

佐渡

Sado Island

Explore
the Golden Island!



Japan.
Endless
Discovery.





Spring

Come Visit

Sado Island is located 28mi / 45 km west of Niigata City, in the northern part of the Chubu region. Sado City covers the entire island, and it belongs to Niigata Prefecture. The island has an area of 330.24sq mi/855.33sq km, which makes it the sixth largest island in the country. The population is 57,976 (Apr 1, 2016).

Sado Island is comprised of two mountain ranges extending north and south and the central Kuninaka rice paddies. Different geographical features can be identified between the northern and southern regions. Because of its beautiful and plentiful natural environment, most of the island is designated as a quasi-national park by the national government and a prefectural nature park by Niigata Prefecture.

The average temperature during winter is comparatively higher than that of mainland Honshu, and snowfalls are relatively minor due to both warm and cold currents flowing off the coast of the island. As a result, the island ecosystem allows both warm and cool temperate plants to



Summer

Sado Island!

grow, making seasonal flowers distinctive throughout the four seasons. There is a variety of seafood, such as squid and yellowtail. Yellowtail caught in winter is especially delicious.

People have lived on the island since the Jomon period and in the 8th century, a provincial capital was established. Spanning the Heian and Kamakura periods, Sado was designated an island for political exiles. During the Edo period, gold production reached peak. Sado is also culturally diverse, and a combination of three cultures can be found on the island. These three were originally brought to Sado by: intellectual aristocrats who were exiled by the central government in the medieval age; samurai officials who managed the gold mining operation during the Edo period; and merchants and sailors who regularly visited the island from distant parts of the country during the late Edo period. Because of its deep and historical background, Sado is often referred to as a microcosm of Japan.



Autumn

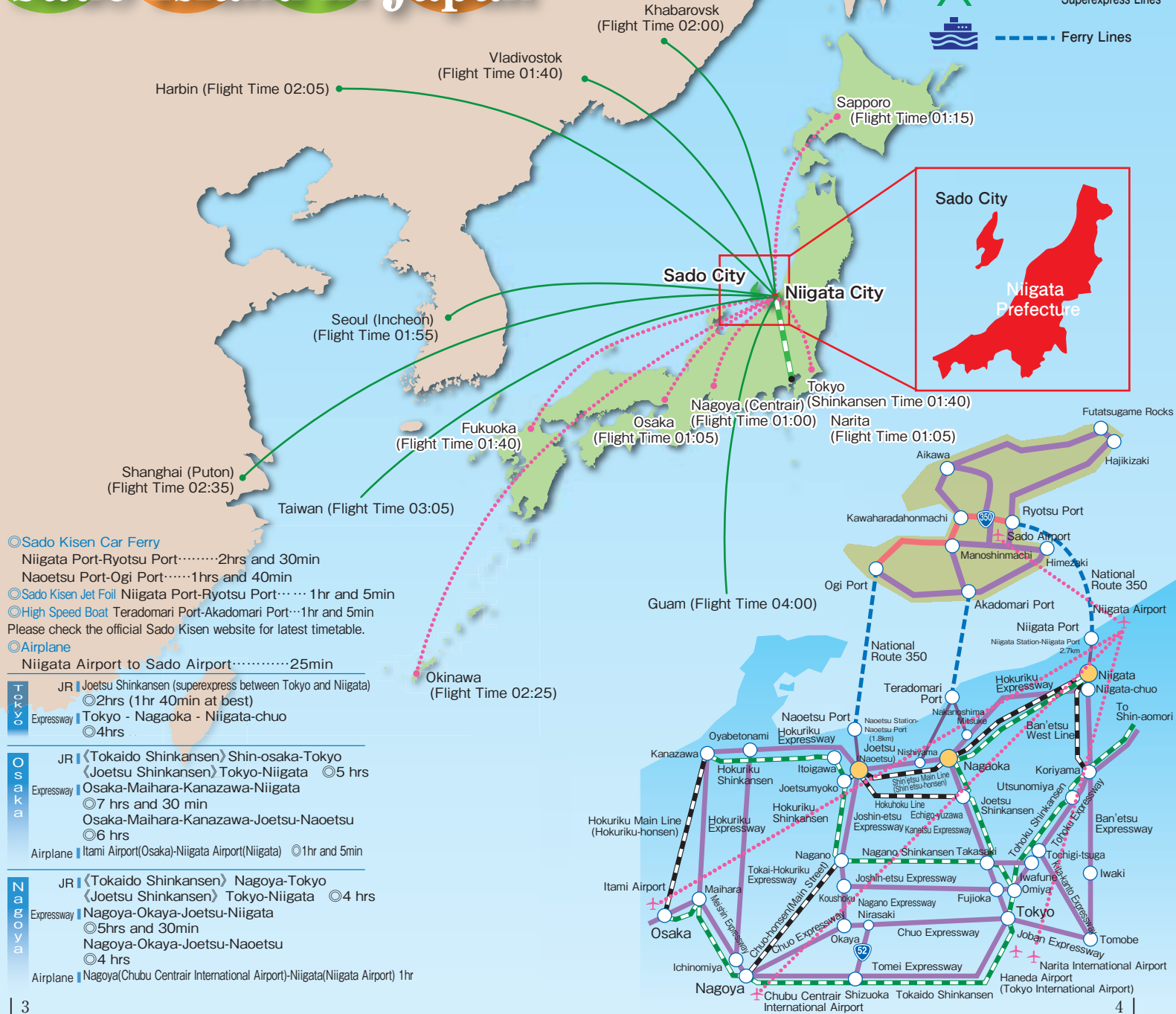
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Winter

Location of Sado Island in Japan



MAP

Sado Island Map



Yellow Daylilies on Onogame Rock



Meoto Rocks



Ryotsu Bay



Yajima-Kyojima



Sado Kisen Car Ferry "Tokiwa-maru"



Sado Kisen Jet Foil "Tsubasa"

Ancient Beauty

It goes without saying that Sado is a treasure chest of nature. The following is an introduction to not only the stunning shorelines, but also mountains, plains and other excellent scenic spots on the island.



Zoge Cedar Wood



Tunnel Cedar Wood (a common name)

Primeval Forest

A primeval forest filled with the breath of life. With a history spanning hundreds of years, these ancient cedar trees project the essence of life. Sado is rich with natural cedar forests. Of them, the towering trees of the Osado Ishina Natural Cedar Forest hold a mystical blend of power and beauty that has survived for over 300 years. At an elevation of 900 meters, the wild grass growing through the forest makes for a scene identical to those of fairytales. In 2011, a path through the famous Ishina area was opened to enable visitors to wander through and enjoy these precious trees.

Yajima-Kyojima

Yajima, or Arrow Island, once produced the bamboo used for making high quality arrows. Legend has it that one of those arrows was used by the samurai Yorimasa Minamoto to slay the mythical beast Nue. Kyojima, or Sutra Island, was given its name because it was there that the famed Buddhist monk Nichiren's top disciple, Nichiro, passed an entire night chanting sutra after being cast ashore amidst a heavy storm. The image of the two small islands connected by a brilliant reddish colored bridge is like that of a floating miniature garden. A ride in a traditional taraibune boat in the distinctively transparent sea causes the stunning green of the grass shining through the white sand to appear even more picturesque.



Meoto Rocks

On the shore of Nanaura, where the sun sinks beautifully into the sea, there are two rocks settled close together like a couple in love. Due to the shape of the rocks appearing to fit together perfectly, the pair was given the name, Meoto (married couple).

Onogame Rock

A guaranteed highlight on the island is this 167m high monolith that looks as if it was tossed out to sea. At the summit are the small Zenpoji monument and a breathtaking view over all of Sotokaifu. In early summer, the rock is brilliantly painted with yellow daylilies and rock lilies. This splendid sight is the one and only place in Niigata prefecture to have been awarded two stars by Michelin.



Futatsugame Rocks

These two rocks were given the name '2 Turtles' because they bear a resemblance to two resting turtles. Covered in green grass, the two are sometimes called, the near yet distant islands. When the tide is out, a strip of land connects the pair of turtles, but as the tide rises they are once again separated. Watching the change

makes for a fascinating scene. Also boasted as being the clearest in Japan, Futatsugame's breathtaking sea has it listed as one of Japan's top 100 beaches.

Senkakuwan Bay

The 4 km of shoreline from Himezu to Kita Ebisu can be seen from the 5 coves that make up Senkakuwan Bay. The name for this bay is a direct translation of Hardanger Bay, in Norway. The Norwegian bay is considered to be the world's most beautiful, with its especially attractive 30m high cliff and Sado's Senkakuwan Bay is felt to be comparable. The area is part of a marine park and visitors can enjoy the spectacular view from scenic boat tours or peer into the sea from glass-bottom boats.



Jinmen Rock

On the eastern side of Mano bay, there is a strangely shaped rock that rises out of Nagahama. At a quick glance, the top of the 10m tall rock formation looks just like the side of a person's face.





View from Osado Skyline

Mt. Kinpoku

As ships near Ryotsu port the Osado mountain range can be seen. The tallest peak in this range is actually the top of Sado's highest mountain, Kinpoku (1,172m). Kinpoku shrine sits atop this mountain and en route to the shrine, a variety of flowers (the Japanese Wood Poppy, Ezo Hydrangea, Umbrella Leaf, Butterbur Sprout, the Japanese Willow Leaf Magnolia, Skunk Cabbage, Adder's Tongue Lilly, Mountain Corydalis Tuber and so on) bloom. In fall the autumn colors covering the entire mountain result in a brilliant landscape.

Hakuundai

As you travel the Osado Skyline, about halfway up Mt. Kinpoku, is Hakuundai. From there you can gaze down at the Ryotsu bay, Kosado mountain range, Kuninaka plains, and Mano bay. On a clear day the northern Alps of Japan are also visible. Tourists and trekking visitors can have a break and take in the mountain atmosphere from the Hakuundai building wonderfully crafted from Sado's cedar trees.

Donden Plateau

At over 900m above sea level, this area has long been used as a cattle pasture. On one side is a stretch of grass and from the other hikers and trekkers can see the majority of the island with Ryotsu bay at the center. From the Japanese Wood Poppy, Rhododendron Metternichii and various other mountain plants to the Bird's Eye Primrose, Anemone Pseudo-Altaica, and Skunk Cabbage, this area features an exceptional number of plant types. In fact, it is considered the Mountain of 100 Flowers by NHK. In addition, there is a lodge called, Mt. Donden Manor, where visitors can sleep, eat and enjoy a refreshing cup of coffee, all under a beautiful star-filled sky.



Momiji Mountain



Lined in the center of Kosado are Mt. Ogami (497.9m) and Mt. Megami (593.3m), and nestled in these mountains is a place renowned in Sado for its wonderful autumn foliage. Mt. Momiji Park is said to have the most beautiful autumn foliage on Sado Island. As the name suggests, the change in color

of the autumn leaves dyes the whole of the mountain in a beautiful red and yellow that can be enjoyed by park visitors. Many people visit the area for friendly gatherings amongst the colorful leaves, and attending the park's fantastic fall festival is a must.

Toki, Crested Ibis



The Crested Ibis, scientifically known as *Nipponia nippon*, is actually a type of pelican. Commonly known as toki, the bird has been designated a special natural treasure and is under international protection. There was a time when toki once soared through the sky all over Japan, but excessive hunting and destruction of their natural habitat led to a dramatic decrease in population during the Meiji period. In 1981 the government captured Japan's last remaining toki and placed them in an artificial habitat at the Sado Toki Center. After many failed attempts at artificial breeding the bird ultimately became extinct in 2003. As this was happening other artificial breeding attempts were being made with two birds, Youyou and Yangyang, which were received from China in 1999. In May of that same year the first baby toki, Yuyu, was born. More were successfully bred from 2000 until there were 100 new birds in 2007. From 2008 a number of toki have steadily been released back into the wild.

In Sado City great efforts are being made in biological diverse agriculture and natural energy to ensure that humans and the Crested Ibis can live together and enjoy the beautiful nature of the island for many generations to come.

★ Sado City, recently certified as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS)!



On June 11, 2011, at The International Forum on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems held in Beijing, "Sado's Satoyama with Ibis," along with the Noto area of Ishikawa Prefecture, became the first GIAHS in Japan officially designated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN. Sado City, in efforts to successfully return the Crested Ibis to the wild, began with the "Farming Method to Nurture Living Creatures" initiative. "Sado's Satoyama with Ibis" was recognized as a project designed to protect the rich landscape and ecosystem that interweaves rivers, ponds, rice fields, and forests whilst preserving the Crested Ibis. Sado is more than an island with a history rich in gold. The start of these agricultural practices using the Tanada Satoyama in its natural form, along with Ondeko and other cultural traditions specific to farming villages, have also helped to continue the preservation of Sado's unique nature, scenery and culture.

※ The "Farming Method to Nurture Living Creatures" is one that uses a certified process to safely farm delicious rice. With minimal use of pesticides and chemicals, the process is focused on farming rice in a way that is nurturing to all living things in the area. It prides itself on producing rice with a firm texture and a sweetness that can be savored as it fills your mouth.

History and Culture

Unique culture with a long history.

Originally brought to Sado by three sources: intellectual aristocrats who were exiled by the central government in the medieval age (1185-1603); samurai officials who managed the gold mining operation during the Edo period (1603-1868); and merchants and sailors who regularly visited the island from distant parts

of the country during the late Edo period, many cultures came together as one to establish Sado's own unique culture.



Sado Gold and Silver Mines

Stories of gold being taken from Sado appeared as early as the Heian period (794-1185), when it was written about in "Konjaku Monogatari" (The Tale of Times Now Past). This gold was taken from Nishimikawa, and it is widely considered to be the beginning of gold mining on Sado. Used as means to yield alluvial gold in Kawahara for 1000 years, panning for gold is a fun activity still available to tourists today.



In the back part of Sawane is the Tsurushi Silver Mine, developed in 1542 using the *haifuki* cupellation method, which smelts silver ore with lead.

It is said that Kagekatsu Uesugi (a daimyo) paid Toyotomi Hideyoshi (in charge of the government at this time) with gold produced in the Tsurushi Silver Mine.

The miners at Tsurushi Silver Mine are said to have found an outcrop after they passed the peak of the mountain while seeking a vein in 1601. This was the beginning of Sado Gold Mine.

When you go to the gold mine from the district of Aikawa, you can see a mountain with a rare shape formed by the bare hands of people cutting away the stone in search of gold.

At the same time Ieyasu Tokugawa came to power (1603), he gained direct control of Sado as a *Tenryou* (a Tokugawa Shogunate landholding). He appointed a talented mine director, Nagayasu Okubo, as the magistrate of Sado and developed the Sado Gold Mine.

Records show roughly 56,250 kg of silver and 375 kg of gold were produced from the late 16th century up to the middle of the 17th century. However, it is said that the actual amount far exceeded this and the mine was quite possibly the top producer in the world at that time.

The Sado Gold Mine supported the finances of the Tokugawa Shogunate for over three hundred years, while production occurred for roughly 400 years after its initial excavation.

You can now visit the mineshaft and the Kinzan Museum by the mine. In the mine you can see animatronics that show the working conditions of the Edo period by taking the *Sodayukoh* course. You can also see displays of a gold bar and old gold coins in the museum.



The Sense of Traveling Back in Time



Sado Bugyosho, the Office of Sado's Magistrate

This magistrate's office continuously supported the finances of the Tokugawa Shogunate for 300 years by managing the Sado Gold Mine. With the development of the Sado Gold Mine in 1601, Aikawa came under the direct control of the Shogunate as a *Tenryou*, and the magistrate's office was built.

Later, after the office burned down several times, it was reconstructed based on the one built in 1858 and is now open to the general public.

Although there are magistrate's offices in Nagasaki, Hakodate, and elsewhere, this is the only one faithfully restored to its old appearance.

With explanations by local volunteer guides, you can gain a deeper understanding of the magistrate's office while enjoying the unique stories of the local people.

The Remains of the Gold and Silver Flotation and Dressing Plant

The plant was built in 1938 when a lot of gold and silver was being produced. Rarely collected by traditional methods, "Flotation and dressing" was a method that used bubbles as floating agents to lift up fine gold and silver. This process had originally been used for the refining of copper. After repeated research attempts, Sado became the first place in the world where it was used as a means to collect gold and silver. It was considered the largest plant in the eastern hemisphere and made it possible to process 50,000 tons of ore per month.



Odate Shaft

The shaft was constructed in 1877 under the guidance of a German engineer named Adolf Ray and was the first Western style shaft in Japan. Compared to the Edo period when men and horses were the main means of conveyance, work efficiency greatly improved with the installation of two lifts.



※Amount of Gold Produced by Sado Gold Mine

The Sado Gold and Silver Mine produced 78 tons of gold and 2,330 tons of silver before its closure in 1989.

By period: Tokugawa (1603-1868)- 41tons; Meiji (1868-1912)- 8tons; Taisho (1912-1926)- 7tons; Showa (1926-1989)- 22tons

History and Culture

Shukunegi

Shukunegi village in the district of Ogi was known as an industrial base for *sengoku-bune* (a major type of freight ship used in the Edo period) and as a place where ship carpenters gathered. The village is a well-preserved Edo period town and has been designated as a district important for the preservation of the nation's traditional architecture. After the entire island of Sado, with its gold and silver production, became a *tenryou* in the Edo period, Shukunegi's neighboring village, Ogi, was developed as a port for shipping the yielded gold and silver. The village's harbor also became a port along the western marine transportation route. At the same time, ship carpenters from all over gathered in Shukunegi, and their high level techniques were widely known even outside the island. The entire village became an industrial base for *sengoku-bune* (ships). Shukunegi village prospered due to its population of ship carpenters and sailors, and it was even said that one-third of the wealth on Sado was concentrated there. It is said that there were about 150 buildings (including 120 residential buildings, barns, and toilets) in a 100 square meter area of the village in 1841 (the late Edo period), and that 569 people lived in this part of the village. In 1824, 11 ship owners lived in the village and it could hold up to 20 *sengoku-bune* (ships). A record remains of a profit now worth 100 million yen that was made in only one voyage.

※Sankaku-ya, a triangle house: A symbol of Shukunegi village, these were built by applying ship production technology to houses. The houses were built along winding paths and rivers.



Seikuro's Residence

This is a ship owner's house. It is an old two story house made of precious woods: zelkova, cypress, cedar, etc. All wooden parts inside the house, such as columns, beams, the ceiling, and furniture, were lacquered except for the flooring. There is a room with luxurious Shoin-zukuri on the second floor, evidence of the introduction of Kyoto and Osaka culture.



Sado Rekishi Densetsukan, History Museum



The museum takes you 800 years into the past and lets you experience the island's history. Emperor Juntoku, Nichiren (a Buddhist monk who lived during the Kamakura period (1185-1333)), Zeami (a Japanese aesthetician, actor, and playwright who lived during the Muromachi period (1363-1443)) and other historically famous figures exiled to the island have been reproduced using life-size high-tech animatronics and full-scale sets. These allow you to feel the history and legends of Sado. There is also a memorial exhibition room with the art works of Shodo Sasaki (a metal casting artist born in Sado who was designated as a living national treasure).

Myosen-ji Temple

After the demise of ex-Emperor Juntoku (1197-1242), Tamemori Endo, a *bushi* (guards for the north side of the Imperial Palace) who accompanied the ex-emperor, founded the temple as a devout follower of Nichiren Buddhism. It has a pagoda and the tomb of Suketomo Hino (exiled advisor of emperor Godaigo). It is the only five-story wooden pagoda in Niigata prefecture and the grounds of the temple were modeled after the Nikko-Toshogu pagoda (Tochigi prefecture). The pagoda at Mysosen-ji was designated as an important national cultural treasure in 1986.



Traditional Arts and Entertainment

Handed down since long ago.

Sado has so many folk arts that have been handed down over many generations that it is described as a treasure trove of traditional arts and entertainment. Noh, puppet shows, and other performances are essential to annual events and festivals and thus are alive today in the everyday lives of the people of Sado Island.

Tagiki Noh Theatre

Noh's popularity here is due largely to the exile of Zeami, the playwright who brought Noh to its highest degree of perfection, to Sado. 1/3 of the Noh stages in Japan are concentrated in the Sado, and most of the 30 or more stages still existing (there were over 200 at one time) also serve as shrine halls or belong to shrines. Every year in early summer, Noh is performed by firelight on the Noh stages in every district. There is quite an air about Noh performed at night, in a shrine, out in nature and beside a bonfire.



Ondeko, A Traditional Performing Art



A classic public entertainment found only on Sado, each area of the island has its own individual style. A kind of lion dance similar to Tang dynasty sangaku (a form of ancient Chinese entertainment similar to a circus from which Noh evolved), the name comes from the way the demon dances to the soul-stirring beat of the drums as though possessed. On Sado this popular type of dancing is known as Ondeko. The dances are performed at many festivals on the island and play an important role as a Shinto ritual to drive out evil and pray for a fruitful year.

Sado Okesa, Traditional Folk Song and Dance

It is believed that the Okesa folk song originated from the Hanya folk song in Kyushu which was sung when seamen drunk together in the harbor. Sailors who worked along the Japan Sea route of transportation brought it to Sado. The song, with its melancholic melody and graceful dance, is widely known throughout the country as representative of the Japanese folk song.



Bunya Ningyo, Puppet Shows



This is an important intangible folk culture treasure and remains in only four places in Japan, Sado included. In the past it was often performed in local festivals and celebrations. There is an artless simplicity about the puppets themselves, which are each manipulated by a single person, but the performances, in the style of old Joruri ballad dramas, accompanied by the mournful sounds of the shamisen (a traditional stringed instrument) are exquisitely graceful.

Events

An island enveloped in excitement

Throughout the year, there are many big events around Sado, which provide chances for visitors to connect with nature.



Sado Island Long Distance International Triathlon

The Sado Island Long Distance International Triathlon, which has grown in popularity and recognition annually since the first event in 1989, is a race of fantastic proportions including swimming in Mano Bay, running through the Kuninaka plains, and a bike around the entire island. The Long Distance International Triathlon occurs in four locations throughout Japan but Sado boasts the longest (the International A-Type is 236 km long), and what is known as the most demanding course.

Sado Long Ride



Beginning in 2006, the Sado Long Ride takes place in May every year. Amongst those who enjoy cycling it is a nationally famous bicycle race with top sponsors such as Sponichi Annex (a sports newspaper company). The race includes four courses of varying lengths, with the longest A Course making a complete circuit around the island for a total distance of 210 km. While the ride is a

beautiful and scenic tour mainly along the coast of the island, it is also very difficult due to the many hills and curves that come with it. Every year the maximum number of entrants is 3000 people and over half of them strive to face the demanding A Course.

Sado Toki Marathon

The affectionately named Toki Marathon has five types of courses: full marathon, half marathon, 10 km, 5 km, and 3 km. All of the courses start and end in the Ryotsu Bay area, allowing runners a beautiful view of the ocean while they run. For the full and half marathon races, the course passes by the only roosting grounds of the released Crested Ibis that remains in all of Japan. The chance to fully enjoy the natural environment of this rare bird while running amidst Sado's beauty is the true magic of this race.



Artistic Events



Earth Celebration (EC)

Earth Celebration (EC) is an international arts festival put on as a coalition between Sado City and the absolutely stunning and internationally famous taiko drumming performance group, Kodo. Through this event, Kodo introduces visitors to the charm of Sado as they perform in the middle of the abundant nature of Shiroyama Park. Beginning in 1988 with artists from places such as America or Britain as the first guests, Kodo continues to invite other artists whom they have met during their world tours to perform. EC takes place in August every year and attracts guests from all over Japan as well as many from overseas. According to the New York Times, Earth Celebration has become one of the "most advanced world music events in Japan" and it has won many awards including the award from the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications at the 12th Hometown Event Award in 2008, the Tiffany Foundation Award and Traditional Culture Award from the Tiffany Foundation in America in 2009.

※Kodo

Kodo is a performing arts group centered on Japanese Taiko Drumming performing all over the world. On their "One Earth" themed tour, they have visited a total of 47 countries with over 3,800 performances.

Shiroyama Concerts

This concert series takes place over three days as the main event of Earth Celebration. Kodo performs on stage along with an invited national or international guest artist. The powerful resonance of the Japanese drums floats with the night breeze across the rich natural park area under a brilliantly illuminated starry sky, creating a truly magical experience.



Workshops

The workshops are another event during EC with popularity rivaling that of the Shiroyama Concerts. Here, visitors can experience a plethora of traditional Japanese or Sado-specific activities such as taiko drumming, making Japanese and world folk handicrafts, and much more. It is a great opportunity to get a feeling for the folk customs and festivals that are particular to the island.

Harbor Market

The waterfront Harbor Market hosts over 100 booths with goods from all reaches of the globe including, of course, many hand-made Sado crafts. Guests can enjoy themselves by walking around and eating and shopping, dancing on the open lawn, or simply sitting and relaxing to beautiful music.



Hands-On Experiences

Feel history, nature and culture

There is a stimulating wealth of possibilities for hands-on experience prepared for you to get a sense of Sado's history, nature and culture.



Lifting a Gold Bar

Within the Sado Gold Mine Historical Exhibition (included in the *Sodayukoh* course), visitors have a chance to feel a real gold ingot through a small hole cut into a clear case. If you are able to remove the bar from the case, you are rewarded with a memorabilia piece of gold leaf.

At first glance it looks like a rather light bar and thus a simple task but it is surprisingly heavy, at a hefty 12.5 kg (27.6 lbs). Simply attempting to lift the bar is rewarding as even a touch leaves you with the feeling that economic good fortune has lifted onto you.

Gold Panning

Nishimikawa's Gold Panning Mountain boasts the longest history among all of Sado's mines with mention of it appearing in writings from as far back as the Heian period. In present time it has been remade into a theme park where visitors can try their hand at gold panning. Using American-made gold pans guests sift through the sand in a small river to reveal fine pieces of gold. Any gold that is discovered during the experience is put in a bottle or other accessory and can be taken home as a great souvenir.



Taraibune Ride

The Taraibune floating along the unique landscape of the Ogi coastline are considered the symbol of Ogi. Developed and used in the Edo and Meiji periods, Taraibune boats were ideal for tight turns and stability amidst the abundant reefs and coves that dot the Ogi Peninsula. The boats themselves are constructed of cedar with bamboo wrapping around the outside. Mainly operated by women, the Taraibune are still used to collect shellfish and seaweed from around the coast and have also become a tourist attraction. At Ogi Port, modified boats (larger than those normally used for fishing) are available for visitors to experience riding and rowing.



Diving

Sado is known for its transparent sea and its fascinating landscape. From the Kitakoura Ocean Center experienced divers can see many interesting sea creatures including the rare Kobudai, featured in the world famous 2010 documentary "Oceans". For the inexperienced, kind instructors will gently guide you through your first dive and allow you to enjoy a journey under the sea.

Taiko Experience

At the Sado Island Taiko Centre (*Tatakokan*) next to Kodo Village visitors can take a taiko-drumming lesson with the ever jolly and energetic Shinchun-sensei, a member of Kodo's staff, and gain a deeper understanding and enjoyment of the Japanese drumming tradition. The Taiko Centre not only houses two enormous taiko drums made from a 600 year-old giant tree but also boasts a beautiful view of the Osado Mountain Range and Mano bay from a terrace in the rear.



Accommodations

*Immerse yourself in the
enchanting Japanese ambience*



Sado has a wide variety of alluring accommodations

From these luxurious accommodations, in the midst of the stunning Sado landscape, visitors can enjoy the delicate changes in nature across the seasons. The island is host to an abundance of unique hotels and lodges with delicious food, relaxing hot springs, and first class service where guests can escape from the stresses of daily life.

Entertainment

Several hotels and lodges throughout the island offer special performances to introduce you to Sado's traditions of Ondeko, the Sado Okesa folk dance, and more to make your stay a truly priceless experience.



Food

While Sado is visually striking, sight is not the only sense through which you will experience the rich nature of Sado. There are also many exquisite dishes to satisfy your palette with as well. Whether it is fresh seafood caught from the surrounding sea, crisp wild plants picked from one of the mountain ranges, or vegetables and rice grown by high environmentally-friendly standards, you can be sure that your culinary experience while staying on Sado will also be satisfying.



Gourmet

*If you come to Sado,
you have to try this!*



*Fresh catches
of the day!*

Sushi and Sashimi

The fishing industry on Sado continues year-round, producing many different kinds of delicious fish. One example of this is the Yellowtail caught in the wintertime that have built up extra fat for insulation in the cold water. Particularly the *nigiri* sushi decorated with fabulous toppings has been one of the main factors that continually attracts visitors to the island.



Okesa-gaki, Persimmons

On Sado Hacchin persimmons have been modified to be sweeter and juicier and subsequently renamed Okesa persimmons, creating a product to represent the island. With a texture that melts in your mouth, these special persimmons are full of vitamin C and are seedless so they are easy to eat yet satiating!



Sake

Sado's local sake is brewed using pristine water from the island's mountains and rice specifically grown for its quality. The sake is known for its dry, crisp taste. Records dating back to the Edo period show that Sado had upwards of 200 brewers on the island, truly establishing Sado as an island with a deep history of brewing. Currently there are six breweries on the island, forming what is known locally as the "Alcohol Republic".



Sado's Soba Noodles

Sado's soba noodles are black in color, which is typically unique to rural areas of Japan. There are various kinds ranging from the slightly rougher (albeit pure) 100% buckwheat flour to a very smooth noodle that is easier to eat. Soba made right after the fall harvest is particularly delectable and comes highly recommended. The town of Osaki in the Hamochi region of Sado holds an annual Osaki Soba Festival that has gained quite a following. At this festival, hand-made 100% buckwheat flour noodles are served and giving visitors a special chance to try the freshest noodles.



Crab and Shrimp Meat Hot Pot

Using widely known locally caught crab and shrimp you will find some of the best seafood hot pot right here on Sado. This exceptional dish is rich in color and sweet in taste making it perfect for winter and a tasty treat in the summer.



Sado Natural Yellowtail Cutlet Rice Bowl

This dish has quickly gained popularity to become a newer culinary specialty of Sado. *Buri-katsudon* (Yellowtail Cutlet Rice Bowl) is flavorful Sado Yellowtail pieces breaded and fried then laid over a bed of *koshi-hikari* (renowned rice particular to Niigata prefecture). The cutlet is soaked in a flying fish-based soy sauce dressing to give it a unique, delicious flavor, while the rice used is certified as coming from farms that follow practices supporting the restoration of the endangered Crested Ibis.



Sado's
Local
Gourmet

Sightseeing spots

*Fully enjoy your trip
by traveling
Sado's Golden Route!*



① Toki-no-Mori Park

Inside Toki-no-Mori Park there is a toki museum, which has live video of toki, video recordings of the hatching process, eggs, skeletons, stuffed birds, and plenty of other educational information about these protected birds. Until recently toki could only be viewed in cages from a distance, but in March 2013 Toki Fureai Plaza was opened. The new facility allows visitors to more closely observe the birds flying, nesting and feeding.



② Hakuundai

This terrace offers a spectacular panoramic view of Sado. Make sure to send your family and friends a souvenir postcard from the toki character post box here at this highly recommend tourist spot.



③ Sado Gold Mine

The Sado Gold Mine Museum houses huge gold ore pieces, gold coins forged during the Edo period as well as various other rare objects. The gift shop sells not only popular souvenirs such as rice crackers, chocolate or other gifts made using gold leaf, but also authentic gold coins and accessories.

④ Senkakuwan Bay

Some visitors will fully enjoy the panoramic view of nature on a breathtaking 2 km boat tour of Senkakuwan Bay. Others will enjoy peering deep into the beautiful sea and watching hundreds of fish swim from a glass-bottom boat.



⑤ Nishimikawa Gold Park

Try your hand at one of the three levels (beginner, intermediate or expert) of panning for real gold at the Nishimikawa Gold Park. The park's staff will use the gold you find to make a one of a kind souvenir pendant perfect for capturing the memory of your trip to Sado. The park is also a great place to buy gifts associated with the famous Sado Gold Mine.

⑥ Taraibune, Tub Boats

Enjoy a relaxing ride in a traditional tub-boat guided by one of the female operators. Not only can you experience rowing the boat for yourself, but also if you are skilled enough you can receive a special Taraibune operating license. Many celebrities have also come to this exceptionally popular tourist spot.



Souvenirs



Remember your fun trip with a souvenir

Gold Products

Sado, being the island of gold, has a variety of gold related gifts ready for you in abundance. Popular souvenirs range from authentic gold coins and accessories to rice crackers, chocolate and other gifts made with gold leaf.

Mumyoi-yaki, Mumyoi ceramics

Mumyoi is the name of the red soil containing ferrous oxide which comes out of the mine shafts in Sado's gold mines. Mumyoi-yaki is the name of the pottery produced by mixing this soil with clay and baking the mixture at high temperatures till it is hard. Known throughout Japan as a type of ceramic unique to Sado it has many admirers. Mumyoi-yaki wares are extremely hard and make a clear sound when tapped. Their luster increases with use. During the Meiji Period in the latter half of the 19th century Jyozan Miura, Sekisui Ito and others created a movement oriented towards fine arts and crafts. At present twelve pottery workshops as well as the workshop of the living national treasure "Sekisui Ito" are to be found in the Aikawa district which is widely known as the home of Mumyoi ceramics.



Bamboo Crafts

Sado has, since long ago, been known for as a great producer of bamboo. Bamboo dolls of the elegant Sado Okesa dancers are a favorite for souvenirs. Beautiful small accessories, as well as functional baskets and strainers are prized traditional crafts on the island.

Dried Seafood

Surrounded by sea, dried seafood is undisputed as the best souvenir from Sado. Selected carefully seasonally, fish fresh enough to make the most delectable sashimi is seasoned then dried and packaged for you to take home. Wakame, iwanori, dried squid, red right eye flounder, dried cuttlefish, dried cod and so on can easily be found at most souvenir shops.

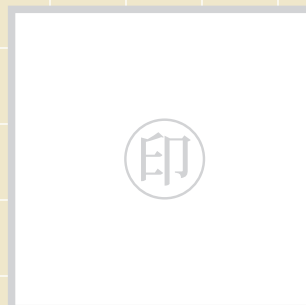


Sado Golden Route Stamp Collection Challenge

Remember your trip by collecting these exclusive stamps as you explore Sado Island!



With this page, you can collect stamps from the 6 sightseeing spots introduced on pages 23 and 24.





For more information, head over to our tourism home page.

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