

Stories of People Living Alongside a Volcano

ASO



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Aso
UNESCO
Global Geopark



English version



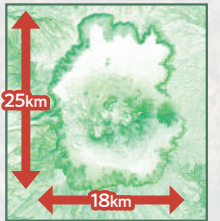
View of the Five Mountains of Aso from Daikanbo



Crater at Mt. Nakadake

One of the world's largest calderas

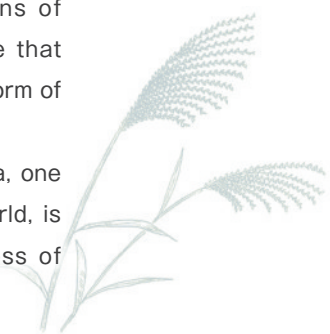
Volcanic activity at Aso is believed to have begun around 270,000 years ago. Since then, four major eruptions have occurred, creating a pyroclastic plateau. This was followed by the ground collapsing to form the vast Aso Caldera.



What we saw in the beautiful landscape of Aso was the very life of people who live alongside the volcano and protect the grasslands.

Aso Gogaku (the Five Mountains of Aso), a beautiful mountain range that has been likened to the reclining form of Buddha.

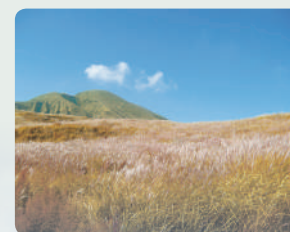
The surrounding Aso Caldera area, one of the largest calderas in the world, is home to an unparalleled richness of culture and people's daily lives.



Nabegataki Falls



Shirakawa Spring Source



Pampas grass field



Rice terraces



Hoarfrost (Mt. Nekodake)



Akaushi beef cattle grazing



Open burning of the fields

Landscapes that live on with myths

As myth has it, a god kicked the edge of the caldera lake in Aso that was filled with water causing it to flow out and create a fresh and verdant land. When the rice planting season begins in May each year, the rich soil of the caldera is filled with water that looks like a mirror over the rice fields. Cattle can be seen grazing leisurely in the surrounding grasslands. In the fall, fields of pampas grass spread all over the area, in the winter, hoarfrost clings to foliage and frozen waterfalls, and in the spring, the grasslands regenerate once again with the flames of open burning.



Kyushu azalea (Mt. Takadake)



Cosmos field (Mt. Tawarayama)



Rice field and Mt. Aso

The Aso region was designated as the Aso UNESCO Global Geopark as it provides the unique opportunity to experience coexistence between nature and people. The activities of people uninterrupted while living in a volcanic area, the rural landscape, beliefs, and food culture can all be felt everywhere against the backdrop of the great nature. Like water gushing from a natural spring, the more you learn about Aso, the deeper you get. That is the charm of Aso.

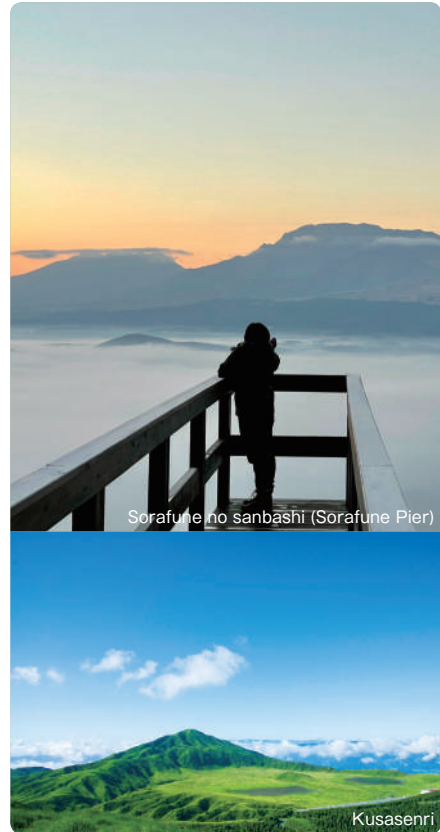


Pickled wild vegetables



Nakae Iwato Kagura (sacred Shinto music and dance)

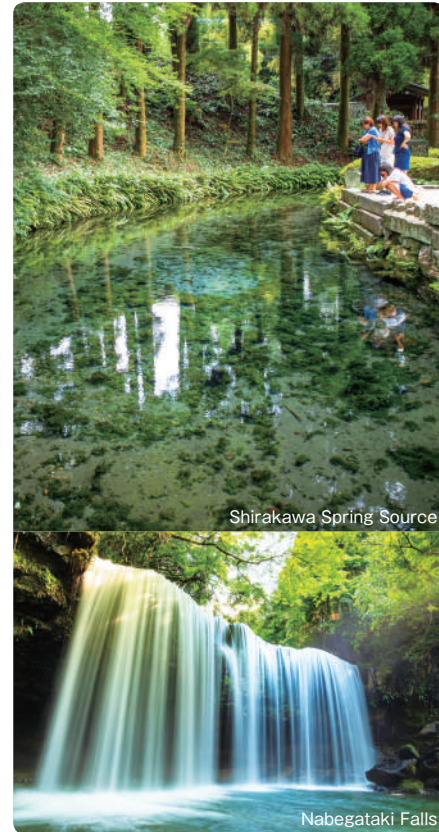
Must-do activities are organized into five themes for visitors to get the most out of their visit to Aso, one of the world's largest calderas.



Theme 01

History and landscapes

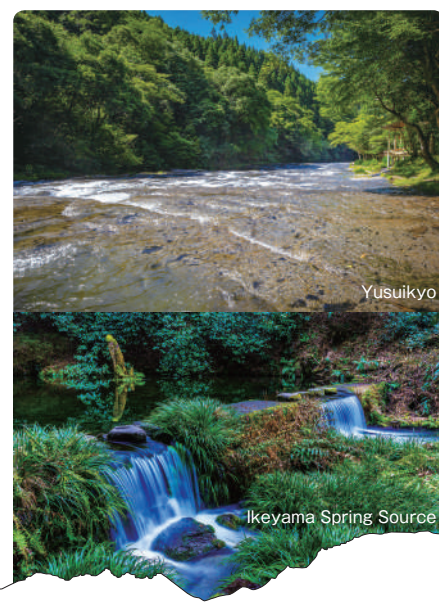
The Aso Caldera and its surrounding areas have developed their own unique culture and customs through relationship with the volcano. The area boasts magnificent mountain scenery, lush green grasslands and rural landscapes, and religious beliefs that have continued since the time of folklore.



Theme 02

Getting close to water

The area is a treasure trove of natural spring water nurtured by the Aso Caldera. The vast amount of spring water gushing from its sources and the scenery of limpid and beautiful waterfalls and streams seem to quench even the spiritual thirst of the onlookers.



Theme 03

Soaking in hot springs

Similar to spring water, the area's geothermal hot springs are one of the greatest blessings of Mount Aso as an active volcano. After experiencing the natural beauty of Aso, a relaxing soak in a hot spring bath will soothe your body and soul, creating a moment of pure bliss.



Theme 04

Culinary experience

Aso's abundant blessings can also be found in its food. High quality Akaushi beef grazed on the vast grasslands, buckwheat noodles made with clean spring water, and dengaku, a simple yet delicious dish made with locally grown ingredients, are unique culinary delights only found in Aso.



Theme 05

Physical activities

The best way to fully enjoy the spectacular scenery provided by one of the world's largest calderas is to experience it firsthand. Try an exciting array of adventures, from trekking and cycling to paragliding and hot-air ballooning.



Mt. Nakadake Trekking

Take in the raw landscape of the crater emitting volcanic gases from the summit of Mt. Nakadake.

Hot air balloon experience

Soar into the sky for an exhilarating aerial walk. The unobstructed panoramic views of Aso from a height of about 40 meters will be a memory of a lifetime.

Strawberry picking

Eat fresh grown strawberries in Aso right in the field.

Cycling

Ride a bicycle along the road down 1,000 meters in elevation from Mount Aso while enjoying amazing views.



Ranch experience

Experience nature in Aso while visiting farm animals and trying your hand at milking a cow.

Paraglider

Glide through the sky of Aso as if you were a bird. Feel the magnificence of nature with your whole body.

Aso Sightseeing Map

The Aso region, centered on the Aso Caldera, consists of seven municipalities from north to south: Oguni Town, Minamioguni Town, Ubuyama Village, Aso City, Nishihara Village, Minamiaso Village, and Takamori Town.

Experience the grandeur of nature at Nakadake crater, which is the center of Mt. Aso, Kusasenrigahama with its wide expanse of grasslands, and Daikanbo peak overlooking the caldera. You can also visit the many hot springs and water sources and enjoy a blissful relaxation. Or, indulge your taste buds in Aso's famous delicacies such as dengaku, buckwheat noodles, and Aka beef.

Enjoy nature's bounty and rich cultural heritage of Aso found in each area within the region.



Tsuetate Onsen



Nabegataki Falls



Waita Onsen



Kurokawa Onsen



Oshitoishi



Ubuyama Farm



Jigoku Onsen
Tarutama Onsen



Daikanbo



Minami-Aso Railway



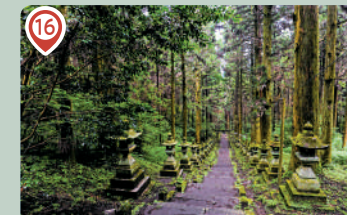
Aso Shrine



Shirakawa Spring
Source



Kusasenri



Kamishikimi
Kumanoimasu Shrine



Crater at Mt. Nakadake



Takamori Yusui
Tunnel Park



Aso Farm Land



Shiraito Falls

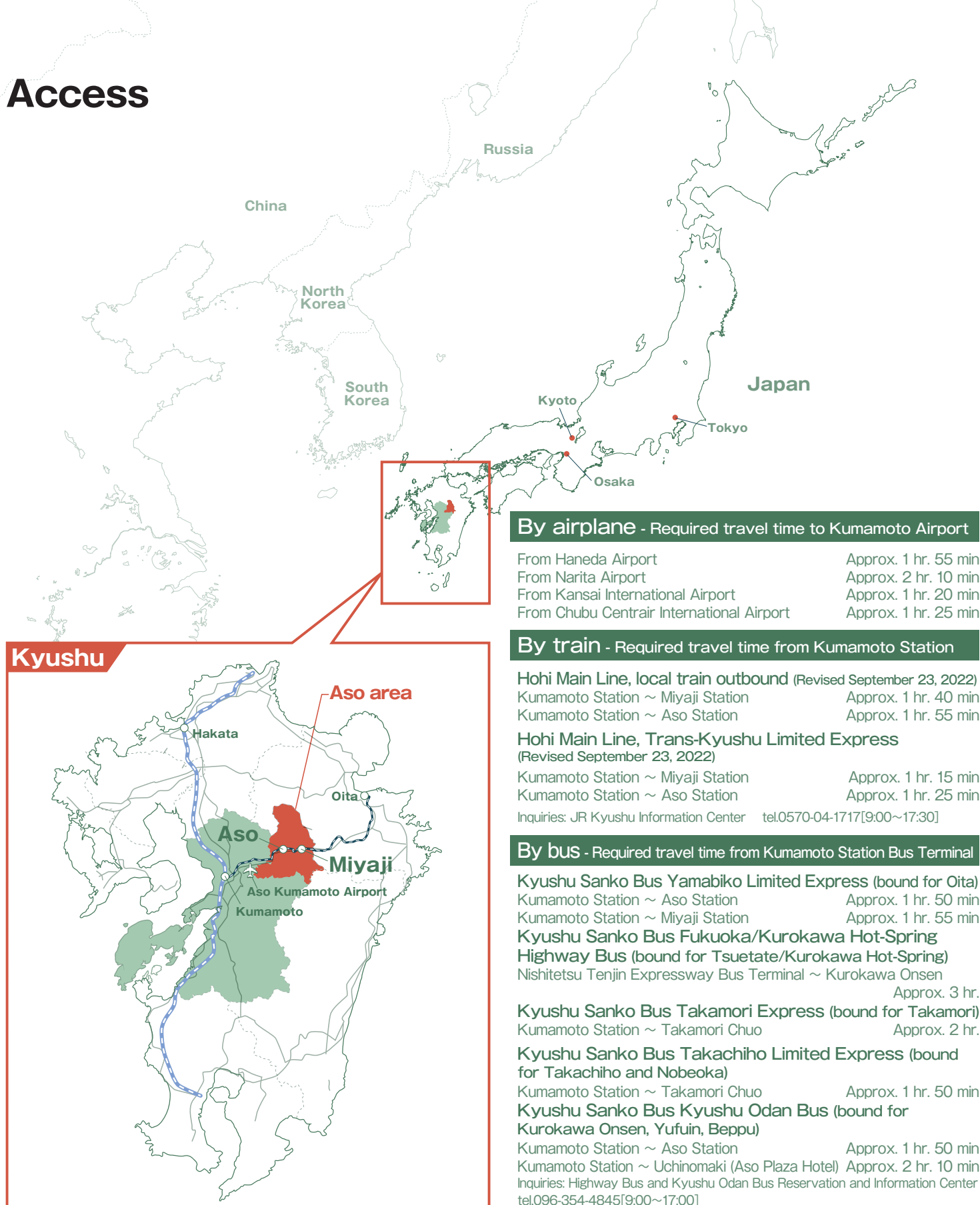


Shin-Aso Ohashi Bridge



Rakunoh Mother's -
Aso Milk Farm

Access



By airplane - Required travel time to Kumamoto Airport

From Haneda Airport	Approx. 1 hr. 55 min
From Narita Airport	Approx. 2 hr. 10 min
From Kansai International Airport	Approx. 1 hr. 20 min
From Chubu Centrair International Airport	Approx. 1 hr. 25 min

By train - Required travel time from Kumamoto Station

Hohi Main Line, local train outbound (Revised September 23, 2022)	
Kumamoto Station ~ Miyaji Station	Approx. 1 hr. 40 min
Kumamoto Station ~ Aso Station	Approx. 1 hr. 55 min

Hohi Main Line, Trans-Kyushu Limited Express (Revised September 23, 2022)	
Kumamoto Station ~ Miyaji Station	Approx. 1 hr. 15 min
Kumamoto Station ~ Aso Station	Approx. 1 hr. 25 min
Inquiries: JR Kyushu Information Center tel.0570-04-1717[9:00~17:30]	

By bus - Required travel time from Kumamoto Station Bus Terminal

Kyushu Sanko Bus Yamabiko Limited Express (bound for Oita)	
Kumamoto Station ~ Aso Station	Approx. 1 hr. 50 min
Kumamoto Station ~ Miyaji Station	Approx. 1 hr. 55 min
Kyushu Sanko Bus Fukuoka/Kurokawa Hot-Spring Highway Bus (bound for Tsuetate/Kurokawa Hot-Spring)	
Nishitetsu Tenjin Expressway Bus Terminal ~ Kurokawa Onsen	Approx. 3 hr.
Kyushu Sanko Bus Takamori Express (bound for Takamori)	
Kumamoto Station ~ Takamori Chuo	Approx. 2 hr.
Kyushu Sanko Bus Takachiho Limited Express (bound for Takachiho and Nobeoka)	
Kumamoto Station ~ Takamori Chuo	Approx. 1 hr. 50 min
Kyushu Sanko Bus Kyushu Odan Bus (bound for Kurokawa Onsen, Yufuin, Beppu)	
Kumamoto Station ~ Aso Station	Approx. 1 hr. 50 min
Kumamoto Station ~ Uchinomaki (Aso Plaza Hotel)	Approx. 2 hr. 10 min
Inquiries: Highway Bus and Kyushu Odan Bus Reservation and Information Center tel.096-354-4845[9:00~17:00]	

Aso Sightseeing Information

Aso Information Center
tel. 0967-34-1600

781 Ozato, Aso City, Kumamoto Prefecture
E-mail: aso-info@aso.ne.jp
Hours of operation/9:00~18:00
Closure/none Parking/available
Language/Japanese

Kumamoto Tourism Website
[OFFICIAL KUMAMOTO
TOURISM GUIDE]
<https://kumamoto.guide/>



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