

# Noshiro City

Sightseeing Restaurant Guide

#Noshiro 



Noshiro City, Akita Prefecture, Japan

# Festival

# Wonderful Noshiro

*Events held in Noshiro harmonize classic Japanese traditions with modern taste. Their photogenic beauty, excitement, and impact will make you lose track of time as they illuminate the Noshiro cityscape.*

## Yomemi Festival

Hiyoshi Shrine's Yomemi Festival is held every year on the day before Naka-nosaru in late May (traditionally the fourth month of the lunar calendar). During the festival, a number of couples who married in the past year gather in the shrine precincts wearing traditional Japanese wedding attire. Feast your eyes on the gorgeous parade of couples as they march along the shrine's approach that extends from the *torii* gate up to the pavilion.

The dress worn by the bride is called *uchikake* which is characterized by its colorful, patterned design. Be sure to turn your camera to the beautiful procession of elegant brides wearing *uchikake* and handsome grooms within the precincts surrounded by fresh green leaves.

Hiyoshi Shrine is said to bring luck in romance. The Yomemi Festival is believed to have started when a married couple revisited the shrine to give thanks for their good match and to pray for everlasting happiness. In recent years, single men and women who wish for a happy marriage have started to participate in the festival.

## Noshiro Minato Festival Fireworks

As you walk toward the sea from central Noshiro, you will find multiple rows of seats on the corner of the port located at the

mouth of Yoneshiro River. This is where many spectators eagerly wait for the festival fireworks to be launched. On the evening of the Noshiro Minato Festival, the starmine fireworks are shot in unison with the MC's voice and music. You will forget to blink as hundreds of fireworks are launched one after another from the river mouth to the ocean creating a panoramic sea of lights so bright it is as if they are diving straight into your eyes. A type of firework called the *sanjaku-dama*, only seen in the Tohoku region of Japan, paints a gigantic flower pattern over the entire canvas of the night sky. Everyone in the audience will be enraptured by the symphony of sound and light, losing their sense of time.

The Noshiro Minato Festival Fireworks is held in late July to enliven the area just before the height of summer.

## Tenku no Fuyajo

Noshiro Tanabata Tenku no Fuyajo, meaning "sky castles that never sleep," is one of the most famous festivals of Noshiro.

A pair of vividly colored lanterns breaks through the pitch-black night of Noshiro City. Both lanterns are built to resemble a Japanese castle with fish-shaped *shachihoko* ornaments at both ends of roof ridges. Each lantern boasts an amazing



height of 17.6 m (Karoku) and 24.1 m (Chikasue). Chikasue is the tallest castle-shaped lantern in Japan. The towering height of the lanterns reaches the clouds, and their brilliant lights drive away the darkness making them literally the castles in the sky that never sleep. You will be further amazed by the fact that each lantern weighs about 25 tons and that each one is pulled by hand.

The two giant lanterns approach the crowd in tune with the rhythm of the *ha-yashi* music, drums and bells, and the chants and excitement of the pullers. The spectacle is sure to leave you spellbound as the vibrant colors of the lanterns mesmerize all in attendance.

According to legend, the Noshiro Tanabata Festival started around 1,300 years ago when lanterns were released into the river at night to lure out enemy forces during a battle (although there are various other theories). Until recently, all lanterns only had a height of about 9 m, but based on evidence stating there was a 17.6-m tall lantern 100 years ago, some local



volunteers developed the giant Karoku lantern in 2013. In recent years, the Tenku no Fuyajo lanterns have paraded through the city on August 3 and 4 during the traditional Noshiro Tanabata Festival held in early August.

## Takaiwa Shrine Hadaka-Mairi

The Takaiwa Shrine Hadaka-Mairi (naked pilgrimage) is held in mid-February (traditionally on the 15th day of the first month of the lunar calendar). This festival is believed to have started with a young man coming to the shrine to pray for good luck on the battlefield before taking a test to join the military.

The region gets very cold in February as the average temperature falls below 5°C during the day before falling below 0°C at night. Despite such cold weather, young men wearing a single piece of loincloth walk down the moonlit path up to the Fujikoto River. As they enter the river and

stand knee-deep in water, they use a pail to pour the water on their heads to cleanse themselves while chanting, “*Soiya! Yoisho!*” Then, these young men show off their endurance by dashing up the snowy paths of Mt. Takaiwa for about 4 km to the Takaiwa Shrine.

Another event called Takaiwa-san Bantouya is held during Hadaka-Mairi. During this event, snow lanterns are lit from the shrine’s approach up to the mountain surface. The glow of the snowy, moonlit nightscape covered with lanterns is stunningly mystical.



## Information

**A**  
Hiyoshi Shrine Naka-no-saru  
Yomemi Festival  
Date: Late May

**B**  
Noshiro Tanabata Tenku no  
Fuyajo  
Date: August 3 and 4  
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**C**  
Noshiro Minato Festival  
Fireworks  
Date: Late July  
7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**D**  
Takaiwa Shrine Hadaka-Mairi  
Date: Mid-February



# A special night in Noshiro



Sakedoko Berabo

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*In the city of Noshiro, bar windows light up as soon as the sun sets in the Sea of Japan. Indulge yourself with endless barhopping and lose track of time enjoying genuine hospitality that makes you feel at home.*

**T**he origin of the Japanese *izakaya* bar culture dates to the Edo period. Liquor shops that sold sake in bulk started to allow customers to drink within the premises in addition to offering some snacks. This practice of staying at the liquor shop to drink sake was called *izake* which is believed to be the origin of the word *izakaya*.

Noshiro is filled with this *izakaya* culture. As you enter the bar invited by the warm light leaking through the store window, joyous laughter and tantalizing smells set the stage for the special night in Noshiro that awaits you.

## **Sakedoko Berabo**

This *izakaya* was named after Noshiro's traditional kite called the

*berabo-dako*. You can find it by looking for a sign with a *berabo-dako* drawn on it which can be seen from the roadside. As you walk through the door, you will find a long counter and a small room behind it. The room is equipped with an *irori* hearth which can be lit to keep you warm while you enjoy your meal.

The bar serves *damako-nabe*, a hot pot dish native to Akita Prefecture with a taste that is on par with the more well-known *kiritampo-nabe* hot pot dish also native to the region. The owner also refers to it as *damakomoji-nabe* in the local accent. Rice dumplings (*damako*) are thrown into a soup flavored with soy sauce mixed with chicken broth and the fragrant smell of Japanese parsley. Other ingredients such as *maitake* mushrooms and Akita's locally grown *junsai* water shield plants are also used. To finish off the meal, Noshiro's famous Noshiro *udon* noodles are put into the soup. Enjoy these chewy noodles soaked with the flavor of the soup.

The bar offers a wide variety of Japanese sake including brands from the local Kikusui Sake Brewery as well as other rare sake from Akita Prefecture and other areas of the country. How about indulging yourself with an excellent meal and tasty sake while having a nice chat with the friendly bar owner?

## Noshiro's Specialty Pork Cartilage

This is one of the most famous *B-kyu gurume* (B-class gourmet cuisine) in Noshiro. The Japanese phrase "*B-kyu gurume*" refers to a range of local specialties that is eaten by the locals on a regular basis. Pork cartilage was first offered at a local bar around 1965, but until then, it was normally just thrown away. A chef at this bar served pork cartilage to customers after

chopping and seasoning it with salt and pepper before grilling it. Its delicious flavor became widely known among the regulars, and the specialty is now often enjoyed by locals as one of the classic dishes of Noshiro. The firm and crunchy texture and the spicy taste of salt and pepper will make you eat and drink beer endlessly. As this dish is offered at many *izakaya* in Noshiro, it may be interesting to compare the different tastes.

## Yakitori and draft Hoppy

One of the most classic combinations in Japanese *izakaya* menus is *yakitori* (grilled chicken skewers) and beer. However, here in Noshiro, there is a slightly different variant loved by local people: *yakitori* and Hoppy.

Have you heard of this drink called Hoppy? Hoppy was first sold in Tokyo in 1948, and it is considered to be one of the first beer-flavored drinks. Hoppy's alcohol content is low at about 0.8%, so in Japan, it is normally enjoyed by mixing it with *shochu*. When Hoppy was developed immediately after World War II, beer was a luxury product inaccessible to ordinary people. During that time, Hoppy achieved explosive success as it could be bought at a low cost which enabled the people to casually enjoy the beer-like taste.

Hoppy is generally distributed in bottles, but at this *izakaya* called Nonki, you can enjoy a draft Hoppy that is directly poured from the tap into your mug. This treat is only available at stores that meet the strict standards of precise temperature control and sanitary management of the servers. The drink served in Noshiro is



A

called "Hokugen no Nama Hoppy," and it is loved by customers who visit local *izakaya*.

Nonki also offers a wide range of *yakitori* dishes including popular chicken parts as well as other rare parts that are seldomly served at other bars. We highly recommend that you try them along with a draft Hoppy poured into a chilled glass before your eyes.

The waterfront city of Noshiro is famous for its abundant seafood, but it is also renowned for the quality horse meat, generally enjoyed raw in *sashimi* slices, from horses raised in the rich natural environment at the foot of Shirakami-Sanchi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Immerse yourself in a long special night of endless bar crawling.

## Information

**A**  
Pork cartilage  
Restaurant Yamakyu  
Tel: 0185-54-8611  
Lunch: 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Dinner: 3:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.  
Closed: Sundays and national holidays

**B**  
*Damako-nabe*  
Sakedoko Berabo  
Tel: 0185-54-4066  
Hours: 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.  
(last order: 10:30 p.m.)  
Closed: Mondays

**C**  
*Yakitori* and draft Hoppy  
Nonki  
Tel: 0185-54-4461  
Hours: 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
Closed: Sundays and Mondays

**D**  
Assorted *sashimi*  
Sakagura Senryo  
Tel: 0185-52-5586  
Hours: 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
Closed: Sundays



B

C

D

# Enjoy the wonderful taste



*Noshiro also has a number of gourmet foods that you should definitely try during the day. Enjoy a wide range of delicious lunch options and sweets served at both established restaurants and newly opened cafés.*

*This section introduces shops that will make you want to visit even from far away as they offer exclusive menu items based on local specialties as well as photogenic dishes and familiar tastes which have been popular over many years.*

## “Noshiro has a diverse food culture.”

How do you decide what to eat for lunch? Your decision may change depending on the moment, your feelings, or the temperature or weather on that specific day. Whatever you decide, Noshiro has a wide variety of lunch destinations that can cater to your different needs.

One of the most representative Japanese foods is sushi which is enjoyed not only within Japan but also around the world. Be sure to delight your taste buds with sushi from Noshiro which borders the Sea of Japan and is blessed with an abundance of fresh seafood.

Miki-zushi is an established local sushi restaurant, and many Japanese customers visit the restaurant from far away lured by its quality sushi and the owner's hospitable personality. The carefully hand-rolled sushi has a vibrant appearance, and when you

toss it into your mouth, it provides a moment of bliss on your tongue as the savory taste covers your palate. In addition to the normal *nigiri* sushi, another popular choice is *bara-chirashi*, vinegared rice with diced toppings.

Although ramen is originally a Chinese noodle dish, it became one of the most popular Japanese food after undergoing a uniquely Japanese transformation. The combination of noodles, soup, and the other ingredients that complete in a single bowl of ramen satisfy customers in a short period of time. Each bowl of ramen is the combination of its unique elements. The highlight of ramen served at Menshiro is the abundant use of Shirakami-negi produced in Noshiro. Shirakami-negi is Noshiro's original brand of Japanese leek with a top-notch appearance, texture, and



taste. The thick and soft leek has a crunchy texture when eaten raw, and it melts in your mouth with a sweet flavor when cooked. Shirakami-negi is shipped to many locations inside and outside Akita Prefecture, and it is already a well-established brand. The Shirakami-negi Bijin Miso Ramen shown in the photo is topped with thin strips of Shirakami-negi. The leek is also meticulously kneaded into the dough of the homemade noodles. This ramen allows you to fully enjoy the texture and flavor of Noshiro's leeks.



One of the most famous festivals in Noshiro is Tenku no Fuyajo. The tallest castle lanterns in Japan parading through the city after dark are beautiful and overwhelming at the same time. At the sushi restaurant Owariya, you can have the pleasure of seeing the castles even during lunch time as it offers a lunch menu option called the *Tendon* no Fuyajo, named after the festival. *Tendon* is a bowl of rice topped with *tempura*, seasoned with *tent-suyu* dipping sauce. The name *Tendon* no Fuyajo is well-deserved because it perfectly recreates the appearance of the castle lanterns by using two towering pieces of shrimp supported by pieces of vegetable and mushroom *tempura*. The assortment of *tempura* with sweet dipping sauce perfectly melds with the chewy texture of the steamed rice below.

During summers in Akita Prefecture, sherbet ice cream called *baba-hera* is frequently sold at stalls with a red and yellow parasol located on the roadside and at festival venues. In Akita, people call old women “*baba*” with a friendly tone, and *baba-hera* was named after an old woman using a spatula (*hera*) to scoop ice cream.

There is also a type of sherbet ice cream in the Futatsui area of Noshiro loved by local people over many years called *jappu*. The name *jappu* is believed to have originated from people saying, “this sherbet tastes good even after it has completely melted (*jabu-jabu*).” The vividly pink sherbet delivers a taste of nostalgia with a sweet and subtle strawberry taste. There are three options available: *jappu* that consists of sherbet only; Milk *jappu* sherbet mixed with condensed milk; and Soft *jappu* sherbet topped with soft serve. All of these are served at Mikuniya Shoten, located in the Futatsui area of Noshiro.

One of the most prominent features of hot summers in Japan is *kakigori*, a type of shaved ice dessert with toppings and syrup. *Kakigori*, confirmed to be eaten by some Japanese aristocrats as long as 1,000 years ago, has recently started to take all kinds of original forms in line with the times. At Sweets Café Bali-ya, you can taste a peculiar type of *kakigori*, called *yakigori* (roasted *kakigori*). Although this is difficult

to explain in words, you will be stunned by the impactful appearance of the actual product. On top of the traditional *kakigori* with plenty of syrup poured on fluffy shaved ice is a thick layer of custard cream toasted using a kitchen torch. The surface is crispy like that of a *crème brûlée*, and as you use the spoon to crack the surface, rich cream spills out to mix with the syrup filling your mouth with sweetness. Their menu includes the most popular strawberry custard flavor along with other limited flavors that use seasonal fruits and ingredients. We recommend you visit the café and check them out for yourself.

In addition to the delicacies introduced in this section, you may want to take some quick side trips for gourmet foods such as *an-doughnuts* (doughnuts filled with sweet red bean paste) available at an 80-year-old bakery and *soba* noodles produced through a partnership between two areas of Noshiro.





# In poetic nature



*Noshiro has a rich natural landscape which is packed with a wide variety of photogenic destinations. Take many souvenir pictures at locations such as the underground Japanese sake storehouse, a location that is said to give you good luck in matchmaking, and an erosion control forest where you can experience nature to its fullest. Come have a look around with your family, loved ones, or by yourself.*

## Underground Tunnel Storehouse

As Noshiro is a production center of rice, it also provides a variety of tasteful Japanese sake brewed from the rice. In winter, breweries start manufacturing sake because it is easier to control the temperature and suppress the proliferation of bacteria during the winter season.

Japanese sake is vulnerable to light and temperature, and its color and aroma change easily. However, if the sake is stored under the appropriate conditions, it will mature adding a layer of depth to its flavor. Noshiro's Kikusui Sake Brewery

was inspired by a wine storage technique, so they refurbished a tunnel that was not in use (previously owned by Japanese National Railways) and repurposed it as an underground storage for Japanese sake. The temperature inside the tunnel is constantly maintained at 12°C throughout the year to achieve an environment suitable for the storage and aging of sake. 60,000 bottles of sake can be stored inside the 100-m tunnel. The sake produced at Kikusui Sake Brewery is slowly aged in the tunnel, and its taste mellows over time. You will not be able to forget its distinctive flavor after you have experienced it.

You may visit this storage to experience the flavor of its sake from April to October. In winter, it gets difficult to reach the tunnel because the area is covered in snow. Ordinary visitors will also be prohibited from entering the building because sake brewing will begin.

## Cherry blossoms

As the winter storms end and as the plants start to turn green, the news of cherry blossoms blooming begins to come from all corners of Japan. As with other areas of the country, Noshiro is packed with a myriad of destinations for cherry

blossom viewing such as Noshiro Park, Kimimachi-zaka Prefectural Natural Park, and Tahoin Temple.

Among such famous destinations, we particularly recommend the Sakura-niwa cherry garden located on the grounds of Noshiro City Hall. The garden is new as it was developed as part of the project to construct a new city hall building in 2017, and you can have an up-close look of the cherry blossoms from the gathering place. The cherry garden is gaining fame as one the newest cherry blossom viewing destinations. The blossoms are illuminated at night to offer people a gorgeous view after dark. After enjoying the view, you may want to visit a nearby restaurant or bar to indulge yourself in locally produced food and drink.

## Kaze no Matsubara

Near the Noshiro coastline, there is an expansive pine forest called Kaze no Matsubara which protects the city of

hectares (14 km from north to south, and 1 km from east to west), which is one of the largest erosion control forests in Japan.

Kaze no Matsubara not only prevents blown sand, but it also provides visitors with a place for rest and relaxation. As you enter the forest, the contrast of light and shadow created by the sunbeams streaming through the pine trees creates a striking image. The chirping of small birds and the breeze blowing through the forest pleasantly stimulate your ears and skin. In winter, you may experience the monochrome world of silence woven by the mystical snowscape. Even if you are a first-time visitor, walking paths and cycling roads within the forest will ensure you do not get lost. Experience the beautiful nature of Kaze no Matsubara selected for six Japan's Top 100s categories.



C

resembles a *byobu* folding screen draws a beautiful and stark contrast to the colorful foliage of red, yellow, and green leaves. The path from the Daiichi Hiroba square to the Koibumi Shrine is carpeted with fallen red, orange, and yellow leaves making the ground breathtakingly vivid.

Kimimachi-zaka was named after the following story: When Emperor Meiji visited this place in 1881, he received a letter from the Empress. It read as if it was a love letter because the Empress showed a lot of concern for the Emperor who was tired from his long journey. Subsequently, the Emperor named this place Kimimachi-zaka meaning “the hill where you waited for me.”

This is the reason why Kimimachi-zaka is now considered a lucky place for loving couples. The Daiichi Hiroba square has a heart-shaped monument called Kimimachi no Kane (The Kimimachi Bell), where couples can take photos of themselves against the background of Byobu-iwa rock. Ringing the bell with your loved one is said to bring you both happiness. The Koibumi (love letter) Shrine is situated at the back of a couple of snuggling cedar trees, and it is said to bring you good luck in relationships and marriage.

If you put a letter in the love letter postbox at Kimimachi-zaka, the letter will be delivered to the recipient stamped with a heart-shaped postmark. If you are considering sending a letter to your loved one, this is the place for you.



D

Noshiro from sand blown in from the shore. Previously, many homes were buried in this sand, so people started planting black pine trees around 1710 to keep the sand from entering the city. Thanks to their efforts, the forest currently has seven million pine trees covering an area of 760

## Sunset

You should definitely visit the coastline where Noshiro meets the Sea of Japan. There, you can view the western sky as the sun dips into the sea. The stunning view as the sky grows dark while the sun paints the scene with a brilliant red glow will leave you astonished. No words can explain the magnificence of the setting sun.

## Kimimachi-zaka

The Kimimachi-zaka Prefectural Natural Park offers beautiful scenery for each of the seasons. Cherry blossoms and azaleas bloom in spring verdant green grows in summer, and snow covers the scenery in winter. We, however, particularly recommend the fall landscape as the leaves turn red. The view of Byobu-iwa rock and the fall leaves seen from the Daiichi Hiroba square is astounding. The white surface of the towering rock that



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## Information

- A  
Kikusui Sake Brewery
- B  
Tahoin Temple
- C  
Kaze no Matsubara
- D  
Hamanasu Gallery
- E  
Kimimachi-zaka Prefectural Natural Park

# Experience Noshiro

Reservation

*The majestic Yoneshiro River and a forest of natural Akita cedars...  
Treat your senses to a day out in nature-rich Noshiro!*



## Yoneshiro River canoe tour

The 136-km long Yoneshiro River flows from the east to west terminating in the Sea of Japan at the northern part of Akita Prefecture. The river was used to transport cargo and people by boat in the past. The area around the Yoneshiro River including its tributaries is one of the greatest sources of Akita cedars and mineral ore in Japan. Therefore, transportation using the river remained essential for carrying lumber and ore until the emergence of truck transportation in the late 1950s.

In the Futatsui area of modern Noshiro City which is located about 30 km upstream of the river's mouth, you can see canoe riders from the canoe tour floating in the Yoneshiro River. The wind, scenery,

and the smell of nature pleasantly stimulate the senses of canoe riders as stunning views of the mystical Mt. Nanakura and the Kimimachi-zaka Prefectural Natural Park at opposite sides of the river are a treat for the eyes. Canoe beginners can also paddle without worry as the tour provides guidance with qualified and friendly instructors. The experience of floating down the river is so immersive that you will even lose track of time.

## Playing with Akita dogs

Akita dogs are a breed of Japanese dogs bred in Akita Prefecture. They are characterized by their long legs, tall body, firm build, and short hair. Due to their large body size, they exude a courageous aura

from the rear. Looking at them head-on, however, will leave your heart mesmerized by their unexpectedly cute face.

Akita dogs are known to be very loyal. Hachiko, one of the most famous Akita dogs in Japan, is famous for having returned to Shibuya Station in Tokyo every day for almost 10 years after his owner's death to await his return from work.

Noshiro is home to a number of leading Akita dog breeders and kennels in Japan where you can play with puppies and adult Akita dogs. As you walk and play, you will not be able to resist the temptation to cuddle with these extremely cute and loyal dogs.



B

## Mt. Nanakura's old-growth forest trekking

Mt. Nanakura consists of an almost straight line of seven peaks from the southernmost and main peak of Gongenkura to the Eboshikura, Minokura, Shibakura, Sanbonsugikura, Okura, and Matsukura peaks to the north. The rugged mountain range is believed to have a good omen called *huo long* (*katsuryu*, lit. vigorous dragon) in feng shui. Even the majestic Yoneshiro River could not cut through this robust wall formed by the seven peaks, and it is forced to flow in steep curves instead. In Japan, meandering rivers have long been thought to bring good luck since ancient times because they look like a dragon that carries the energy of earth. This mystical place fascinates tourists with its fantastic scenery of morning fog.

This mountain, which used to be a monastery for Shugendo priests, is filled with a forest of giant, old-growth cedars that are estimated to be over 300 years old. The trees hide the sky with their high-reaching branches and are deeply rooted over the huge rocks exposed throughout the mountain surface. Trekking around Mt. Nanakura will bathe you with spiritual energy.



C

## Walking through a forest of beautiful Akita cedars

In Japan, there are three forests that are considered to be particularly beautiful and idyllic: The Kiso *hinoki* cypress forests of Nagano Prefecture, The Aomori *hiba* cypress forests of Aomori Prefecture, and the Akita *sugi* cedar forests of Akita Prefecture. The Nibuna-Mizusawa Rare Cedar Forest Reserve located in Nibuna, Noshiro is one of the rare old-growth forests of natural Akita cedars in Akita Prefecture.

The 18-hectare area is packed with over 3,000 natural Akita cedar trees with an average age of 250 years old,

diameters of 1 m, and heights up to 50 m. A specific tree named Kimimachi-sugi is the tallest natural Akita cedar tree in Japan with a height of 58 m and a diameter of 164 cm estimated to be 250 years old.

This forest has been left untouched by logging and has maintained its natural state since the late 19th century except for cases when it was necessary to remove wind-fallen trees after natural disasters. If you are used to looking at artificial forests frequently seen alongside national and prefectural roads, you will be astonished by the grandeur of the many rows of first-class Akita cedars that represent Japan immediately after stepping into this beautiful forest.

## Walking in *kanjiki* snowshoes

In winter, the mountains are covered with snow piling higher than your head. In order to walk on snowy paths during the winter, snowshoes called *kanjiki* have traditionally been used in Japan. *Kanjiki* are attached to the soles of your shoes, and they are made from twigs and vines woven in a circle. Putting them on expands your contact area with the ground and disperses your weight which prevents your feet from getting stuck deep into the snow and prevents sliding. Now, however, snowblowers are regularly used to remove the snow around the roads, so only a few people are still using *kanjiki* in this area.

Hills and fields are entirely blanketed in snow during the winter. How about putting on *kanjiki* and walking uphill to take in the sublime views exclusive to this season? You do not have to worry about your feet getting caught in the snow thanks to ancient Japanese ingenuity.



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## Information

A

1. Yoneshiro River canoe tour (180-minute course)

Date: Once every month from June to September

Tenjin Kobo

Tel: 0185-88-8815

2. Casual canoe tour (90-minute course)

Date: May to October

Tenjin Kobo

Tel: 0185-88-8815

3. Michinoeki (Roadside Station) Futatsui petit canoe tour (45-minute course)

Date: June to October

Futatsui Town Tourist Association (NPO)

Tel: 0185-73-5075

B

Playing with Akita dogs

Date: All year

Noshiro Kojuso

Tel: 090-2020-1486

C

Mt. Nanakura old-growth forest trekking

Date: May to November

Futatsui Town Tourist Association (NPO)

Tel: 0185-73-5075

D

Walking through a forest of beautiful Akita cedars

Date: May to November

Futatsui Town Tourist Association (NPO)

Tel: 0185-73-5075

E

Walking in *kanjiki* snowshoes

Date: During snow season

Futatsui Town Tourist Association (NPO)

Tel: 0185-73-5075

# Dining in style

# KANEYU

国登録有形文化財

旧料亭 金勇 かねゆう  
-KANEYU-



## Kaneyu Lunch

Enjoy a catered lunch from a popular Japanese restaurant. Experience classic *ryotei* hospitality.

9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Room rental charge: From 90 yen per room (per hour)



## Akita *maiko* and Kaneyu special tour

Enjoy a performance by a popular Akita *maiko* at Kaneyu along with a photo-op afterward.

Tour and dance performance: From 33,500 yen (per hour)

Noshiro City Tourist Facility: Former Ryotei Kaneyu  
 Tel: 0185-55-3355  
 Tour: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
 Room rental: 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
 Admission: Free  
<http://www.kaneyu.jp>



The city of Noshiro was developed as a lumber town at the mouth of Yoneshiro River processing mainly Akita cedarwood. During the Meiji era, the lumber industry started to grow rapidly after Naomoto Isaka established the Akita Lumber Company and introduced mechanical lumber processing, resulting in a number of lumbermills being built within the city.

The processed wood was not only distributed within Japan but also exported overseas, and the city developed to the point where it was called the greatest lumber city of the East.

This *sukiya-zukuri* building, characterized by its seven large hip-and-gable roofs, was built in 1937 as a guest house managed by the lumber industry at the height of its prosperity to welcome their business partners. The sophisticated construction created by using an abundance of high-quality natural Akita cedar still fascinates today's visitors. This is a precious piece of historical architecture that stands as evidence to the prosperity of a lumber city which had a flourishing woodworking industry.

### ***Mangetsu-no-ma***

The *Mangetsu-no-ma* (lit. room of the full moon) is on the first floor, and its ceiling is made from gorgeous solid wood pieces. These five pieces of wood with a length of 9.1 m each were harvested from a single tree and have a medium-burl wood grain pattern. They took about three days each to be processed by woodworking artisans. The long *nageshi* frames also required the mastery of craftspeople only available at the lumber processing center.

### **Main Hall**

This room features a ceiling design called *yojohan shikiri kakutenjo* where wooden boards the size of *tatami* mats, harvested from the base of a natural, 260 year old Akita cedar tree with a diameter of 2 m, are arranged in a Buddhist swastika pattern. The large 200 m<sup>2</sup> space (290 m<sup>2</sup> including the stage and outer corridor) does not have fixed side walls. Western architectural techniques such as truss construction (framing structure based on multiple triangle patterns) are used for the roof framing.

### ***Tokonoma / Tokobashira***

The recessed *tokonoma* space with a width of 10 m creates an elegant atmosphere that matches the grandeur of the 200 m<sup>2</sup> main hall. The *tokobashira* pillar, made from a painted maple tree logged at the edge of Lake Towada, is elaborately polished to exude a unique and impressive presence along with the stately *tokonoma*.

### **Stage**

Long ago, Noshiro *geisha* gave dance performances on this stage. A box-shaped stage was used when the building was completed.



### **Dressing up in yukata or kimono**

Dress up in a *yukata* or *kimono*, take pictures, and enjoy a guided tour.

From April to September: *Yukata*  
 From October to March: *Kimono*  
 Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
 Rental charge: 500 yen (per hour)





## Various local sake brands from the Kikusui Sake Brewery

Since the manufacturer is locally based, these sake brands are difficult to find outside of Akita. The Kikusui Sake Brewery puts in a lot of effort to develop sake that they themselves can appreciate by utilizing an underground tunnel storehouse for aging inspired by French wine storage techniques.

1.8-l bottle: 6,600 yen (with tax)

720-ml bottle: 3,300 yen (with tax)

Ten-yo Liquor Shop

Tel: 0185-52-3722

Also available at other liquor shops within the city.



## Kimimachi Bizakura Beer

This beer is made using Akita Bizakura yeast extracted and cultivated from the cherry blossoms in Kimimachi-zaka.

Its fragrant aroma is widely loved by beer fans.

530 yen (with tax)

# Shop Noshiro

*How about buying some of Noshiro's exclusive souvenirs to relive today's memories?*

*They can also be a special gift for yourself, your friends, and your family.*

*Here are some of our recommended souvenirs.*



## Berabo-dako

These are Noshiro's traditional kites featuring vivid colors and a unique design of a man or a woman sticking their tongue out. This design is believed to expel evil. The man is drawn with Japanese banana leaves on his head, and the woman is drawn with a peony flower on her head.

1/4 size: From 2,970 yen (with tax), different varieties available

Kitaman (Kitamura kite and lantern shop)

Tel: 0185-52-7978

## Michinoeki Futatsui



Michinoeki (Roadside Station) Futatsui is the best place to refresh yourself between long hours of driving.

The building's construction uses plenty of local Akita cedar, harvested from one of the three types of forests considered to be the most beautiful in Japan, to welcome you with the pleasant atmosphere of wood. You can feel the nature's majesty while staying in the comfort of the building as it offers a panoramic view of the mystical Mt. Nanakura, the scenic Kimimachi-zaka, and the meandering Yoneshiro River.

The local produce and souvenir section offers a wide range of freshly harvested seasonal vegetables, fruits, and edible wild plants. Kimimachi Bizakura Beer is one of the products only available in this area, and it is produced using Akita Bizakura yeast extracted from the petals of cherry blossoms in Kimimachi-zaka.

As you look through the glass-paneled floor of the history and folklore section, you will see some bogwood fossilized by being buried underground for a very long time. You will feel as if you have experienced the history of the area.  
Tel: 0185-74-5118 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.



## Daifuku Monaka

These crispy *monaka* wafers contain three types of bean paste with chewy *daifuku* mochi. They pair well with Japanese tea.  
125 yen each (with tax)  
Takiya Confectionery  
Tel: 0185-52-3632



## Shinonome Yokan

The manufacturing method for Shinonome Yokan (jellied dessert made from red bean paste) is believed to have been passed down from a confectioner from Kyoto onboard a northern-bound ship. It is a fine delicacy with a smooth texture that is not too sweet and leaves a refreshing aftertaste.  
1,160 per package of 5 small sticks (with tax)  
Kumagai Choeido  
Tel: 0185-52-6413



## Shinko

This snack is representative of Noshiro and has been loved by the local people for over 80 years. The mochi made from *uruchi* rice produced in Akita are covered with quality *koshi-an* bean paste to produce a simple but delicious taste. Shinko can also be sold by weight without a box. From 1,200 yen per box (with tax)  
Okashi no Sekito  
Tel: 0185-54-3131



## Okina-ame

Kikyoya was established in 1592 as a *manju* confectionary, and the shop developed the Okina-ame in 1812 marketing it with the catchphrase that it brings longevity. The traditional taste of this fully handmade confection has been preserved by passing down the recipe from father to son for generations.  
1,300 yen per 30 pieces (with tax)  
Okina-ame Hompo Kikyoya  
Tel: 0185-52-5853



## Hokugen no Hiyama-cha (Northernmost Hiyama Tea) Cha Yokan

Hiyama Tea produces a rich aroma and a sweet taste that leaves a refreshing bitterness across your palate. Cha Yokan (tea-flavored *yokan*) spreads the distinctive taste and aroma of tea as it melts in your mouth.  
Hiyama tea: 1,000 yen per 30 g (with tax)  
Chaseido  
Tel: 0185-58-5021



## Hiyama Natto

This *natto* is entirely made from locally produced Akita Shirakami soybeans grown using the rich soil and water of the Shirakami-Sanchi area. Enjoy its classic taste created with the traditional and original processing techniques enhanced with modern technologies.  
From 165 yen per *warazuto* wrapper (with tax)



**Local Produce and Souvenir  
Section**



**History and Folklore Section**



**Restaurant Koikoi Shokudo**

# Access To Noshiro City



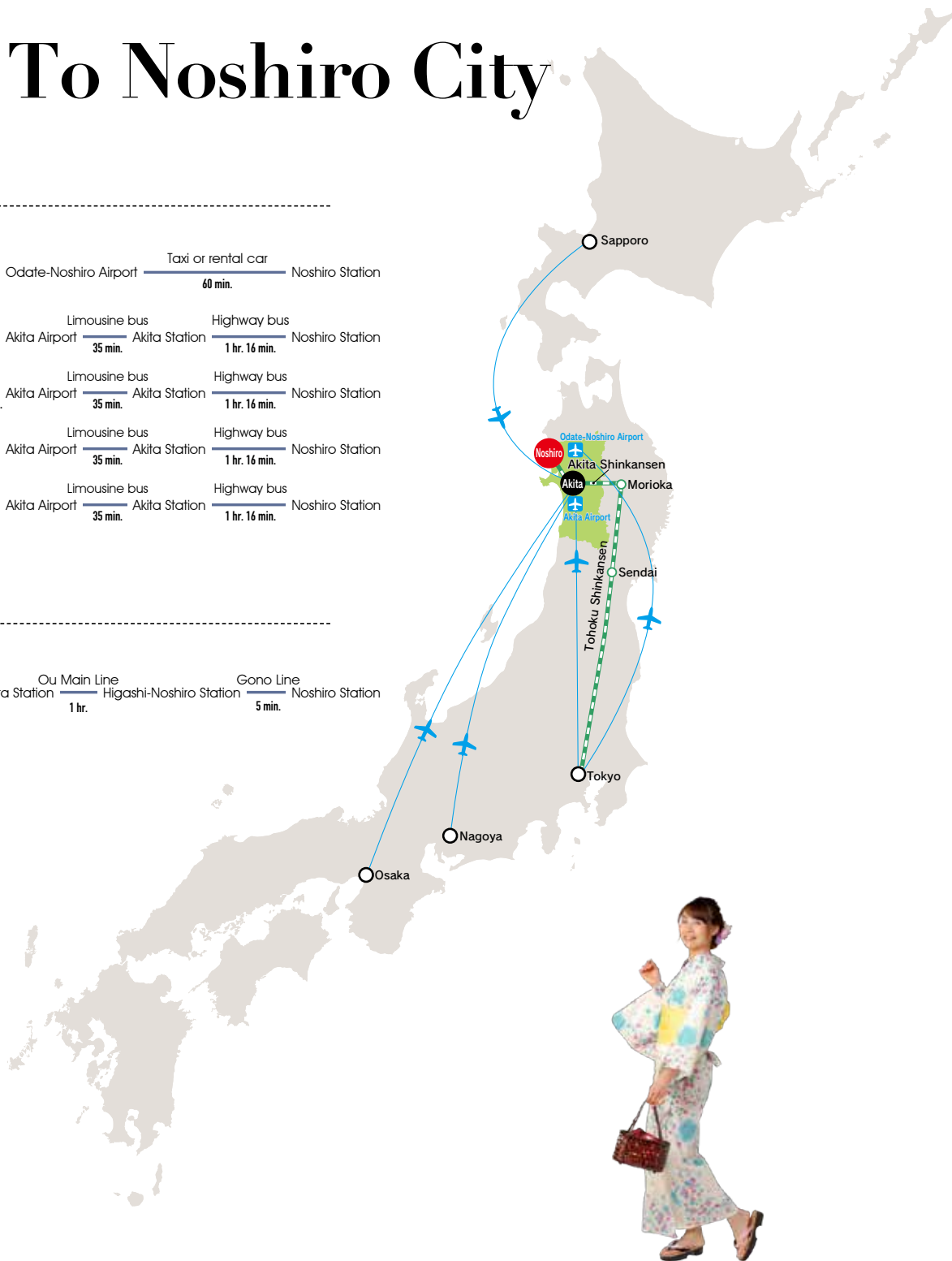
## By air

Tokyo (Haneda Airport)	70 min.	Odate-Noshiro Airport	Taxi or rental car	60 min.	Noshiro Station
Tokyo (Haneda Airport)	65 min.	Akita Airport	Limousine bus	35 min.	Akita Station
			Highway bus	1 hr. 16 min.	Noshiro Station
Sapporo (New Chitose Airport)	60 min.	Akita Airport	Limousine bus	35 min.	Akita Station
			Highway bus	1 hr. 16 min.	Noshiro Station
Osaka (Itami Airport)	85 min.	Akita Airport	Limousine bus	35 min.	Akita Station
			Highway bus	1 hr. 16 min.	Noshiro Station
Nagoya (Chubu Centrair International Airport)	85 min.	Akita Airport	Limousine bus	35 min.	Akita Station
			Highway bus	1 hr. 16 min.	Noshiro Station



## By train

Tokyo Station	Akita Shinkansen	4 hr.	Akita Station	Ou Main Line	1 hr.	Higashi-Noshiro Station	Gono Line	5 min.	Noshiro Station
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Akita Prefecture

**Noshiro City**

<https://www.city.noshiro.lg.jp/>

akita no miti (videos of northern Akita): <http://akita-north-info.jp/>



### Tourism Promotion Section (Noshiro City)

1-3 Kamimachi, Noshiro-shi, Akita, 016-8501  
Tel: 0185-89-2179 Fax: 0185-89-1776  
E-mail: [kankou@city.noshiro.lg.jp](mailto:kankou@city.noshiro.lg.jp)

### Noshiro Tourism Association (NPO)

14-40 Motomachi, Noshiro-shi, Akita, 016-0831  
(within JR Noshiro Station)  
Tel: 0185-88-8802 Fax: 0185-88-8803  
E-mail: [welcomenoshiro@shirakami.or.jp](mailto:welcomenoshiro@shirakami.or.jp)  
URL: <http://welcomenoshiro.com/>

### Futatsui Town Tourist Association (NPO)

98-1 Aza Izumi, Kotsunagi, Futatsui-machi, Noshiro-shi, Akita, 018-3102  
Tel: 0185-73-5075 Fax: 0185-73-4081  
E-mail: [futatsui-kankou@shirakami.or.jp](mailto:futatsui-kankou@shirakami.or.jp)  
URL: <http://futatsui.com/>

Model: Hikaru Hanaki (from Noshiro) / Grandia