



Gifu Regional Guide 2018-2019

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Acknowledgements

This regional guide is not a complete guide to everything in and around Gifu Region, however a brief introduction of places and things to start to get you set up. We highly encourage you to explore, adventure and find all the many charming places and things Gifu Region (and the rest of Japan), has to offer.

This guide book has been compiled over the years by several RPA teams and JETs living in the area.

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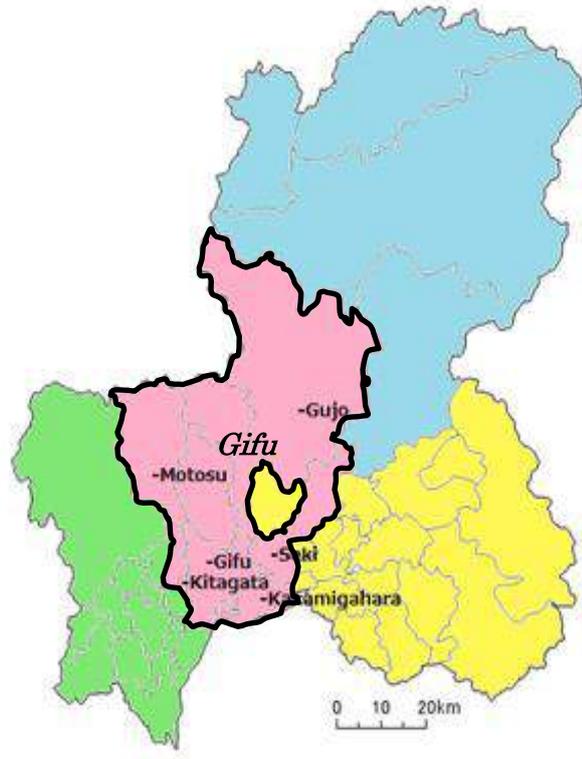
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People in Gifu are usually kind and willing to help others so even if you speak little to no Japanese you will most likely be able to solve problems by consulting those around you. If you do ever need any help please feel free to consult us via email.

- Sammy, Emmy and Gaëlle

So, where am I?

Gifu Prefecture is divided into 4 regions (as shown on the map on the right). You are located in the Gifu region, towards the south west of the prefecture.



JETs in the Gifu region work and live in the following areas:

Gifu City (岐阜市)

- North of the Nagara river (長良川): 4 ALTs
- Near Nishi-Gifu station (西岐阜駅): 2 PAs (ALT PA and CIR PA)
1 ALT
3 CIRs at the Prefectural Government Offices
3 CIRs at the Gifu International Centre
- Gifu city: 1 CIR at Media Cosmos

Kakamigahara (各務原)

- Living in the Nishi-Gifu apartments: 1 ALT

Kitagata (北方)

1ALT

Motosu (本巣)

4 ALTs

Seki (関市)

1 ALT

Gujo Hachiman (郡上八幡)

1ALT

Other places in Gifu Region, currently without JETs:

Yamagata 山形

Hashima 羽島

Mizuho 瑞穂

Ginan 岐南

Kasamatsu 笠

Transportation

Trains

The most common and convenient way to travel is by train. Trains are clean, safe and almost always on time. The main rail company is **Japan Rail (JR)**, but there are also a few privately owned railways. Below is a not-to-scale map that shows all of the lines and their main connections in Gifu.



Gifu JR Station

Gifu JR station is the transport hub for this area. The main lines that depart from here are:

- **Tokaido Line (東海道線)**: south to Nagoya, west to Ogaki, Sekigahara and Maibara.
 - From Maibara you can catch a train to Kyoto and Osaka. Though slightly longer than catching the shinkansen from Nagoya, it is a much cheaper option (from Gifu station it costs ¥2500 rather than ¥6000 one way).
 - If you are short on time and plan on going to Kansai for a short trip, try the shuttle ticket (シャトル切符) from Ogaki. This gives a 2 day discount for the shinkansen from Nagoya.
- **Hida Line (飛騨線) in yellow** and **Takayama Line (高山線) in light green**: east to Kakamigahara, Mino-Ota, Gero and Takayama. The Takayama Line takes longer than the Hida express line, but is much cheaper (¥2500 and 3hr15m compared to ¥5000 and 2hrs from Gifu).

Gifu Meitetsu Station

Meitetsu trains are slightly more expensive than JR trains. The train lines that depart from here are:

- **Kakamigahara Line (各務原) in light blue**: to Meiden-Kakamigahara and Inuyama.
- **Meitetsu Limited Express Line (in red)**: to Nagoya and Central Japan International Airport. It's incredibly convenient for getting to the airport, costing ¥1700 and taking about an hour.

The Tarumi (From Ogaki JR Station)

The Tarumi is a private, one carriage train that departs from platform 6 (樽見鉄道), which is at the far right end of the furthest platform when you walk into the Ogaki JR Station. It runs to and from Tarumi station in Neo village and goes via MALera and Kitagatamakuwa. It only goes every 1-2 hours and costs around ¥500, which you pay on board to the train driver.

Chuno Region

Kani City

Kani city is lucky enough to have both JR and Meitetsu Lines. From Kani station, Tajimi, Takayama, Gifu, Nagoya and Minokamo are easily reachable. The nearest Shinkansen is located in Nagoya.

Gujo and Seki

The only railway line available in both Gujo and Seki is the Nagara River (*Nagaragawa Testudo* 長良川鉄道) Line. In order to travel anywhere in Gifu prefecture, you need to take this line to Mino-Ota Station. However, since the line is privately by Nagarakawa Testudo it is more expensive than other public lines run by Japan Railways. For more information about train schedules and timetables please refer to the following website: www.nagatetsu.co.jp

If you are on a budget and would like to travel, taking buses from Gujo and Seki are a much cheaper, faster option (see below for more details on buses in Gujo and Seki).

Buses

Gifu City Buses

- Outside the north exit of the Gifu JR station is the main bus centre (see map below).
- There is an information booth there and staff can direct you to the appropriate bus if you know where you want to go but don't know how to get there. However, they are unlikely to speak much English. The tourist office staff on the second floor of Gifu JR (to the left of the ticket machines) are likely to speak (slightly) more English.
 - For people who ride buses frequently, you can get a bus IC card (not to be mistaken with your train IC) at the information booth.
- When your bus arrives, get on via the back door and take a ticket (only take a ticket if you don't have an IC card). When you get off, give the ticket to the driver and pay your fare (the fare is always ¥210 within Gifu City).
- If you have a bus card, remember to tap the sensor when you get on and off of the bus.

Beyond Gifu City

- Between Gifu JR and Gifu Meitetsu is another bus rank. The buses that leave from here are mostly longer-distance buses, many to touristy destinations like Shirakawa-go and Takayama.
- You have to book these tickets at the ticket office, but you can look the times up online beforehand at nohibus.co.jp



- From Nagoya station you can catch more buses to regions outside of Gifu. They have many day and overnight buses departing from there. You can book tickets online using www.willereexpress.com or www.kousokubus.net/JpnBus/en and a range of other different websites. Catching a bus from here is the cheapest way to get to Tokyo (about ¥4000 one way)!

Buses in Chuno

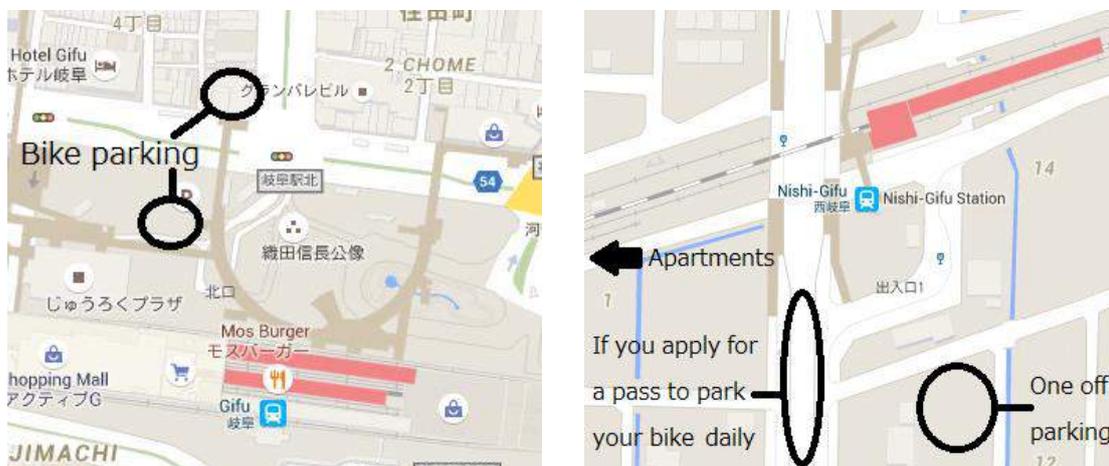
Buses are constantly going to Hida, Fukui, Nagoya, and Gifu. In the Chuno area, trains aren't always the fastest and cheapest choice; however, buses are fast, reliable and frequent.

Below is a list of websites for buses in the Chuno region:

- <http://www.gifubus.co.jp/noriai/nori/jikoku/mino/nagoya.pdf>
- <http://www.gifubus.co.jp/noriai/index.html>
- http://www.onthestreet.jp/busri_de.php?od=1687mino-kyoto

Bicycles

There is a lot of bicycle parking all around Gifu, so cycling places is never a problem. Also, Gifu is very safe, so there is little fear of having your bike stolen. If you are looking to take a train from Gifu or Nishi-Gifu station but want to leave your bicycle there, you can use one of the parking areas located on the map below for ¥100/day.



You can also rent a bicycle for ¥100/day. This is perfect for anyone visiting and wanting to get around downtown easily. To do so you have to show ID and fill in a form. The person at the counter might not speak English, so here is your chance to practice Japanese, sign language, or interpretive dance. You can borrow it for up to 2 days and returns are between 9am–5pm. These bikes can be returned to any of the 5 bicycle stands around the city:

1. JR Gifu Station south exit stand
2. Gifu City Office south building stand
3. Gifu Park stand
4. Ukai Viewing Boat boarding area stand
5. Nagara River Ukai Museum stand

For more information on renting bicycles go to: http://www.gifucvb.or.jp/en/06_access/06_02.html

Bicycle Rules

- 1) Ride on the left side of the road, not the right.
- 2) Don't ride on the footpath where possible.
- 3) Don't hold an umbrella, use you phone, or wear earphones.
- 4) Bicycles are considered as vehicles, so follow all the road rules (including stop signs)!



In Japan it is compulsory for you to register your bicycle, however there are no penalties for not registering it (unless you get really unlucky). The registration system is supposed to stop bicycles from being stolen and help return them to their owners, so if your bicycle is inspected by a policemen and it's registered to someone else you may face charges for theft as well as having your bicycle taken off you.

Registering your bicycle isn't very difficult. If you buy a bicycle from a store then they will help you register it there and then. If you buy your bicycle online or second hand from someone then you will need to fill out this form: <http://www.bouhan-net.com/dl/hanbaishoumei.pdf>, have the seller fill out this transfer of ownership form: <http://www.bouhan-net.com/dl/joutoshoumei.pdf>, and give you a copy of their residence card, and then take the bicycle and the forms to your local police station to be registered. Both ways will only cost you ¥500 to register it.

Airports

Central Japan International Airport / Centrair / Chubu (*just south of Nagoya*)

- This is the closest airport to Gifu, Seki and Gujo. You can easily access it using the Meitetsu Limited Express Line which takes one hour from Meitetsu-Gifu station (¥1700). The first train doesn't arrive at the airport until 6:30am so keep this in mind when booking flights.
- You can also use the Meitetsu Limited Express Line from Kani City.
- Driving to the airport is quite expensive because of the tolls you will be hit with driving through Nagoya, however parking fees are quite reasonable.
- Low cost carriers Skymark and Jetstar fly from here, as well as ANA and Japan Airlines. You can fly to numerous domestic and international locations from here.
- Always check out the prices from Nagoya before booking because utilising this airport will save you travel time and money!

Kansai International Airport / KIX (*near Osaka*)

- Kansai has similar domestic options to Centrair, except with the addition of super low cost carrier Peach Airlines (which allows you to pay for flights at a konbini too)!
- Kansai also has a much larger range of international airlines flying in and out of it for generally cheaper prices, but remember to factor in that it will cost you at least ¥3000 and 3-4 hours each way to get to KIX from Gifu.
- A bonus is that you can sleep in KIX for free if you want to make an early morning flight. Look for the Lawson on the second level of T1. There you will find padded benches with arm rests, low lighting, and you can even get blankets from the information desk! You may be woken by a security guard but they will just want to check your ticket and then will let you go back to sleep. There's also hostels and manga cafes nearby if you'd prefer.

Narita International Airport (*Tokyo*)

- Narita has the most international flight options, but it's very costly to get there from Gifu compared to going to Centrair or Kansai airport. However, if you do need to get to Narita International Airport you can catch a night bus from Nagoya to Tokyo and this is a much cheaper option to travel (see below for more details about night buses).



Pro tips:

- 1) Always use a flight compare website to find the cheapest flight!
- 2) Take into consideration the cost and time you will spend traveling from Gifu to Kansai or Tokyo airport compared to Centrair before choosing your flights!
- 3) If you don't have a credit card, check out the Japanese airlines (JAL, ANA, Peach, sometimes Jetstar, etc.) which allow you to pay for your flights in cash at a konbini.

Websites and Apps

Hyperdia

For all train schedules all across Japan. Hyperdia is offered in English and in Japanese. You can either pay for the app (free for android) or use hyperdia.com

Navi.gifubus.co.jp

Bus timetables for Gifu. It's all in Japanese, so to search for stops you must type the proper kanji or use the map to find your stop.

Willerexpress.com	Cheap highway buses. Particularly useful for cheaper trips to further away places, like Tokyo. They have useful overnight buses too.
Nohibus.co.jp	Buses servicing Hida Takayama. Tip: This bus is half the price of the express train to Takayama and takes the same amount of time! (¥2570 verse ¥4900)!

How to get home from downtown Gifu

North Gifu Area

- 20 minute bus ride. Buses leave every 15 minutes or so from the Gifu Station Bus Stop 10 to メモリアル正門前 (Memoriaru seimonmae) and from bus stop 11 to 簡易保険前 (Kanihokenmae). The last bus home is at 10:20pm.
 - ◇ 5-10 minute walk from the bus stop to the apartments
- 60 minute walk (4.5km)
- 30 minute bike ride
- 15 minute, ¥2000 taxi

Nishi Gifu Area

- 2 minute train ride from Gifu to Nishi-Gifu station (Tokaido line). They leave every 15 minutes or so and the last train is at 12:27am.
 - ◇ 5-10 minute bike ride from the station to the apartments
 - ◇ 20 minute walk from the station to the apartments (1.6km).
- 15 minute bus ride. Buses leave every 30 minutes or so from Gifu Station bus stop 13 to 市橋 (Ichihashi). Ichihashi bus stop is only 500m from Nishi-Gifu train station.
- 60 minute walk (5km)
- 30 minute bike ride
- 20 minute, ¥2500 taxi

Kitagata/Motosu/Neo

- 30 (Kitagata/Motosu) or 75 (Neo) minutes total. Catch the JR Tokaido Line from Gifu to Ogaki station, then change to the private Tarumi (樽見) line. It goes through Kitagata, Motosu and Neo, and runs about once an hour. The last Tarumi leaves at:
 - For Kitagata/MALera: 10:42pm, so you need to catch the 10:21pm from Gifu.
 - For Neo: 9:21pm, so you need to catch the 9:06pm from Gifu. 15 min walk home.
- 40 minute bus ride to Motosu. Buses leave every hour or so from bus stop 8 at Gifu Station to MALera. The last bus is at 9:25pm. (*For websites and apps, you must search "Morera" or the corresponding katakana 'モレラ'*).
- 10 minute train to Hozumi station (between Nishi-Gifu and Ogaki – the last train from Gifu is 12:27am) and then a 20 minute, ¥3000 taxi from Hozumi station to the Kitagata/Motosu area.

Seki / Gujo

- Catch a bus from your location to JR Gifu Station. If you are unsure about the bus schedules please find your nearest bus stop and use the Gifu Navi bus website to search for buses that go to JR Gifu. Buses from JR Gifu to Seki usually take around 2 hours as they are local buses which stop at every station. Once you arrive at JR Gifu you will need to go to bus stop number 14 and catch a bus to either Seki or Gujo.

Driving

Parking can be found under and all around Gifu station. It costs about ¥300/hour or ¥1200/24 hours. Money saving tip: Drive to Nishi-Gifu station and park your car there for much cheaper (or for free at the Nishi-Gifu apartments), then catch the 2 minute train in to Gifu. This option is faster and becomes dramatically cheaper if you plan on leaving your car at the station for more than one day.

How to get to the Kyouiku Center (教育センター)

Most ALT events, such as Work Orientation and the Skills Development Conferences, are held at the Kyouiku Center. The closest train station is Nishi Gifu, but that's a 20 min walk away, so if you are not already in the Nishi Gifu area then its recommended that you take the bus from Gifu Station bus stop #5 to ふれあい福寿会館 (Fureaifukujukaikan), which drops you right across the street from the center.

Gifu City 岐阜

Located in the south-east of Gifu region, Gifu is the central hub for goings on in the region. So even if you are placed in a neighboring town, there is a high likelihood you will spend a fair amount of time in Gifu City.



U-tan

What to do

Mt. Kinka (金華 Mt Kinka (金華山) and Gifu Castle (岐阜城)

It's pretty hard to escape the gaze of Gifu Castle, perched on top of the 329m tall Mount Kinka. It's historically significant and you will likely hear much about its history during your time here. In the 16th Century, Warlord Oda Nobunaga used it as his base from which he attempted to unify all of Japan.

Admission to the castle is ¥200. There's a small museum on the inside with old weaponry, armor, and paintings, but the real reason to go inside is for the beautiful, panoramic view from the top!

There's also a super cute squirrel park next to the top of the ropeway where you can touch and feed squirrels for a ¥300 admission!

To get to the castle, take one of the following buses from JR or Meitetsu Gifu station to Gifu Park (岐阜公園), they take about 15minutes and cost ¥210:

- N80 towards Takatomi
- N32 to N86 bound for Gifu Park /Takatomi direction
- City Loop-line, Counterclockwise direction

Once you're in Gifu Park, there's two ways to get to the castle:

1. Hike up

- ◇ The harder route: 馬の背 (Uma No Se) – Horseback trail
- ◇ The easier route: めい想の小径 (Meiso No Komichi) – Meditation Path trail.
- ◇ There are two other minor trails that start near the Nawa Insect Museum, the Hyaku-magari trail (100 turns) and the Nana-magari trail (7 turns).

2. The ropeway

- ◇ The ropeway goes from Gifu Park to nearly the top of Mt Kinka, leaving you with a leisurely 5-10 minute walk to the castle.
- ◇ The prices are:
 - One way ¥620



- Round trip ¥1080 (or ¥900 after 6pm if you want to see panoramic night views)

Castle hours	
March 16-May 11	9:30am – 5:30pm
May 12-October 16	8:30am – 5:30pm
October 17- March 15	9:30am – 4:30pm
Special days have night panorama openings	For more information contact Gifu City Convention and Visitors Department 058-265-3984

*Depending on the weather, the castle may be closed early.

Cormorant Fishing (Ukai 鵜飼)

Ukai on the Nagara River has a 1300 year history which is the longest unbroken stretch of this kind of fishing in Japan. It's an immense source of pride for people here and one of the only things about Gifu region you can find in the guidebooks!

The fishing starts around 7:30pm every night from May 11 to October 15. To experience the wonderment of ukai yourself you can book a spot on a boat for about ¥3000. The boats leave at about 6:30pm and you're allowed to bring your own food and drinks on board. If you're feeling frugal, you can enjoy the view for free from the Nagaragawa Bridge.



Gifu AJET usually holds an Ukai event in September/October, either in Gifu City or Seki City. Keep an eye out for the event!

Big Buddha

Gifu is home to a very impressive Daibutsu (Big Buddha), but you would never know it was there because it's hidden away in a building near Gifu Park.



To get there, catch the same bus that you would catch to get to Gifu Park (岐阜公園) and get off a stop early, or just walk the 600m walk from Gifu Park. You can see where it is on the map on the right:



Gifu City Tower 43 (岐阜シティ・タワー43)

Located near Gifu JR station, this is the tallest building in the prefecture with 43 floors, reaching a height of 163 meters (535 ft). While it can hardly be called a skyscraper, Tower 43 offers 360-degree views of Gifu city from the top-floor observatory, 'Sky Lounge'. Take the free elevator from the shopping area on the first and second floor

FC Gifu

Check out a soccer game! The local team, FC Gifu, plays at home every second Sunday or so from December through to July. The team is quite bad so we lose quite a bit, but admission comes with all-you-can-drink!



Masa 21

This is the local shopping center for JETs living north of the Nagara River. Masa has a food court and a bunch of other restaurants, a shopping market (though not the closest shopping market to the North Gifu JET apartments), clothing stores such as Uniqlo, and Gu (and many more), a 100 Yen Store, an Edion for electrical appliances, and an arcade and bowling alley. Masa 21 is also conveniently located across from Nitori (the home goods Japanese Ikea equivalent), Starbucks and Sushiro.

Where to eat and drink

This is definitely not a complete list of restaurants, but just some of the recommendations of restaurants that are popular with the Gifu JETs.



Gifu Station

Gifu Station has a variety of different restaurants, cafes and izakayas within the station!

Starbucks

Great to grab a coffee, a sandwich and use the free WiFi (must sign up for an account using other WiFi before you can access Starbucks WiFi).

Showa Shokudo

A Showa themed Izakaya in Gifu Station with all-you-can drink for only ¥1000 per person for two hours, including self-serve umeshu!

Central Gifu

The area around Gifu Station tends to be the central meeting area and hub for eating and drinking in the region, and as such there are tons of great places to check out.

Poruchipu Samugyopusaru

A casual Korean BBQ place. They have an all you can eat and drink for ¥3500! The service is really on point, and you get food and drink really quickly after you order. Perfect to combine with a night of karaoke in downtown Gifu.

Watami

A popular izakaya, located right next to Meitetsu Gifu Station with traditional Japanese izakaya dishes.

Da Achiu (ダアチュ)

Delicious, legitimate pizza.

The Golden Chicken

Rotisserie chicken restaurant.

Rasamanda

An Indian food restaurant, inconveniently located right between Nishi-Gifu and Gifu Station, but the food makes up for it. The décor is pretty great as well, with beautiful, large wooden chairs and tables.

Hana No Mai

An izakaya with good all you can eat and drink menus that are popular for parties and gatherings.

Nomads

This bar is situated just behind Loft and Meitetsu Gifu station. It's cozy, has a great atmosphere, a TV, and nice bar staff.

El Paso

A Tex-Mex joint in a small space with friendly staff and wacky decor. It's a bit on the expensive side and the restaurant is pretty small, so booking in advance is advised. *Recommendation: the Burritos leave something to be desired, so go for the Quesadillas or the Fajitas. But if you are looking for something to really fill those Mexican food withdrawals, it's honestly probably worth making the trip down to Desperados in Nagoya instead.

Torikizoku

Torikizoku is a casual Yakitori Izakaya (grilled chicken on skewers) chain where drinks and food cost only 298 yen! After you order a plate of cabbage, you can refill it for free! We recommend you to try their Tsukune Tare (chicken meatballs with sweet soy sauce) and their Mochi-mochi Cheese Yaki (rice balls made from rice flour with cheese and seaweed on the top). It is usually busy on weekends but if you write down your name and queue, the nice wooden atmosphere of this izakaya is well worth the wait!

Kiteya

Kiteya is a Japanese style restaurant which is popular among locals for its good value and taste. This restaurant located not far from Donki Hote in Yanagase. It is ran by grandmas and grandpas who make delicious sesame miso ramen and the salad is only 100 yen! The only downside is that this restaurant is not open during the evening.

Akawani

Akawani is one of the best spots to enjoy a refreshing shaved ice cream during a hot Japanese summer. It is only a 5 minute-walk from Gifu Meitetsu station and is opened from 11:30 to 20:00, it is closed on Wednesdays except during summer.

Tamamiya-Dori (玉宮通り)

Many young Japanese and foreigners alike are likely to be located in Tamamiya-dori, often referred to as “drinking street”. It's a small street running north of Gifu JR station. The simplest way to get there is to walk along the overpass leading from the second floor of the station to the right, at the Circle K convenience store turn left and go down the stairs to reach the ground level. Turn right and follow this street north.



Bierhall Certainly lives up to its name, being both full of beer and built like a narrow hallway. Bierhall also has a handy book-swap corner where you can take one and leave one. They also put on a pretty good St Patrick's Day party every year.

Scrum Located just above Bierhall, Scrum is a New Zealand themed rugby bar. The most important games are played here on the TV and one can sample a wide range of brews from around the world. There's usually a few pool sharks are in attendance.

Alffo This is a kind of hipster bar with a chill atmosphere with DJs and a view over the park. The food here is a little lacking in volume but the drinks are good, and the crowd is really friendly. It's a good place to meet hip, young Japanese people. It is located on the second floor across from the Gifu Bunka Center.

Tora An izakaya on the main food street with the best karaage we have ever had! It also does all you can eat and drink menus that you have to book at least one day in advance.

North of the Nagara River

Sushiro A chain 100 yen conveyor belt sushi restaurant popular with JETs who love sushi but are on a budget.



Dohtonburi A chain Okinomiyaki restaurant. Even though it's a chain, the place still has a good atmosphere and does excellent food.

Café Turquoise A Turkish café with delicious pancakes. On nice days you can eat out on the roof and soak up the sunny weather.

Indo Nagara All you can eat Indian curry for only 1000 yen (take out curry and naan for 800¥)! The food is pretty mediocre and the options are limited but you can't beat the price.

Indo Dinigu Himaraya More expensive Indian food than the previous option, but it is so much more delicious with many more options.

Something New York It used to be a bagel shop but now it just sells western breakfasts like pancakes, eggs and coffee.

Nishi-Gifu area

Benigoma A really popular spicy tonkotsu and sesame ramen place popular with the locals. The teachers at my school make special lunch trips from across town to visit this place!



Ichiran A famous tonkotsu ramen chain restaurant where you fill out a sheet to personalize your ramen order. It has separate booths for people looking to slurp in silence.

Sushiro A chain 100 yen conveyor belt sushi restaurant. It's right next door to the closest supermarket to the Nishi-Gifu apartments, so it's really convenient if you want to drop in for a quick dinner when getting groceries! They also do take-away!

Marugame Udon Sanuki udon is made fresh in front of your eyes which you can choose to be served either hot or cold. You can then top it off with your own selection of self-serve tempura before paying at the end. Fast food, but really fresh and delicious!

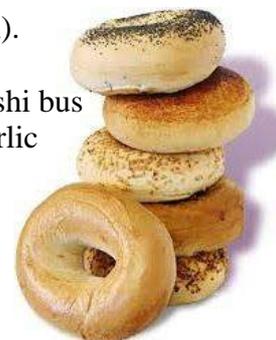
Tulsi Indian One of the best Indian restaurants in Gifu which is reasonably priced and also that provides all you can eat naan bread if you eat in and order a set meal! They've also just started selling Thai food too, but I haven't been game to try it yet.

Rustico A trendy bread shop with nice lunch sets.

Oshou A cheap Chinese chain restaurant that has a nice gyoza set.

Tenka Ippin A cheap ramen chain that has good thick sauce ramen (kotteri ramen).

Den A very local and delicious Izakaya located just in front of the Ichihashi bus Stop! We recommend you to try their Hida beef croquette and their garlic fried chicken.

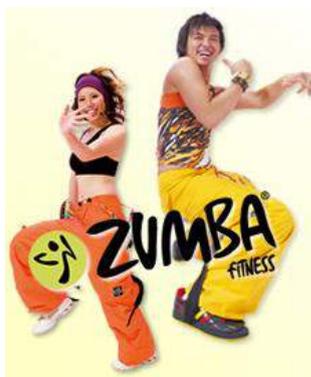


Where to go to stay fit

Gyms

- The Gifu Memorial Centre near the North Gifu apartments has a cheap gym option at only ¥310 per session. It has weights, treadmills, machines, bikes and a platform for deadlifts and overhead weights. It also has showers, ¥100 parking, and no sign up fees! You need indoor gym shoes to go here.
- The Nishigifu Gym (岐阜市西部体育館) which is near the Nishigifu apartments is a small gym with treadmills, bicycles, weights, machines and a bench press (but no squat rack). It's only ¥200 per session or ¥920 for a monthly pass. You need indoor gym shoes to go here.
- Konami Gym or Holiday Gym in Gifu and Ogaki are great for people looking for the full gym experience. They have exercise classes, weights, machines, bikes, a pool, sauna, sento and even a virtual golf driving range with lessons available.
Holiday – ¥8000 for unlimited visits per month (cheaper rates for limited hours passes). Very close to the Nishi-Gifu apartments and Ogaki station.
Konami – ¥7000 for 4 visits per month, or ¥12,000 for unlimited visits per month. In Gifu station and Ogaki Aeon Town.
- Ogaki Boxing Gym is in the east of Ogaki city, only a 15 minute drive from the Nishi-Gifu apartments. It has treadmills, skipping ropes, a few free weights, heaps of boxing

bags and sparring partners, and a boxing ring. It also has 2 trainers that are willing to train non-Japanese speakers (through the use of gestures and basic one word commands)! It's ¥4000 for 4 visits per month, or ¥5300 for unlimited visits per month.



Sports

- You can rent out gym space and equipment for sports like volleyball and basketball at the gym next to the Board of Education.
- The Nishigifu Gym (岐阜市西部体育館) also has a range of Japanese martial arts lessons available. Iaido lessons are Friday from 7pm - 8:30pm.
- The Ichihashi community centre has many clubs you can join, such as Ikebana, calligraphy, taiko, singing, and photography. The clubs generally meet during work hours (they're aimed at older people), but they also have some activities on weekends.
- You can also take Yoga lessons and dance class at Media Cosmos. The classes are not regular but they're fun to try! Usually you can make a reservation via email or just go on the day. One class costs between 500 yen and 1500 yen.

Motosu 本巢

Located in the north west of the Gifu Region, this city was originally four separate towns, Motosu, Neo, Shinsei and Itonuki, but was incorporated together as Motosu City.

<http://www.city.motosu.lg.jp/>



Momomaru

What to do:

Malera (モレラ岐阜)

The biggest shopping mall in Gifu prefecture! Be warned, it gets pretty crowded on weekends. Shops found in the mall include, but are certainly not limited to:

Edion (エディオン) for electrical appliances

Nitori (ニトリ) for home goods

Toho Cinemas

H&M, Uniqlo, Berksha, Zara, Gap, GU, Old Navy and much more for fashion
Daiso ¥100 store
Bowling, Pool Hall, and Arcade
Freshness Burger, Saizeriya (cheap pasta, pizza and wine), Baskin-Robins, KFC, Starbucks, Café Lani, the food court, and many other fancier restaurants.
Valor Supermarket
Kaldi import food store

Where to eat:

Shintai Menbo One of Motosu's many ramen shops, but conveniently located just around the corner from where the Motosu JETs live.

Swagatam A great Indian restaurant that's also just around the corner from the Motosu JET apartments. It also does take-away using re-usable containers.

Neo Kaido A delicious mom-and-pop yakiniku restaurant that's hidden away in Motosu's backstreets.

MALera At any of the delicious restaurants and food court shops in the shopping mall!

Kitagata 北方

Kitagata is the smallest municipality in Japan, at only 5km², and is located in the west of the Gifu region, sandwiched between Gifu city, Motosu city and Mizuho city. It's only 2km from the Motosu JETs and MALera (the huge shopping mall), and 6km from the Nishi-Gifu JETs.



Kitagataro-kun

What to do:

Rice Field Art

Every June, elementary and junior high students work together to plant rice fields with different kinds of rice to create images in the rice fields that appear when the rice grows in August.

Where to eat:

Shanimuni One of the best ramen restaurants we've ever eaten at! There is a heated debate between JETs as to which dish is better; the tsukemen (a type of ramen where you dip your noodles in a rich broth instead of it coming premixed in one bowl) or the pork maze soba (a deliciously garlic filled ramen). This gem was discovered upon a local's recommendation and is known to locals as one of the best ramen shops in the area.

Sushiro A chain 100 yen conveyor belt sushi restaurant that's super popular with JETs due to its good quality and super low price.

Neo 根尾

Officially a part of Motosu City, Neo is a picturesque little village located to the north of Motosu proper. It's a small mountain town, with a clean river and some nice waterfalls.



What to do:

Usuzumi Onsen (淡墨温泉)

Relax in the public baths with water from natural hot springs for a ¥800 entrance fee. There are both indoor and outdoor baths. If you're the lucky Neo JET, make sure to show them your residence card with your address for the Neo local discounted ticket!

Earthquake Fault Observation Museum (地震断層観察館)

A museum about the 1891 Mino-Owari earthquake. It was one of the largest earthquakes to ever hit Japan and had its epicenter right in Neo.

Usuzumi-zakura (淡墨桜)

One of Japan's National Treasures, and referred to as "One of the Three Great Cherry Blossom Trees of Japan", said to be planted by the Keitai Emperor over 1,500 years ago. It blooms in early April, and creates immense traffic up to the sleepy little town of Neo. Right next to the tree is the Usuzumi-zakura Museum.

Neo Camping Park

Spend a night in the mountains camping right by the river and enjoying picturesque nature.

Where to eat:

Mihara

(みはら)

An adorable café restaurant for lunch, with an outside dining patio right on the river, making it the perfect place to enjoy the fall and spring seasons.

There are a few more restaurants in Neo, but many tend to be lunch-time establishments.

Kakamigahara 各務原

Located in the south east of the Gifu region, Kakamigahara is famous for being the site of Japan's oldest airfield and aviation matsuri, and for being one of the top 100 places to view cherry blossoms in Japan.

<http://www.city.kakamigahara.lg.jp/>

Rarara



Shinsakai-unga River

A beautiful river lined with 1200 cherry trees on either side. It's known as one of top 100

Cherry Blossom viewing spots in Japan. The tree's bloom in early April, and draw large crowds to sit along the river banks and snack on food from the numerous food stands (yatai), while enjoying the beautiful views. Gifu AJET has their Hanami Event here every year so keep an ear out for it!

Kakamigahara Aeon Mall

A large mall with almost everything you could want! It's a rival mall to Motosu's MALera. Some of the shops it has are:

- Aeon Cinema and Namco Arcade
- H&M, Forever 21, Berksha, Uniqlo, Urban Outfitters and much more for fashion
- Kaldi foreign import store.
- KFC, Subway, Starbucks, Burger King, Mr.Donut, Baskin-Robbins, and Krispy Crème.
- Seria ¥100 Store

Murakuniza

A Japanese traditional entertainment theater built in 1877. Traditionally used for Kabuki, but will also host other performances.

Hashima 羽島

Located in the south west of the Gifu region, Hashima is the one city in the prefecture with a shinkansen stop. It's also known for its newly opened Costco, its 300 year old wisteria tree, and the Takehana mastsuri held at the end of April.



Hanachan and Takechan

Hashima Costco

JETs travel all the way down from Hida to make the pilgrimage to the Hashima Costco, which only just opened in November 2015. Stock up on bulk foods that are hard to find elsewhere such as good quality cheese, tortillas and pesto! Don't forget to make a stop at the food court for some pizza or a cheap hotdog!

Hashima Enku Museum

Only ¥300 admission to see 17 of the wooden statues carved by the Edo-period Buddhist Monk Enku, who is said to be from the area and to have carved 120,000 enku-butsumis throughout Japan during his lifetime.

Yamagata 山形

Yamagata is located to the east of the Gifu region, bordering on the Mino area. Yamagata City is made of up three smaller villages; Takatomi, Ijira, and Miyama.

<http://www.city.yamagata.gifu.jp/index.html>



Town emblem

Ijira (伊自良)

Western Yamagata City. Check out Ijira Lake (伊自良湖), nestled between the mountains creating a very scenic spot.

Miyama (美山)

Northern Yamagata City. The Mugi River is famous, especially for the Ayu (sweet fish) that come from it. Miyama Forest (みやじまの森) has amazing summer fireflies.

Takatomi (高富)

Eastern Yamagata City.

Mizuho 瑞穂

Located in the western part of the Gifu region, Mizuho is famous as the origin of Fuyu Persimons in 1892. Around the end of September, many are grown, and you can buy them for quite cheap. The orange of the persimmons compliments the fall colors of the many ginkgo and maple trees, turning the town into a picturesque place during fall.



Kakirin

Ginan 岐南

Located in the south of the Gifu region, Ginan is famous for its own special version of a scallion. It has been designated as Gifu Prefecture's traditional vegetable, and it is a mix between a long white and long green onion. Every year farmers from Ginan take the Tokuda long onions to the Onion Summit!



Negiccyo

Kasamatsu 笠松

Kasamatsu is located in the south of the Gifu region and runs along the Kiso river. Its mascots are the adorable two yuru-chara riding in boats on the right here!



Kasamarukyodai

Seki 関

Although Seki city is actually located in the Chuno Region this city is included as one of the Gifu RPA regions.

Seki city is known for its sword making. This tradition is 700 years old and Seki swords are still shipped all over Japan. In recent times, Seki swords crafts have turned to knives, cutlery, and other kitchen supplies as well. Sword making demonstrations are always available.



Seki is a bigger city in the Chuno area combining many smaller communities. There is a shopping mall (Mago), a training center/gym and a public bathhouse located in the city.

Seki city is also home to the paper doll making master, Chisako Higashiya. Chisako not only teaches Japanese doll classes, but she is the only Japanese member of the Gifu AJET community. She will always welcome you with open arms and is a great support source (like everyone in Chuno). For further details on the doll class, please call Chisako at 080 5133 3847 or e-mail Higashiyachisako@yahoo.com.



What to do:

Kasuga Shrine

Exhibits Noh drama costumes, masks and swords

Three-tiered Pagoda

Amida Hall, Mandara Garen, Seki Zenkoji Temple, Seki Zen garden and temple

Sword Demonstration and Sword Museum

Open 9 – 4:30, closed Tuesdays and weekends
Cost: 200 yen for the museum

Paper Doll Making Class

Contact Chisako for class times
Cost: between 1400 and 2500 yen

Where to eat:

Starbucks at Mago, マーゴ店

Starbucks is a must for coffee lovers! You can find this Starbucks at Magos. Opening hours: Mon-Sat: 10am-9pm; Sun: 9:30am- 9pm.

Texas Burger 66, テキサスバーガー66

This cute little restaurant tucked away in Seki is known for great burgers. There are a variety of burgers and other foods to choose from. Opening hours: 11am-2:30pm, 5pm-9:30pm, closed Mon.

Melon Farm Hamburgers, メロンファーム

Opening hours: 8:30am-10pm, closed Wednesday.

Akikatsu Miso Tonkatsu Shop, みそかつの店 明勝

Opening hours: 11am-2:30pm, 5pm-8:30pm, closed Sundays and every 4th Monday.

Shigeyoshi, しげ吉

This restaurant is known for great Eel. Opening hours: 11am-2pm, 5pm-8pm.

Sunday Monday, サンデーマンデー

This café has a small selection of pasta and seafood. Be careful! The entrance to the place is very very small...but you are in the right place! Opening hours: 11am to 3pm, closed Tuesdays.

Kagura, うまい膳処神楽

This is a local Izakaya which is very popular with locals. Opening hours: 11am – 11:15pm, weekdays, 11am-11:45pm Fridays and Saturdays.

Gujo

Similarly to Seki, Gujo is also located in the Chuno region but is classified as one of the Gifu RPA regions.

Gujo looks deceptively big, but like Seki, the Gujo area is made up of many smaller towns. Because of this, there are many things to see and do in the region.

Gujo itself is famous for its Obon (summer dancing festival to honor ancestors) festival. It is ranked as one of the top 3 festivals in all of Japan.



Gujo is also known for its plastic food making (which you can do yourself) and for the Gujo limestone caves.

What to do:

Ukai Fishing

Every night from May to October

White-water rafting / shower climbing

Rafting along the Nagara River, which runs from northern Gifu to Gujohachiman, is a popular activity for those with a sense of adventure. The river offers both relaxing calm pools in a beautiful scenic environment and more intense rafting experiences. There are many different companies that run both white-water rafting and shower climbing; however, it usually costs between 7,500 yen and 11,000 yen.

Skiing and Snowboarding

lift – 4000 yen, rentals – 4000 yen from December to March

Amidaga Waterfall

The Amidaga Waterfall is one of the most famous waterfalls in Japan. The large waterfall has been regarded as a place for ascetic practices which are celebrated during the “Misogi Matsuri” festival in July.

Waterfall Limestone Caves

The Otaki Limestone Cave is a 2km deep limestone cave in Gujo. At the cave’s deepest point there is a waterfall but it cannot be seen from the places inside of the cave that are opened to the public.

To get to the entrance of the cave you will need to ride on a wooden cable car through the forest which is also an experience.

Gujo Castle

Gujo castle was built in 1559 by a feudal lord. The castle overlooks the whole town and is particularly beautiful in the autumn leaf season.

Plastic food making

Gujo Hachiman has been the centre of Japan’s food replica production for over 10 years. There are several different workshops you can take to produce different types of foods such as sushi, hamburgers and even Ramen. However, you do need two or more people to book a class. Classes typically cost between 800 yen and 1200 yen.

Where to eat:

Hachiman Craft Beer Kobokobo, 郡上八幡麦酒 こぼこぼ

Opening hours: 12am-12pm; Wed: 5pm-12pm

Colombaccio, コロンバッチョ

An Italian restaurant that serves wood oven pizza. Opening hours: 11:30am-3pm, 5:30pm-11pm, closed Wed.

Local Deli, ロカデリ

Calendar – Festivals (祭り) and Events

Japan's festivals - *matsuri* (祭り) - are truly magnificent and give you an insight into the country's traditions. They are a chance for people to take time out to marvel at nature, experience Japanese culture at its most intense, and really let loose. JETs tend to be avid attendees of matsuri, with various trips happening throughout the year. Here's a brief run-down of some annual festivals in the Gifu region. (Just some we're aware of, this list is by no means complete! There are plenty more in neighboring regions and prefectures too!)

July

Chunichi Newspaper Nagaragawa Fireworks Festival, Gifu

What: The first weekend of the large 'rival' fireworks displays that are held two weekends in a row. Fireworks are set off from the Nagara riverbed with Mt. Kinka in the background. This is a perfect opportunity to buy a yukata and enjoy the festival in style!

Where: Gifu City, along the banks of the Nagara river, between the Nagara bridge and Kinka bridge.

When: Fireworks are from 7:15-8:45pm on the last Saturday of July.



August

Nagaragawa National Fireworks Display, Gifu

What: The second weekend of the 'rival' fireworks displays (as above).

Where: Gifu City, along the banks of the Nagara river between the Nagara bridge and Kinka bridge.

When: Fireworks are from 7:00-8:45pm on the first Saturday of August.

Tejikara Fireworks Festival, Gifu

What: Men carry portable shrines with firecrackers exploding from them. This festival also happens in another part of Gifu City in April.

Where: Gifu City at Nagaragawa Park (north side of Nagara bridge).

When: From 6:30-9pm on the second Sunday of August.



September

Kanomizu's Kake Dance, Gujo

What: This dance festival involves 4 dancers in traditional Japanese costumes that are adorned with long bamboo poles and decorated with flowers. They perform traditional Japanese dance wearing these costumes. There are also 126 musicians who contribute to this festival.

When: 8-9th of September

Where: Meiho, Gujo City

October

Gifu Nobunaga Festival, Gifu

What: Held in honor of Oda Nobunaga, who aimed to unite Japan from his headquarters in Gifu castle. There is a warrior procession, horses, flea markets, a marching band and more.

Where: Downtown Gifu City.

When: 10am-5pm the first Saturday and Sunday of October.



Chestnut Festival, Gifu

What: A celebration of the Reihei chestnuts that were developed locally. At this festival over 100 booths sell delicacies such as yakikuri (fried chestnuts), yakitori and other local foods. There is also entertainment, including performances by local and more prominent talent.

Where: Oga in Yamagata City

When: 9am-4pm on the first Sunday of October

Seki City Cutlery Festival, Seki

What: This festival celebrates Seki's blade-production culture and attracts people from all over Japan. The festival consists of around 50 different producers who sell different kinds of products such as kitchen knives, scissors, pocket knives and other knives.

Where: 501-3886 Honmachi, Seki-shi, Gifu. Go to Seki station via the Nagaragawa Tetsudo Line and you will only have to walk 5 minutes to Honmachi street.

When: October 6th to October 7th

December

Ikenoue Purification Ceremony, Gifu

What: Men jump into the Nagaragawa wearing only loincloths for purification and to pray for personal achievement.

Where: Gifu City in the Nagara River near the Chusetsu-bashi Bridge.

When: 3pm, 7pm and 10pm on the second Saturday in December.



January

Koinobori Dyeing Event, Gujo

What: This event is held on the coldest day of the year in Gujo (usually on January 20th and again in February). Colorfully dyed carp streamer socks are fixed as they are soaked overnight in the Yoshida River's cold running water.

Where: Yoshida River, between the Mitagase Bridge and Shinbashi Bridge.

When: 20th of January to February 10th.

March

Bairin Park Plum Festival, Gifu

What: Bairin Park has 1300 plum trees, and so is one of the best spots to enjoy the plum trees in full blossom in early March. Bairin Park also holds a festival at this time with photography contests, Japanese harp concerts and a plum bonsai exhibition. Plum blossoms are one of the first flowers to emerge every spring.

Where: Gifu City in Bairin Park (just south of Gifu station)

When: Early March



Shinsakae-unga River Cherry Blossom Festival, Kakamigahara

What: A canopy of about 1,200 cherry blossom trees line and overhang the river, with dozens of yatai (food stands) lining the pathways on either side. You'll find families and group of friends putting blankets down on the grassy riverbanks enjoying the splendor that is cherry trees in blossom!

Where: Kakamigahara, on the banks of the Shin-Sakae River and Citizen's Park. Take the Takayama JR Line east from Gifu City and get off at Naka Station.

When: Late March/early April



April

Usuzumi Sakura Hanami and Festival, Gifu

What: See one of Japan's oldest cherry trees in all its blossoming splendor!

Where: Neo

When: Early April

Dosan Festival & Gifu Festival, Gifu

What: During the day there is a parade of floats honoring Dosan Saito, a famous warlord. The Gifu Festival follows it Saturday night and involves another parade of floats and lanterns from Inaba shrine to Kogane and Kashimori shrine.

Where: Gifu City, 10 minute walk north of Meitetsu-Gifu station.

When: The first Saturday and Sunday in April



Tejikara Fire Festival, Gifu

What: Men carry portable shrines with firecrackers exploding from them. This festival also happens in a different location every August.

Where: Tejikarao Shrine, Kuranomae in Gifu. Take the Meitetsu Inuyama line to Tejikara station.

When: 6:30-9pm on the second Saturday of April

Takehana Wisteria Festival, Hashima

What: You can view the purple flower clusters of hanging wisteria around the town, but don't miss the highlight, a 300 year old wisteria tree in full bloom in front of the Takehana Betsuin Temple, which has been designated a natural prefectural treasure. On May 3rd there is a huge puppet performance followed by old floats being paraded through town while people and yatai stands flood the main streets to celebrate in the bloom of the wisteria.

Where: Hashima. 5-10 mins walk from Hashima Shiyakusho Mae Station (Meitetsu Takehana Line).

When: The festival is on May 3rd, but the wisteria is in bloom from late April to early May.



May

Nagaragawa Cormorant Fishing, Gifu

What: A religious service is held before the fishing boats make their maiden voyage, accompanied by drums, dancing and fireworks.

Where: Gifu, on the banks of the Nagara River near Gifu Park.

When: May 11th is the opening night, but ukai runs every night until October 15th.



Oze Cormorant Fishing, Gujo

What: Cormorant fishers practice their craft on the Nagara River.

Where: Oze, on the banks of the Nagara River.

When: May 11th to October 15th.

June

Daianji River Firefly Festival, Kakamigahara

What: Fireflies flit around the river at dusk, creating a dream-like atmosphere!

Where: Kakamigahara. Take the JR Takayama line from Gifu station to Unuma station. Turn left out of the station and walk north alongside the 21 or the Kiso river which heads north to Seki. You will see the firefly park (a very cute fairy garden) on the right hand side. There is viewing along the river in the area but the park is the easiest landmark to spot.

When: Fireflies appear at around 7:45pm and stay for a couple of hours from mid to late June.

Itadori Hydrangea (Ajisai) Festival, Seki

What: Every June, Itadori Villiage, in Seki City there is a Hydrangea Festival. You can see these beautiful flowers both in the mountains and beside the Itadori River. It is a beautiful escape from the city and the temperatures are always a few degrees cooler up in the mountains.

Where: Around Itadori River (〒501-2901 2340-5, Itadori, Seki-shi, Gifu)

When: June 23rd – July 1st

Health Resources

In Japan it is normal to go to a hospital to see a doctor if you have a cold because they don't have GP clinics. This will be the only way you can get a certificate to get sick leave for your school. A lot of the hospitals and clinics are also specialized (eg: respiratory, gastro-intestinal etc) so make sure you go to the appropriate hospital or clinic for your concern.

Don't forget to take your blue insurance card! It enables you to pay only 30% of the total medical cost (excludes extras like medications). If your concern was caused by an accident, like a bicycle or lifting injury, then you are also eligible to apply to have the last 30% of your bill paid for by your JET Accident Insurance. Check out the [Gifu weebly website](#) for more details.



Here are some websites that can be helpful for finding the right health centre:

- [JHI](#) can help find specific health services for you in your area and assist with making appointments
- [A Gifu Database](#) which you can search in English for English speaking doctors
- [Aichi Medical Database](#) has information based on area, type of doctor and English abilities
- [Mental Health Support](#) pages
- [AJET Counselling](#)

Recommended English Speaking Doctors

- Ohnishi Clinic (general, all ages) in Nagara-Gifu
- Miwa Clinic (pediatrics) in Nagara-Gifu

Recommended Gynecologists

- [Ohno Ladies Clinic](#), in Gifu City
- [Ito Ladies Clinic](#), in between Nishigifu and Motosu
- [Iida Ladies Clinic](#) in Nagoya
- Sakuradai Clinic, in Seki



Recommended Dentists

- [Yamanaka Dental Clinic](#), an English speaking dentist in Nagoya
Address: 〒456-0058 Aichi Prefecture, Nagoya, 熱田区六番2丁目1-2 7
Phone: 052-652-2804

Recommended Hairdressers

- [Cockney Hair Design](#) in Nagoya has a few English speaking staff and the main hairdresser worked in England for a few years and is used to cutting foreigners' hair.
- [Agu Hair](#) near Meitetsu Gifu also has and is owned by an English speaker who did an internship in London for few months. He knows how to dye and cut foreigners' hair. However, you need to make an appointment before going.
- [Stateroom](#) in Nagoya is also owned and run by Hiroshi Morita who speaks English. He worked in New York as a hairstylist for over 10 years and knows how to cut and treat foreign hair. However, you need to make an appointment before going.

Other important places for your reference

Immigration Offices (名古屋入国管理局岐阜出張所)

Anything to do with your visa will be processed here. Hopefully you don't have to go through any painful processes here, especially if you're not staying longer than your 3 years visa. But this might be useful for some of our JET unicorns or for people bringing over partners and families.

Gifu International Center (GIC)

This is a support center for foreign people living in Gifu Prefecture. The center conducts activities that promote multicultural awareness among people living here, as well as translating and interpreting services in Portuguese, Chinese, Tagalog and English. One very cool thing they do is three way interpreting over the phone between individuals and government agencies (i.e. immigration, tax, city hall, police, NOT your internet provider or your boyfriend). This only costs the price of the phone call. It's on the second floor so make sure you look up when looking for it!



We hope that you enjoy your time in Gifu!