



Traditional Crafts of Echizen and Wakasa

**Culture through Travel.
Changes in Everyday Life.**

Culture through Travel. Changes in Everyday Life.

Fukui Prefecture is home to seven items designated as Traditional Craft of Japan by the national government, each of which has been handed down and developed over its long history.

For each of these, some parts remain unchanged, while other parts have evolved over time to the present day, creating their own unique stories.

In addition to these items, Fukui's climate and lifestyles have produced many other local crafts that are part of everyday life.

Encountering traditional culture during your travels in Fukui is sure to lead to wonderful changes in your own life.

C O N T E N T S

Nationally Designated Traditional Crafts

4	Echizen Lacquerware
6	Echizen Washi
8	Echizen Knives
10	Echizen Pottery
12	Echizen Chests
14	Wakasa Lacquerware
16	Wakasa Agate Work

Local Crafts Developed through Everyday Life

18	Echizen Candles
18	Ginkgo Wood Products
19	Echizen Bamboo Dolls
19	Mikuni Chests
19	Takefu Paulownia Chests
20	Takefu Karaki Crafts
20	Echizen Mizuhiki Crafts
20	Wakasa Pearls

21	Wakasa Washi Paper	24	Kumiko Joinery	27	Enjoy Fukui's Traditional Crafts at Traditional Craft Events
21	Lacquer Daruma Dolls	24	Ishida Striped Fabric		
21	Echizen Joinery	24	Echizen Umbrellas	28	Experience Fukui's Traditional Crafts with Hands-On Workshops and Shops
22	Takefu Karaki Joinery	25	Fukui Shamisens		
22	Echizen Onigawara Ogre Tiles	25	Echizen Sedge Hats	34	Stop By if You're in Fukui! Recommended Sightseeing Destinations
22	Sabae Wood-Carving	25	Mikuni Paper Lanterns		
23	Yuton Lacquered Paper Mats	26	Echizen Bamboo Crafts		
23	Fukui Buddhist Altars	26	Imadan Ware		
23	Echizen Shimenawa Ropes	26	Fukui Modern Embroidery		



Durable, Long-Lasting Products for Lifelong Use, Taking Advantage of Lacquer's Natural Antimicrobial Properties

Echizen Lacquerware is said to have roughly 1,500 years of history years, but decoration techniques were introduced comparatively recently, during the Edo period (1603–1868) — including maki-e gold powder decorations from Kyoto, and chinkin gold inlay from Wajima (in northern present-day Ishikawa) — making these inherently durable lacquerware products gorgeously decorative ever since.

Traditionally, Echizen Lacquerware items were primarily bowls, but over time artisans have diversified to now make square and rectangular items, such as small dining tables, food boxes, jewelry cases, trays, and confectionery boxes. In recent years, numerous new types of tableware and other items have arrived on the market, as well.

On the one hand, these products inherit 10,000 years of lacquerware tradition and excellent functionality; at the same time, they are carefully designed for ease of modern-day use, with dishwasher-safe lacquerware items, as well as items in colors that better fit contemporary tastes.

The possibilities are endless for these lacquerware items: use them to serve side dishes, as small rice bowls, or as plates for individual servings. With use, they become a beloved part of everyday life — perfect for items that last a lifetime.



Scan for Video



Echizen Lacquerware



The production of Echizen Lacquerware is handled by various specialist artisans throughout the area who each focus on a single step of the production process, such as making wooden bases, applying lacquer, or decorating these items. Nowadays, artisans work to also offer consumers a wide variety of products beyond traditional wooden lacquerware, using synthetic resin materials and chemical coatings.

越前和紙

Echizen Washi



Leading Japan in Both Variety and Quality, with Textures That Beg to Become Part of Everyday Life

Echizen Washi's history goes back some 1,500 years. It has long been renowned as some of Japan's finest washi paper for both its beauty and strength: it was used for Japan's first paper banknotes, and was the choice of famous artists such as Yokoyama Taikan and Hirayama Ikuo. In recent years, it has been used as a material for space suits due to its antibacterial and deodorizing effects.

Applications of Echizen Washi continue to expand beyond the boundaries of paper for writing, painting, and printing: these include not only wallpaper and sliding screens, but also interior design products and other items that fit into everyday life. Accessory cases feature gentle wrinkled textures and delightful shapes, while other items have vivid, colorful finishes with patterns created through crisp creases on their surfaces. As a result, these make even ordinary situations instantly picturesque.



Scan for Video



Echizen Washi



Echizen Washi is made of fibers from plants such as *kozo* (paper mulberry), *mitsumata* (paper bush), and *ganpi* shrub. These main raw materials are formed into sheets of paper primarily by hand, using methods such as *tamezuki*, in which fibers are spread by hand onto a reed mat, and *nagashizuki*, in which fibers are suspended in water thickened with mucilage, then shaken back and forth to distribute them evenly in a frame. In addition to handmade *washi* paper, some artisans also use machines for making and processing paper. As a result, Echizen Washi is considered Japan's finest *washi* paper, in terms of both variety and quality.

越前打刃物

Echizen Knives



From Sickles Known Nationwide to Knives Beloved by Chefs from Around the World

Echizen Forged Blades date back to about 700 years ago, but at the time, the main products artisans produced were sickles for farmers. Over the centuries, one change led to another, and today, the region is known for cooking knives. Echizen Knife artisans have preserved tradition and techniques while simultaneously pursuing functionality and sophisticated design, creating knives that are highly regarded not only in Japan but also internationally. Knives from different makers each feature their own unique hammered patterns and beautiful handles.

Echizen Knives are beloved by famous chefs overseas, as well as by passionate home cooks all over. They maintain an excellent sharpness, said to make cooking easier and faster, and perhaps even improve the flavor of food — once you try one of these knives, you may never want to go back to any other. With regular sharpening and occasional replacement of damaged handles, these premium knives can remain a reliable part of everyday life for many years.



Scan for Video



Echizen Knives



The process of making a blade involves fourteen steps, including forging a block of steel and iron to make it stronger, shaping it, heating it, hammering it again, heating it, cooling it, and hammering it again, until finally, the blade is sharpened to finish it. In particular, techniques like *nimai hiroge* ("double layering," or hammering two layered blades together during the shaping process) for kitchen knives, and *mawashi hagane tsuke* ("rotated steel joining," or hammering steel to create a diamond-shaped blade edge, starting from the corner, across the whole blade) for sickles and hedge clippers, are unique to Echizen Forged Blades.

越前焼

Echizen Pottery



A Tasteful Way to Add a Sense of Sophistication to any Meal

Echizen Pottery originated in Echizen Town (formerly Miyazaki Village and Ota Town), in Fukui's Nyu District, due to the sticky, iron-rich pottery clay found there. Today, the prefecture is home to about 80 pottery producers, each with their own kilns and their own styles.

Traditional Echizen Pottery is characterized by its simple, unglazed finish, made mainly by firing at high temperatures and using ash glaze. On the other hand, though, today's artisans also work to develop new styles of pottery that build upon these traditions, such as thinner products that take advantage of the characteristics of Echizen clay, as well as items made with iron glaze or colored glazes, helping this traditional craft continue to evolve with changing times. The types and designs of these works are as varied and unique as the artisans who create them.

These modern dishes and cups fit into contemporary life, flexible enough for serving any type of food, making everyday dining just that little bit more special.



Scan for Video



Over the past 850 years, the Echizen region of Fukui has developed into the Hokuriku region's largest ceramics production area. At one point, this was one of the six ancient pottery producers of Japan, earning it Japan Heritage recognition in recent years. The *nejitate* pottery method, invented here, has been handed down to the present day; this method involves coiling up ropes of clay, and repeatedly spreading the clay thin using a wooden tool called a *hagatana*.

越前箆笥

Echizen Chests



Chests with Beauty and Character — Truly, Works of Art

Over time, Echizen Chests came to be made by artisans who specialized in Japanese-style joinery — a technique that takes advantage of the characteristics of the wood itself to join panels together without using nails. For the finish, these chests feature local Echizen Lacquerware techniques, and the metal decorations are made of iron, produced using the techniques used for Echizen Knives.

For centuries, they have been treasured as wedding presents and family heirlooms. Today, artisans continue to develop new products that incorporate the traditional designs, beauty, and durability of Echizen Chests alongside modern ideas, creating items still suited for everyday life. This blend of traditional and contemporary makes these chests works of practical art, ready to lend any room an air of sophistication.



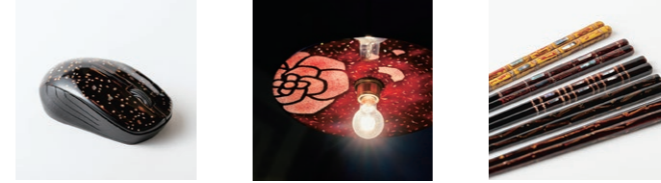
Scan for Video



Echizen Chests



These chests are made from natural solid wood, which artisans cut into the parts necessary, then coat them with lacquer, assemble them, and attach the metal decorations. Traditionally, these did more than simply hold clothing; they were long used as safes by merchants, for storing bonds and crucial business ledgers. In addition to sturdy locks, some even had wheels on them, making it easier to move them out in the event of a fire.



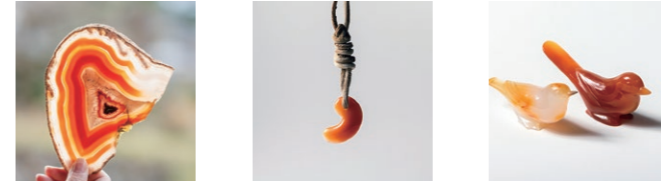
Layers of Lacquer Carefully Ground Away to Reveal a Gem-Like Shine Within

This lacquerware, nicknamed “gem lacquerware” by some for its beautiful patterns, originated roughly 400 years ago. Wakasa Lacquerware is known for the embedded abalone shell, eggshell, and pine needles used to make patterns on its surface. These are then hidden under dozens of layers of lacquer, which is ground away with stones and charcoal to reveal the beauty hidden within.

Back in the period of austerity in which it was developed, this luxurious lacquerware was initially used only by a limited number of court nobles and samurai families. In addition to its beauty, Wakasa Lacquerware is known for a durability created through its painstaking production process. As a result, these items handle water and heat particularly well, making them ideal for frequent, long-term use as parts of everyday life. Lacquerware artisans continue to produce traditional tea utensils and chopsticks, as well as innovative new products with more modern sensibilities, better suited to daily use in contemporary households.



The 18th and 19th centuries are said to have been a golden age for Wakasa Lacquerware: it was during this period that over 200 decorative lacquering techniques were perfected, including the use of gold leaf and powder, and embedded mother-of-pearl and eggshell polished down to be revealed on the surface. Wakasa Lacquerware is known for its ability to handle both water and heat, and in fact, this region produces the vast majority of Japan's lacquered chopsticks.

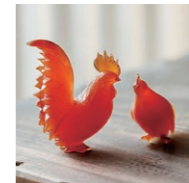


The Roots of Japanese Semi-Precious Stone Work, Now a Part of Everyday Life

In Japan, agate has long been considered one of the “seven treasures,” and is known as the roots of Japanese semi-precious stone work. Agate is beloved for its brilliant flame-like hue and its translucency.

This rich color is produced through a unique firing process known as “tempering,” which uses the iron naturally present in agate. Because agate is very hard, it can only be carved away little by little, based on the shape of the stone. As a result, all Wakasa Agate-Work items are one-of-a-kind.

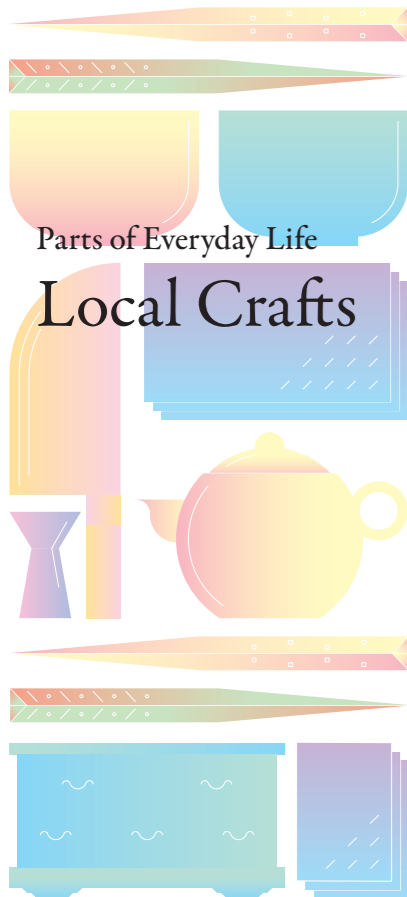
Traditionally, this craft has been used for items like home decorations in the shape of chickens or carp, but today’s artisans also take advantage of the pieces of agate left over from making these to produce items like stylish earrings, for a casual way to incorporate this distinctive traditional craft into contemporary fashions.



Wakasa Agate-Work



This craft originated over 1,000 years ago, as a form of religious devotion. Centuries later, it was revived by an artisan who learned to make beads while apprenticing under a glasses maker. In the 19th century, artisans began using engraving techniques to produce delicate works of art.



Parts of Everyday Life
Local Crafts



Echizen Candles

The Gentle Flicker of the Flame and Beautiful Decorations Add Warmth to Any Room

Japanese-style candles originated in the Edo period (1603–1868), and have long been used in Buddhism and other various ceremonies. They are made from the berries of the wax tree, with wicks of specially made *washi* paper. The flame may flicker, but it produces very little oily smoke, and resists being accidentally extinguished, making these candles an eco-friendly way to contribute to the SDGs. They also make lovely contemporary interior decorations: in addition to solid white and vermillion, they are available with designs like flowers painted on them — and some are even scented.

Kodaikokuya
2-15-9 Junka, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 22-0986



Ginkgo Wood Products

Take Your Cooking to the Next Level with Tools Used by Pros

Since ancient times, ginkgo has been known as “the tree of the gods” in Japan. These cutting boards are an excellent example of ginkgo wood products: the wood’s high oil content helps prevent water from seeping in, and its natural springiness makes chopping easier on the arm over time. Ginkgo wood has other advantages for cooking, too. For instance, it dulls blades more slowly, and resists taking on unwanted odors. Even the sound of knives on these cutting boards is pleasant, making time spent cooking that much more enjoyable.

Futaba Shoten
1-26-8 Asuwa, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 36-3796



Echizen Bamboo Dolls

The Natural Curves of Bamboo, Enhanced through Delicate Technique and Rich Browns

Bamboo products like these were born from the bamboo forests that were once everywhere in Fukui, combined with artisanal ingenuity. As a material, bamboo is lightweight and durable, and over the years it takes on a rich brown color. It is at once mysterious, old-fashioned, and comforting. These dolls run the gamut, from simple yet charming home decorations to incredibly elaborate works of art bound to become family heirlooms.

Kin'ichi Ozaki Fukui Bamboo Craft Studio
3-10-13 Matsumoto, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 23-4770
Sochiku Bamboo Crafts (Kanazawa Forest of Creation)
44-21 Aonoki, Awara City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 73-1645



Mikuni Chests

Japanese-Style Furniture Crafted for a Lifetime, Built on the History and Culture of Mikuni

The seaside town of Mikuni was once a port of call for the Kitamaebune trading ships. The chests made here exude a dignified air built on the town’s history and culture, for an unmistakably Japanese feel. At the same time, they feel at home within a variety of décor styles, both Japanese and Western. Even today, they are made with genuine natural materials like zelkova and paulownia wood, as well as lacquer, lovingly prepared and assembled with timeless techniques handed down for generations.

Takumi Kougei
3-905 Wakasugi, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 34-3848



Takefu Paulownia Chests

Made of Paulownia Wood, to Protect Precious Items Like Clothes and Accessories

Paulownia wood is prized for its ability to handle moist environments, with antibacterial properties and excellent breathability — all crucial in Fukui’s humid climate. As a result, these chests made of paulownia wood are ideal for storing clothing, accessories, and other valuable items. Traditional paulownia chests can be restored to their original beauty by shaving off a single layer of wood from their surface, or renovated with designs to fit contemporary lifestyles.

Hatakenaka Kiri Tansu
121-27-2 Hirose-cho, Echizen City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 22-3021





Takefu Karaki Crafts

A Modernized Take on This Traditional Style of Furniture

In Japan, “Karaki” refers to types of wood first brought here during the Tang Dynasty, and Karaki crafts are generally made with red sandalwood. Today, artisans work to develop fresh new contemporary takes on this traditional craft, subverting its old-fashioned reputation. The gorgeous sheen on this furniture comes from countless layers of lacquer, polished to a glossy shine. With years of use, each of these items takes on its own distinct, beautiful patina.

Work of Mihara Karaki Crafts
1-23 Shinmei-cho, Echizen City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 22-4602



Echizen Mizuhiki Crafts

Keep a Treasure Ship Nearby to Invite Good Fortune and Wealth into Your Life

Mizuhiki paper strings have been used since ancient times to make crafts — especially lucky items for celebrations. Each strand is made by twisting up *washi* paper with glue, and these are then bent, folded, and woven into beautifully delicate shapes. Each of these craft items is imbued with an auspicious, celebratory feel. These can still be used as decorations after celebrations, so the recommendation is to keep them by the entrance to the home, or as room décor, as a way to bring good luck.

Nishitani Bussan
3-1716 Geba, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 50-0707



Wakasa Pearls

Delicate Shines in Various Hues, Letting Wearers Look Their Best

For formal occasions, pearls are considered a must by many — and more and more people are wearing them with everyday outfits. It’s no mystery why, given their unique beauty and ability to fit any look. The pink hue of Wakasa Pearls can be enjoyed through various different items, perfect for adding a subtly showy accent. Visitors to the area can also try making their own pearl accessories.

Mamiya Pearl
31-28 Inumi, Ohi Town, Ohi District, Fukui
Phone: (0770) 77-0432



Wakasa Washi Paper

Strong, Versatile Handmade Washi Paper, Perfect for Adding a Splash of Color to Everyday Life

This *washi* paper is made by hand, taking advantage of the Wakasa region’s pure water and climate. It is used to make handicrafts like torn-paper pictures, as base paper for Yuzen dyeing, and much more. For instance, colored paper can serve as an accent for white *washi* paper, or to add a distinctive color to lampshades. Wakasa *Washi* Paper is also known for its strength, making it great for all sorts of different uses.

Wakasa Washi no Ie
4-406 Onyu, Obama City, Fukui
Phone: (0770) 56-0363



Lacquer Daruma Dolls

Let These Charming Daruma Dolls Be a Source of Strength — or Comfort

These Daruma dolls are made of colorful lacquer, and their colors and shapes are each one of a kind. The sharp angles and crisp expressions give them a fun and lively feel. The smaller ones are popular as key chains, or line up a few on a shelf to liven up a room. In addition to these angular Daruma dolls, there are also Fukuhime Daruma dolls, with a much rounder, gentler look.

Tsukamoto Folk Craft Center
8-29-8 Fukutani, Obama City, Fukui
Phone: (0770) 52-2590



Echizen Joinery

A Single Piece of Wood, Carefully Carved to Make the Most of the Beauty of the Grain

For the craft known as Ugetsu-biki, pieces of zelkova wood over 100 years old are dried for a minimum of a decade, then expertly carved on a lathe. In recent years, this craft has evolved to feature not only circular lathed designs, but also new forms like octagonal motifs. And because each project is carved from a single piece of wood, the wood grain on the surface lines up perfectly. The unique techniques involved elevate these to true works of art.

Kogetsu Tanaka
42-6-2 Besshi-cho, Sabae City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 65-2569



Takefu Karaki Joinery

Works of Craft Art, with Artisanal Techniques to Bring Out the Beauty of the Wood

For a century, a traditional craft originally known as Osaka Karaki Joinery has been handed down from generation to generation in Takefu (now part of Echizen City). The term “Karaki” refers collectively to red sandalwood, ebony, cassia, and Chinese quince wood. These hardwoods are assembled with joinery techniques that use no metal fittings, then coated with a natural lacquer finish for a beautiful gloss and smooth feel. Even old items can be restored through these artisanal techniques.

Takashima Mokko
1-6-8 Fuchu, Echizen City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 24-0601



Echizen Onigawara Ogre Tiles

Menacing yet Caring Monsters to Watch Over Households for Safety and Security

These tiles began to appear on the roofs of many houses and temples around the early to mid 18th century; their intimidating faces were meant to frighten away evil. Modern-day artisans now also produce smaller ones that are popular as interior décor items, placed by the entrances of homes or rooms. *Onigawara* tile artisans in Fukui make these tiles entirely by hand — a rarity in Japan nowadays — as they adapt traditional techniques to fit contemporary lifestyles.

Echizen Tile Industrial Cooperative
6-7-3 Bunkyo, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 22-3912

Kitagawa Onigawara
8-5-1 Ikenokami-cho, Echizen City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 23-5744



Sabae Wood-Carving

Wood Carvings That Take on a Rich Patina with Time, Evocative of Life Itself

Wood surrounds us in everyday life, including carved wood. These items from Sabae are made mainly from zelkova, camphor, and *hinoki* cypress wood, and artisans can use as many as over 200 different chisels in their work. The choice of chisel and carving technique can be the difference between creating different feels, from supple and gentle to dignified and serious. Connoisseurs especially appreciate the way that the wood takes on a rich brown patina over the years.

Suzuki Wood-Carving
55-13-1 Hirai-cho, Sabae City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 62-1836



Yuton Lacquered Paper Mats

Mats of Washi Paper and Perilla Oil, for a Cooling Sensation Wholly Unlike Air Conditioning

Yuton mats are an iconic symbol of summer here. They are made by layering several sheets of *washi* paper together, and coating the surface with perilla oil, creating a cooling sensation to the touch that provides at least a moment’s respite from the summer heat. Freshly made *yuton* mats are a milky white color, gradually giving way to a rich brown over time, with a luster that develops with each time they are wiped clean. As these mats take on their own unique look and feel, they can lend a tasteful feel to a room’s atmosphere.

Beniya
2-10 Tamura-cho, Sabae City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 62-1126



Fukui Buddhist Altars

A Source of Calm and Peace of Mind in an Ever-Changing World

Fukui Buddhist altars are known for their incredibly elaborate, ornate designs, intended to leave viewers feeling overwhelmed. They date back to the 19th century, and arrived at their modern-day design in the early 20th century. The gorgeous lacquer coating, decorated with gold leaf and powder, offers a sense of relaxed calm. In today’s chaotic, often confusing world, Buddhist altars like these can offer a grounding connection to family history and religious faith.

Fukui Buddhist Altar Craft Association
2-24-36 Yonematsu, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 54-1933



Echizen Shimenawa Ropes

Sacred Ropes, Spun with Wishes for Happiness, for a Refreshing Addition to Home Décor

Shimenawa ropes are an indispensable part of celebrating the new year in Japan, and each region spins them in their own ways. The straw used to make these is fully dried, then stored before it changes color. The rest of the process of spinning *shimenawa* ropes takes a full year. The different items attached represent various prayers: an orange represents hopes for the prosperity of descendants, while andromeda flowers and holly olive aim to ward off evil. These decorative ropes are lovingly created to help ring in a new year full of happiness.

Yamazaki Farm
97-8 Ota, Echizen Town, Nyu District, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 36-1698



Kumiko Joinery

Extraordinarily Delicate Artisanal Technique, for Works of Art Worth Waiting a Year or More For

Kumiko joinery is done entirely by hand, and the smaller the pieces of wood, the more delicate the finished result. One iconic *kumiko* design, the basketwork pattern, is based on bamboo basket-weaving techniques. Wood joinery this small — as little as 1.5 mm squared — requires exceptional skill. A single item can take over a year to produce, but the sense of delight and satisfaction make it quality worth waiting for.

Tsuchimoto Crafts
7-27 Uwase, Takahama Town, Ohi District, Fukui
Phone: (0770) 76-1514



Ishida Striped Fabric

Long Beloved for Stylish Vertical Stripes, Especially by Kimono Connoisseurs

These hand-woven cotton textiles are known for the stripes that run along their length, usually dyed with indigo. The material is known for its durability, and was even once used in school uniforms in Fukui. Ishida textiles are used for items like accessory pouches, aprons, and coasters, but they are also beloved for kimonos and obi belts, especially in a rare and beautiful style known as Echizen Ishida-Jima, woven with Echizen *Washi* paper spun into threads.

Sabae Textile Association
32-1-1 Tadasu-cho, Sabae City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 52-1880

Rie Sasaki
1-6-15 Chosenji-cho, Sabae City, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 51-4647



Echizen Umbrellas

A Symbol of Good Luck, and So Beautiful You'll Look Forward to Rainy Days

The 24 ribs of these umbrellas use technology originally developed for eyeglass frames, while the fabric is a blended *Habutae* weave, and the handle and tip are made with Echizen Lacquerware techniques. Every step of the production process is handled by hand, using materials from Fukui, for umbrellas that are as durable and easy to use as they are beautiful. In Japan, umbrellas have long been a symbol of good luck and warding off evil, and Japanese phrases regarding fulfillment or satisfaction often involve words like “circle” or “round.” With lovely, auspicious umbrellas like these, rainy days become something to look forward to.

Fukui Yougasa
4-4-2 Hamabessho-cho, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 85-1114



Fukui Shamisens

From Japanese Music to Unexplored Frontiers of Sound, with Tones to Stir the Soul

This multi-generational business began with koto harp sales. The second generation then started to make their own koto harps and *shamisens*, and today, the third generation makes and repairs these while striving to achieve ever-greater sound quality. The shamisen is a versatile instrument: its tone can be lively and joyful in one song, yet plaintive and mournful in the next. Encounters with this historic Japanese musical instrument can open the doors to entire new worlds of music.

Iyo Wagakki
3-12-27 Chuo, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 22-5644



Echizen Sedge Hats

Old-Fashioned yet High-Performance, for Impressive Protection from the Elements

In the Edo period (1603–1868), weaving hats out of sedge became a popular side business for farmers. Men would split the bamboo for the framework, and women would weave them together. The resulting hats had a simple structure, but drying the sedge in the sun and soaking it in water resulted in hats that offered protection from both heat and rain, making them ideal for outdoor work and gardening in the summer heat, even today. Despite being made to order, these hats have many loyal fans nationwide.

Echizen Sedge Hat Preservation Association
1-22 Tajiri Tochitani-cho, Fukui City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 98-2333



Mikuni Paper Lanterns

Warm Light through Washi Paper Offers an Invitation to Magical Moments

These lanterns are made from just three things: bamboo, *washi* paper, and a light source. Bright, colorful text and designs can be painted on these to add a lively feel, drawing on their roots in Japanese culture and history. The *washi* paper on the outside diffuses the light from inside, giving it a soft, warm, soothing glow. Visitors to the area can even try a hands-on workshop to make their own Mikuni Paper Lanterns.

Itoya Mikuni Paper Lanterns
2-3-29 Minamihon-machi, Mikuni Town, Sakai City, Fukui
Phone: (0776) 81-3574





Echizen Bamboo Crafts

Storage Containers Worth Becoming Heirlooms, Made from Locally Sourced Materials

These crafts are made by a family business, currently on its fourth generation. The studio once presented a clothes chest to the Imperial household made with a lacquered papier-mâché technique called *ikkanbari*, in which lacquer is applied to individual layers of *washi* paper set over a frame of bamboo. The bamboo, *washi* paper, and lacquer used are all locally produced. These storage containers are both sturdy and naturally insect-repellent, making them the perfect place to store your favorite items — or wonderful gifts.

Nohara Bamboo Works
20-15 Tonokuchi-cho, Sabae City, Fukui
Phone: (090) 4680-8968



Imadan Ware

Revived after a Millennium, Combining Old and New to Embody “Cool Japan”

This local specialty was revived after the discovery of the remains of a Sue Ware kiln in Imadani, Ohi Town, in 1990. Sue Ware was a type of unglazed pottery produced from the Kofun Period (300–538) through the Heian Period (794–1185). The earth used in this modern version is blended with red clay from the area around Kinoko-no-Mori Amusement Land. The clay's rich iron content gives items an alluring black luster, which lends itself well to modern ceramics. In 2017, these goods went on sale in Paris and became a popular example of Japan's stylish appeal. Imadan Ware items can also be made to order.

Ohi Co., Ltd.
42-27 Shikano, Ohi Town, Ohi District, Fukui
Phone: (0770) 78-1714



Fukui Modern Embroidery

Preserving Tradition while Sewing Distinctive Designs in New Styles

Sashiko is an embroidery technique originally born out of necessity long ago, when cloth was a precious resource. Using this technique, multiple layers of fabric are stacked and carefully stitched together, for stronger, warmer garments. The iconic traditional Japanese geometric designs, such as *asanoha* (hexagonal “hemp leaf”), *shippo* (overlapping circles), and *chidori* (houndstooth), make these garments much more desirable as parts of day-to-day life. Even today, this technique continues to be passed down to younger generations, with a distinctive modern twist.

Mariyo Kojima
110-114 Ozowara, Echizencho, Nyu District, Fukui
Phone: (0778) 32-3457

Enjoy Fukui's Traditional Crafts with Traditional Craft Events



RENEW

This event held in Sabae City, Echizen City, and Echizen Town showcases locally produced goods and aims to sustainably grow the local community. Local businesses, studios, restaurants,

and lodgings from each of seven areas known for their local specialties take part in the event. From Echizen Lacquerware, Echizen Washi, Echizen Knives, Echizen Chests, and Echizen Pottery to eyeglasses and textiles, each area offers much to see, and visitors can enjoy studio tours and engaging workshops.

Date: Early October
Location: Sabae City, Echizen City, Echizen Town (all regions)

Chopstick Festival

A popular event held annually on August 4 in Obama City, which produces 80% of all lacquered chopsticks in Japan. August 4 is known as Chopstick Day because the numbers eight and four sound similar to *hashi*, the Japanese word for chopsticks. Visitors can try grinding their own chopsticks and making crafts with chopstick blocks. Products inside the museum are also available at half price! There is also a Shinto memorial service held to show gratitude for chopsticks which have reached the end of their usable lives; families can bring up to five pairs to retire.



Date: August 4
Location: Wakasa Chopstick Museum

Echizen Pottery Festival

Echizen Pottery artisans come together here for Fukui's largest pottery market, where a great many pieces, including new works, are available for sale. The venue bustles during the event, and visitors can enjoy traditional handicrafts, food and drinks sold by Local Chamber of Commerce member stores, and events like tea ceremony.

Dates: Last Saturday & Sunday in May
Location: Echizen Pottery Village



Kawada Lacquerware & Echizen Lacquerware Festival

Experience Echizen Lacquerware, a traditional craft with a rich 1,500-year history. Good deals and unique items will be on display for purchase at the several sales exhibitions. There are plenty of activities to enjoy as well, such as lacquerware painting workshops, demonstrations by lacquerware artisans, a food area, music and dance performances, and more.

Dates: May 3 & 4
Location: Echizen Lacquerware Hall

Echizen Craft Mirai CoNEXTion

More than 100 artisans specializing in traditional crafts, hand-crafted goods, and food gather from all over Japan to sell their wares and run workshops at this exhibition. Visitors can encounter a variety of goods and handicrafts from up close, with a focus on crafts from Echizen City, such as Echizen Washi, Echizen Knives, and Echizen Chests.

Date: Late August
Location: Echizen City Aishin Sports Arena & elsewhere



Echizen Washi Market

The workshops that produce Echizen Washi gather in one place, to sell various kinds of Echizen Washi normally not available to the public. *Washidokoro* Echizen, the shop at the nearby Papyrus House, also holds a special sale.

Dates: May 3–5
Location: Parking at the Papyrus House



Experience Fukui's Traditional Crafts with Hands-On Workshops & Shops

Echizen Lacquerware Hall



Learn about the history and manufacturing process of Echizen Lacquerware. Over 1,000 items are on display and for sale at special local prices. Enjoy decorating a bowl, a picture frame, or a hand mirror with a hands-on *e-tsuke* workshop. Visitors can even try decorating their own lacquerware with chinkin (gold inlay) and *fuki-urushi* (lacquer-wiping) workshops. Stop at the Wan Wan teahouse, located inside the venue for a relaxing lunch made from local ingredients, served on locally crafted lacquerware.

Hands-On Shopping

Phone: (0778) 65-2727
40-1-2 Nishibukuro-cho, Sabae City, Fukui



Hours: 9:00 to 17:00

Closed: Fourth Tuesday of each month (or the following Wednesday if the fourth Tuesday falls on a national holiday), new year holidays (December 29 to January 3)

Fees: Free entry to the Hall. Painting workshop ¥1,650, gold inlay workshop ¥2,200, lacquering workshop ¥2,970

Access: From Sabae Station, ride the Community Bus (Azalea Bus) Kawada Line for 25 minutes, to the Echizen Lacquerware Hall stop

Papyrus House



Located in the Echizen *Washi* Village area. The paper-making workshop offers hands-on experiences for all ages making *washi* from its signature ingredient, paper mulberry. Try making your very own one-of-a-kind sheet of *washi* paper. The shop inside, *Washidokoro* Echizen, carries a wide variety of goods, including *washi* stationery.

Hands-On Shopping

Phone: (0778) 42-1363
8-44 Shinzaike-cho, Echizen City, Fukui



Hours: 9:00 to 16:00. Reception for workshops closes at 15:30.

(Washidokoro Echizen is open until 16:30)

Closed: Tuesdays, new year holidays

Fees: Free entry. Paper-making workshops start at ¥600, *goshuincho* booklet-making ¥2,700, fan-making (mini size) ¥1,000 per set (includes two postcards and plastic frame kit)

Access: From Takefu Station, ride the Fukui Railway Bus Ikeda Line or the Nanetsu Line bus for 30 minutes, to the Echizen Washi Village stop

Udatsu Paper & Craft Museum



Once the home of a papermaker, built in the 18th century, then dismantled and reconstructed here. Visitors can watch the entire paper-making process, from processing the raw materials and spreading the pulp to drying — all done with the traditional tools of the era. Visitors can also follow along with resident artisans in an authentic *nagashi-suki* paper-making workshop, made with 100% domestic paper mulberry. Experience the unique traditional paper-making technique cultivated by the climate, spirit, and sensibilities of Japan.

Hands-On

Phone: (0778) 43-7800
9-21-2 Shinzaike-cho, Echizen City, Fukui



Hours: 9:30 to 17:00 (Last admission at 16:30)

(Paper-making demonstrations end at 16:00)

Closed: Tuesdays, new year holidays

Fees: ¥300 entry fee (free for children 17 and younger).

Nagashi-suki paper-making workshop ¥8,800 (two *kiku-ban* (939 × 636 mm) sheets or four *masa-ban* (530 × 393 mm) sheets)

Access: From Takefu Station, ride the Fukui Railway Ikeda Line bus for 30 minutes, to the Echizen Washi Village stop

Echizen Chiyozuru Hall



Echizen Chiyozuru Hall showcases the appeal of Echizen Knives through forging demonstrations, as well as exhibits and videos on their history and the techniques used to make them. Workshops are held occasionally, including blade-grinding and petty-knife-making. The Echizen Knife Hall is also located nearby, where artisan-crafted kitchen knives can always be found for sale.

Hands-On

Phone: (0778) 22-1241
48-6-1 Ikenokami-cho, Echizen City, Fukui



Hours: 9:00 to 17:00

Closed: Tuesdays (or the following day if a national holiday), new year holidays (December 29 to January 3)

Fees: Free entry. Petty knife workshop ¥2,500

Access: From Takefu Station, ride the Community Bus (Norossa) Sakaguchi Kanayama Line bus for 25 minutes, to the Koyochi bus stop, then walk 10 minutes

Takefu Knife Village



Multiple knife companies produce superb knives at this shared workshop. Walk up the ramp for a simultaneous view of the forging and grinding processes. A great variety of knives are available for purchase in the shop. If one catches your interest, you can even hold it to see how it feels in your hand!

Hands-On Shopping

Phone: (0778) 27-7120
22-91 Yokawa-cho, Echizen City, Fukui



Hours: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Closed: New year holidays

Fees: Free entry. Double-beveled knife workshop ¥20,000, *kodoba* knife grinding ¥5,000, double-beveled knife grinding ¥6,000. Reservations required for all activities.

Access: •From Takefu Station, ride the Iritani Line bus for 20 minutes, to the Ajimanojinja-mae bus stop, then walk 10 minutes
•8 minutes by taxi from Echizen-Takefu Station on the Hokuriku Shinkansen line

Fukui Prefectural Museum of Ceramics



A place to experience many aspects of Echizen Pottery: take in the sights and history in the archive, enjoy making your own ceramics in a workshop, and taste delicious green tea served in a ceramic bowl. Available workshops include hand-sculpting ceramics and painting ceramics with glaze. Ceramic items produced at kilns throughout Fukui are also available for purchase. Other Echizen-Pottery-related facilities are also located at the same site, such as the Echizen Old Kiln Museum and the Echizen Potters' Village Ceramic Art Center.

Hands-On Buy

Phone: (0778) 32-2174
120-61 Ozowara, Echizen Town, Nyu District, Fukui



Hours: 9:00 to 17:00 (last entry at 16:30)
Closed: Mondays (open on national holidays), the day after each national holiday, and new year holidays (December 28 to January 4)
Fees: ¥300 entry fee (free for children 17 and under). Hand-sculpting workshop ¥1,500, painting workshops ¥800 and up, electric potter's wheel workshop ¥3,000 (includes cost to fire one ceramic item)
Access: From Takefu Station, ride the Fukui Railway Echizen Coastal Line bus for 30 minutes, to the Tougeimura-guchi bus stop, then walk 10 minutes

Echizen Pottery House



A pottery market run by the Echizen Pottery Industry Cooperative Association, featuring a rich variety of over 3,000 different ceramic items for sale, including pots, vases, tableware, and teacups. The subtleties in the glaze and unique sense of warmth felt from each piece make Echizen Pottery a fantastic gift. You're sure to find something that speaks to you.

Shopping

Phone: (0778) 32-2199
5-33 Ozowara, Echizen Town, Nyu District, Fukui



Hours: 10:00 to 16:00 (9:00 to 17:00 on weekends and holidays)
Closed: New year holidays
Fees: Free entry
Access: From Takefu Station, ride the Fukui Railway Echizen Coastal Line bus for 30 minutes, to the Tougeimura-guchi bus stop, then walk 10 minutes

Ota Toba Wazumi Hall



An establishment in Echizen Town where both children and adults can enjoy making ceramics. Up to forty people can participate at once. Local artisans are ready to offer their assistance, so even beginners can join in. Come feel the natural clay of Echizen in your hands as you make your very own Echizen Pottery!

Hands-On

Phone: (0778) 36-1922
37-44 Shimogawara, Echizen Town, Nyu District, Fukui



Hours: 9:00 to 17:00. Reservations required.
Closed: No fixed days off
Fees: Ceramic-making workshop ¥1,570 (includes 1 kg of clay)
Access: From Takefu Station, ride the Fukui Railway Echizen Coastal Line bus for 30 minutes, to the Byodo-guchi bus stop, then walk 5 minutes

Echizen Chest Center



A venue looking out on "Chest Street," the central hub for Echizen Chests, where the makers are concentrated. Items from member studios are displayed in the showroom on the first floor, including Echizen Chests and Echizen Cabinets. Woodworking and other workshops are also held on occasion.

Hands-On

Phone: (0778) 42-5289
[Echizen City Traditional Craft Promotion Division]



1-19 Honmachi, Echizen City, Fukui Prefecture
Hours: 11:00 to 16:00
Closed: Wednesdays & Thursdays, new year holidays
Fees: Free entry
Access: 10-minute walk from Takefu Station

Wakasa Studio



Located on the second floor of the Miketsukuni Wakasa Obama Food Culture Museum. Here, visitors can view, touch, and experience the traditional handicrafts of the Wakasa-Obama region: Wakasa Lacquerware, Wakasa Agate-work, and Wakasa Paper. Artisans and instructors are available to help in the workshops, which include chopstick grinding and agate polishing.

Hands-On Shopping

Phone: (0770) 53-1034
2F Miketsukuni Wakasa Obama Food Culture Museum
3-4 Kawasaki, Obama City, Fukui



Hours: 9:00 to 18:00 (Closes at 17:00 from November to February)
Note: Sign-ups for workshops end one hour before closing.
Closed: Wednesdays (or the following Thursday if Wednesday falls on a national holiday), new year holidays (December 28 to January 5)
Fees: Free entry. Chopstick polishing ¥1,300, agate polishing ¥1,100, agate sheet decorating (pendant or keychain) ¥1,100, colored paper making ¥1,100
Access: From Obama Station, ride the Ai-Ai Bus Healthcare Center Line bus for 15 minutes, to the Food Culture Museum bus stop

Wakasa Chopstick Museum



Over 3,000 styles of chopsticks are on display for sale, including both stunning pairs crafted with traditional techniques as well as fresh, novel designs fit for a modern table. All items are available for 50% off on Chopstick Day (August 4). Visitors can make their own pair of chopsticks at the chopstick grinding workshop.

Hands-On Shopping

Phone: (0770) 52-1733
8-1-3 Fukutani, Obama City, Fukui



Hours: 9:00 to 17:00
Closed: Thursdays, new year holidays
Fees: Free entry. Chopstick grinding ¥1,100
Access: From Obama Station, ride the Ai-Ai Bus Tomari Line bus for 13 minutes, to the Fukutani bus stop, then walk 5 minutes

Kinoko-no-Mori Amusement Land Museum of Ceramics



Located inside Kinoko-no-Mori Amusement Land, a theme park with a mushroom motif, based on Ohi Town's local specialty. Built to commemorate the discovery of the remains of a sixth-century Sue Ware kiln. Take in the area's natural beauty as you enjoy a workshop making or decorating ceramics, guided by an expert.

Hands-On

Phone: (0770) 78-1714
42-27 Shikano, Ohi Town, Ohi District, Fukui

Hours: 9:30 to 17:00 (workshops start at 10:00 and 13:30)
Closed: Mondays & Thursdays (or the following day if a national holiday)
(Open daily during summer break)
Fees: ¥300 entry fee. Pottery-making workshop ¥1,040/kg of clay, painting workshops ¥420 and up
Access: From Wakasa-Hongo Station, ride the Fukui Railway Bus Hongo Line bus for 16 minutes, to the Koshiyata bus stop



Fukuninki Happiring Store



Located inside the Happiring shopping center near JR Fukui Station, and built on the concept of sharing local goods crafted with care. This shop carries Fukui specialties like Echizen Washi, Echizen Pottery, Echizen Lacquerware, and Wakasa Lacquered Chopsticks, as well as various other goods made by local designers using traditional techniques.

Shopping

Phone: (0776) 25-0291
2F Happiring
1-2-1 Chuo, Fukui City, Fukui

Hours: 9:00 to 20:00
Closed: Open daily
Fees: Free entry
Access: 1-minute walk from Fukui Station



Fukui WAZABI



A shop located on the fifth floor of the Seibu Fukui department store, offering a selection of Fukui crafts. A plethora of works from various artisans are on display for sale. Events are also held regularly in collaboration with these artisans, such as sales demonstrations and limited-time items, so feel free to stop in and see what is on offer.

Shopping

Phone: (0776) 28-8261
5F Seibu Fukui
1-8-1 Chuo, Fukui City, Fukui

Hours: 10:00 to 19:30
Closed: Open the same hours as Seibu Fukui
Fees: Free entry
Access: 7-minute walk from Fukui Station



SAVA! STORE



A shop created by TSUGI, a Sabae-based company focused on local creative projects. It carries traditional crafts and merchandise with outstanding design. Listen to the stories of the products and makers — from the materials they are made from, the manufacturing process, and how they are used — as you browse for the perfect souvenir.

Shopping

Phone: (0778) 25-0388
19-8 Kawada-cho, Sabae City, Fukui

Hours: 12:00 to 18:00 (11:00 to 18:00 on weekends and holidays)
Closed: Tuesdays & Wednesdays
Fees: Free entry
Access: From Sabae Station, ride the Community Bus (Azalea Bus) Kawada Line bus for 25 minutes, to the Kawada Community Center stop
(Fukui store opening March 2024 at MINIE, by Fukui Station)



Michi-no-Eki Echizen-Takefu



This “roadside station” is connected to Echizen-Takefu Station on the Hokuriku Shinkansen line, and features restaurants, a tourist information center, and more. The shop on the first floor carries products made locally in Echizen City like Echizen Washi, Echizen Knives, and Echizen Joinery, as well as Echizen Lacquerware, Wakasa Lacquered Chopsticks, and other great souvenirs.

Shopping

Phone: (0778) 43-5661
38-5-1 Oyacho, Echizen City, Fukui

Hours: 9:00 to 18:00 (shop)
Closed: Second Wednesday of each month (or the following day if a national holiday), January 1
Fees: Free entry
Access: 1-minute walk from Echizen Takefu Station on the Hokuriku Shinkansen line



Fukui Antenna Shop 291 Ginza



A showroom located in Ginza, Tokyo, featuring a shop offering a special selection of food items and craft goods from throughout Fukui Prefecture, a tourist information area, and a dining space. Explore a wide variety of items that showcase Fukui's artisanal spirit, including modern, stylish products that inherit a rich history of traditional techniques.

Shopping

Phone: (03) 5159-4291
1-5-8 Ginza, Chuo City, Tokyo
1F & B1 Ginza Willow Avenue Bldg.

Hours: 10:30 to 19:00 (shop)
Closed: No fixed days off, new year holidays Fees: Free entry
Access:
• 5-minute walk from Exit A9 of Ginza Station on the Tokyo Metro Line
• 1-minute walk from Exit 5 of Ginza-itcho Station on the Tokyo Metro Yurakucho Line
• 5-minute walk from the Kyobashi Exit of Yurakucho Station on the JR Yamanote Line and the Keihin-Tohoku Line



Stop By if You're in Fukui! Recommended Sightseeing Destinations

Echizen Ono Castle

Ono City



This castle looks down over central Ono from the top of the modest Mt. Kameyama. The current castle was reconstructed in 1968, and inside there is an exhibition of items belonging to the various feudal lords. From late October to the end of April, when weather conditions are just right, the town below is occasionally covered in fog, making it appear as if the castle is floating in the air.

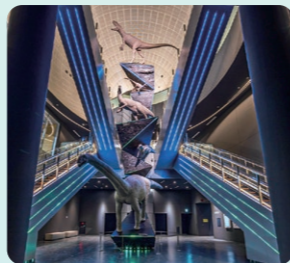


Fukui Prefectural Dinosaur Museum

Katsuyama City



One of the world's finest museums dedicated to dinosaurs, located in a city known throughout Japan as a treasure trove of dinosaur fossils. The museum's vast, pillar-less exhibition space is filled with dinosaur skeletons, fossil samples, dioramas, and models. Three enormous screens show off the world of dinosaurs at a lifelike scale, allowing visitors to feel like they are really there.



Maruoka Castle

Sakai City



Constructed in 1576 by Shibata Katsutoyo, the nephew and adopted son of samurai Shibata Katsui. The tower still remains to this day: it is a free-standing watchtower with a two-level exterior and three floors, designated an Important Cultural Property. Each spring, over 400 cherry blossom trees bloom throughout the castle park, earning it recognition as one of Japan's 100 finest places to see cherry blossoms. At night, visitors can enjoy colorful projection mapping shows, projected onto the castle walls.



Tojinbo Cliffs

Sakai City



A Natural Monument where visitors can witness the powerful waves of the Sea of Japan crashing against towering bluffs. This kilometer-long stretch of coastline features distinctive columnar joints of pyroxene andesite — one of only three known places in the world to have rock formations like this — making the area a stunningly beautiful geological treasure. The unique view can also be enjoyed from a tour boat.



The Five Lakes of Mikata

Mihama Town & Wakasa Town



The Five Lakes of Mikata — Lake Mikata, Lake Suigetsu, Lake Suga, Lake Kugushi, and Lake Hiruga — are located in Mihama Town and Wakasa Town. Each of these lakes has a different depth and different type of water, earning them the nickname “the Five-Colored Lakes” for their different shades of blue. The Rainbow Line Summit Park has five terraces from which to enjoy the superb view, including a sofa terrace and a foot bath terrace.



Port of Humanity Tsuruga Museum

Tsuruga City



Tsuruga Port is the place where Polish orphans who lost their parents in the Russian Revolution, as well as Jewish refugees carrying “Visas for Life” fleeing to Japan, first landed. This museum shares stories from Tsuruga residents of the time, and the heartwarming connections that continue to this day, in the hopes of spreading the value of life and peace.



Eiheiji Temple

Eiheiji Town



A Zen training monastery founded by Zen master Dogen in 1244, featuring over 70 buildings across the temple grounds. The *shichido garan*, or seven halls of a complete Buddhist temple compound, are particularly important as a place of purity where monks train.



Ichijodani Asakura Clan Ruins

Fukui City



The ruins of a castle town from which the Asakura Clan controlled Echizen (the northern half of modern-day Fukui) for 103 years, across five generations. Archaeological excavations of the site began in earnest here in 1967, leading to discoveries of one precious historic artifact after another. The ruins themselves and the artifacts found there have received three different official designations for their historical and cultural importance — Special Historic Site, Special Place of Scenic Beauty, and Important Cultural Property — making it one of only six sites nationwide with this triple designation. The full-size reconstructions of samurai residences, merchant residences, and the surrounding neighborhood are a must-see for visitors.



Getting to Fukui Station by Train



From Tokyo

Hokuriku Shinkansen Travel Time: 2 hr., 50 min.

Tokaido Shinkansen, transferring at Maibara Sta.
..... Travel Time: 3 hr., 20 min.



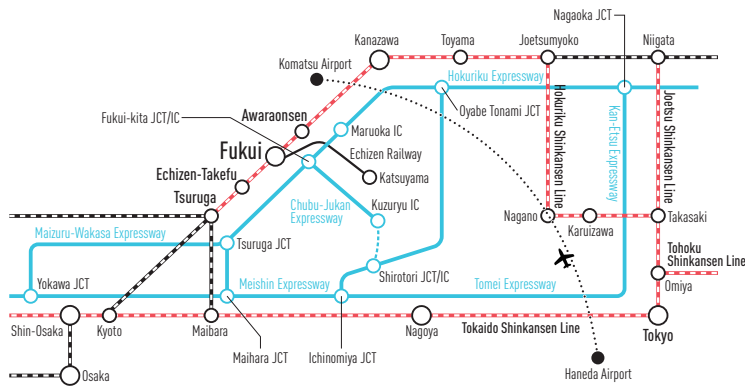
From Nagoya

Shirasagi Limited Express, transferring at Tsuruga Sta.
..... Travel Time: 2 hr., 10 min.



From Osaka

Thunderbird Limited Express, transferring at Tsuruga Sta.
..... Travel Time: 2 hr.



Commerce and Market Development Division,
Department of Industry and Labor, Fukui Prefecture

3-17-1 Ote, Fukui City

Phone: (0776) 20-0377 Fax: (0776) 20-0645



Information on Tourism in Fukui Prefecture

