

PG-502

LAKE BIWA, OTSU and HIKONE



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

Tourist Information Center (TIC)

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Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0006

Tel. (03)3201-3331



"YOKOSO" means "welcome"

Lake Biwa (琵琶湖): The largest lake in Japan, occupies 1/6 of Shiga Pref. Lying 85.6 m above sea level, the lake has a circumference of 235.2 km, an area of 670.5 sq.km and a depth of 103.6 m at its deepest point. There are many attractive tourist spots and resort areas in the region surrounding Lake Biwa such as Otsu City, Hikone City, Biwako Valley, Mt. Hiei, Mt. Ibuki and Omi Maiko.

Otsu (大津): The capital of Shiga Pref. with a population of 331,000. Once Otsu was the capital of Japan for 5 years in the 7th century, and later became an important station of the Tokaido road famous as by the wood-block prints of Hiroshige Ando. It has since prospered having a key position in Japan's transportation networks.

Hikone (彦根): The largest town of the eastern shores of Lake Biwa with a population of 111,000. It is a castletown with one of the most beautiful castles in Japan.

Access:

To	From Tokyo	From Osaka	From Kyoto
Otsu	2 hrs. 20–25 min. by Tokaido Shinkansen "Nozomi" or "Hikari" to Kyoto, then 10 min. by JR Tokaido Line (every 10 min.) ¥12,900	40 min. by JR Tokaido Line ¥950	9 min. by JR Tokaido Line ¥190
Hikone	2 hrs. 30 min. – 3 hrs. 30 min. by Tokaido Shinkansen some "Hikari" or "Kodama" to Maibara, then 5 min. by JR Tokaido Line ¥12,060	1 hr. 17 min. by JR Tokaido Line ¥1,890	47 min. by JR Tokaido Line ¥1,110

Major Places To Go in Otsu:

① **Miidera (Onjoji Temple)** (三井寺{園城寺}): 10-min. walk from Miidera Sta. on Keihan Line. It was founded in 686 in memory of Emperor Kobun, elder son of Emperor Tenji. The Evening Bell of Miidera Temple is one of the well-known Omi Hakkei (Best Eight Views of Omi, Shiga Pref.). It is main temple of Tendaishu sect. Open 8:00–17:00 (every day year-round). Admission: ¥500.

Tomb of Ernest Francisco Fenollosa (1853–1908): An American art critic who contributed very much to preservation and restoration of Japanese traditional art. The tomb is in the cemetery of the **Homyoin Temple Garden** (法明院庭園) (20-min. walk from Miidera Temple and 10-min. walk from Bessho Sta. on the Keihan Line) which is a very quiet temple with a superb view of Lake Biwa. The garden is open 24 hours a day.

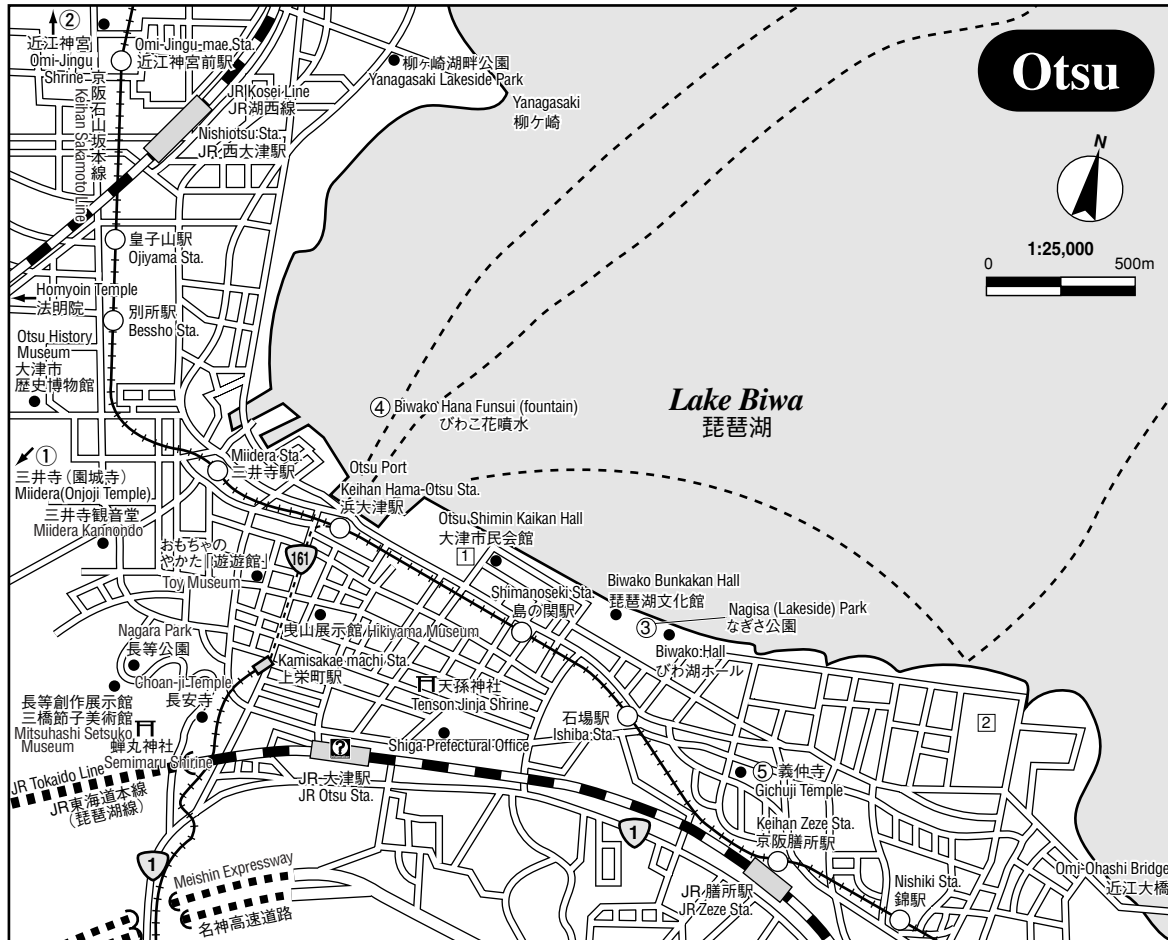
② **Omi Jingu Shrine** (近江神宮): 10-min. walk from Omi Jingu-mae Sta. on Keihan Line. Omi Jingu Shrine was established in 1940 to enshrine Emperor Tenji. Rokoku-sai, a Water Clock Festival held in honor of the first water clock in Japan, was established by Emperor Tenji on Jun. 10. **Clock Museum** (近江神宮時計博物館), Open: 9:00–16:30. Admission: ¥300.

③ **Nagisa (Lakeside) Park** (なぎさ公園): It is located just beside Lake Biwa in the center of Otsu. The length of the park is about 5 km. 10-min. walk from JR Otsu Sta.

④ **Biwako Hana Funsui (fountain)** (びわこ花噴水): The gateway to sightseeing on Lake Biwa, this fountain (having a length of 440 m) is one of the longest fountains in the world. At night its shape and color changes regularly as it is controlled by a computer. White, orange, and green lights show the spray of the water beautifully. 3 min. walk for Keihan Hama Otsu Sta.

⑤ **Gichuji Temple** (義仲寺): 5-min. walk from Zeze Sta. on JR Line. A small temple founded in the 16th Century, and dedicated to Kiso Yoshinaka, a general of the Minamoto clan who was killed in battle near here. The tomb of Matsuo Basho, the great haiku poet is in this temple. Basho's haiku poetry is carved on many of the monuments on the temple grounds. Open: 9:00–17:00 (9:00–16:00 in Nov.–Feb.). Closed: Mon. (except national holidays) Admission: ¥200.

⑥ **Hiyoshi Taisha Shrine** (日吉大社): 10-min. walk from Sakamoto Sta. on Keihan Line. Hiyoshi Taisha Shrine enshrines the deities believed to protect Mt. Hiei. The vermilion-painted main edifices (National Treasure) which stand out against the foliage of the grounds, were built in 1586. Sannosai Festival is the main event of this shrine in which Mikoshi (portable shrine) fighting is held on Apr. 13 and Mikoshi procession by boat on Apr. 14. Open: 8:30–16:30 (every day year-round). Admission: ¥300.



①-② correspond to those in the Accommodations list on page 3/5.
①-⑤ correspond to those on page 1/5 & 2/5.

⑦ **Enryakuji Temple (延暦寺)**: 10-min. walk from Enryakuji Sta. of Sakamoto Cablecar Line (11 min. from Sakamoto Sta. of the same line, which is again a 5-min. walk from Sakamoto Sta. of the Keihan Line) or 1 hr. 10 min. by Keihan Bus and Kyoto Bus from JR Kyoto Sta. Located near the summit of Mt. Hiei, Enryakuji Temple was founded in 788 by the Buddhist Priest Saicho (Dengyo Daishi, the founder of Tendai Sect, 767-822) Kompon-Chudo (Central Hall, National Treasure), Kaidan-In (Ordination Hall) and the Mausoleum of Dengyo Daishi are the main places to see in the Toto area of the temple. Open 9:00-16:00 (Dec.-Feb.); 8:30-16:30 (Mar.-Nov.) (every day year-round). Admission: ¥550. **Treasure House (国宝殿)**, Admission: ¥450.

⑧ **Ishiyamadera Temple (石山寺)**: 10-min. walk from Ishiyamadera Sta. on Keihan Line. This Shingon Sect temple was founded in the 8th Century. by the priest Roben. The main sights of the temple are the Sanmon Gate, the Tahoto Pagoda, the Belfry, the Hondo (Main Hall) and the adjoining Room of Genji, where Murasaki Shikibu created the plot of the Tale of Genji, a famous court novel of the Heian Period. Open: 8:00-16:30. Admission: ¥500.

Cruise on Lake Biwa

Lake cruise by the Michigan and the Bianca

The Michigan, an American Mississippi River paddle wheel boat running with the cooperation of the Univ. of Michigan. 1 & 1/2 hr. boat trips leave Otsu Port at 9:50, 11:45, 13:40. 1hr.boat trips leave 15:30, 16:45. Also available are Michigan Show Boat in the evenings and the 4-hour boat trip by the Bianca on weekends (Apr. 29-Dec. 2). For information and reservations, contact Biwako Kisen Boat Co. Tel.(077)524-5000.

Sightseeing Boat

A few sightseeing boat tours departing from Otsu Port and visiting lakeshore places of interest are available.

Major Places To Go in Hikone:

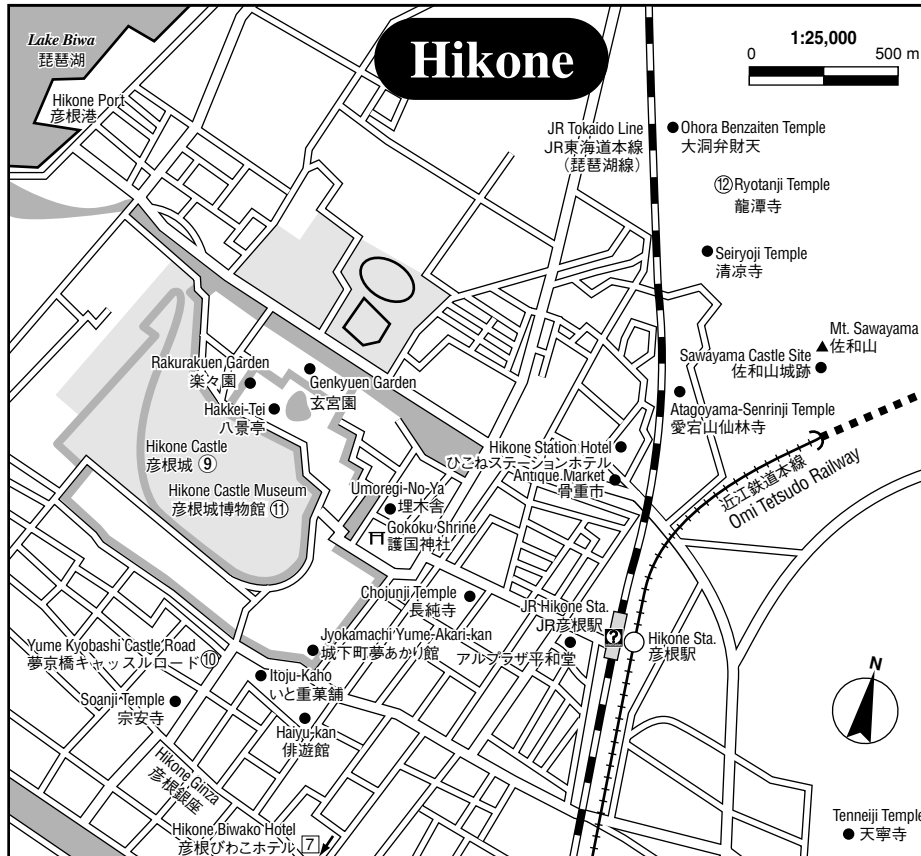
⑨ **Hikone Castle (彦根城)**: 10-min. walk from Hikone Sta. on JR Line. Naokatsu li began construction of this castle in 1603 completing it in 1622. Standing upon Konkizan hill and surrounded by forest, Hikone Castle is considered, together with Himeji, to be one of the most beautiful castles in Japan. There is also a splendid view of Lake Biwa from the 3rd story of the donjon of this castle. Incidentally, Naosuke li, a descendant of Naokatsu, was an important minister of the Tokugawa Shogunate and played an important role in opening Japan at the end of the Edo Period. Open 8:30-17:00 (every day year-round). Admission: ¥500 including the admission for **Genkyuen Garden (玄宮園)**.

⑩ **Yume Kyobashi Castle Road (夢京橋キャスルロード)**: From Kyobashi Bridge built across the outer moat of the Castle, the City's 350 meter long main street stretches southward-this is the area called Yume-kyobashi Castle Road. Arts and crafts shops, tea houses, restaurants, and boutiques, as well as private houses, are refurbished in a unified color of white, black, brown, and gray, together creating the atmosphere of merchants' houses of the Edo Period. Visitors are entertained by unique presentations at each shop as they walk along the road, and are reminded of past times. With the old merchant town beautifully arranged in a modern style, Yume kyobashi Castle Road has become another tourist favorite of Hikone City.

⑪ **Hikone Castle Museum** (彦根城博物館): Located by the main gate of the castle, the museum exhibits treasures from the li family collection such as armor, swords, calligraphy, Noh costumes and pottery. This museum also includes an exhibit of the Hikone Byobu (folding screens) which were painted by a member of the Kano school. Open: daily (except Dec. 25–31), 8:30–17:00. Admission: ¥500.

⑫ **Ryotanji Temple** (龍潭寺): 20-min. walk from Hikone Sta. on JR Tokaido Line. Ryotanji Temple is a Rinsai Sect Zen Temple founded in 1617 by Naotaka li. This temple contains a dry landscape garden of white sand and 48 stones. Open: daily, 9:00–16:30. Closed: Aug. 15, Dec. 22-27 Admission: ¥400.

⑬ **Chikubushima Island** (竹生島): Circumference 2 km and area 0.14 km². Tsukubusuma Shrine and Hohonji Temple are the main attractions of this island. Hohonji Temple features the Chikubushima Kannon and is famous as the 30th temple of the Kannon Temple Pilgrimage. Oumi Marine. Co. Ltd operates boat from Hikone Port, which leaves at 9:30, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 13:30 and 14:30 every day from Mar. 1–Nov. 30, takes 35 min. and costs ¥3,300 for round trip. A boat for Chikubushima Island also leaves from Omi Imazu and Nagahama. Admission to the island: ¥400.



⑦ corresponds to those in the Accommodations list on page 3/5.
⑨–⑫ correspond to those on page 2/5 & 3/5.

Accommodations:

Numbers ①–⑦ correspond to those on the map page 2/5 & 3/5.

Name of facilities	Tel.	Fax	Room rate (¥)	Name of facilities	Tel.	Fax	Room rate (¥)
Otsu:				Hikone:			
① Biwako Hotel (H)	(077)524-7111	(077)524-1384	¥¥¥	⑥ Hikone Prince Hotel (H)	(0749)26-1111	-	¥¥¥
② Otsu Prince Hotel (H)	(077)521-1111	(077)521-1110	¥¥¥	⑦ Hikone Biwako Hotel (H)	(0749)24-8000	(0749)24-8050	¥¥
③ View Lodge Biwa (PL)	(077)572-1317	(077)572-3370	¥				
④ Yumotokan (R)	(077)579-1111	(077)578-1082	¥¥¥				
⑤ Ryokan Tsukinoya (R) <u>W</u>	(077)537-1058	(077)533-3551	¥¥				

Remarks: Standard rates are quoted.

Accommodation rates are due to change by season or days. Please check the correct rates before you visit.

- H = Hotel
 - R = Ryokan
 - PL = People's Lodge (Kokumin Shukusha)
 - W = **Welcome Inn** member
 - ¥¥¥ more than 15,000 yen
 - ¥¥ 8,001 yen – 15,000 yen
 - ¥ 8000 yen or less
- Rate for a twin room.
Rate per person.
Rate per person.

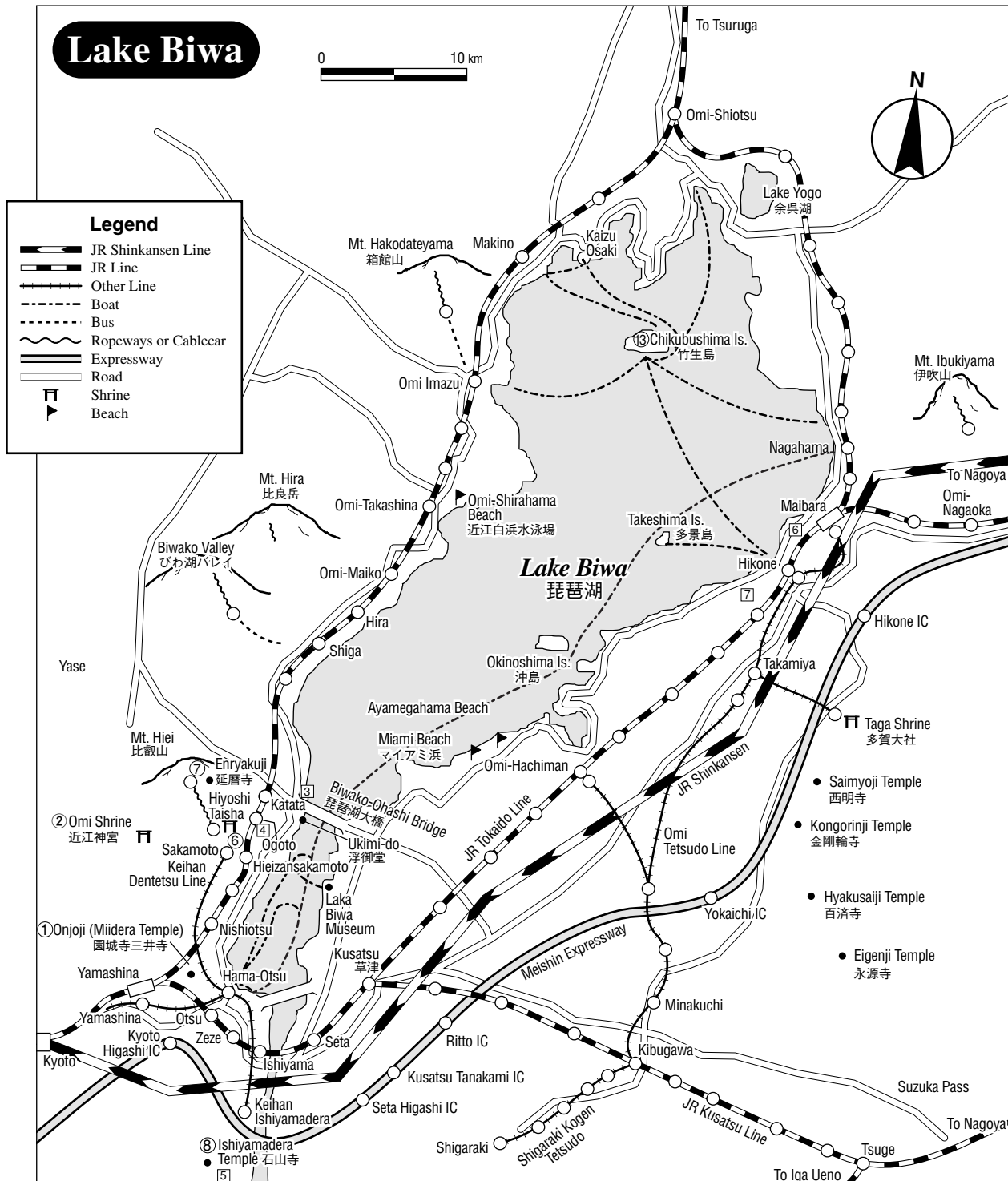
Note: The Welcome Inns provide single room at 8,000 yen or less.

Annual Events:

Otsu Matsuri Festival (大津祭): Every year in Oct., on the two days preceding Health-Sports Day (national holiday). A big festival is held in the city's old streets. It began about 350 years ago and is similar to a procession of floats used in the Gion Festival in Kyoto. On festival eve, many floats are decorated with red lanterns. And the next day, thirteen floats decorated with gorgeous Gobelin tapestries are pulled around town. The floats are designated as Important Cultural Properties. Don't miss seeing the unique mechanical marionettes on the floats. 5-min. walk from JR Otsu Sta. (Parade takes place from 9:30-17:30 on the second day.)

Fireworks at Lake Biwa (びわ湖花火大会): One of the largest fireworks shows in the Kansai region, held on Aug. 8, starts at 19:30. The fireworks can be seen best from Hama-Otsu.

Hikonejo Matsuri (彦根城まつり): Procession of children dressed in the traditional costume of feudal lords on Oct. 1-Nov. 5.



Number [3]-[7] correspond to those in the Accommodations list on page 3/5.
 Number [1]-[2], [6]-[8], [13] correspond to those on page 1/5 - 3/5.



TOURIST INFORMATION

(Visit Japan Information Network)

Otsu City Tourist Information Office:

JR Otsu Station, 1-3, Kasuga-cho, Otsu City, Shiga Pref.

8:40 – 17:25; Closed : Dec.29 – Jan.3 Tel. (077)522-3830

Hikone City Tourist Information Office:

JR Hikone Station, 40-7, Nanko, Furusawa-cho, Hikone City, Shiga Pref.

Tel. (0749)22-2954

9:00 – 17:30 ; Closed : Dec.29 – 31



Goodwill Guide Groups offer tourists from overseas local tours guided in English or other languages. The guides are registered with JNTO and display the badge shown. As they are volunteers, there is no charge for their service. You are only expected to pay for their transportation, admission to tourist facilities if you visit any and their meals if you eat with them.

JNTO Website

www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/essential/guideservice.html



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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

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