

The Hida Guide



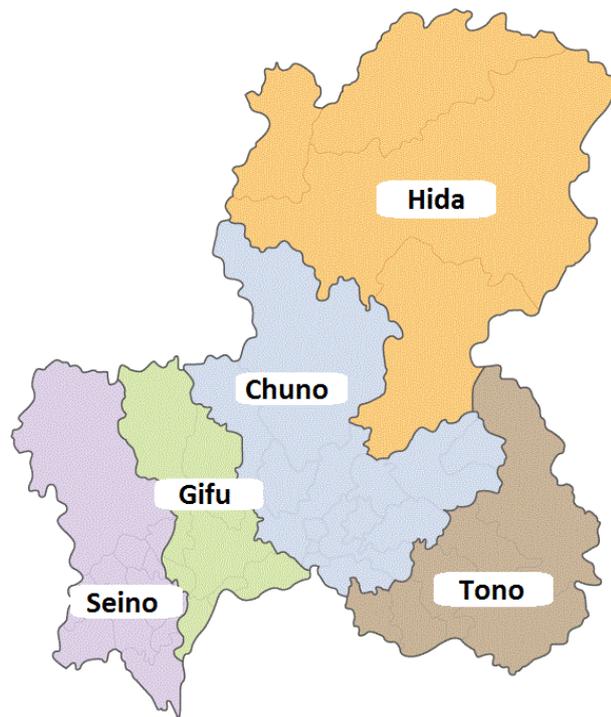
2018

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Where am I?

The Five Regions of Gifu



Once its own province, Hida is the northernmost of Gifu's 5 regions. Located amid the Japanese Alps, it is famous for ski slopes, hot springs, woodwork, and well-preserved historical districts. Hida has long, snowy winters and humid summers, with very brief spring and fall seasons. The first kanji in Hida, 飛, means 'to fly,' and 驒 is a 'dappled gray horse.' Along with wood carvings, horse figures and statues are common throughout Hida. Food in Hida is also famous, from the nationally recognized Hida beef to Takayama ramen and Hida soba.

ALTs in Hida work in one of the following municipalities:

下呂市	げろし	Gero City
高山市	たかやまし	Takayama City
飛驒市	ひだし	Hida City
白川御	しらかわご	Shirakawa Village

Map of Hida



About ten years ago, mergers in Hida led to these numerous villages and towns being combined into cities, making Takayama city geographically the largest city in Japan. From north to south, Hida is made up of Kawai, Miyagawa, Kamioka, and Furukawa. The largest city, Takayama, includes Kamitakara, Kokufu, Nyukawa, Shokawa, Kiyomi, Miya, Kuguno, Asahi, and Takane. Shirakawa, determined to maintain its individuality, chose not to merge into a city, and Gero combines Maze, Hagiwara, Osaka, and Kanayama with central Gero.

Getting In and Getting Out

Transportation

Hida by Car & Bike

車 Owning a Car in Hida

Most ALTs in Hida buy a car, due to the general impracticality of public transportation in most areas. In the winter, transportation by other means is difficult and driving can be a struggle if you've never lived in a snowy area before — snow tires, an ice scraper, and a high-powered defroster are things you'll want to be equipped with for the winter, and AC and a booming system will help get you through the summer.

The ALTs in Hida have a long-standing relationship with Shimamitsu Motors in Takayama (0577-32-0578) for buying and servicing cars. They will work out payment plans for purchasing cars, servicing them, and paying *shaken* (vehicle inspection) around an ALT's monetary situation – something very few businesses will do. There are no rental companies in the area willing to rent out to ALTs on a long term basis as we don't have any standing relationship with those companies.

For navigation, most ALTs use Google Maps, as most local roads don't have names. The major roads, however, do. Route 41 runs north-to-south, and intersects with other highways leading to Matsumoto and Fukui. The Tokai Hokuriku Expressway connects Hida to Japan's convenient, but expensive, system of tollways.

自転車 Getting Around by Bike

If your predecessor doesn't leave one for you, there are many shops in Takayama where you can purchase a bike. Here are just a few:

Hara Cycle (0577-32-1657)

Kawakami Cycle (0577-32-4056)

Cycle Shop Tagashira (0577-32-1153)

A Brief Guide to the Takayama Line

If you've been to Japan, you probably know how extensive and convenient the train lines are. However, Hida is a rural area, so adjust your expectations accordingly. There is a single north-south train line in Hida, with express trains running every 1.5-2 hours, and local trains about every 2.5 hours. Though infrequent, the trains are still a great way to travel, if you plan it out in advance. Beware the last train! Here are some tips for riding the trains in Hida.

Planning Your Trip

The train schedule can be found by using public transportation websites such as <http://www.hyperdia.com/en/> or, if you have some ability reading and understanding Japanese, <http://www.jorudan.co.jp/>.

Many stations on the Takayama line are common Japanese town names, so if you look up a station and get an itinerary with 5 transfers, try putting "Hida" in front of the name to get the right one (i.e. "Hida Furukawa" rather than "Furukawa").

Tickets

Aside from Takayama, Gero, and Furukawa, just about every train station in Hida is unmanned and has no ticket-purchasing machine. There are also no automated ticket gates, so Suica, Pasma, Icard, & other type of metro passes can't be used in Hida. If you board a train at an unmanned station, you will need to buy your ticket from a train staff member (flag him/her down with a "*Sumimasen! (destination station name) made ikimasu*") after you board the train.

If you are boarding an express train (called the Wideview, literally ワイドビュー in Japanese) in Takayama or Gero, you need to purchase a ticket in advance. In addition to the regular fare, you will also pay a seat fare for reserved or unreserved seating.

One-Man Local Trains

The majority of local trains in Hida are called “ワンマン” (*wan-man [one man]*), because the only person staffing the train is the conductor. If you are on a one-man train and getting off at a minor station (AKA not Takayama or Gero), you need to present your ticket and payment to the conductor at the front of the train before getting off.

A one-man train can be identified in several ways:

1. If you board a one-man train at an unmanned station, the doors **will not** automatically open. You need to **press a button** to open the door. This is so the train doesn't print tickets unless someone is actually boarding. You must **board from the rear door of the first car**, because this is where the (only) orange ticket dispenser is. The ticket says the number of the station where you got on, so you will be charged the correct amount. At the front of the train, there is an electronic board displaying the prices.
2. Sometimes, a local train will turn into a one-man train midway through your journey. You'll be able to tell because the announcements will revert to a **pre-recorded female** voice, rather than the usual barely-audible nasal train guy.
3. If you are not on a one-man train, the doors will open and close automatically at each stop, and a JR worker will be walking through the train between stops to sell tickets. Most people have prepaid tickets, so if you don't ask to buy a ticket, they'll assume you already have one. You can exit via any door, but make sure to give your ticket to one of the train dudes before you take off.

Which Train Am I Taking?

Southbound trains will be for Takayama [if you're in the north], Mino-Ota, Gifu, or Nagoya (In kanji, respectively: 高山、美濃太田、岐阜、名古屋).

Northbound trains will be for Takayama [if you're in the south], Hida-Furukawa, Inotani or Toyama (In kanji, respectively: 高山、飛騨古川、猪谷、富山).

Local trains look like this



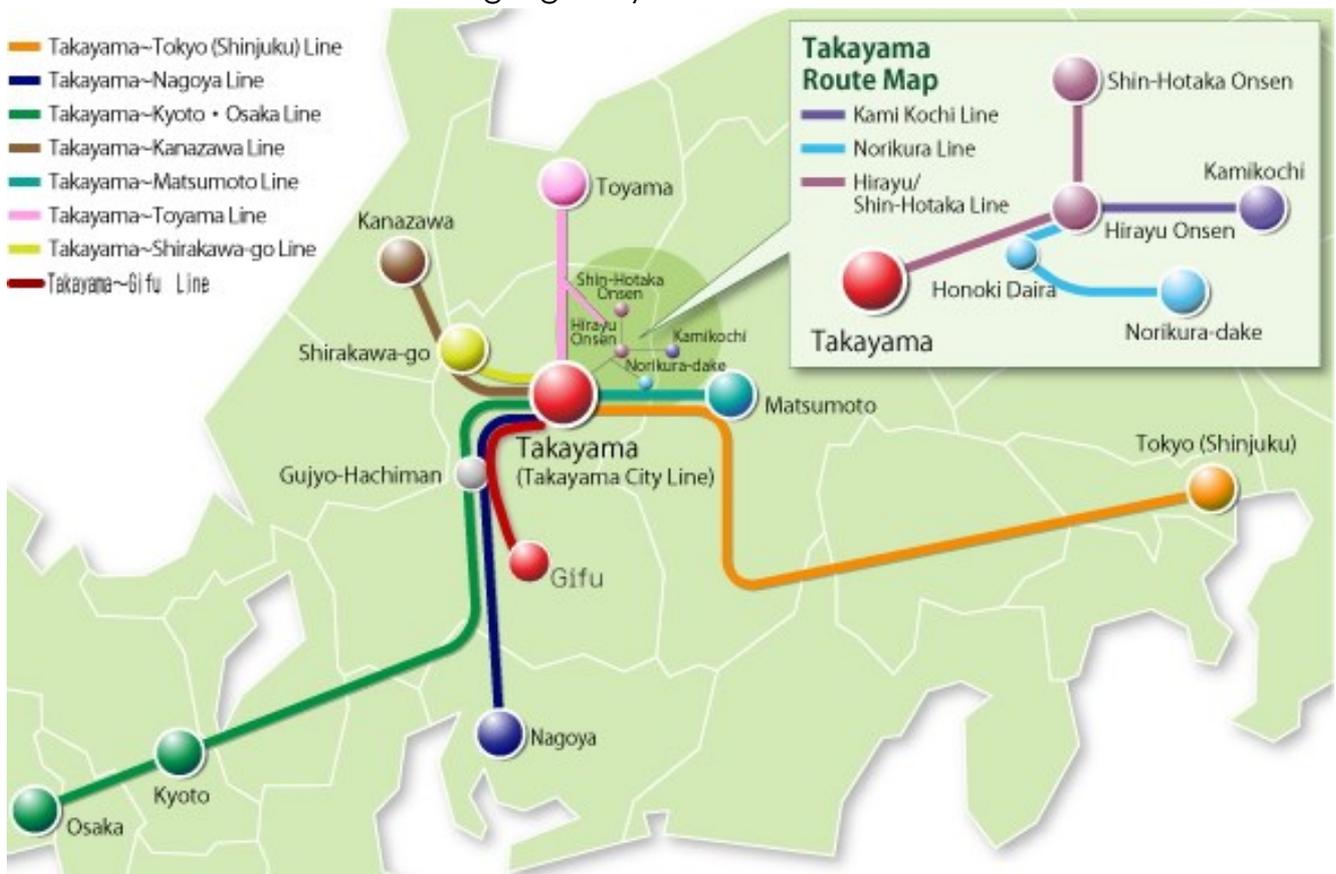
Express trains look like this



Hida by Bus

Most highway and regional buses are operated by the Takayama Nohi Bus Center, sometimes abbreviated as “Takayama BC.” Nohi Bus’s highway routes are the **cheapest** (and usually fastest) way to get to Nagoya, Tokyo, or Kyoto/Osaka from Hida. You can purchase tickets in advance online or at the Takayama BC. While it is possible to purchase the day of your trip, be aware most highway buses have reserved seating and the buses on the popular routes will often be full during high tourism seasons.

Nohi Bus offers the following highway bus routes:



See <http://www.nouhibus.co.jp/english/> for routes, departure times, and online reservations. Be aware that except during summer, there are no overnight buses.

Nohi Bus also offers local buses between Takayama and Gero, Furukawa, Kamioka, Kiyomi, Kamitakara (Miza), Shirakawa (Amotoge) and Shokawa several times per day. Schedules for the local buses can be found at the Takayama Bus Center or any bus station along the route. Tickets can be purchased at the Takayama Bus Center, but the fare can also be paid directly on the bus.

Events Calendar

Regional Festivals and Where to Find Them

In addition to the following events, most villages have their own festivals sometime during Golden Week. Ask your teachers for your village's festival dates!

Early Jan. – End Mar. New Season Sake

Sake-tasting and promotional events at some of Takayama's sake breweries.

January 15 Santeramairi [三寺参] (Furukawa)

Candles made of snow line the streets, and lanterns are floated on the town's canals, as young women in kimono visit three main temples to pray for love.

February (2nd Saturday of the month) Asahi Ice Festival [Hyoutenka no Mori 氷点下の森] (Asahi)

A small winter ice light-up in Takayama's Asahi village.

February Konpira [金毘羅宵祭] (Kamioka)

A big parade with lots of sake, followed by group performances.

February 3rd Setsubun (Takayama)

Bean-throwing ceremonies celebrating spring at the Hida Kokubunji Temple and Daijōji Temple.

April Garakuta Market (Takayama)

Held on the 1st Sunday of every month from April through October. An antique market in Sanmachi Street featuring old folk crafts as well as antiques.

Ideyu Morning & Evening Markets (Gero)

These are markets where local residents bring their homegrown vegetables and other specialties. The morning markets run from April to late November; the evening markets from July through to late August.

April 2nd Living Doll Festival [Ikibina Matsuri 生きびな祭] (Miya)

Young, single women and children dress up as living representations of traditional dolls, which are usually on display for the Doll Festival. It features a small parade around the streets of Miya starting from Minashi Shrine and including performances inside of the shrine.

April 14th – 15th	Takayama Spring Festival (Takayama) A festival that spans over two days and is considered one of the three most beautiful festivals in Japan. The Spring Festival is hosted by the Hie Shrine and features a variety of exquisite floats and puppet performances.
April 19th – 20th	Furukawa Festival [Okoshi Daiko 起し太鼓] (Furukawa) A rowdy night time festival starting from the afternoon of the 19 th in which a large drum is pulled through narrow streets and teams of half-naked drunk men try to out-muscle their rivals and attach their herald drums to the large drum!
April (4th Saturday of the month)	Spring Festival (Kamioka) Features noon and evening parades with a lion dance and other traditional dances.
Late April – Early May	Cherry Blossom Season (Takayama)
May 4th – 5th	Hida Sousha Shrine Festival (Takayama) The annual festival of the grand sanctuary enshrining the guardian gods of Hida. Features a worship service and Kaguradai music and dance.
May 15th	Opening of the Norikura Skyline Road
June 26th	Open-Air Bath Day (Hirayu) A stamp-rally and walking course, but more importantly, the onsen is free!
July (early weekends)	Hida Kiyomi Lavender Festival
July 1st	Opening of Hida Takayama Camping Site (till September)
July (last Saturday)	Chokeramaika [ちよけらまいか] (Takayama) “Chokeru” is Hida dialect for “fuzakeru” or, screw around. Come see crazy costumed groups parade and dance their way down Sanmachi Street.
July 21st	Ayu Fish Festival (Maze)
July 30th	Hida Takayama Fireworks Festival Held at the Miyagawa Riverbank Park, from 7:30pm – 9:00pm.
August (early)	Kokufu Summer Joy Festa (Takayama)

August 1st – 3rd	Gero Hot Springs Festival (Gero) A three-day festival in Gero involving dancing dragons, fireworks, a mikoshi parade, and music!
August 1st – 15th	Ema-ichi (Takayama) Paintings of horses originating in the practice of dedicating real horses or wooden horses to temples and shrines are on sale at this traditional fair at Jinya.
August 6th	Tanabata Festival (Takayama) In Hida, a handful of holidays are celebrated a month later than in other parts of Japan, as Hida goes by the lunar calendar. Tanabata, the Star Festival, is one of these. The Star Festival takes place at the Matsunoki Tanabata Park.
August 9th	Hand-held Fireworks Festival [Tezutsu Hanabi 手筒花火] (Takayama) Fireworks contained in bamboo send flames and sparks fifteen feet into the air. The demonstration is held near the Yayoi-bashi Bridge on the Miyagawa River from 7pm.
August 11th – 13th	Evening Market (Takayama) An evening market held in front of Jinya with demonstrations of local crafts and various performances on an outdoor stage.
Mid-August	Hagiwara Music Festival & Furusato Festival (Hagiwara)
August 16th – 17th	Bon-Odori Dances
August 19th	Shoro-Okuri Floating of commemorative lanterns on the Miyagawa River.
Late August	Maze Fireworks (Maze)
September (4th Friday of the month)	The Fox Fire Festival [Kitsunebi Matsuri kitsune火祭] (Furukawa) A nighttime parade in which locals dress up as foxes and re-enact a wedding at the Okura Inari Shrine. Lots of torches, candles, and a large bonfire at the end.
Oct. – Mid-Nov.	Autumn Foliage Season (Takayama)

October 9th – 10th

Takayama Fall Festival (Takayama)

A festival that spans over two days and is considered one of the three most beautiful festivals in Japan. The Fall Festival is hosted by the Sakurayama Hachimangu and features a variety of exquisite floats and puppet performances.

October 14th – 19th

Doburoku Festival [どぶろく祭] (Shirakawa)

A week-long sake drinking festival where participants pay 300 yen for a small cup that they can use to obtain unlimited amounts of the special chunky, unrefined, white sake called Doburoku.

Mid-October

Hida Shokawa Hometown Festival & Renjishi

30 "lions" gather from the shrines in Shokawa to put on dances.

November 3rd

Sukuna Festival (Nyukawa)

Local produce festival featuring ancient heirloom rice mocha and sukuna pumpkin.

December (every Saturday)

Winter Fireworks Musical Festival (Gero)

Brilliant fireworks are shot into the air with accompanying music in the clear sky. These performances are held every Saturday in December, but the last performance is a special Christmas program that's particularly spectacular!

Hospital

Takayama Red Cross Hospital (Takayama)

0577-32-1111

The largest hospital in Hida and handles everything from emergency room visits to basic dentistry. There's always a staff member around who can speak English and translate when necessary. Open 24/7.

Kumiai Kosei Hospital (Takayama)

0577-32-1115

A nice, clean hospital also located in Takayama city. They handle just as much as the Takayama Red Cross Hospital does and this is where some ALTs do their annual health check.

Hida Municipal Hospital (Kamioka)

0578-82-1150

Kamioka hospital is very nice, and multiple people who work there are in the local English conversation group and speak English.

Chiropractor

Kawai Chiropractic (Furukawa)

A great chiropractor with a practice in Furukawa.

Dentist

Mizuguchi Dental Clinic (Takayama)

**0577-35-
0648**

Located across from the Red Cross hospital, Dr. Mizuguchi is a dentist used and trusted by many ALTs. Though his English isn't fluent, he's always able to communicate.

The Athlete's Guide to Hida

Gyms, Ski Slopes, and Hiking Trails

Gyms In Hida

Big Arena (Takayama)

0577-43-3333

As you might guess from the name, it's Takayama's largest gym. Membership is free, but requires you to sit through a two-hour orientation only offered twice a month. Use of the facilities is only 100 yen per hour. Offers open sports classes for badminton, volleyball, etc.

High Mount (Takayama)

Indoor rock climbing! Shoe rentals are available, but larger sizes may not be available.

Ryu's Style (Takayama)

A boxing gym that also offers hot yoga. Startup costs are about 15,000 yen, and membership costs 10,000 yen per month for unlimited usage. Facility faces the 41.

Sakuragaoka Gym (Kamioka)

In Kamioka, located by the middle school.

Kuguno Taiikukan (Kuguno)

Closed Mondays

0577-52-3490

A 3-floor gym with gateball, volleyball, basketball, badminton, ping-pong, and a training room. Reserve half of any room for an hour for 800 yen. Open 8:30am to 10:00pm.

Uegahira Sun Village (Gero)

Closed Wednesdays

Located near Active in central Gero.

Asagiri Gym (Hagiwara)

0576-52-1514

Open daily from 8:30am to 9:30pm. Reserve half a room of volleyball, basketball, badminton, handball, or table tennis. Prices range from 410 to 610 yen for an hour. Outdoor tennis/baseball facilities are also available for reservation.

Hiking Trails

Hotakegayama

Easy access from Hagiwara.

Gozenyama

Difficult to get to, but a good climb.

Ontake

The entrance to this hike is in Gero, and this hike is a “stay-the-night climb.”

Norikura Skyline

Goshikigahara

Gorgeous hiking trail on Mt. Norikura, but expensive—hiking here is limited, and requires a fee for nature preservation.

Kamikochi

Marathons

Daikon Marathon (Yamanomura)	September
Ultramarathon (Takayama)	June
Maze Ayu Marathon (Maze)	October

Skiing

Skiing and snowboarding are hugely popular in Hida, and a big tourist draw. Schools often have Alpine skiing clubs, and often have school visits to the local ski resort for Ski School. The ski season generally begins in mid-December, and goes until March.

Recommended ski resorts include:

- Nagareha (Kamioka)
- Honoki (Hirayu – far east of Takayama)
- Arkopia (Kuguno)
- Mont Deus (Miya)
- Takasu Snow Park (Takasu)
- Dinoland (Takasu)
- Chao Ontake (Takane)

Hida Onsen Guide

From North to South

If you're planning to go to the onsen, remember to bring your own towel or you'll have to buy one there. Most people are good with a small sports towel. Japanese onsen are separated for men and women. Clothing – including bathing suits – are not allowed in the water.

Nagareha

600 yen

Off route 41, a great place to soak after skiing. Open 10am to 9pm.

Shijuhattachi Onsen (Kokufu)

600 yen

Located near the base of the 48 Waterfalls hiking trail, this onsen is popular for its newly designed baths and whirlpools.

Hirayu no Mori (Hirayu)

500 yen

One of the nicest onsen in Hida, if you're willing to drive 50 minutes out east.

Associa Hotel Onsen (Takayama)

1150 yen

Perhaps the best in central Takayama, Associa offers gorgeous views of the city. The infinity style onsen, "Tenbou no yu" alternates between men and women everyday so call ahead to check whether or not it's your day! Go at sunset for a great experience!

Green Hotel Onsen (Takayama)

1000 yen

Small, but elegant, with a convenient location 10 minutes from the station. There is a free foot onsen in front of the hotel, and a huge gift shop with more souvenir samples than you can (but will) eat. A 16-ticket book can be purchased for 10,000 yen.

Garyuu no Sato (Miya)

600 yen

Located right along the 41 between Takayama and Miya. Great place to go for a cheap but enjoyable soak!

Shirakawa no Yu (Shirakawa)

700 yen

Located in between the small grocery store and the traffic light coming out of the tunnel that leads from the major parking lot.

Shiramizu no Yu (Hirase) 600 yen
A 15 minute drive from Shirakawa, Shimizu no Yu is a higher quality onsen in a beautiful town with amazing scenery and almost no tourists. Open 11am-8pm.

Oka no Yu (Shokawa) 700 yen
Right next to Shokawa Junior High School.

Himeshaga no Yu (Osaka) 650 yen
10am-9pm, Closed
Wednesday

Go to Osaka for the waterfalls, stay for the gorgeous rotemburo. A 15-minute detour off the 41 in Hida-Osaka. Food + onsen plans are available.

Miki no Sato (Maze) 700 yen
A huge onsen complex, it will spoil you for other onsens. Features a creative variety of pools, jets, and saunas, it's definitely a must-see. Annual passes available.

Shimizu no Yu (Hagiwara) 500 yen
This small but gorgeous onsen was recently remodeled for a visit by the Emperor. Located off the highway between Gero and Takayama. Annual passes available.

Gero Rotemburo (Gero) Free
A public onsen near the big bridge in Gero. Open (and visible) to anyone, anytime.

Yamagata-ya (Gero) 800 yen
Along Gero's main road of onsens, Yamagata-ya offers a small but private onsen with an indoor and outdoor bath.

Exploring the Hida Region

The North

Hida, Furukawa, Miyagawa, and Kamioka

Dining Guide: Restaurants & Cafes

Kitchen Kyabingu (Furukawa)

A cozy lunch spot in the historic district that serves Hida beef. Try the beef curry with rice, or the Kyabingu Teishoku (set menu) with sizzling steak on a hot iron plate.

Ichinomachi Coffee House (Furukawa)

This friendly little coffee house features the best homemade curry around. The quiet atmosphere offers a good place to read, write, study, or meet friends.

Matsuki Cake Shop (Furukawa)

Near the Surugaya Supermarket.

Ramen Hiro (Furukawa)

Run by a taciturn man who makes a tasty tomato chili ramen!

The Sky Dome (Kamioka)

Kamioka's Michi-no-Eki, the Sky Dome has a nice sit-down restaurant and Japanese-style fast food.

Keyaki (Kamioka)

A yakiniku restaurant on the main road that runs along the river.

ALTs Recommend:

"There is a small shrine in Miyagawa, and there are several small temples in Furukawa. There are also koi in the Seto river which runs through Furukawa."

"Great [cherry blossom] views by Kamioka Castle and a big cherry blossom tree that gets lit up at night by the community center."

Places of interest in Kamioka include "Kamioka Castle (by the middle school), Tachidaruma (the largest standing up statue of Daruma in Japan) (up on a hill that runs up from by the elementary school), Rail Mountain Bike (riding a bike contraption on the old railroad tracks that used to service Kamioka station). Closed on Wednesdays and for groups ranging from 2 to 6 people. Reservation required. Ema Yakata (a restored lord's house that you can tour)"

"Kamioka is very proud of its 'Kamioka tonchan', a sort of soup/stew that they often sell during the winter festival. They also sell frozen Kamioka tonchan in Valor."

Takayama North

Kokufu, Nyukawa, and Kamitakara

Dining Guide: Restaurants & Cafes

Itakura Ramen (Nyukawa)	8:30am-5pm	0577-78- 1138
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Kaiten Zushi (Kokufu)

Next to Apita – for cheap rotating sushi in Kokufu.

Chinese Restaurant (Kamitakara)

Reservation recommended! Located by Hokuryo JHS.

ALTs Recommend:

"Sakurano Koen, along the river opposite the Kokufu Bypass, is full of cherry trees, and very beautiful during sakura season. On weekends it's also very crowded with other Hanami-ers. If you're looking for secluded or peaceful, look elsewhere."

"The 48 Waterfalls [in Kokufu] is a nice hike, offers some pretty views. It's about 45 minutes to the top."

"Ankokuji temple is a National Historic Treasure, and worth a visit."

Sightseeing around Nyukawa: "Norikura, Goshikigahara, Hida limestone cave, and Tomato house."

Central Takayama

Dining Guide: Restaurants & Cafes

Center 4 Hamburgers Closed Wednesdays 0577-36-4527
tiger-center4.com

Best hamburgers to be found in Japan, Center 4 is an ALT favorite. The owners, Gaku and Yukari, can speak English and have a great relationship with the Hida ALTs.

Jakson Curry Closed Thursdays 0577-36-1810
A small restaurant near Takayama station with great Japanese curry.

Café Ichii Closed Wednesdays 0577-34-9016
cafeichii.shopinfo.jp

This hilltop café is a great place to eat in the Higashiyama area. The owner, "Ichii Mama," loves practicing her English with the ALTs that come in.

Chapala Closed Sundays 0577-34-9800
Takayama's only Mexican restaurant, featuring average Mexican food and Coronas. A five-minute walk from Takayama station. Open for dinner only (from 6:00-10:30pm)

Choukai Closed Thursdays 0577-34-5514
Great teishoku, tonkatsu, and udon, right off the 41. Try the crab cream croquettes!

Kanki ("Caesar Salad")
Known for its Caesar Salads, most people don't know it by its original name.

Mahal 0577-32-7055
Located near Nishi High School, Mahal serves delicious Indian/Nepalese curry and enormous naan.

Bar Fiore Closed Tuesdays 0577-34-3282
A great place for handmade pasta, and delicious pizzas. Reservations are advised.

Hamazushi
Cheap and delicious kaiten-zushi, with plenty of side dishes to choose from. Located just off the 41 near Edion.

Pizza California
A bit expensive, but good quality pizza. Located in Chijima-machi.

Mina Vieta

Closed Wednesdays

0577-57-7788

Nice Italian food. Open 11:00-2:30 for lunch, 5pm-9pm for dinner.

Tsubaki Café

Located on the Ekimae Chuo street in front of the station, Tsubaki makes a great matcha latte and has nice seating area on the second floor for studying.

Koma

A bit narrow, Koma is the place to go for good okonomiyaki in the Kokubunji neighborhood. Located close to city hall.

Nakau

Inexpensive Taiwanese food, right across from Piua.

Wasabi

A classy café right across from the Kanshokan (library) with lots of delicious drinks.

Restaurant ShikiClosed Wednesdays, 2nd Tues.

0577-35-2335

Right in front of Kogyo High School, Shiki does yakiniku and Japanese cuisine.

Icchou (一丁)

Closed Thursdays

0577-35-2051

Near Ogaki Bank and Valor, Icchou has great chashu ramen.

Izakayas**Ogiya**

Open until 2:00am

A 12-minute walk from Takayama Station, Ogiya has great yakitori and a well-priced nomihodai for two hours of all-you-can-drink alcohol. Right across from Monkey House Hyaku-en shop.

Bols

"A faux Irish pub, Bols offers Guinness, decidedly mediocre food, and an (almost always) empty establishment in which to bring 10 of your friends."

Murasaki aka "Spiderman"

Big beers, 10 minutes from Takayama station.

Bakeries, Confectioners, & Specialty Foods**Trainbleu**

Closed Wednesday

0577-33-398

Takayama's most famous bakery, Trainbleu is located off the 41, but is notorious for having a line out the door of hungry customers.

Seize	Closed Wednesday	0577-34-9580
An excellent Western-style cake shop.		
Chez Gou	Closed Thursday	0577-33-6635
Delicious confectioner's shop. Located right behind Aoyama.		
Tora-ya		0577-32-0050
For traditional Japanese sweets. Located in Sanmachi.		
Anew		0577-36-4783
A health food store for organic foods, brown rice, soy butter, and more.		
Okaasan		0577-36-1057
A macrobiotic store with small health and import sections. Good for canned beans and nut butters.		
Chocolat Beli	Closed Monday	0577-62-8899
Located in Ishiura just west of the train tracks, known for their macarons.		

ALTs Recommend

For viewing cherry blossoms: "Toushougu (across from Valor Home Center up a tiny hill, there's a machinami bus stop) and Nakabashi (the red bridge)." "There is a river near Hida High School that has amazing cherry blossom trees. There are some benches and grassy areas facing the river."

"Hida no Sato is nearby, you can see the Gasho-zukuri in Takayama!"

"The Higashiyama temple walk is a great way to see lots of historic buildings in town."

"Wandering the central area of the city on foot is a great way to spend a weekend. There are tons of shops and cute cafes. Try talking with the shopkeepers and vendors at the morning markets to get recommendations for things to do and places to see. They're extremely friendly and give great tips."

Takayama South

Miya, Kuguno, Asahi and Takane

Dining Guide: Restaurants & Cafes

White Runse (Miya) Closed Mondays 0577-53-2831

Famous for apple pie, White Runse is a gorgeous mini-hotel/restaurant/cake shop often booked for weddings (check their online calendar). Dinner by reservation only. Try their cake buffet in early July! <https://www.whiterunse.jp>

Nakajin (Miya) 0577-53-3456

Great handmade soba and udon noodles. The menu is limited to noodles, but the food is delicious. Venue has a beautiful outdoor Japanese garden. Reservation recommended.

Gaoro (Miya) 0577-53-2246

Chinese restaurant in front of Minashi Shrine.

Mikadoya (Kuguno) 0577-52-2005

Right in front of Kuguno station. Try the curry udon!

Michi no Eki (Asahi)

A nice place to go if you're interested in green curry. They make most of their food with the yomogi plant which results in green curry, green udon and green everything.

Rinrin Café (Asahi)

A cute place to eat—nice lunch sets and really cute and delicious looking parfaits.

ALTs Recommend

“Miya is known for a 1,100-year-old sakura called Garyuuzakura (literally “Sleeping Dragon Sakura). When it blooms in late April, you can get festival food and eat in front of the tree.”

“Minashi Shrine in Miya (Also known as Suimu Shrine) used to be the premier shrine of the Hida area. It hosts a lot of massive and old Japanese cedar trees, as well as the statues of horses which legend says used to gallop around Miya eating the farmers' crops. A great time to see Minashi is during the Ikibina Matsuri.”

“Kuguno is a major producer of apples and peaches in Hida. You can get lots of fresh goods at Nagisa's Michi-no-Eki. Of course, there's also Arkopia Ski Resort for the winter, and Kamigumi Sakura is beautiful in the spring. Do no Sora is a free museum/park with restored village remains from the Jomon period. Also, check out the Ayu fishing competition in summer.”

The West

Kiyomi, Shokawa, and Shirakawa

Dining Guide: Restaurants & Cafes

Tenboudai (Shirakawa)

Located within the tourist souvenir shop. It's the only viewpoint in town, so it's easy to find. Very traditional Japanese food, and there is an English menu. Try the Kattakedon – a hot pot of rice, meat, and a raw egg on top.

Kisami (Shokawa)

A wonderful little sushi and udon shop right next to the Michi-no-eki in Shokawa.

Muroya (Shokawa)

A good soba and tonkatsu place. They have the absolute BEST zaru-soba.

Suika (Shokawa)

A nice Chinese restaurant that averages around 1000-1500 yen per meal.

High Time (Shokawa)

A café located right next to Shokawa no Sato. They have good coffee and hot chocolate and wonderful lunch specials.

ALTs Recommend:

“Shokawa has a 400+ year old cherry tree that is really popular. That area is very beautiful. There are many trees across the lake from where the old cherry trees are, and it makes for a fantastic view -- picnicking there doesn't work very well though, so going into Takayama for hanami picnics is probably a better option. Picture taking though, Shokawa-zakura is perfect.”

“Summer time swimming is fantastic in Shokawa. Fishing is good here, in winter, there is an ice-climbing wall that is created for those adventurous enough to try it. You can also find tubing and snowshoeing groups here.”

“Hirase is a beautiful town with amazing scenery and has almost no tourists. You can fish or swim in the river, hike in the mountains, or explore the forests. However, there are no gassho-zukuri houses in Hirase.”

“People come to Shirakawa-Go from all over Japan and the world to see the gassho-zukuri houses. These 400 year old houses have unique thatched rooves that were developed to help them withstand the over 2 meters of snow that falls during the harsh winters.”

“The わだ (Wada) house is a gassho-zukuri house that has been converted into a museum. It is very popular because it is one of the few gassho-zukuri houses you can walk around the interior of. It contains props and information about the construction of the houses. It is all in Japanese and I don't think has an English guide.”

“The おぎまちお神社 (Ogimachi jinja) is quite a nice shrine. You can take pictures there, walk around the grounds, and peer up at the massive and ancient trees that are considered to be gods. I believe there is a small museum or house with information about it.”

“There is also a main museum about Shirakawa-Go and gassho-zukuri houses located at 道の駅. However, this is located in いいじま (Iijima) village, a 15 minute walk north of the main tourist area of Ogimachi. I only recommend it if you have extra time.”

“You should come see the gassho-zukuri houses during winter. During two weekends a month the village holds "Light-up" events for a couple hours at night. The houses are illuminated from within creating amazing scenery.”

“Parking in the Seseragi lot and walking across the bridge into Ogimachi, the main tourist area, is probably the most convenient way to park.”

The South

Gero, Hagiwara, Osaka, Maze, and Kanayama

Dining Guide: Restaurants & Cafes

Siegfrida (Hagiwara)

0576-53-3020

A delicious & classy specialty cake shop in Hagiwara.

Midori no Yakata (Hagiwara)

A coffee shop in Hagiwara decorated with antique clocks. Try the "ring toast"!

Kurakko

A teppanyaki restaurant that serves okonomiyaki and monjayaki.

Kiryu Coffee

Recommended for morning service.

Shikikou

Restaurant for standard Chinese food.

Touan (Gero)

6pm-midnight

A Chinese restaurant near downtown Gero. Get the Gero milk ramen and the best tebasaki in Japan. Open for dinner only.

Enzou

Try the tomato-don!

Takeshi (Gero)

A sushi/udon place in the alleyway in front of A-Coop

Maru-hachi Shokudo

Closed Tuesdays

0576-26-2077

Open 11am-5pm, Maru-hachi is famous for Keichan!

Crepe Shop "Un de Plaisir" (Hagiwara)

A delicious crepe shop in front of the station. The owner, Mika, "speaks fantastic English and is super kawaii."

Riga de Coco

Located on the 41, near the giant Zebra sign. Takes a while to make food but has good homemade cakes and lunch.

Uosen (Hagiwara)

For kaiten-zushi!

Matsuba (Hagiwara)

Fellow

A really good Italian restaurant

ALTs Recommend:

For cherry blossoms: "Hidagawa Koen," "Sakuradani Park, off the 41 (Google Map it!)"

"Osaka (north Gero) [is famous] for waterfalls, Zensho-ji for a temple, and Kuzuhachiman for a shrine. There are the remains of a castle in Hagiwara too."

"We have bowling, ayu-catching (like with your hands) in the summer, 8 free foot hot springs, egg ice cream, and fireworks by the river almost every Saturday night, sometimes with music. Also, rock climbing."

"Hagiwara is home to an amazing sake brewery, Tenryo. It also has possibly the best butcher's in the world, Tengu. They sell genuine authentic streaky bacon, New Zealand lamb, and award winning sausages."

For Further Reference

A Compilation of Online Resources

General

Gifu JETs

<http://gifujets.weebly.com/>

News and events, contract information, tax tips, driving questions, Japanese culture, and general help for any questions or problems that may arise while you're in Japan.

Gifu AJET Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/102940926826/>

If you're a Facebook user, get connected with other Gifu JETs and get notifications about AJET events.

Gifu Prefecture Tourism and Events

travel.kankou-gifu.jp/en/

Importing Goods

There are no specialty stores devoted to foreign goods in Hida. There are Kaldi Coffee Farm shops in Toyama and Gifu city and there is also a Seijo Ichii on the bottom floor of Gifu Station. There is also a Costco near Centrair Airport, for American goods in bulk. But if you don't have the time or means to go that far, foreign products can be imported in bulk and delivered to your place from the following websites:

The Flying Pig

www.theflyingpig.com

An independent wholesaler of Costco goods.

The Meat Guy

www.themeatguy.jp

High quality meat products, from Italian sausage to kangaroo loin.

Foreign Buyers Club

www.fbcusa.com

Foreign foods and products, mostly from America.

