

ACCESS

By Car

Nikko-Utsunomiya Highway
 about 20 min. to Nikko
 about 10 min. to Nikko City
 about 10 min. to Nikko City Bus

By Public Transportation

Railway

JR East Tohoku Line
 JR Tohoku Line
 JR Utsunomiya Line
 JR Nikko Line
 Tohoku Bus
 Nikko City Bus

Bus

Tobu Bus Nikko Office
 Nikko Kotsu (bus)
 Nikko City Bus

Taxi and limousine

Car Rental

Nikko	NIPPON RENT-A-CAR	0288-54-0821
Sanei Jidosha	Nissan Rent a Car	0288-50-1523
Nikko Kotsu	TOYOTA Rent a Car	0288-50-1800
Daiwa Kotsu	NikoNiko Rent a Car	0288-53-1566
Chuo Kotsu		

Nikko City Tourism Association
 717-1 Imaichi, Nikko City Tochigi, 321-1261
 TEL: 0288-22-1525

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OKUNIKKO

Around Chuzenji and Yumoto Onsen

GUIDE MAP

Hike around and explore the nature and history of Okunikko



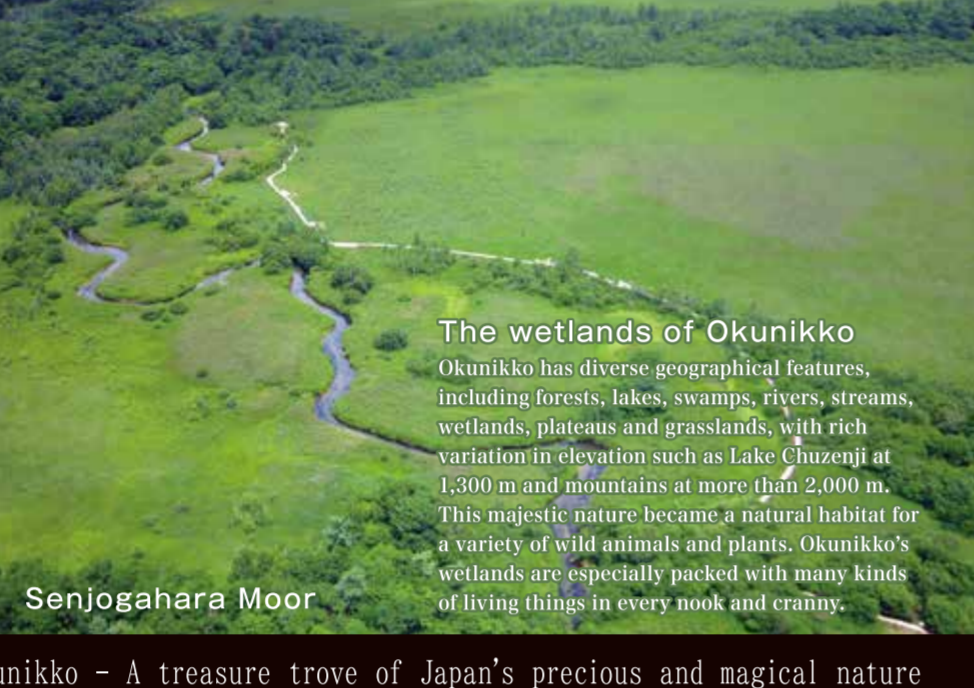
History of Okunikko as an international summer resort



Italian Embassy Villa Memorial Park (MAP 24)



Lake Chuzenji



Senjogahara Moor

The wetlands of Okunikko

Okunikko has diverse geographical features, including forests, lakes, swamps, rivers, streams, wetlands, plateaus and grasslands, with rich variation in elevation such as Lake Chuzenji at 1,300 m and mountains at more than 2,000 m. This majestic nature became a natural habitat for a variety of wild animals and plants. Okunikko's wetlands are especially packed with many kinds of living things in every nook and cranny.

For wildbirds at the damp areas of Senjogahara Moor you can see Latham's snipe, which flies in from Australia. In the dryer area close to the grassland, lots of stonechat fly around. In the relatively dry areas within the wetlands, plants such as spiraea salicifolia, which shows off pink flowers in summer, are widely distributed together with nepis rivularis scopoli (nicknamed "two-lined butterfly") which live on the flower. In 2005, Lake Yunoko, Yukawa River, Senjogahara Moor and Odashirogahara Moor were registered under the Ramsar Convention as Okunikko Shitsugen (Okunikko Marsh).

[Do you know the Ramsar Convention?]
 It is formally known as the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat," which was developed, focusing especially on waterfowl, for the conservation and sustainable utilization of waterfowl and wetlands as their habitat, and adopted at an international summit held in Ramsar, Iran in 1971. Later the definition of wetland was extended from "the landing zone of migratory birds such as waterfowl" to wetlands that play an important role for the "wider ecosystem."



Lake Chuzenji Boat House (MAP 32) Nishi-Rokuban Memorial Garden (Remains of Thomas B. Glover's second home) (MAP 31)



Italian Embassy Villa Memorial Park (MAP 24)

Enjoy by using the map on the back

The wetlands of Okunikko - A treasure trove of Japan's precious and magical nature



The sacred nature of Nikko is worshipped at the Nikko shrines and temples, which have been inscribed as World Heritage

The mountains in Nikko are a sacred object of worship. The three Buddhist images enshrined in the Sanbutsu-do (literally means three Buddhas Hall), the main hall of Nikko Rinnoji Temple, one of the World Heritage Nikko shrines and temples, represents Mt. Nantai (Thousand-armed Kannon) located at Lake Chuzenji, Mt. Nyoho (Amittabha Tathagata) and Mt. Taro (Horse-headed Kannon). It is said that Mt. Nantai, which rises in the center among Nikko mountains at an altitude of 2,486 m and is one of the best 100 mountains in Japan, created Lake Chuzenji, Senjogahara Moor, Odashirogahara Moor and Kegon Falls, one of Japan's three best waterfalls, over the course of several thousand years since its last eruption 20,000 years ago.

Senjogahara Moor

Senjogahara Moor is one of the most famous wetlands in Honshu. It is located at 1,400 m above sea level and covers 400 ha. Here, you can see a variety of aquatic plants. The wetlands used to be a lake created by the eruption of Mt. Nantai. Senjogahara Moor is rich with the blessings of Mother Nature. Birds singing joyfully in spring, alpine plants blooming beautifully in the early summer, and radiant foliage in the fall. Senjogahara Moor literally means "battle field." The name comes from a legend that a god of Mt. Nantai and a god of Mt. Akagi in Gunma fought over territory.

Odashirogahara Moor

Odashirogahara Moor is a grassland that spreads out from the west side of Yukawa River, about 2 km in circumference. It is surrounded by Mongolian oak trees. It is approximately a quarter the size of Senjogahara Moor. The grassland has plant colonies of lesser celandine, spruce and larch, which are found in the forest. The flowers in early- to mid-summer. Odashirogahara Moor has a gorgeous natural landscape in autumn too, especially with the yellow leaves of Mongolian oak trees and grasses painted in autumn colors. The most famous sight is a white birch nicknamed "Kifujin" (literally, "noble lady") which draws a constant stream of visitors trying to take a perfect snapshot.

Lake Yunoko

Lake Yunoko was formed when the Yukawa River was dammed by a stream of lava from the eruption of Mt. Mtsudake Lake Yunoko is 1,478 m tall and about 3 km in circumference. You can walk around it in about an hour. The surrounding area of Lake Yunoko is covered by virgin forest consisting of broadleaf trees such as yew, Japanese cedar, Japanese larch, and Japanese oak, and deciduous trees such as ginkgo, sweetgum, and chestnut. You can enjoy the natural beauty of the lake in all seasons. In the spring, the water is clear and the surrounding forest is green. In the summer, the water is blue and the surrounding forest is lush. In the autumn, the water is brown and the surrounding forest is colorful. In the winter, the water is white and the surrounding forest is white.

Lake Sainoko

If you walk around Lake Sainoko, you will be surrounded by white birch trees for about 15 minutes from the "Sainoko Inari" bus stop. You will find Lake Sainoko. On the way, there is a suspension bridge over Vassigawa River. After crossing the bridge, you will encounter a forest of Mongolian oak and Japanese oak trees. The narrow forest trails lead to Lake Sainoko. Lake Sainoko is a small, mysterious lake, about 1.5 km in circumference, located between Senjogahara Moor and the western coast of Lake Chuzenji. Lake Sainoko was once a part of Lake Chuzenji but later separated from the main lake due to sand and silt piled up over time. On the sand beach along the lake, Japanese oak trees stand in water. A rare phenomenon seen only in Lake Sainoko and Shoda Onsen, the "depression increase of its water level" is an odd phenomenon known as "Okunikko Ai." You can hear the sounds of nature, such as the chirping of birds, as the most attractive feature here. If you concentrate and meditate, you can hear the whispering of wind, twittering of birds and even cries of deer.

Nikko's Central Hiking Trail

Senjogahara Moor Natural Research Trail

- MAP 1 Yudaki Falls**
Yudaki Falls is one of the three famous waterfalls in Okunikko, the other two being Kegon Falls and Ryuzu Falls. Located on the southern end of Lake Yunoko, Yudaki Falls is 70 m high and 25 m wide at the widest. You can walk down to the waterfall basin. The nearby observatory gives you a stunning view of Yudaki Falls which is the starting point of Senjogahara's hiking trails and filled with hikers in the peak season.
- MAP 2 Kotaki Falls**
Yudaki Falls and Ryuzu Falls are the two most famous waterfalls in Yukawa River. There is another one: the small but beautiful Kotaki Falls, which, at a height of only 5 m, stands in harmony with the surrounding forests. Classified as a bamboo-blind type fall, Kotaki Falls attracts visitors with its dazzling white flow. You can enjoy the marvelous view either in autumn with colorful leaves or in early summer with lush green leaves.
- MAP 3 Odashiro Bridge**
Odashiro Bridge is an old wooden bridge that spans Yukawa River. The bridge is surrounded by fallen trees. Most of them appear to be up to 1 m in diameter, and some older ones are covered in moss, creating a primitive landscape of dense forest and wild plants.
- MAP 4 Aoki Bridge**
Aoki Bridge, a bridge over Yukawa River, is an important point on the Nature Research Trail. The view from the bridge is beautiful, but what is more stunning is scenery as a whole; the bridge fits into the surrounding atmosphere so naturally. The tall torii gate stands near the riverbank, and the view is beautiful.
- MAP 5 Yukawa River**
Yukawa River is a short river with a total length of about 12.4 km. It flows down from Yudaki Falls at the south of Lake Yunoko to join Jigokugawa River by way of Ryuzu Falls, to finally reach Shobugahama Beach on Lake Chuzenji. The unspoiled river running from south to north meanders along the west side of Senjogahara Moor and is an excellent spot for brook trout fishing.
- MAP 6 Akanuma Pond**
According to a myth called "Shinsen'an," in ancient times there was a swamp around here which became blood-stained as a result of the fierce battle between the gods from Mt. Nantai and Mt. Akagi. That's why the swamp was named Akanuma, which literally means "red swamp." Akanuma Pond is located at the gate to Senjogahara Moor. It's convenient to get off the bus here to start hiking the Senjogahara Moor Nature Research Trails.
- MAP 7 Shakanuge Bridge**
The Yukawa River flows toward Ryuzu Falls via Senjogahara Moor. The Shakanuge Bridge, which runs from Senjogahara Moor to Ryuzu Falls, is located about a 10-minute walk away from Ryuzu Falls. Mongolian oak trees are seen in the area. There are ecological bus stops nearby.

Odashirogahara Moor Sightseeing Trail

- MAP 8 Odashirogahara Observatory**
The observatory is located at the best site to relish the panoramic view of Odashirogahara Moor, including the Noble Lady, a White Birch. As the wetland is surrounded by fence to prevent wild deer from entering, visitors must go inside through a turnstile. There is a rest area, toilets, and low-pollution bus stop near the basin observatory.
- MAP 9 Izumiyadoike Pond**
Izumiyadoike Pond is along the Senjogahara Moor Nature Trail and is located at the western end of Senjogahara Moor. With crystal clear spring water and dead trees and fallen trees here and there, the surrounding area creates a unique and mysterious atmosphere. Wild ducks can be seen all year round. From Izumiyadoike Pond you can go to Aikamura Pond via the Nature Research Trail.
- MAP 10 Yumoto Onsen**
Located on the northern coast of Lake Yunoko, Yumoto Onsen has a long history, dating back to 1,200 years ago when, according to legend, Shodo Shonin, who established Nikko as a center of Buddhist religious activity, discovered a hot spring and named it "Yukubiyu" in 788. The spring water is sulfuric (hydrogen sulfide).
- MAP 11 Nikko-zan Onsenji Temple**
Nikko-zan Onsenji Temple is a branch temple of the World Heritage Nikkozan Rinnoji Temple. Its principal deity is Yakushi Nyorai Nyorai, which had originally been enshrined in the "Yakushi-do" Hall on the Mt. Onsen Shrine and then moved to the existing Onsenji Temple due to damage caused by a typhoon that struck Japan in 1972. Onsenji Temple is very unique in that even general visitors can take a hot spring bath in the temple.
- MAP 12 Lake Karikomi**
Lake Karikomi is a mysterious lake which was formed when lava dammed a stream from nearby Mt. Mtsudake. Lake Karikomi, about 600 m across at its widest point and about 15 m deep, is connected with Lake Kirikomi, about 300 m across at its widest point and the same depth of 15 m.
- MAP 13 Karenuma Pond**
Karenuma Pond is a dry lake, as its name literally suggests. Many hikers take a rest here along their way. In the cone-shaped grassland surrounded by mountains, varieties of alpine plants bloom in early summer. In autumn, the leaves of trees begin to change colors at the foot of the mountain.
- MAP 14 Sanno Pass**
Sanno Pass is located almost at the midpoint between Mt. Sannobashi in the east and Mt. Mtsudake in the west. Standing on the Sanno Pass, you can see Mt. Nantai right in front of you. The road toward Kotoku is a downward slope. While walking down the trail, you'll see the trees on the way changing from coniferous trees to broadleaf trees like Mongolian oak and Russian larch birch.
- MAP 15 Kotoku Pasture**
Kotoku Pasture is 30,000 m² and grazes cattle and horses. Fresh milk is sold over the counter and rich-flavored ice cream is very popular among hikers. This small resort, the base of hiking trail is equipped with accommodation, a hot spring, public toilets and a parking lot.
- MAP 16 Kotoku Pond / Entrance to Kotoku**
Kotoku Pond, which is a small pond located in the upper reaches of Sakagawa River, is about 300 m in circumference and about 1 m deep. The source of its water is spring water from a nearby mountain. The cold and crystal clear surface of the pond gives off a stunning impression. There are many tall, slender trees in the area, which produce pretty white flowers in June. The center of the pond is accented with yachiyo, an aquatic plant. If you walk the trails along the Sakagawa River from Kotoku Pond toward Sakagawa Bridge for about 15 minutes, you'll encounter the "Kotoku Iriguchi" bus stop along National Route 120.

Light trail for an enjoyable stroll

Hiking trail around Lake Yunoko

- MAP 18 Yudakie**
Located at the southern end of this course, Yudakie is the point where the water of Lake Yunoko flows over a vertical drop from Yudaki Falls. Here, you can enjoy a majestic view. In May and June, rhododendron wadum blooms around the basin of the waterfall. You can sense Mother Nature embodied in Okunikko here. It only takes 20 minutes to make a round trip from there to the basin observatory.
- MAP 19 Usagijima Peninsula**
Usagijima Peninsula is the only peninsula on Lake Yunoko. It is said that Usagijima Peninsula (literally, "Rabbit Island") was named because it is shaped like a rabbit's ears. Another famous spot is Usagijima Peninsula Swamp at the base of the peninsula, which is a habitat of Japanese azalea, eriophorum vaginatum and vaccinium oxycoccos. Although the leaves turn glowing red and yellow to create a fantastic view here, the spot is rarely known among tourists.
- MAP 20 Akechidaira Observatory**
Akechidaira Observatory, which is accessible by Akechidaira Cable Car, is said to be the best spot to see Mt. Nantai in Nikko. The panoramic view includes Lake Chuzenji, Kegon Falls and Mt. Nantai in front, which is commonly seen in pictures of Nikko.
- MAP 21 Chanokidaira**
Chanokidaira is 1,600 m above sea level, on the way to Mt. Hangetsu at the southern bank of Lake Chuzenji, which is a very popular view spot overlooking scenic Lake Chuzenji.
- MAP 22 Mt. Hangetsu Observatory**
The Mt. Hangetsu Observatory is the most popular scenic spot in Nikko together with Akechidaira Observatory. From the observatory you can relish the superb view spreading out before your eyes, including Mt. Nantai in the front, Lake Chuzenji below, Senjogahara Moor to the front left and Nikko's Mt. Shirane in the distance.
- MAP 23 Mujinakubo**
Mujinakubo faces Lake Chuzenji and is the best spot to take a rest and enjoy the superb view. You will be impressed by a different face of Mt. Nantai from here level. About a 20-minute walk along Lake Chuzenji from here will take you to the Italian Embassy Villa Memorial Park.
- MAP 24 Italian Embassy Villa Memorial Park**
The former Italian Embassy Villa was built in 1929 and designed by Antonin Raymond, an architect. It had been used as a villa up to 1996. Then it was opened to the public as a memorial park after being renovated by Tochigi Prefecture. The villa's inside and outside walls covered with cedar bark and a wide veranda from which you can enjoy the fantastic view of Lake Chuzenji.
- MAP 25 British Embassy Villa Memorial Park**
The building in the park was originally built as a private summer cottage for Sir Ernest Mason Satow, a British diplomat. Then it was used as an official villa by successive British ministers. The view overlooking Lake Chuzenji and Mt. Shirane is overwhelming from the villa situated on its hill, especially from the second floor of the building. In the hall, the history and the culture of the Lake is exhibited, based on the descriptions in the Satow's diary.
- MAP 26 Nikko-zan Chuzenji Temple Tachiki Kannon**
Tachiki Kannon, the principal deity of Chuzenji Temple, is another name of Senju Kannon the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy with 1,000 arms. Senju Kannon (an important cultural property) is the Honzobutsu (original Buddhist deity) of Mt. Nantai, Chuzenji Temple, which was founded in 784 by Shodo Shonin. It is a branch temple of World Heritage Rinnoji Temple. According to tradition, it is said that when Shodo Shonin was cruising on Lake Sanoko, the golden Senju Kannon appeared from the water. He then carved the image in a Japanese Judas tree.

Relish the superb view of Mt. Nantai from Senjogahara Beach, Lake Sainoko, Senjogahama Beach, and Ryuzu Falls Sightseeing Trail

- MAP 28 Senjogahama Beach**
This beach is about 2 km long and extends from south to north on the western end of Lake Chuzenji. The Senju Hill, founded by Shodo Shonin, was later rebuilt. You can enjoy the fantastic landscape with Mt. Nantai on the other side of Lake Chuzenji. Nature around here is rich enough to raise a forest of more than 200-year-old Mongolian oak and Japanese oak. The park is crowded with hikers in June when the Japanese primrose is in full bloom. General cars are not allowed here, but the beach is accessible by boat or on foot.
- MAP 29 Akaiwa**
If you go over the mountain trails with their ups and downs near Lake Chuzenji, a big rock that looks like it is protruding from the lakeside will come into sight. The rock, called Akaiwa, is big enough for 5-6 adults to stand on, making it a famous view spot. From Akaiwa, you'll see another face of Lake Chuzenji, and Senjogahama Beach in the far distance. On your way to Akaiwa, you'll be greeted by red and white azaleas.
- MAP 30 Ryuzu Falls**
Ryuzu Falls is one of the three famous falls in Okunikko. It flows down as long as 21 m over the lava stones. The flow branches just before reaching the basin, making it look like a dragon head. That's why the fall is called Ryuzu which literally means "dragon head," according to legend. Azaleas bloom in spring and the leaves of surrounding trees turn red and yellow, creating a marvelous view in autumn.
- MAP 31 Nishi-Rokuban Memorial Garden (Remains of Thomas B. Glover's second home)**
This site is the location of the remains of Thomas Glover's and Hans Hunter's villa. Glover was a Scottish trader and Hans Hunter was a businessman in Meiji Era. You can see the mantelpiece they used to warm themselves by and feel the atmosphere of the international social gatherings of the time by taking a walk around. Hunter established the "Tokyo Andover and County Club" in 1925 and used his villa as its club house. The members of the club included diplomats from European countries in those days.
- MAP 32 Lake Chuzenji Boat House**
The Lake Chuzenji Boat House was used as a waterside resort facility on Lake Chuzenji from the mid 1940s to mid 1950s when the area was bustling as international summer retreat. It was later rebuilt. The reconstructed Lake Chuzenji Boat House is now used as a rest house where you can enjoy rich nature and get closer to water, surrounded by the beautiful landscape of Lake Chuzenji.

INFORMATION

- 1 Tochigi Prefectural Nikko Natural Science Museum**
A central information source on Okunikko, you can find guidance related to the latest nature information and hot sightseeing spots here. It is also a base for natural exploration. You'll have fun learning about nature and the history of Okunikko by efficiently incorporating this information into your activities. ● Tel: 0288-55-0880
- 2 Akanuma Nature Information Center**
Located at Akanuma, the gate to Senjogahara Moor, this center provides hikers with the latest nature information, rules and etiquette, and other useful information. There is a prefectural parking lot and ecological bus terminals for Odashirogahara Moor, Lake Sainoko and Senjogahama Beach.
- 3 Nikko Yumoto Visitor Center**
The Center provides useful, detailed information on Nikko National Park to help tourists who come to the Okunikko region so that they can get the most from their exploration. Dive into nature armed with the information you gain here. ● Tel: 0288-22-2321

See the overhead view map on the back to outline the route of your journey and the locations to visit.