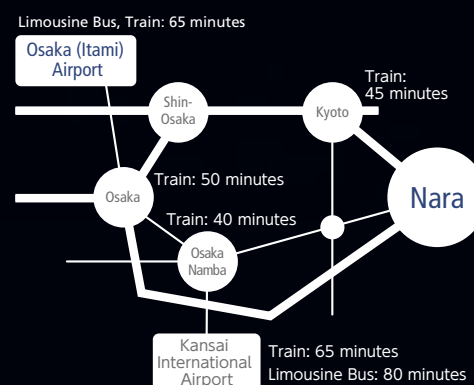


奈良



The 3 new greatest night views of Japan,
"The Night View from Mt. Wakakusa"



Straight to the capital
of the Tempyo era (729-749)



Nara City Official Web Page
URL: <http://www.city.nara.lg.jp/>



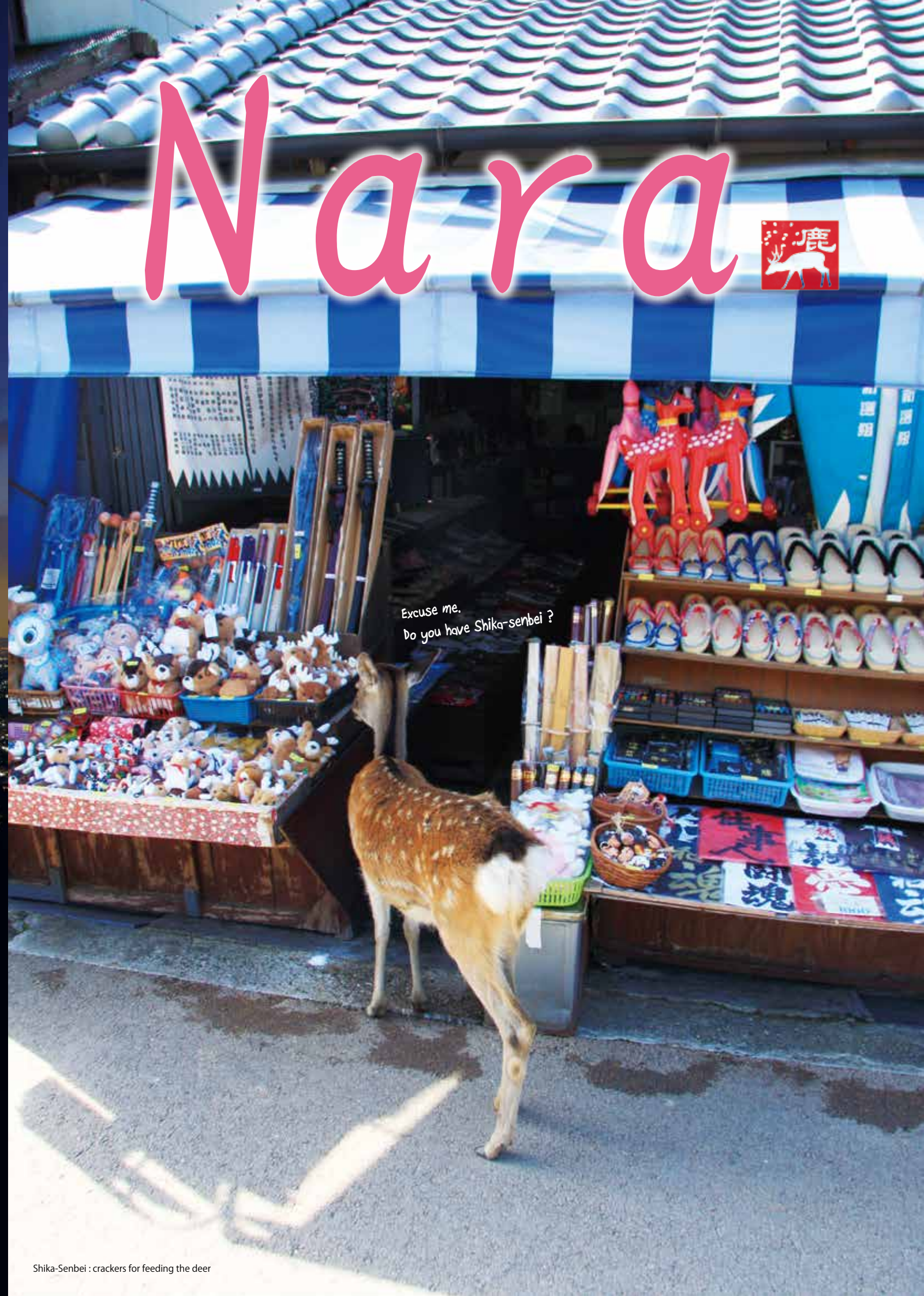
Nara City Office Official Twitter



Nara City Office Facebook Page



Nara



Excuse me,
Do you have Shika-senbei?

Shika-Senbei : crackers for feeding the deer



Aoniyoshi

Nara no miyako wa saku hana no

Niou ga gotoku

Ima sakarinari

(A poem from *Man'yōshū*, volume 3-328)

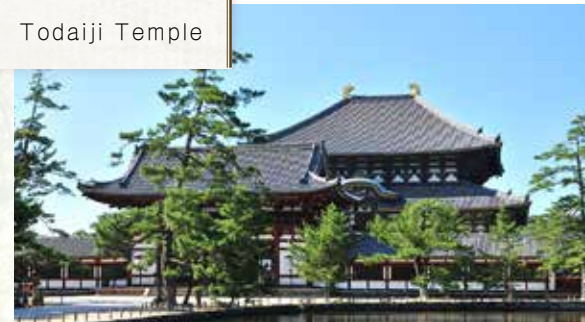
(As flowers in bloom glow in beauty
and fragrance, the capital of Nara is
now at the height of its splendor.)

The World Heritage of the Ancient Capital, Nara

Mt. Kasugayama Primeval Forest

A primeval forest which has been protected as the sacred mountain of Kasuga Taisha Shrine along with Mt. Mikasayama, after hunting and tree-felling was prohibited in the Heian period. The area is approximately 300 ha. It constitutes the cultural landscape formed in oneness of nature and Shrine in the philosophy of Shinto unique to Japan.

Todaiji Temple



This temple was built at the request of the Emperor Shomu and functioned as the center of the Kokubunji Temples established across the nation. Many buildings of national treasures are dotted within the vast precincts, including Kondo (the Hall of the Great Buddha), which houses a seated image of the Vairocana Buddha, and Shoso-in Repository, which stores treasures beloved by the Emperor Shomu.

Kofukuji Temple



This temple was built as the family temple of the Fujiwara clan. The temple buildings were destroyed by frequent fires, but they were rebuilt each time and restored to their original appearance. Hokuendo Hall and the Three-storied Pagoda that were rebuilt in the Kamakura period, the Five-storied Pagoda and Tokondo Hall which were rebuilt in the Muromachi period, are the four national treasures.

Kasuga Taisha Shrine



This shrine was built in the early Nara period to protect the capital, Heijo-kyo, in the west foot of the sacred mountain, Mt. Mikasa. Many shrines such as the main shrine, Honden (national treasure), Wakamiya Shrine, known for the Kasuga Wakamiya On-Matsuri Festival, are enshrined in the precinct.

Gangoji Temple



Originally built in Asuka in the 6th century, Hokoji Temple (Asuka Temple) was renamed Gangoji Temple when it was moved in the 8th century from Asuka to Japan's new capital in Nara. There are national treasures, the mandala main hall (Gokurakudo), built in the Kamakura period by reusing components of the monastery (priests' residence), and the contemplation hall (Zen-shitsu). Some parts are still covered with the roof tiles from the Asuka period.

Yakushiji Temple



The Emperor Temmu built this temple to pray for the Empress Jito's recovery from disease. It was moved to Heijo-kyo from Fujiwara-kyo, the previous capital. The East Pagoda, a national treasure from the Nara period built in the Hakuho style, is elegant. There is another national treasure building, Toindo (East Hall), rebuilt in the Kamakura period.

Toshodaiji Temple



Ganjin, a Chinese monk, founded Toshodaiji as a temple to learn Buddhist precepts. The Kondo (the main hall, a national treasure) is the only Kondo building from the Nara period still existing today. The hipped roof is magnificent, and a pair of ornamental tiles on top of the roof, called Shibi, are widely known as "the Roof Tiles of the Tenpyo era". There is also the Kodo (lecture hall, a national treasure) whose structure had originally been the Eastern State Assembly Hall of the Heijo Palace and was later moved here. With all of these and more, this temple is a treasure trove of Nara period architecture.

Across Time Eternal

A group of 8 cultural properties in the city were registered in the World Heritage List of UNESCO as "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara" in December, 1998.

Our city Nara is a treasure house of cultural properties, making its other name, the International Cultural Tourism City, most fitting. When faced with the treasures which have been carefully protected and inherited by the hands of our predecessors, we are fascinated with the beauty and the strength that have passed through the ages.

We want to share this fascination with more people.

Nara City remains committed to creating a city in which history and culture continue to play an important role.

What is a world heritage site?

It is cultural and natural heritage site considered to have remarkable and universal value based on the "World Heritage Treaty" adopted by UNESCO in 1972, and each country is to preserve it with the worldwide cooperation. The World Heritage Committee examines the property each country recommends and authorizes it as a "cultural heritage" or a "natural heritage". Japan ratified the treaty in 1992.



Site of Heijo Palace grounds



The palace stood in the center of the ancient capital of Nara. Formerly there were some buildings, such as the Daigokuden (Imperial Audience Hall) and the Chodoin (State Halls Complex) where national politics and rituals were carried out, the Dairi (Imperial Residence Complex) where Emperors resided, the garden where banquets were held, and some government offices. The Suzakumon gate and the Daigokuden hall were restored.



Nara Event Calendar

January

Shusho-e ritual (Toshodaiji Temple)
Shusho-e Kichijo Keka Ceremony, [New Year's Confession Ceremony] (Yakushiji Temple)
Shusho-e ritual (Todaiji Temple)
New year's opening ceremony of ancient court music and dance (Kasuga Taisha Shrine)
Konin-e Festival, a festival to confine cancer with sake in a bamboo cup (Daianji Temple)
Mt. Wakakusa Fire Festival (Mt. Wakakusa)
Otondo, New Year's Big Bonfire (Tobihino)

February

Shuni-e Fire Ceremony (Ryosenji Temple)
Setsubun, the day before the beginning of Spring, Saito Goma-e Ceremony [to drive away demons and bring in good luck] (Gangoji Temple)
Tsuina-e Ceremony [to exorcise demons] (Kofukuji Temple)
Setsubun, Mantoro Lanterns (Kasuga Taisha Shrine)
Setsubun Events (temples and shrines in Nara City)
Hatsuumata Yakuyoke Ceremony (Jigenji Temple)
Nara Rurie Illumination (Nara Park)
Potted plum blossom exhibition (Sugawara Temmangu Shrine)
Tsukigase Plum Blossom Festival (Tsukigase Valley)

March

Shuni-e Fire Ceremony (Todaiji Temple Nigatsudo Hall)
Gyoki Festival (Kikoji Temple)
Kasuga Festival [Monkey Festival] (Kasuga Taisha Shrine)
Shuni-e Flower Ceremony [offer artificial flowers to the Yakushi Buddha and make confessions and pray for peace] (Yakushiji Temple)

April

Hina-eshiki Ceremony (Hokkeji Temple)
Otaimatsu (Shuni-e Fire Ceremony) (Shin-Yakushiji Temple)
Jusan Mairi, the coming of age ceremony (Koininji Temple)
Grand Tea Ceremony in Spring (Saidaiji Temple)
Manju Matsuri Festival (Rin Shrine)

May

Ice Dedication Festival (Himuro Shrine)
Emperor Shomu Festival (Todaiji Temple)
Heijo-kyo Tempyo Festival (Heijo Palace Site)
Genjo Sanzo Festival and Manto Kuyo Ceremony, praying for ancestors (Yakushiji Temple)
Manyo Gagaku performance on Children's Day (Kasuga Taisha Shrine)
Takigi O-Noh, Noh performance with bonfires (Kasuga Taisha Shrine, former site of Kofukuji Temple South Gate)
Jukoki, Memorial Service for Juko (Shomyoji Temple)
Uchiwamaki, Fan-Throwing Festival (Toshodaiji Temple)

June

Kaizanki [Shari-e], Memorial Service for Ganjin, the founder of the temple (Toshodaiji Temple)
The special opening of the seated statue of Priest Ganjin and the Mieido Hall (Toshodaiji Temple)
Saikusa no Matsuri [Lily Festival] (Isagawa Shrine)
Take Kuyo, memorial service for bamboo (Daianji Temple)

July

Light-up Promenade Nara (Nara Park, etc.)
Jizo-e [Memorial Service for Jizo Bodhisattva, Guardian of Children and People, by Changing the dress] (Denkoji Temple)
Koyasu Jizo Great Memorial Service (Obitokadera Temple)
Kejo-e, Ceremony to disperse evil spirits (Todaiji Temple)

August

Nara Toka-e Candle Festival (Nara Park)
Cleaning of the Great Buddha (Todaiji Temple)
Mantoro Lantern Lighting Ceremony (Kasuga Taisha Shrine)
Nara Daimonji Great Bonfire Festival (Mt. Takamado, tobihino)
Manto Kuyo Lantern Festival (Todaiji Temple)
Jizo-e Manto Kuyo, to thank the protector of children (Gangoji Temple)
Basara Festival (across Nara City)
Heijo-kyo Tempyo Festival (Heijo Palace Remains)
Ryoto-e Illumination (San-ryobo ancient tombs)

September

Seventeenth Night Bon Dance Festival (Todaiji Temple Nigatsudo Hall)
Uneme Festival (Uneme Shrine and Sarusawa Pond)
Kangetsu Sanbutsu-e, Moon Viewing Festival (Toshodaiji Temple)

October

The annual Bugaku dance festival (Himuro Shrine)
Okina-mai, original form of Noh [designated one of the Important Intangible Folk Cultural Properties of Japan] (Nara Zuhiko shrine)
Daimoku-tate Story-telling folk entertainment [designated UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage] (Yahashira Shrine)
Deer Antler Cutting Ceremony (Rokuken, deer pen)
Autumn Grand Tea Ceremony (Saidaiji Temple)
Naramachi Traditional Children's Song Festival (Naramachi area)
Exhibition of Shoso-in Treasures

November

Heijo-kyo Tempyo Festival (Heijo Palace Site)
Manyo Gagaku performance on Culture Day (Kasuga Taisha Shrine and Kofukuji Temple)
Jion-e Ceremony (Yakushiji Temple)
Harvest Festival (Kasuga Taisha Shrine)

December

Nara Marathon (Start/finish at Konoike Athletics Stadium)
Kasuga Wakamiya On-Matsuri Festival (Kasuga Taisha Shrine)
Toji-sai, Winter solstice Festival, [burning ritual for good health on Dec. 22nd, the day of the winter solstice] (Shoryakuji Temple)
Joya no Kane, New Year's Eve bells [108 peals of temple bells rung at the end of the year] (temples in Nara City)



Naramachi

The area around the precinct of the world heritage site, Gangoji Temple, with its many historic townhouses is commonly known as Naramachi.



Naramachi Koshi no Ie (latticework house)



Karakuri Omocho-kan (Museum of Mechanized Toys)



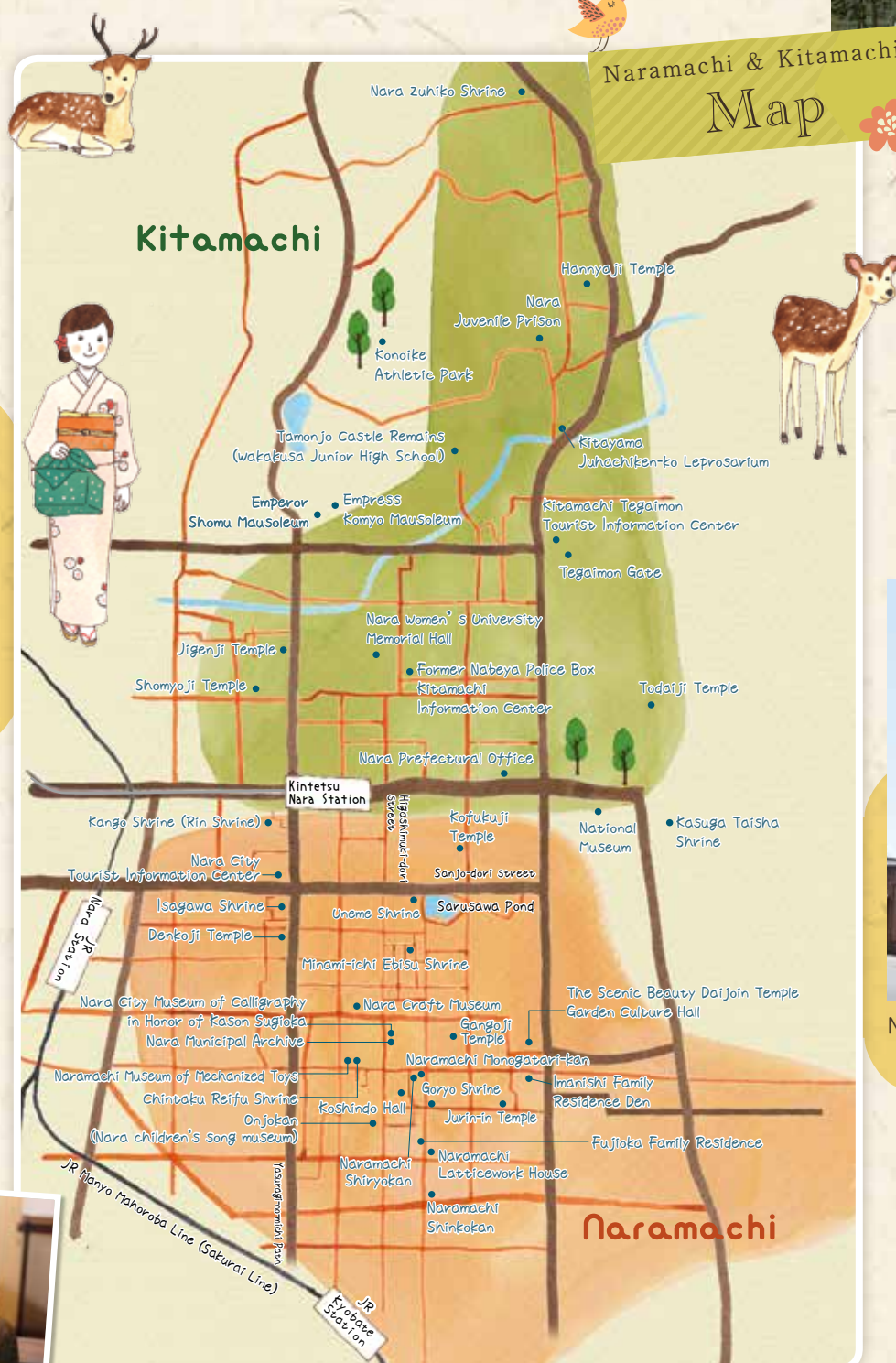
Koshindo Hall

It protects you from evil!

A little tip on Nara

Red lucky charm in Naramachi Migawari-zaru Monkey Charm

When walking in Naramachi, you can see little red stuffed objects hanging on the eaves of houses. They are called Migawari-zaru, substitute monkeys, kind of a charm of the Koshin belief. They say that when the stuffed monkeys are hung on the eaves, they take the misfortune in place of their owners.



Naramachi & Kitamachi Map

Nara Women's University Memorial Hall



Kitamachi

There are many cultural heritage assets in Kitamachi (literally "North Town"), which prospered in ancient times as the northern entrance of Nara.

Tegaimon Gate



Nara Juvenile Prison



Former Nabeya Police Box Kitamachi Information Center

A little tip on Nara

The narrow frontage was a tax strategy!?
Naramachi houses are like beds of eels.

You can see many houses in Naramachi with narrow frontages stretching deep into the back. This is because they were taxed according to the width of the frontage of their houses in the Edo period, so they built narrow-width houses to pay less tax.

So that was it!

Traditional Crafts in Nara Traditional Industries



Akahada Ware



Nara Lacquer Ware



Nara Doll (carved from a single piece of wood)



Sumi ink Stick



Nara Calligraphy Brushes



Nara Round Fans



Masks for Classical Performing Arts



Nara-sarashi Linen



Deer Antler Craft



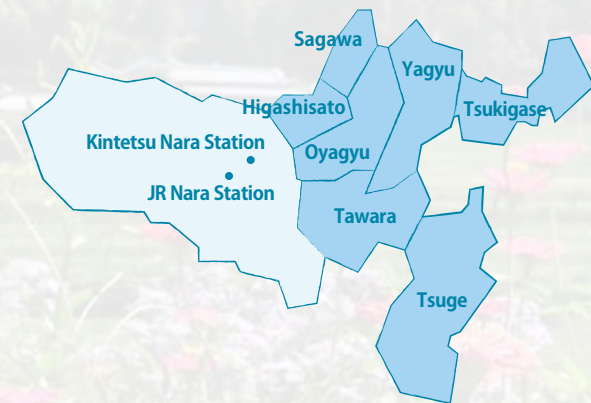
Mosquito Net



Nara Rooftiles

Mountain Village of Nara

In the eastern regions of Nara City, nestled among verdant forests and abundant natural beauty, many villages still retain an atmosphere that is steeped in a rich, long history. These open spaces, with their focus on agriculture and forestry, are one with nature and have continued to be richly blessed by nature. Such places offer the chance to experience nostalgic and traditional scenery loved by the Japanese people.



The mountain village and the countryside of Nara City is an area with abundant nature and nostalgic landscapes as well as the deep history and rich culture of the ancient capital, Nara. It is also a place for nurturing spiritual happiness.



Ono Yasumaro's Tomb

The tomb of mythical Ono Yasumaro, the editor of Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters) was discovered coincidentally during the maintenance of a tea plantation in Tawara in 1979, and it became clear by the epitaph that he really existed.



The Village of the Master Swordsmen Yagyu Family

The village of Yagyu is the hometown of the master swordsmen, the Yagyu family, known as the martial arts instructors for the Tokugawa clan in the Edo period and for the Yagyu Shinkageryu School of Sword. Many famous swordsmen in history passed along the road of this mountain village. There are many highlights to see, such as the former Yagyu feudal clan senior retainer's mansion, Hotokuji Temple built by Yagyu Munenori for his father Sekishusai's soul, the Jubeisugi tree which was planted by Yagyu Jubei when he departed for a tour around the country, and Yagyu Muneyoshi's Ittoseki Stone, a huge stone slashed into two by sword.



Tsukigase Plum Valley

With its natural scenic beauty, the landscape was praised by many writers and artists such as Rai Sanyo and Tessai Tomioka. The plum forest of Tsukigase Valley became the first designated scenic beauty site in Japan in 1922, along with Kenrokuen Garden and Nara Park.

Yamato Tea Plantation

In this area around the northern Yamato Plateau, Yamato tea is richly cultivated thanks to the cool climate.



Ume-no-Sato Tsukigase Onsen Hot Spring

This is a simple hot spring resort in the mountains where you can spend a relaxing time taking a bath in the open-air bath that commands a fine view, an inside bath, and a sauna, and also dining while enjoying the landscape of each season.



Lily of the Valley Colony, a Natural Monument

Seen at the foot of Mt. Kozui, pretty little flowers bloom in late May. This designated natural monument is the southernmost land where the northern kind of lily of the valley is naturally found.



Yamato Tea

This area belongs to a part of the Yamato Plateau, in the mountains of 200 to 500 meters above sea level, with short daylight hours and a large temperature difference between morning and evening, so that the tea leaves grow slowly to be fragrant, creating a high quality tea labeled "Yamato Tea".

Rice

The abundant, mineral-rich mountain waters and the large morning/evening temperature difference found in these parts produce fully ripened, delicious rice.



More Nara

This town of plenty nurtures people with a rich spirit.

Nara is a town which has calm and abundant nature and a long history. It is a safe and generous environment where people can raise children at ease, nurturing people with generous hearts.

A town where people cooperate and have lively interactions regardless of age.

A town where children and grandchildren can live happily forever.

A town where history and the future, the city and the country coexist.



Let's all support them!



Bambitious Nara

Nara Prefecture's first professional sport team. The team name is the union of "Be ambitious!" and "Bambi", and the team color is red (Bambitious Red).



Nara Club

A soccer club based in Nara City. The club colors "blue" and "red" were derived from Nara's poetic epithets "Ao (blue) ni (red) yoshi (good)". Their aim is to enter the J League.



Nara Marathon

About 16,000 people gather from around the country and run through the ancient capital of Nara in the early winter.

Friendship/Sister Cities



Gyeongju
[South Korea]



Toledo
[Spain]



Xi'an
[China]



Versailles
[France]



Canberra
[Australia]



Yangzhou
[China]



Koriyama
[Fukushima JPN]



Obama
[Fukui JPN]



Dazaifu
[Fukuoka JPN]



Usa
[Oita JPN]



Tagajo
[Miyagi JPN]

A little tip on Nara

Included in various "100 Selections"

100 Fragrant Landscapes of Japan

The Ministry of the Environment selected these landscapes on November 12, 2001 to preserve the rich fragrances, nature, culture and life and hand them down to future generations.



Nara Toka-e Candles



Nara's sumi-ink making

100 Soundscapes of Japan

The Ministry of the Environment selected these on July 1, 1996 as environments with a sound (soundscape) that people value as local symbols and hope to preserve for future generations.



Deer in Kasugano and the temple bells in the neighbourhood

100 Cityscapes of Japan

These districts won the Ministry of Construction Award for cityscapes that many people have felt pride in since the city's founding.



Naramachi district
(awarded on October 4, 1996)



Nara Park district
(awarded on October 4, 1993)

❖ The History of Nara City

- 1889 April 1, Established as a town
- 1898 February 1, Established as a city
(Area: 23.44km², Population: 29,986)
- 1910 November 20, The 1200th Anniversary Festival of Nara Heijo-kyo Capital was held.
- 1922 October 12, The Heijo Palace Site was designated a Historic Site. (about 1/3 of the present site)
- 1923 April 1, Annexed Saho-mura (village).
- 1939 April 1, Annexed Byakugoji, Toichi-mura.
- 1940 November 3, Annexed Miato-mura.
- 1946 October 19, The 1st Exhibition of Shoso-in Treasures was held.
- 1947 April 6, The first public election of mayor.
- 1950 April 1, Ichijo Senior High School was established.
- 1951 March 15, Annexed Toichi-mura, Daianji-mura, and Heijo-mura.
- 1952 March 29, The Heijo Palace Site was designated a Special Historic Site.
- 1955 February 15, Natural Monument Kasugayama Primeval Forest was designated a Special Natural Monument.
March 15, Annexed Fushimi-cho, Tomio-cho, Tatsuichi-mura, Meiji-mura, Obitoke-cho; and Gokadani-mura.
- 1957 September 1, Annexed Tawara-mura, Yagyu-mura; Oyagyu-son; Higashisato-mura; and Sagawa-mura.
September 18, The Deer in Nara were designated Living Natural Monuments.
- 1960 March 10, The 1250th Anniversary Festival of Nara Heijo-kyo Capital was held.
- 1968 November 3, The Citizens' Charter was established, Kiyoshi Oka was honored as the first honorary citizen.
- 1970 April 15, Established a sister-city relationship with Gyeongju, Korea.
- 1971 August 5, Established a sister-city relationship with Koriyama-shi, Fukushima.
November 7, Established a sister-city relationship with Obama-shi, Fukui.
- 1972 September 11, Established a sister-city relationship with Toledo, Spain.
November 3, Gyoin Hashimoto was honored as the second honorary citizen.
- 1974 February 1, Established a sister-city relationship with Xi'an City, China.
- 1975 November 3, Isamu Saeki was honored as the third honorary citizen.
- 1977 February 11, The city hall as it exists today was completed.
A reconstructed model of the Heijo-kyo Capital was completed.
- 1979 January 20, The grave of Ono Yasumaro was discovered in Konose-cho.
- 1981 May 24, The 32nd National Tree-planting Ceremony was held in the Heijo Palace Site.
- 1984 August 11, The Special Historic Site the «Palace Site Garden» was restored.

More Nara

Nara City Special Tourism Ambassadors



Waraimeshi (comedian duo)
Commissioned on September 23, 2012



Tsuyoshi Domoto [artist]
Commissioned on April 20, 2008



Fuka Kakimoto [former professional wrestler]
Commissioned on August 3, 2009



Norito Yashima [actor]
Commissioned on September 28, 2013



Naomi Kawase [movie director]
Commissioned on September 28, 2013

A little tip on Nara

The number of disciplines in Buddhism Fifty-Two Steps

The wide stone stairs that go up from the east side of Sarusawa Pond to the Kofukuji Temple Five Storied Pagoda, is called Gojuni-dan, or the Fifty-Two Steps.



Divine messengers
in Kasuga Taisha Shrine

Deer in Nara Park

Deer in Nara are said to be the Kasuga's divine messengers, from the legend "The God of Kasuga Taisha Shrine arrived on the white deer". To this day, they are real wild deer, not under any possession or being fed. The number of visitors were injured by their antlers increased as the number of deer increased in the Edo period, so the

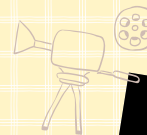
Deer Antler Cutting Ceremony become a custom. The number of deer varies at different time, but they have been carefully protected, and between one and two thousand several are maintained every year now.

A little tip on Nara



Nara International Film Festival

This is a film festival supported by the director Naomi Kawase and people who love Nara to show the charms of Nara domestically and internationally through films.



Nara International Film Festival

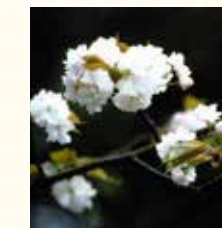
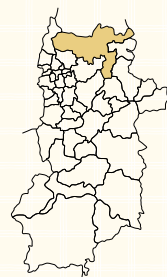


Nara City Profile

Nara City declared to become an International Cultural Tourism City in 1950 as the home of Japanese culture. It has grown as a bedtown of Kyoto, Osaka and Kobe while maintaining its character as a sightseeing city. In 1998, which marked the 100th anniversary of the municipal organization, eight groups of properties were registered as the "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara" in the UNESCO World Heritage List.



The City Emblem



The City Flower
Double Cherry-Blossoms of Nara



The City Tree
Quercus Gilva



The City Bird
Bush Warbler

- Area : 276.84 sq. km
- Population : 364,614 (Male: 171,940 Female: 192,674)
- Households : 157,069 (As of March 1, 2014)

珠光茶会



Experience the culture of tea ceremony – Juko Tea Ceremony

The tea ceremony held in tribute to Murata Juko from Nara who founded the "Wabi Cha" style. The three major schools of Japanese tea ceremony and others meet in tea rooms in "Naramachi" area with its historical townscape and at temples and shrines within the city, including world heritage sites.



Learn in Nara at night – Naramachi Night Culture

Daily changing schedules, including appreciation of traditional performances or craft workshops, are held for the local people as well as tourists to have a fun evening.



A little tip on Nara

Unrivalled sake made in Shoryakuji Temple

The birthplace of sake

Refined sake was made in the middle of the Muromachi period, and called "Mujoshu", the best alcoholic beverage. Shoryakuji Temple made this refined sake. This is the origin of Japanese refined sake. The yeast starter for a batch of sake called "Bodaimoto" was created from the rice grown in the Nara Basin and rich, clean water from the Bodaiyama River.



The taste passed down
from the ancient times!



Arukun Nara Machinaka Bar

Eat & drink
in the town of Nara!

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Daimokutate Story-telling folk entertainment



This entertaining art dedicated to the god at the Yoimiya Festival (on October 12th) in Yahashira Shrine in Kami-fukawa, is performed mainly by young men at the age of seventeen. "Daimokutate", seen as early as the late 16th century, has been handed down only in Kami-fukawa to this day. The stories themed on Genji and Heike clan commanders are told with unique intonation; this is a rare narrative performing art, which offers a glimpse into the medieval performing arts, was designated a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2009.

- 1986 November 14, Established a sister-city relationship with Versailles, France.
- 1988 February 11, The 90th anniversary of the municipal organization commemorative ceremony was held.
April 24 (-Oct. 23), «Silk Road Exposition, Nara» was held.
- 1993 October 26, Established a sister-city relationship with Canberra, Australia
- 1994 November 8, The Nara Forum of World Tourism Minister.
- 1998 February 1, The 100th anniversary of the municipal organization commemorative ceremony was held, and announced the Nara City 100 Year Declaration.
February 4, The completion ceremony of the restoration of the Heijo Palace Site Suzaku Gate was held.
October 17, Designated Naranoyaezakura (Double Cherry Blossoms) as the city flower, Ichiigashi (Quercus Gilva) as the city tree and Uguisu (Bush Warbler) as the city bird.
December 2, A group of eight properties was registered as "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara" in the UNESCO World Heritage List.
- 2001 September 15, Kason Sugioka was honored as the fourth honorary citizen.
- 2002 April 1, The commemorative ceremony for the transfer of the core city was held.
- 2004 July 30, Established a sister-city relationship with Dazaifu-shi, Fukuoka and Usa-shi, Oita.
December 1, Nara City Hospital was established.
- 2005 April 1, Annexed Tsukigase-mura, and Tsuge-mura.
- 2010 January 1, The 1300th Anniversary Festival of Nara Heijo-kyo Capital opening ceremony was held.
February 6, Established a sister-city relationship with Tagajo-shi, Miyagi.
April 23, The completion ceremony of the First Daigokuden restoration was held.
May 23, Established a sister-city relationship with Yangzhou City, China.
August 25, The «Nara International Film Festival 2010» was held.
October 12, The World Conference of Historical Cities was held.
December 5, The first Nara Marathon was held.
- 2012 August 27, Given the Nara Citizens Honour Award to Ryota Murata, a London Olympics boxing gold medalist.
- 2013 April 9, The Nara City Nursing School was established.
October 6, «Naramachi Koshi-no-le (Latticework House) was chosen for a Travelers' Choice, Free Sightseeing Spot award in 2013»
- 2014 February 12, The first large-scale tea gathering, Juko Tea Ceremony was held.

Nara City Guidebook

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