

PG-408

# KISO VALLEY



JNTO Website : <http://www.jnto.go.jp>

Tourist Information Center (TIC)

10th Fl., Tokyo Kotsu Kaikan Bldg., 2-10-1,

Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0006

Tel. (03)3201-3331



"YOKOSO" means "welcome"

## Old Post Towns of Tsumago, Magome and Narai

**Kiso Valley** (木曾谷), or "Kiso-ji" as it is often called by the Japanese, is in the southwestern part of Nagano, the most mountainous prefecture located in central Japan. Surrounded by mountains such as the Central Alps to the east and the North Alps to the west, the deep valley formed by the Kiso River is filled with the refreshing fragrance of woodland trees. The old Nakasendo Highway, which was completed in the Edo Period (1603–1867) as a trunk road connecting Kyoto and present day Tokyo, went through the region, the most difficult section for travelers because of the deep forests and steep slopes. In those days it took three days to pass through the valley, where today, National Road Route 19 and the JR Chuo Line enable one to take the trip in a few hours. Vestiges of the old highway are well

preserved in the Kiso Valley. Among the 11 post towns situated along the road, Tsumago, Magome and Narai are the most protected and worth visiting. There you will be surprised to discover that the old days of Japan still exist. "Fuzoku Emaki Parade," the most famous event in the region, takes place in Tsumago on November 23 every year. Local folks, dressed in various costumes of the Edo Period travelers, form a procession along the old highway.

**Kiso-Fukushima** (木曾福島), now the political and cultural center of the district, has valuable relics and museums, although the town as a whole doesn't retain much of the olden day atmosphere.

### Access to Tsumago & Magome:

To	From	Type of transportation	Time required	Fare (¥)
Shiojiri Sta.	Shinjuku Sta.	JR Chuo Line "Azusa" "Super Azusa" (express)	2 hrs. 45 min.	6,510
Nakatsugawa Sta.	Shiojiri Sta.	JR Chuo Line (local)	1 hr. 40 min.	1,620
Nakatsugawa Sta.	Nagoya	JR Chuo Line "Shinano" "Wide View Shinano" (express)	50 min.	2,740
Magome	Nakatsugawa Sta.	Nohi Noriai Jidosha Bus	30 min.	540
Nagiso	Nagoya	JR Chuo Line "Wide View Shinano" (express)	60 min.	3,080
Tsumago Sta.	Magome	Ontake Kotsu Bus	30 min.	650
	Nagiso Sta.	Ontake Kotsu Bus	7 min.	270

### Nezame-no-toko (寢覚の床)

This is a unique beauty spot where granite that has encroached into the Kiso River has taken a variety of shapes, and the formations have been given names that describe their shape, like Byobuiwa (Folding Screen Rock), Zoiwa (Elephant Rock), and Eboshiwa (Noble's Court Headgear Rock).

### Torii Pass (鳥居峠)

A number of ancient haiku-inscribed monuments can be found along this pass in the pine tree lined Miharashidai Maruyama Park.

### Magome (馬籠)

Commanding a view of Mt. Ena, this is the southernmost post town, noted as the birthplace of Japan's great man of letters, Toson Shimazaki (1872–1943). Old-fashioned houses, most of them inn or souvenirs shops nowadays, are lined along a 600-m curving slope. A 20-min. stroll through the town.

### Toson Memorial Hall (藤村記念館)

10-min. walk from Magome bus stop. Halfway up the slope, this hall exhibits books, photos and other materials regarding the author. The hall is built on the site where Toson's home, Magome Honjin (an officially appointed inn for feudal lords), was located. Admission: ¥500. Open: 8:30–16:45 (Apr.-Oct.), 8:30–16:15 (Nov.-Mar.), 9:00–16:00 (Dec.28-Jan.3). Closed: 2nd Tue.-Thu. of Dec.

Toson and his family rest in the peaceful precinct of **Eishoji Temple** (永晶寺), off the main street, on a small hill. There are also several other museums and historical sites concerning Toson and the post town in Magome.

### Tsumago (妻籠)

The second post town from the south. After the construction of the Chuo Line and the national road in the early 1900s, Tsumago gradually lost its role as a relay station and was left behind in the

massive development of the whole nation. Faced with a serious problem of depopulation, people of Tsumago found a way out by making good use of the old deserted village in the late 1960s, when the movement of preserving and restoring historical structures took place. In 1976, Tsumago was designated as a Protected Area for the Preservation of Traditional Buildings by the government. The preservation of Tsumago is supported by the efforts of the townspeople as well as by the charter, whose principles state that no part of the town should be sold, hired out or destroyed.

Now the landscape is perfectly that of the Edo Period, where even TV antennas or electric light poles are out of sight. Spending a night at one of these traditional style inns along the main street will become a memorial high light on the itinerary of your journey.

In the middle of the main road, **Wakihonjin Okuya** (脇本陣奥谷), an officially appointed inn, whose designation is next to Honjin, is a three-storied structure all made of Japanese cypress. The present building was reconstructed in 1877 and it is now open to the public to show its elaborate details. Behind the house stands a folk museum. Admission: ¥600. Open: 9:00–17:00. Closed: Dec. 29 - Jan. 1.

#### Nagiso Town Museum (南木曾町博物館)

This museum incorporates the Tsumagoyado honjin (Tsumago Inn) Wakihonjin Okuya and History Museum, which opened in April 1995. Admission: ¥700. Open: 9:00–16:45. Closed: Dec.29-Jan.1

#### Hiking from Magome to Tsumago

The path between Magome and Tsumago is an ideal route to walk in Kiso if you have the time. The 3-hr. walk can be most enjoyable during the seasons of fresh verdure and autumnal tints.

In winter (Jan. & Feb.), snow is about half a meter deep, and hiking boots are required. Luggage carrying service is available daily from Jul. 20 thru Aug. 31, and on Sat., Sun. & national holidays during the periods of Mar. 21 thru Jul. 19 & Sep. 1 thru Nov. 23. Luggage is accepted at both Tourist Information Offices in Magome and Tsumago until 11:30 for morning delivery and until 13:00 for the afternoon. ¥500 per piece. There is a map on the 4/4 page.

#### Narai (奈良井)

Once called “Narai of a Thousand Houses,” it was the most prosperous post town in the valley. Designated as a Protected Area for the Preservation of Traditional Buildings, the town preserves the atmosphere of an old post town as well as Tsumago. The Narai Station, a small wooden structure, is unique, for it is kept up by the local senior citizens club instead of the railroad officials. Along the 1 km. long main street, there are five wells which, dating from the Edo Period, are still in use and appease the thirst of travelers.

Folkcrafts such as **Nurigushi** (lacquered combs) and **Magemono** (round containers made of cypress) are famous items from this town.

#### Kiso-Hirasawa (木曾平沢)

One station north of Narai, is noted for lacquer wares. **Kiso Lacquerware Museum** (木曾漆器館), displaying works of ancient to modern times, is 15 min. on foot from the station. Admission: ¥200. Open: 9:00–17:00 (–16:00 Dec.-Mar.). Closed: Mon. (open when Mon. falls on a national holiday and closed the following day.)

#### Yabuhara (藪原)

South of Narai, is known for wooden combs called Orokugushi. The process of making combs by hand can be observed at several workshops left in the town.

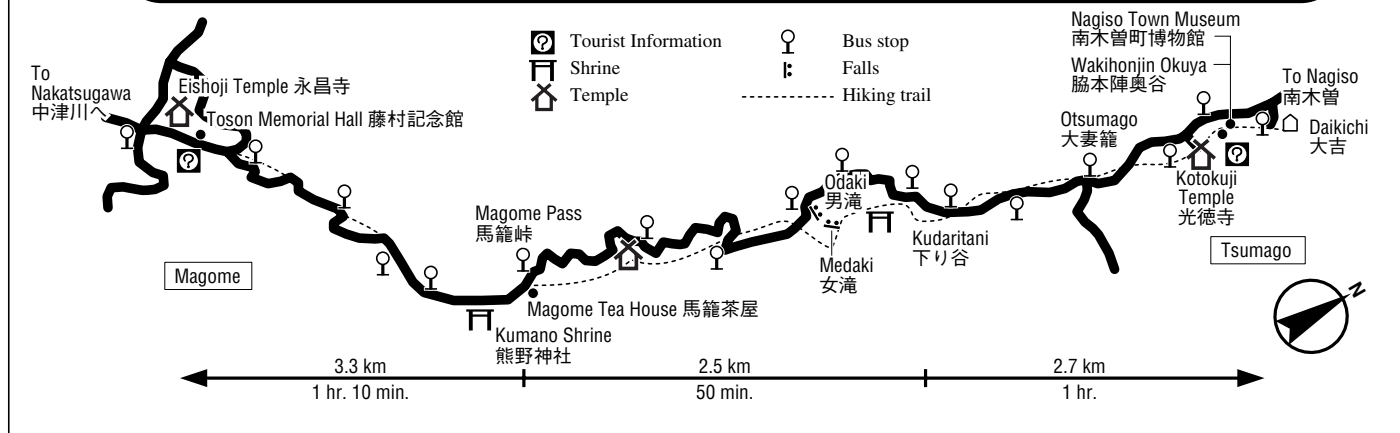
#### Accommodations:

Name of facilities	Tel.	Room rate (¥)	Name of facilities	Tel.	Room rate (¥)
<b>Magome</b>			<b>Narai</b>		
Ryokan Iwatake (R)	(0264)59-2201	¥	Aoki (M)	(0264)34-3781	¥
Iroribata (M)	(0264)59-2026	¥	Iseya (M)	(0264)34-3051	¥¥
Umenoya (M)	(0264)59-2132	¥	Echigoya (R)	(0264)34-3011	¥¥
Magomechaya (M)	(0264)59-2038	¥	Kato (M)	(0264)34-2625	¥¥
Tajimaya (M)	(0264)59-2048	¥	Shimada (M)	(0264)34-2678	¥¥
Shimoyanagiya (M)	(0264)59-2131	¥	Tsuchikawa (M)	(0264)34-3224	¥
Shirokiya (M)	(0264)59-2035	¥	Nagai (M)	(0264)34-2624	¥
<b>Tsumago</b>			Narai-so (M)	(0264)34-3660	¥¥
Fujiya (M)	(0246)57-3186	¥	Ikariya (M)	(0264)34-3202	¥
Okame (M)	(0246)57-3043	¥	<b>Kiso-Fukushima</b>		
Sakamoto (M)	(0246)57-3111	¥	Tsutaya Grand Hotel (R)	(0264)22-2010	¥¥
Shimosaga (M)	(0246)57-3124	¥	Iwaya (R)	(0264)22-2015	¥¥¥
Maruya (M)	(0246)57-3117	¥	Tsutaya (R)	(0264)22-2145	¥¥
Tsutamura (M)	(0246)57-3235	¥	Komanoyu (R)	(0264)23-2288	¥¥
Kameyama (M)	(0246)57-3187	¥	Sarashinaya (R)	(0264)22-2307	¥
Shimomura (M)	(0246)57-3158	¥	Moritomi Ryokan (R)	(0264)22-2303	¥¥
Koshinzuka (M)	(0246)57-3029	¥	Murachiya (R)	(0264)22-3186	¥
			Kiso Rojoan YH (YH)	(0264)23-7716	¥

Remarks : H = Hotel Rate for a twin room. ¥¥¥ more than 15,000 yen  
 M = Minshuku (family-run inn) Rate per person. ¥¥ 8,001 yen – 15,000 yen  
 R = Ryokan Rate per person. ¥ 8,000 yen or less  
 PE = People's Lodge Rate per person.  
 Y = Youth Hostel Rate per person.



# Hiking Course between Magome and Tsumago



**Welcome Inn Reservation Center (WIRC)** is here to help you book economical accommodations at participating inns throughout the country. Our participating establishments, called "Welcome Inns", comprise a range of accommodations from hotels, business hotels, Ryokan, minshuku, pensions and Shukubo (temple lodgings) to youth hostels. Most of them have guest rooms at rates which do not exceed ¥8,000 yen per night (excluding tax and service charges) for a single room.

### Reservation over the Internet

Visit our website at <http://www.itcj.jp> and apply through our system.

Application deadline – generally 5 days ahead of your check-in date

### Reservation at booking counters in Japan

To take advantage of our service, you must appear in person at any of the Welcome Inn reservation counters located at the Tourist Information Centers (at Narita International Airport and Kansai International Airport) and Kyoto Tourist Information (on the 9th Fl. of JR Kyoto Sta. Bldg.).

## Welcome Inn Reservation Center

c/o International Tourism Center of Japan

Kinseisha-Kanda Bldg. 3F, 3-15 Kanda-Nishikicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0054

Tel:03-3233-3303 Fax:03-3233-3305



## TOURIST INFORMATION

### Magome Tourist Information Center:

4300-1, Magome, Nakatsugawa City Gifu Pref.

(馬籠観光案内所)

Tel.(0264)59-2336

9:00–17:00. Closed: Dec. 29–Jan. 3. Reservations for inns are made here.

### Tsumago Tourist Information Office:

2159-2, Azuma, Nagiso-cho, Kiso-gun, Nagano Pref.

(妻籠観光案内所)

Tel.(0264)57-3123

8:30–17:00. Closed: Dec. 29–Jan. 3. Reservations for inns are made here.

### Narakawa Tourist Office:

Narai, Shiojiri City, Nagano Pref.

(楢川地区観光案内所)

Tel.(0264)34-3160

10:00–16:00 (Jan.–Mar.), 9:00–17:00 (Apr.–Dec.)

Closed: Mon. & Wed. in Jan., Feb. & Mar. Information of inns in Narai is available here, but no reservations are made.

Please note that only Japanese language is spoken on the telephone.

All information, including transportation schedules, fares, prices and accommodation charges, which is contained in this leaflet is based on data as of August 2006, and is subject to change without notice. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of all information, regrettably errors do occasionally occur. Therefore, you should check with organizations concerned for updated and accurate information on your chosen destination. JNTO shall not be liable for any loss or damage of whatever nature that may arise as a result, directly or indirectly, from the use of any of the information or material contained in this leaflet.