

Scenes of Mountains in Hiji

Would you like to take a hike in the mountains of Hiji? The Kanagoe mountain range in Hiji creates natural spring water.

In Hiji, there are many hidden natural springs.

There are so many natural springs in Hiji that most of the tap water in the town is supplied by spring water. One of the most famous springs is called "Yamada Spring", and many people from neighboring cities come to this spring to get fresh water. Hiji's springs are closely related with the Kanagoe mountain range. Rain that falls and is absorbed on the mountains is slowly filtered over many years and gushes out not only in the town but also in the sea. To climb the Kanagoe mountains, there are two routes: the east route and the west route. Near the entrance to the west route, there is "Yamada Spring."

The Kanagoe West Route was used by Francis Xavier

While he was doing missionary work in Yamaguchi, Francis Xavier was invited to come to Oita City by the then feudal lord of Oita, Otomo Sorin. It is said that Xavier took the Kanagoe west route and came to Hiji. He then got on a Portuguese ship, which was moored at a Hiji port, to go to Oita.

The Kanagoe East Route is dubbed "Lord's Way"

In the old days, the east route was the main road between Hiji and Yamaga in Kitsuki City. There are remains of stone walls and stone pavements in some places along the way, which are reminders of the old road. Feudal lords in those days passed this road carried by their servants on litters, so it is dubbed "Lord's Way."

Magnificent View of Beppu Bay from the Top of Nanatsuishi-yama

The highest peak of the Kanagoe mountain range is called Nanatsuishi-yama. The top of this mountain commands a panoramic view of Beppu Bay. If the air is clear, even parts of the Shikoku Island can be seen. Historically, this mountain top served as a lookout to watch suspicious boats. It is said that a signal fire was lit there when a suspicious boat was spotted.

Hiji, a Town of Fresh Spring Water

Hiji Mountain and Sea map

Recommended Plans to Enjoy Hiji Mountains and Sea

Fishing Experience with Fishermen

One boat for one group of up to eight people costs 50,000 yen. The duration is approximately three hours. For information, contact Oita Fishermen's Cooperative Hiji Branch Tourism Cruise Group. Reservation is required three days in advance at the latest. Tel: 090-8833-7255

Fukae Fishing Port Morning Market

At the morning market, you can watch, buy, and eat fish. Open: for about one hour from 7:30 a.m. Closed: on Sundays and holidays, and one or two Wednesday a month. For information, contact Oita Fishermen's Cooperative Hiji Branch Tourism Cruise Group. Reservation is required three days in advance at the latest. Tel: 090-8833-7255

Short Cruise by Fishing Boat

There are two courses: Shiroshita (below the sea) course and Oga course. The Shiroshita course leaves from Hiji Fishing Port and the Oga from Oga Fishing Port. This cruise is available for a group of five or more people at 2,000 yen per person. Its duration is approximately 30 minutes. For information, contact Oita Fishermen's Cooperative Hiji Branch Tourism Cruise Group. Reservation is required three days in advance at the latest. Tel: 090-8833-7255

Trekking with an Arborist

This trekking course of approximately five hours is available for a group of between five and ten people at 5,000 yen per person. For information, contact Hiji Tourist Association. Tel: 0977-72-4255

Hiji town tourism association TEL (+81)-977-72-4255

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Kanagoe Mountain Range Walk

This mountain range walk takes about 4.5 hours. "Kanagoe" literally means "deer screaming pass." According to a folk belief, it was so named because the pass was so difficult that that even deer screamed.

- Using the Kanagoe East Route to get to Higashino-toge is about 1.4 km.
- Using the Kanagoe West Route to get to Nishino-toge is about 1.6 km.
- It is about 2 km between Higashino-toge and Nishino-toge, skipping Kojono-yama.

Charms of Mountain Walking

Mountain walking lets us feel the nature; Its beauty, power, strength, and more. It is said that mountain walking is a drama with no plot. Walk while feeling the difference of the seasons.

Cautions in Mountain Walking

- Wear shoes and clothing which are appropriate for mountain walking. Also, wear gloves and a hat, and have a towel with you.
- Drink plenty of water to prevent heatstroke.
- Walking with shorter steps at a comfortable pace and taking breaks helps to decrease fatigue.
- Do not disturb the plants or animals. Bring back all of your trash including cigarette butts.
- Animals and plants in the nature are very fragile. In order not to damage their living environment, keep to the route marked for the mountain walk.

Remember these rules and enjoy walking!

Scenes of the Sea of Hiji

How about having a fishing boat cruise on Beppu Bay? You will be able to enjoy magnificent views of Beppu Bay from Hiji, glittering waves on the sea, and the stately Kanagoe Mountains.

Fresh water springs in the sea make Hiji “Shiroshita” flounder very tasty.

A famous “haiku” poet named Takahama Kyoshi once wrote a poem in Hiji. It goes like this: “In the sea, fresh water gushes out, which nurtures fish.” As is expressed in this poem, there are fresh water springs in the sea just below the Hiji castle site. Flounder which live around the springs have a delicate taste, and Hiji has been well-known for this fish, which is called “Shiroshita” flounder. It was even presented to the Shogun, Japan’s national head, during the Edo period (1600-1868) as the town’s precious cuisine.

Attractive Views of the Sea from Hiji

Views of the sea from Hiji are so varied: the orange-tinted sea in the morning, the glittering Beppu Bay with the backdrops of Mt. Takasaki and the cities of Oita and Beppu during the day, and city lights reflected on the water at night. These beautiful scenes of the sea are treasures of Hiji. Some people move to the town attracted by its views.

Beppu Bay is dubbed “Naples in the East”

During the Edo period (1600-1868), all the feudal lords were required to go up to Edo, present-day Tokyo, every two years. Hiji’s lords of successive generations sailed from a port near the castle to another port called Fukae. There they waited for favorable winds to blow at their seaside house. Then they sailed through the Inland Sea on a luxurious ship called “Jinriki-maru”, the lord’s private-use ship. After they reached a port in Hyogo called Muro-minato, they journeyed to Edo by land. The journey took as long as 33 days in total; 14 days by the sea and 19 days by land.

Nitobe Inazo, the author of “Bushido, the Soul of Japan”, once visited Hiji. When he dined at a “Shiroshita” flounder restaurant which overlooked Beppu Bay, he admired its view and said, “This view is more beautiful than Naples. It is a Naples in the east.” Since then, Beppu Bay has been dubbed “Naples in the east.”

