 🚶 Free



You can get up close to calves, sheep and horses.

Indoor baths using 100% natural hot spring water

Enjoy a relaxing dip in the outdoor hot spring with magnificent views of the mountains.

Relaxing Hot Spring Bath

Day trips

Day Trips

Village of Fire Shigaraki Hotel Ogawatei

Tanuki-accented outdoor baths are popular among guests.

The sodium-rich, hot spring-fed Tanuki Onsen baths soak away the fatigue of a long journey. Popular among tourists are the bath tubs made of ceramic tiles fired in a climbing kiln and outdoor baths that can be rented out privately. Reservations are required.

☎ 0748-82-0008 MAP P.18 A-4

🕒 11:30 am - 9:00 pm 🕒 Not fixed 🎫 900 yen, Private outdoor bath rental (50 min) 4,400 yen for 2 persons, 5,500 yen for family * Day-trip visitors are required to book in advance. ➡ 876 Shigaraki-cho Nagano, Koka-shi 🚗 Walk from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (10 min) 🚶 Free

🌿 Sodium hydrogen-carbonate spring



An elegant hotel located in Shigaraki

Koka Hot Spring Yaponpon no Yu

The outdoor rock bath surrounded by mountains is the perfect place to escape the daily hustle and bustle and just relax. In addition to the large main baths, there are also saunas, bedrock baths, and private baths for families.

☎ 0748-68-0250 MAP P.19 E-2

🕒 12:00 pm - 9:00 pm (opens 11:00 am on weekends and holidays) 🕒 Open daily 🎫 1,400 yen (weekdays), 1,700 yen (11:00 am - 3:00 pm on weekends and holidays), 1,900 yen (3:00 pm - 9:00 pm on weekends and holidays) ➡ 1711 Tsuchiyama-cho Kurokawa, Koka-shi 🚗 Take Koka Community Bus from JR Kibukawa Station (40 min), get off at Diamond Shiga 🚶 Free

🌿 Sodium hydrogen-carbonate, cold mineral spring

Shiono Onsen

One of the oldest hot springs in Shiga

Shiono Onsen is a long-established restaurant and inn with a hot spring. The saline spring, whose source lies within the inn's grounds, is believed to have been discovered by Kobo Daishi. The granite bath is equipped with handrails, showers, and stools.

☎ 0748-86-2130 MAP P.18 C-2

🕒 11:00 am - 10:00 pm 🕒 Not fixed 🎫 Day trips Set price (meal + hot spring bath) 3,300 yen + service charge (reservations required) ➡ 269 Konan-cho Shiono, Koka-shi 🚗 Take a taxi from JR Kibukawa Station (7 min) 🚶 Free

🌿 Natural cold mineral spring / salt spring



The outdoor bath is a Goemon-buro (cauldron bath).

Discover the natural wonders of Minakuchi

Minakuchi Kodomo no Mori

This nature park nestled in a sprawling woodland features a biotope, public farm, and a nature museum featuring displays that take you back in time to glimpse Minakuchi as it was 2.3 million years ago along with dioramas and other exhibits.

☎ 0748-63-6712 MAP P.18 C-2

(Minakuchi Kodomo no Mori Nature Museum) 🕒 9:00 am - 4:00 pm 🕒 Monday (Tuesday if Monday falls on a holiday)

🎫 Free, Admission to nature museum 200 yen ➡ 10 Minakuchi-cho Kita-naiki, Koka-shi 🚗 Take a taxi from JR Kibukawa Station (5 min) 🚶 Free

🌿 Free, Admission to nature museum 200 yen

☎ 0748-62-7529 MAP P.19 E-4

🕒 Gates open 24 hours (hours vary depending on the facility) 🕒 Open daily 🎫 Varies depending on the facility ➡ 230 Minakuchi-cho Kita-naiki, Koka-shi 🚗 Take Koka Community Bus from JR Kibukawa Station (5 min), get off at Sports no Mori Nishiguchi 🚶 Free

Fossil Tunnel at the nature museum



Picnic area on a grassy hill
Grassy plaza where you can spend all day having fun

Kafuka Yume no Mori

The park features a Dream Garden and Ninja Fort (an outdoor field and kids playground) as well as Koka Sokenkan, a library, plus a lifelong learning center.

☎ 0748-88-2190 MAP P.19 D-3

(Public Welfare Center) 🕒 Gates open 24 hours 🕒 Monday ➡ 507-2 Koka-cho Okubo, Koka-shi 🚗 Take a taxi from JR Koka Station (10 min) 🚶 Free



Savor the exquisite flavor of Asamiya tea

Green Tea Otona Roll from Cha-no-miyagura

This shop run by a tea grower in Asamiya offers roll cakes made with the tea it produces. Featuring a rich flavor, these roll cakes are popular among shoppers. They come in sencha and matcha flavors. The shop also sells homemade gelato.

☎ 0748-84-0405 MAP P.18 A-3
 10:00 am - 6:00 pm
 Tuesdays, and the third Wednesday of the month
 ADD 39-1 Shigaraki-cho Shimo-asamiya, Koka-shi
 Take a taxi from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (12 min) Free

The sencha flavored Otona Roll

Tea, sweets, rice, fruits, vegetables, and more

Koka has so much to offer!

Dotted with beautiful tea plantations, Koka produces quality tea and delicious tea flavored sweets. Rice cakes and noodles made from rice grown with abundant pristine water are popular specialties of Koka. Picking fruit when it's in season is fun for the whole family.

Take a break at a hojicha tea salon Ohmi-cha Maruyoshi

Using the tea leaves grown in Ohmi's Tsuchiyama Tongu area and locally harvested tea leaves, this tea shop employs a special roasting technique that brings out the best of the tea's flavor. Try its original hojicha flavored sweets, such as monaka and dorayaki, in the attached tea house.

☎ 0748-67-1333 MAP P.19 D-2
 9:30 am - 6:00 pm (shop), 10:00 am - 6:00 pm (tea room) Open daily (Tea room closed Tuesdays)
 ADD 2723 Tsuchiyama-cho Ono, Koka-shi Take Koka Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen at JR Kibukawa Station (25 min), get off at Ono Imajuku Free

Tongu Hojicha, the shop's 5th specialty, provides a profound aroma and deep flavor.

Enjoy hojicha and sweets. You can choose one of three types of sweets.



Relax and enjoy tea with sweets at Horaku

Enjoy the savory flavor Cold Brew Akachan Bancha from Tatsuoka Seicha

Containing no caffeine, this tea is great for people of all ages. The company also offers fall-harvested bancha, which it makes from tea leaves harvested in October or later using a special technique.

MAP P.19 E-1

☎ 0748-66-0025
 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Weekends and holidays
 ADD 982 Tsuchiyamacho Kita-tsuchiyama, Koka-shi
 Take Koka Community Bus Tsuchiyama Honsen from JR Kibukawa Station (35 min), get off at Higashi-tsuchiyama Free



Tatsuoka's cold brew Akachan Bancha is also sold at the Aino Tsuchiyama roadside station.



What's Tsuchiyama tea?

Shiga Prefecture's biggest producer of tea, Tsuchiyama is home to vast tea plantations that stretch out across its rolling hills. The first Tsuchiyama tea is believed to have been grown from seeds taken from Daitoku-ji Temple in Kyoto.



Asamiya Tea "Shigaraki" is characterized by a full-bodied flavor and rich aroma.

Locally produced tea with a refreshing, mild flavor Asamiya Tea "Shigaraki" from Katagi Koukaen

Katagi Koukaen is a tea farm that produces quality tea products by working with the natural systems. The pesticide-free premium tea is made by the special processing of selected young tea leaves that come out in early summer.

☎ 0748-84-0135 MAP P.18 A-3
 9:00 am - 4:30 pm Not fixed
 ADD 1090 Shigaraki-cho Miyajiri, Koka-shi
 Take a taxi from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (18 min) Free



Asamiya Ochabatake (green tea tiramisu) with premium hojicha



Inside the tea shop is a tea room called "With Tea."

Sweets that accentuate the flavor and aroma of Asamiya green tea

Matcha Kuzumochi from Yamamoto-en

The center of this kuzumochi made with Yoshino kudzu is filled with sweet bean paste incorporating lots of Asamiya matcha. The robust full flavor, color, and aroma of the green tea really come through.

☎ 0748-84-0014 MAP P.18 A-3
 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (tea shop), 11:00 am - 5:00 pm (tea room)
 Monday (Tuesday if Monday falls on a holiday)
 ADD 275-1 Shigaraki-cho Kami-asamiya, Koka-shi
 Take a taxi from Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway (10 min) Free

What's Asamiya tea?

Asamiya tea is a high-quality tea grown on a misty mountainside situated 500 meters above sea level. Featuring a unique aroma and flavor, Asamiya is one of Japan's five leading tea brands.



Strawberry tart and raspberry milk



Savor a tasty tart in an idyllic setting patisserie MiA

The gallery and patisserie housed in a renovated old wooden school building offer a warm, cozy atmosphere that harks back to yesteryear. Here, you can enjoy cakes and baked goods made on the premises.

Bringing delicious, healthy food from the home of the ninjas to your table

Kurokage Rice from Minori Sangyo

This ancient black sticky rice reminiscent of the ninja in black is rich in nutrients such as anthocyanin, protein, and vitamins. Kurokage Rice is sold at Koka-ryu Real Ninja Museum, Michi-no-eki Aino Tsuchiyama and Konan Parking Area.

MAP P.18 C-2
 ☎ 0748-86-4778
 ADD 2472 Konan-cho Ryuboshi, Koka-shi



Gallery-mamma mia has displays of woodcraft and ceramics.

☎ 0748-86-1552
 12:00 am - 4:30 pm (takeout and gallery: 11:00 am - 5:00 pm)
 Monday and Tuesday
 ADD 835 Konan-cho Nogawa, Koka-shi
 Take a taxi from JR Terasho Station (8 min) Free



A 500 g bag of Kurokage rice is priced at 1,296 yen. It's great when cooked with white rice.



Mochi pounded in the traditional way Ninja Mochi from Koka Mochi Factory

These healthy rice cakes inspired by the ninja diet come in five different flavors: Yuzu citron, perilla, mugwort, sesame and yam.

MAP P.19 D-2

☎ 0748-88-5841
 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
 Open on weekends only (closed during the summer season)
 ADD 2121-1 Koka-cho Kosaji, Koka-shi
 Take a taxi from JR Koka Station (10 min) Free



Ninja Mochi

Koka Mochi Factory has a restaurant that serves light fare including gomoku ankake rice noodles.

Have fun on the farm!

You can eat as many sweet strawberries as you like!

Kafuka Strawberry Farm

Forty-five minutes of all-you-can-eat strawberry picking, with complimentary chocolate sauce and condensed milk. There's also a market where local produce and Kafuka gelato are sold.

MAP P.19 E-4

☎ 0748-63-5811
 10:00 am - 4:00 pm from May 16 to Dec. 19, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm from Dec. 20 to May 15
 Tuesday and Wednesday from May 16 to Dec. 19, open daily from Dec. 20 to May 15
 ¥2,200 - 2,500 yen ADD 5940-4 Minakuchi-cho Minakuchi, Koka-shi
 Walk 10 min from Minakuchi Jonan Station on the Ohmi Railway Free



A sprawling farm of 35,000 strawberry plants



Pick sweet and juicy blueberries

Miya Berry's blueberry farm

At this pick-your-own farm you can enjoy all the ripe, plump blueberries you can eat. The farm also has a shop where you can buy jam.

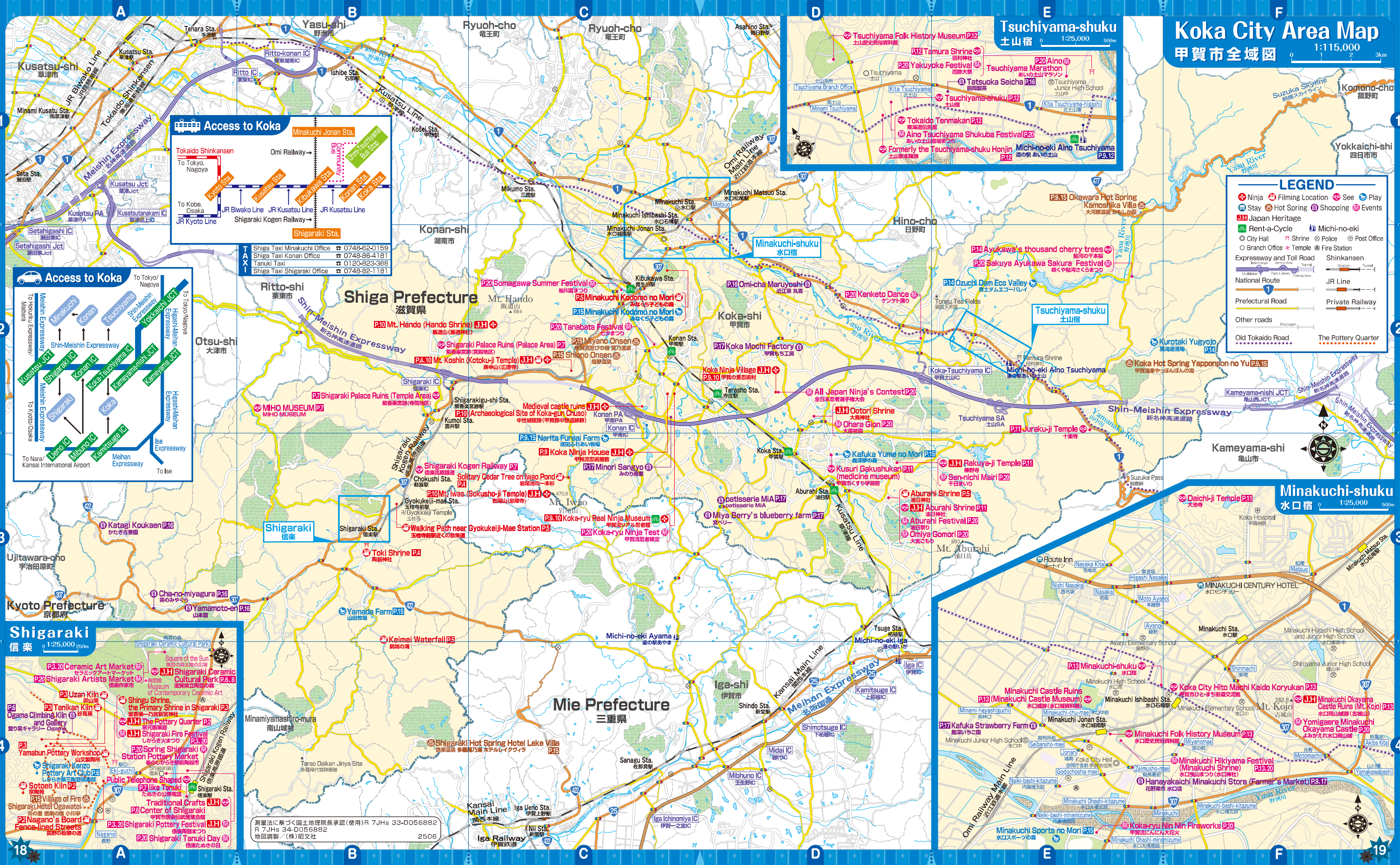
☎ 0748-60-1746 MAP P.19 D-3
 8:00 am - 12:00 pm All-you-can-eat fee: 1,500 yen for adults, 1,300 yen for elementary school children
 ADD 462 Konan-cho Nogawa, Koka-shi
 Take a taxi from JR Koka Station (10 min) Free



Delicious fresh blueberries.

The blueberry gelato is also delicious!





Koka City Area Map

甲賀市全域図

Access to Koka

Diagram showing routes to Koka from major cities like Kyoto, Osaka, and Tokyo via various train lines (JR, Tokaido Shinkansen, Omi Railway, Shigaraki Kogen Railway).

Access to Koka

Diagram showing routes to Koka from major cities like Kyoto, Osaka, and Tokyo via various expressways (Meishin, Tozai, etc.).

Shigaraki

Inset map of Shigaraki showing local landmarks, museums, and festivals. Scale: 1:25,000.

Tsuchiya-shuku

Inset map of Tsuchiya-shuku showing local landmarks, museums, and festivals. Scale: 1:25,000.

Minakuchi-shuku

Inset map of Minakuchi-shuku showing local landmarks, museums, and festivals. Scale: 1:25,000.

LEGEND

- Ninja
- Filming Location
- See
- Play
- Stay
- Hot Spring
- Shopping
- Events
- Japan Heritage
- Rent-a-Cycle
- Michi-no-eki
- City Hall
- Shrine
- Police
- Post Office
- Branch Office
- Temple
- Fire Station
- Expressway and Toll Road
- National Route
- Prefectural Road
- Other roads
- Shinkansen
- JR Line
- Private Railway
- Old Tokaido Road
- The Pottery Quarter

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Festivals & Events in Koka



* Information provided here is current as of May 2025. Dates are subject to change.

February

17th - 19th Yakuyoke Festival

Tamura Shrine/**MAP P.19 E-1**

☎ 0748-66-0018 (Tamura Shrine)

Held in the shrine associated with Sakanoue no Tamuramaro, the festival is fondly called Tamura Matsuri.

22nd Ninja Day

February 22 is certified by the Japan Anniversary Association as Ninja Day. On this day various ninja-themed events are held across Japan.

April

Early to Mid April

Sakuya Ayukawa Sakura Festival

Ayukawa's thousand cherry trees/**MAP P.19 E-2**

During the festival, there are stalls offering local specialties and meals made with local ingredients, and cherry trees are illuminated at night.

Mid April

Yomigaere Minakuchi Okayama Castle

Summit of Mt. Kojo/**MAP P.19 F-4**

☎ 050-5491-1370

(Minakuchi-Okayama Association Administrative Office)
A huge inflatable castle representing Minakuchi Okayama Castle is set up atop Mt. Kojo (site of the Minakuchi Okayama Castle Ruins) and illuminated at night.

19th and 20th

Minakuchi Hikiyama Festival

See P.13 for more information. /

MAP P.19 E-4



May

Late April to early May

Spring Shigaraki Station Pottery Market

Square in front of Shigaraki Station on the Shigaraki

Kogen Railway/**MAP P.18 A-4**

☎ 0748-82-1016 (Marutoku Toki)

Local delicacies, as well as pottery, are available.

1st Aburahi Festival

Aburahi Shrine/**MAP P.19 D-3**

☎ 0748-88-2106 (Aburahi Shrine)

This is an annual spring festival of the Aburahi Shrine. The festival features yakko-buri, a procession of samurai servants held every 5 years, which is a Selected Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Shiga Prefecture.

2nd to 5th Shigaraki Artists Market

Taiyo-no-hiroba in Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park/**MAP P.18 A-4**

☎ 0748-83-0909 (Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park)

Works of potters and other artists active in various parts of Japan are collected for exhibition and sale.

3rd Kenketo Dance

Tagi Shrine/**MAP P.19 D-2**

☎ 0748-67-0533 (Tagi Shrine)

Elementary school boys dressed in bright colored costumes dance to the beat of drums and bells. The festival is nationally designated as an Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Japan.

June

Koka-ryu Ninja Test

Shinobi no Sato Prala/**MAP P.18 C-2**

This test is designed to assess knowledge about Koka ninjas at three levels: elementary, intermediate and advanced. The elementary-level test involves the skills of playing a ninja in a ninja outfit and throwing shuriken.

Organizer: Koka Ninjutsu Research Group kokaninken@gmail.com

July

7th Tanabata Festival

Yagawa Shrine/**MAP P.18 C-2**

Spectacular tezutsu hanabi (hand-held fireworks) are set off as an offering to the shrine, which is decked out in Tanabata decorations.

23rd and 24th Ohara Gion

Otori Shrine/**MAP P.19 D-2**

☎ 0748-88-2008 (Otori Shrine)

On the eve of the festival people bearing lanterns on their heads clash with one another, ramming each other's lanterns. The main festival features a gauntlet run by participants carrying flowers.

Late July Koka-ryu Nin Nin Fireworks

Yasugawa River Bed/**MAP P.19 E-4**

☎ 0748-60-2690 (Koka City Tourism and Community Development Association)

A spectacular fireworks show that features the summer of Koka City. Nin Nin Yokochi, an outdoor food stall event, is held at the same time, offering local delicacies and popular foods.

Saturday in late July

Shigaraki Fire Festival

See P.3 for more information. / **MAP P.18 A-4**

☎ 0748-82-0873

(Pottery Capital Shigaraki Festival Committee)



August

9th Sen-nichi Mairi

Rakuya-ji Temple/**MAP P.19 D-3**

☎ 0748-88-3890 (Rakuya-ji Temple)

Jizo statues and the temple's main hall lit by candle lights create a magical atmosphere.

16th Somagawa Summer Festival

Somagawa/**MAP P.18 C-2**

☎ 0748-62-2027 (Kibukawa Community Center)

This riverside summer festival, dedicated to world peace, features goma kuyo (holy fire ceremony), floating lanterns, and fireworks.

September

13th Omiya Gomori

Aburahi Shrine/**MAP P.19 D-3**

☎ 0748-88-2106 (Aburahi Shrine)

This fantastical festival features flames fueled by oil, given to the shrine as an offering, that are kept burning until midnight.

Late September Ceramic Art Market

See P.3 for more information. / **MAP P.18 A-4**

☎ 0748-83-0909 (Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park)

October

First Sunday

Aino Tsuchiyama Shukuba Festival

Tokaido Tenmakan area/**MAP P.19 D-1**

☎ 0748-66-2770 (Aino Tsuchiyama Shukuba Festival

Administrative Office)

With a Tokaido waraji (straw sandal) throwing competition, stage shows, and bingo game, this festival is fun for both adults and children.

Mid October

"All Japan Ninja's Contest"

Koka Ninja Village/**MAP P.19 D-2**

☎ 0748-88-5000 (Koka Ninja Village)

This popular event brings together ninja wannabes from all across Japan as they put their shuriken, obstacle course, wall climbing, water spider, other skills to the test in competition with one another.

Mid October Shigaraki Pottery Festival

See P.3 for more information. / **MAP P.18 A-4**

☎ 0748-82-0039

(Shigaraki Ware Wholesaler Cooperative Association)

☎ 0748-83-1755

(Shigaraki Ware Promotion Council)



November

First Sunday Aino Tsuchiyama Marathon

Across Tsuchiyama-cho/**MAP P.19 E-1**

☎ 0748-66-0091

(Aino Tsuchiyama Marathon Administrative Office)

Runners enjoy running in the crisp, clean air, following the pleasant course along the majestic Ozuchi Dam and the vast expanse of tea plantations and farming fields with the Suzuka mountain range in the background.

8th Shigaraki Tanuki Day

Across Shigaraki-cho/**MAP P.18 A-4**

☎ 0748-82-2345 (Shigaraki Tourist Association)

November 8th is certified by the Japan Anniversary Association as Shigaraki Tanuki day. It's a day dedicated to Shigaraki ware tanuki figurines. Many fun events associated with the tanuki are held on and around this day, such as the national belly drum contest and Shigaraki Kogen Railway's Tanuki Train.

Early November Koka-ryu Ninja Festival

☎ 0748-62-1676 (Youth League of the Koka City Society of

Commerce and Industry)

Various events associated with ninjas are held, such as a Nin Nin Food event.



* Before visiting a festival/event, please check the date and venue at the website of the Koka City Tourism Guide (<https://koka-kanko.org>) or other sources.

❖ Tourist Information Center "Koka-ryu Real Ninja Museum"

☎ 0748-70-2790 **CL** Monday (Open if Monday falls on a holiday)

ADD 600 Konan-cho Ryuboshi, Koka-shi (Shinobi no Sato Prala)

<https://www.real-ninjakan.com>

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- Information provided in this publication is current as of May 2025.
- Information about the events and facilities (address, hours, days closed, fees, and contact information) is subject to change. Please check beforehand.
- Operating hours of a facility indicate the hours during which it is open to the public. For restaurants, the hours shown here are from the time they open until the time the last orders are taken. For other facilities, the hours are from the time the doors open until the last admission.
- Days closed refers to regularly scheduled days facilities are closed and does not include New Year, Golden Week, and summer holidays or when facilities are temporarily closed.

The pictograms shown in the text are used with the approval of the Saku City Social Welfare Council.

For tourist information, please contact:



❖ Koka City Tourism and Community Development Association

☎ 0748-60-2690 **CL** Saturday, Sunday, holidays

ADD 810 Konan-cho Noda, Koka-shi (1st floor of the annex)

<https://koka-kanko.org>



❖ Shigaraki Tourist Association

☎ 0748-82-2345 **CL** Thursday

ADD 1203 Shigaraki-cho Nagano, Koka-shi

<https://www.e-shigaraki.org>



Japan Heritage Site



About Japan Heritage

Japanese tangible and intangible cultural properties/assets, i.e., regional histories, traditions and customs, are passed down for generations through narratives. These stories, telling of the legacy of our culture and histories, have been designated as "Japan Heritage" by the Agency of Cultural Affairs. In April 2017 two stories from Koka earned the Japan Heritage designation.

Shinobi no Sato Iga and Koka – Exploring the Birthplace of the Real Ninja

Koka Iga

Iga and Koka, the homelands of ninjas, still retain the atmosphere of real ninjas. Here, the tradition of ninjas who thrived in the Warring States period still remains alive today.



Six Ancient Kilns – Ceramics Created and Nurtured in Japan

Shigaraki ware Bizen ware Echizen ware Seto ware Tokoname ware Tanba ware

The "Six Ancient Kilns" of Japan are ceramic production sites with histories dating from the middle ages. Please visit Shigaraki, one of the six ancient pottery areas, where the idyllic landscape of Japan is well preserved.

