

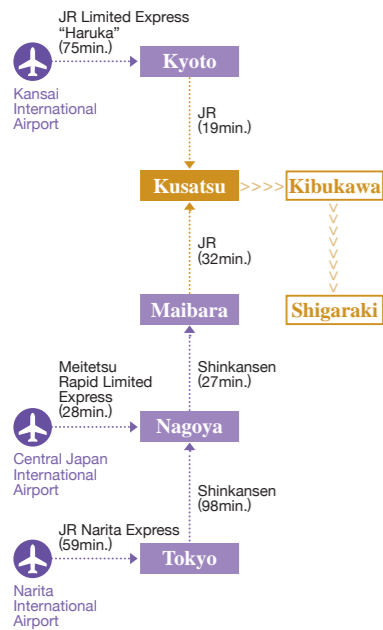
## ACCESS

### By car

- Take the Meishin Highway to the Ritto interchange. Koka is a 30 minute drive down Route 1. Additionally, we are also a 30 minute drive from the Kusatsu Tanakami interchange, and a 15 minute drive from the Ryo interchange.
- Take the Higashi Meihan Highway to the Kameyama interchange. Koka is a 20 minute drive up Route 1. Additionally, via the Meihan Highway (Route 25) we are a 10 minute drive from the Kami Tsuge interchange and a 30 minute drive from the Mibuno interchange.

### By train

- Take the JR Tokaido Line and transfer at Kusatsu Station. Take the JR Kusatsu Line to Koka City.
- Take the JR Kansai Line and transfer at Tsuge Station. Take the JR Kusatsu Line to Koka City.
- Kibukawa Station, on the JR Kusatsu Line, connects to the Shigaraki Kogen Railway and the Omi Railway.



## FURTHER INFORMATION

NAME	ADDRESS	TEL	FAX
Koka Tourism Association	Koka City, Konan-cho Noda 810 URL: <a href="http://www.koka-kanko.org/">http://www.koka-kanko.org/</a>	0748-60-2690	0748-60-2690
Shigaraki Tourism Association	Koka City, Shigaraki-cho nagano 1142 URL: <a href="http://www.e-shigaraki.org/">http://www.e-shigaraki.org/</a>	0748-82-2345	0748-82-2551

# KOKA SIGHTSEEING GUIDE

A journey that transcends time

# 甲賀

## Koka Sightseeing Guide

Koka City Products and Tourism Division

<http://www.city.koka.lg.jp/>  
<http://www.city.koka.lg.jp/en/>

Koka City Tourism Association

[Mobile Site]

<http://www.koka-kanko.org/>  
<http://www.koka-kanko.org/i/>

520-3308 Shiga Prefecture Koka City, konan-cho Noda 810

TEL/FAX 0748-60-2690

All prices and fees are as of May, 2012 and are subject to change.



 go. biwako  
Shiga, Japan

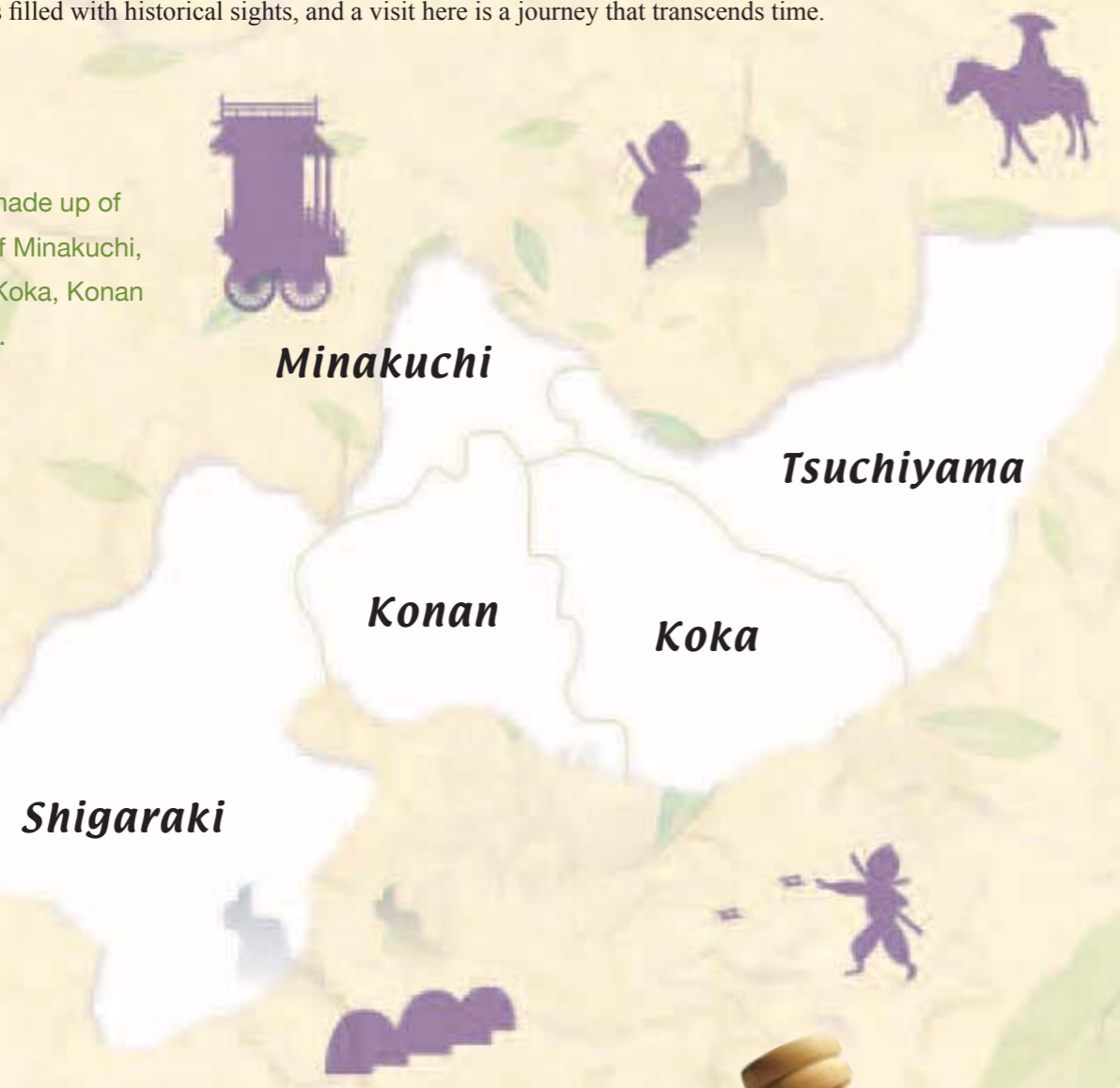
# Welcome to Koka

In ancient times, the Shomu Emperor made plans to create an imperial palace (Shigaraki no Miya) in what is the present-day Shigaraki district of Koka City. It is said that Shigaraki ceramics first began to thrive during this time, when residents fired ceramic tiles. However, due to several natural disasters, the palace was never constructed and the capital was instead built in Nara Prefecture. Ultimately, Shigaraki never became the imperial capital.

Several hundred years later, during the middle ages, it is said that ninjas from Koka City worked with Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu to unify Japan. After Tokugawa Ieyasu established the Edo Shogunate, the Tokaido Road was built, and Koka City prospered from having two rest stations on this road: Minakuchi and Tsuchiyama.

Koka City is filled with historical sights, and a visit here is a journey that transcends time.

Koka City is made up of the districts of Minakuchi, Tsuchiyama, Koka, Konan and Shigaraki.



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# Shigaraki Ceramics



Shigaraki ceramics are characterized by their reddish brown hues and rough texture. In order to improve water resistance and aesthetic qualities, ceramics are usually coated with a glass-like liquid glaze before they are fired. However, an ingredient in the clay used for Shigaraki ceramics reacts with very high temperature wood ash and turns into glass, making its own glaze. This is called a natural glaze, or a Vidro glaze. Furthermore, the blackish brown, or “burnt,” color in places that were covered in ash during firing is another characteristic of this pottery. This is the tradition of Shigaraki ceramics, and today the Shigaraki people create a variety of works by protecting conventions while also implementing modern sensibilities.

## Facilities relating to Shigaraki ceramics

### Shigaraki Imperial Palace Ruins

Excavations are still continuing at the Miyamachi Ruins and the Koka Temple Ruins.  
**Location:** Koka City, Shigaraki-cho Miyamachi, Maki.  
**Phone:** 0748-86-8026 (Koka City Cultural Asset Preservation Division).  
**How to get here:** a 5 minute walk from Shigaraki Gushi Station, located on the Shigaraki Kogen Railway. **Map:** page 6, B-2



### Pottery Class

Use a potter's wheel and paint a design to create your very own Shigaraki pottery.  
**Location:** Throughout Shigaraki. **Phone:** 0748-82-2345 (Shigaraki Tourism Association). **Fee:** varies by location.  
**How to get here:** get off at Shigaraki Station.



### Pottery Trail

Roam this trail where you can see pottery and old kilns that were powered by firewood and used to fire Shigaraki ceramics.  
**Location:** Koka City, Shigaraki-cho Nagano 1142. **Phone:** 0748-82-2345 (Shigaraki Tourism Association).  
**How to get here:** 10 minute walk from Shigaraki Station. **Map:** page 6, B-3



### Shiga Prefectural Ceramic Cultural Park

Showcases Shigaraki ceramics and other pottery from all over the world. Exhibitions are held regularly.  
**Location:** Koka City, Shigaraki-cho Chokushi 2188-7. **Phone:** 0748-83-0909. **Hours:** 9:30 – 17:00. **Fee:** Only entrance to the Ceramic Hall requires a fee. **Closed:** Mondays (Open on holidays, but closed the following day). **How to get here:** 20 minute walk from Shigaraki Station. **Map:** page 6, B-3



### Shigaraki Traditional Industry Hall

Exhibiting Shigaraki ceramics by era, from ancient times to modern day.  
**Location:** Koka City, Shigaraki-cho Nagano 1142. **Phone:** 0748-82-2345. **Hours:** 9:00 – 17:00. **Fee:** free. **Closed:** Thursdays (Open on holidays, but closed the following day). **How to get here:** 6 minute walk from Shigaraki Station. **Map:** page 6, B-3



An old kiln that was powered by firewood and used to fire Shigaraki ceramics.



# Koka Ninja

Ninjas thrived during the middle ages, a time in Japan known as the age of provincial wars. They served throughout the country under commanders, using special forms of martial arts. Because they acted secretly behind the scenes of the commanders, ninjas are called “shinobi no mono,” or spies. The legendary Sarutobi Sasuke is said to have been a Koka Ninja.

## Facilities relating to the Koka Ninja

### Koka Ninja Village

The Koka Ninja Village is a collection of reconstructed ninja estates in a spacious mountain forest. While you are here, take a try at throwing ninja stars.

**Location:** Koka City, Koka-cho Oki 394. **Phone:** 0748-88-5000. **Fee:** 1000 yen. **Closed:** Mondays (open on holidays, but closed the following day), closed around the New Year. **How to get here:** 30 minute walk from JR Koka Station, located on the JR Kusatsu Line (bus pick-up from the station is also possible). **Map:** page 7, D-2



### Koka Ninja Estate

The Koka Ninja Estate incorporates a number of gadgets and devices that were used to protect the ninja from sudden attacks.

**Location:** Koka City, Konan-cho Ryuboshi 2331. **Phone:** 0748-86-2179. **Hours:** 9:00 – 16:30. **Fee:** 600 yen. **Closed:** Dec. 27 – Jan. 5. **How to get here:** 20 minute walk from JR Konan Station, located on the JR Kusatsu Line (bus pick-up from the station is also possible). **Map:** page 6, C-2



# Tokaido Road Rest Stations

During the Edo Period, the Tokaido Road and its 53 rest stations \* were constructed, providing a vital link between Edo (present day Tokyo), and Kyoto. Present day Koka City is home to two rest stations, Tsuchiyama Station and Minakuchi Station. The local scenery from these days long past still remains.

Tsuchiyama Station was said to be a trouble spot along the Tokaido Road, and it was the rest area used before or after passing over the Suzuka Mountains. On the other hand, Minakuchi Station had its own castle, and it showed off the excitement and bustle of a castle town.

\* Facilities set up for travelers to take a rest or spend the night.

## Facilities related to the Tokaido Road

### Tsuchiyama Daimyo Inn -Tsuchiyama Rest Station-

A public inn for the nobility, the third generation Tokugawa Shogun, Iemitsu, once stayed here.

**Location:** Koka City Tsuchiyama-cho Kitatsuchiyama 1628. **Phone:** 0748-66-0007. Because this is now a private residence, reservations are required for visitors. **Fee:** 300 yen. **How to get here:** Take the JR Kusatsu Line to Kibukawa Station. From Kibukawa Station, the Inn is a 30 minute bus ride and 4 minute walk. **Map:** page 7, E-2



### Tokaido Pines -Tsuchiyama Rest Station-

The pine tree-lined streets that gave shade to the travelers of the Tokaido Road will bring you back to the middle ages.

**Location:** Koka City, Tsuchiyama-cho Ichiba. **How to get here:** from Kibukawa Station, a 30 minute bus ride and 3 minute walk. **Map:** page 7, E-2



### Tokaido Museum -Tsuchiyama Rest Station-

With exhibits that reconstruct the old days of the Tokaido Road, this museum gives easy to understand information on the history of the Tsuchiyama Station.

**Location:** Koka City Tsuchiyama-cho Kitatsuchiyama 1570. **Phone:** 0748-66-2770. **Hours:** 9:00 – 17:30. **Fee:** free. **Closed:** Mondays, Tuesdays, New Year holiday. **How to get here:** from Kibukawa Station, the museum is a 30 minute bus ride and 4 minute walk. **Map:** page 7, E-2



### Scenery of the Minakuchi Rest Station -Minakuchi Rest Station-

Here you can see the garages that store the hikiyama wagons that are used in the Minakuchi Hikiyama Festival, a celebration that began during the Edo Period.

**Location:** Koka City, Minakuchi-cho. **How to get here:** located right next to Minakuchi Ishibashi Station on the Omi Train Line. **Map:** Page 7, D-2



Scenery of the Tsuchiyama Rest Station

“The 53 Stations of the Tokaido Road”  
As drawn  
by Ando Hiroshige



Minakuchi, “Kampyo: A Local Specialty”



Tsuchiyama, “Spring Rain”

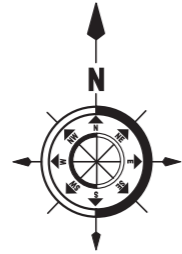
### Minakuchi Castle Museum (Minakuchi Castle Ruins) -Minakuchi Rest Stop-

A Restoration of Minakuchi Castle, which was built as a lodging for the third generation Tokugawa Shogun, Iemitsu, on his journeys to Kyoto.

**Location:** Koka City, Minakuchi-cho Honmaru. **Phone:** 0748-63-5577. **Hours:** 10:00-16:00. **Fee:** 100 yen. **Closed:** Thursday, Friday, New Year holiday. **How to get here:** a four minute walk from Minakuchi Jonan Station on the Omi train line. **Map:** Page 6, C-1



# Koka City Sightseeing Map



## Miho Museum

Miho Museum displays ancient art work from the Silk Road area, from Egypt to China.

Location: Koka City, Shigaraki-cho Tashiro 300. Phone: 0748-82-3411. Hours: 10:00-17:00. Fee: 1000 yen. Closed: Mondays (open on holidays, but closed the following day), winter. How to get here: 20 minutes by car and 5 minutes by foot from Shigaraki Station. Map: Page 6, A-2



## Daichiji Temple

This temple is known for its beautiful azalea garden that was made by the famous Edo Period commander and architect, Kobori Enshu.

Location: Koka City, Minakuchi-cho Nasaka 1688. Phone: 0748-62-0396. Fee: 400 yen. Closed: Obon holiday, New Year holiday. How to get here: From Kibukawa station it is a 20 minute bus ride and 5 minute walk. Map: Page 6, C-1



## Choju Rice Cakes

These are highly authentic, glutinous rice cakes that are made from Shiga Habutae sticky rice. The five colors each have their own distinctive flavor.



## Tsuchiyama Tea

Tsuchiyama tea was born about 650 years ago, when seeds that were brought from Kyoto's Daitokuji Temple were planted in the area. This is a top class tea that prides itself on its fine quality and being the largest producing tea in the prefecture.



## Asamiya Tea

It is said that the great monk Saicho brought this tea back from China 1200 years ago, planting seeds in Shigaraki's Asamiya area. With its distinctive flavor, Asamiya Tea is widely loved in both name and in reality as the "fragrance of Japan."



## Special Products



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