Sustainable Tourism

Let's travel to Agricultural Heritage Systems

[Osaki region in Miyagi Prefecture, Shizuoka Wasabi Cultivating region in Shizuoka Prefecture, Lake Biwa region in Shiga Prefecture]
What is Agricultural Heritage Systems?

In the regions designated as Agricultural Heritage Systems, farming, forestry, and fishing have been practiced in traditional methods that have been passed down for more than 100 years. These traditional practices have been nurtured and formed by the local climate, topography, and historical background, creating a food culture, climate, and landscape unique to the regions.

Designated as Agricultural Heritage Systems, the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industry has a resource recycling system that does not deplete natural resources (soil, forest, and aquatic resources), and has a low environmental load, contributing to the conservation of biodiversity, including Japan’s endemic creatures. Agricultural Heritage Systems are "living heritages" that continue to evolve and adapt to changes in society and nature.

Agricultural Heritage Systems include Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) designated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Japanese Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (J-NIAHS) designated by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

In Japan, there are 13 ●Globally Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) and 24 ●Japanese Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (J-NIAHS).

[●Areas designated for both]
(As of the end of March 2023)

Biwa Lake to Land Integrated System

Lake Biwa region in Shiga Prefecture

The Biwa lake to land integrated system is known as Satoumi. The system has a history of more than 1000 years of using eri fishing (small fixed-net fishing) and agricultural techniques that contribute to lake conservation, leading to a unique food culture that was passed down.

Around Lake Biwa, fishing for catching lake fish including species indigenous to Lake Biwa such as Nigoro-buna (the round crucian carp), has connected with agriculture, and created a diverse and distinctive food culture that combines lake fish with agricultural products, such as "fish and rice". Enjoy a trip in harmony with Lake Biwa, and experience fishing and farming where people's ingenuity shines through.
~ Introduction to three attractive areas of Agricultural Heritage Systems ~

Osaki Kōdo’s Traditional Water Management System for Sustainable Paddy Agriculture

Osaki region in Miyagi Prefecture

In the Osaki region, there still remain the ingenious water management systems developed to cope with natural disasters such as cold temperature damage and flooding, and a rich wetland ecosystem blessed with diversity of flora and fauna in “Igune” (homestead woodlands) scattered in the rice paddies like forests, which creates a unique landscape.

Visitors can also enjoy the fantastic scenery of migratory birds such as roosting geese, and experience the culture of historical fermented food such as sake, miso, and soy sauce making.

Why don’t you experience the scenery, culture, and nature unique to the rice-paddy farming region of Tohoku?

Traditional wasabi cultivation in Shizuoka
~ The birthplace of wasabi tells the history of people and wasabi ~

Shizuoka Wasabi Cultivating region in Shizuoka Prefecture

In the Shizuoka wasabi cultivating region, wasabi, an endemic species to Japan, is grown in traditional wasabi fields called “Tatamiishi style,” which are created by clearing mountain streams to make terraces for wasabi cultivation. The traditional wasabi cultivation has been inherited, using nutrients contained in spring water with as little fertilizer or pesticides as possible.

Ikadaba wasabi fields, which boast one of the largest cultivation areas in the Izu region, overlook a vast array of Tatamiishi style wasabi fields and is selected as one of the 10 best terraced rice fields in Shizuoka Prefecture for the spectacular scenery.

Visitors can enjoy an outdoor trip with a guided cycling tour by e-Bike, wasabi harvesting and making wasabi pickles, and other experiences.
In the Osaki region, there are spots associated with Lord Date Masamune. "Uchikawa," a registered World Heritage Irrigation Structures, "Former Yubikan and its Garden," an officially designated historical site, and a studio surrounded by the "Igune" (homestead woodlands) are all examples of this region's history.

Enjoy the history and agricultural culture of the Osaki region to your heart's content, through farming experience, interacting with creatures that inhabit the fields, visiting breweries leading you into the traditional culture of fermentation of sake, miso, and soy sauce, and dishes using vegetables grown on the Osaki Kōdo.

**Osaki region in Miyagi Prefecture**

**Day 1**

**Lunch with rice and vegetables grown on Osaki Kōdo**

How about homemade meals and sweets such as cookies made with local vegetables and frozen tofu, while enjoying the view of the Uchikawa River?

[Uchikawa Historic Café]
Open days: Fridays to Sunday
*Monday is open only on national holidays*
Open hours: 11:00 AM-5:00 PM
Address: 24-3 Hiyahikawa, Iwadeyama, Osaki City
Tel: 0229-72-1344

**Visit the kominka (traditional Japanese house) gallery in Igune**
Relax in the space surrounded by "Igune," a landscape unique to this region.

[Kominka Gallery “omoya”]
Open days: Fridays, Saturdays, and Mondays from June to October
Open hours: 11:00 AM-4:00 PM
Address: 134 Okigahara, Shimomone, Iwadeyama, Osaki City
Tel: 050-1790-5986

**Former Yubikan and Garden**
It is designated as a national historic and beautiful site. Visitors can enjoy the sounds of the abundant water flow of the "Uchikawa River" and the various seasonal landscapes.

Open hours: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM
Closed: December 29 to January 3, Mondays (the following day if it is a national holiday)
Address: 6 Komikawa-machi, Iwadeyama, Osaki City
Tel: 0229-72-1344

**Stroll along the Uchikawa promenade**
This is a historic agricultural irrigation canal that was excavated about 400 years ago by order of Lord Date Masamune to serve as the outer moat of Iwadeyama Castle. Along the river, there are high cliffs reminiscent of castle ruins, and the tranquil view of the "Former Yubikan and Garden" on the other side, which makes a valuable World Heritage Irrigation Structures site with a sense of history.

**Day 2**

**Seasonal farming experience**

Open a special time and learn something that you would not normally experience, through farming experience such as harvesting rice and interacting with living creatures, where visitors can experience the production and supply of rich agricultural products supported by skillful water management.

[Tatena Field Museum]
The website of Osaki Region Committee for the Promotion of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) introduces seasonal farming experience in the Osaki region (Osaki City, Yamafutokoro, Higashikawara, and Kominka). Visit the webpage for more information.

**Visiting a Miso and Soy Sauce Brewery**
Established in 1830, it is the oldest miso and soy sauce brewery in Osaki Kōdo. This brewery focuses on soybeans and wheat produced in Miyagi Prefecture. Visitors can learn about today’s SDGs initiatives from the background of the region’s historical fermented food culture.

[Kamata Soy Sauce]
Open hours: 10:00 AM-5:00 PM
Time required: About 1 hour
Address: 3 Kaya Kitamura, Iwadeyama, Osaki City
Tel: 0229-34-2041

**Stay at Naruko Hot Spring Village**
It is one of the leading hot spring resorts in the Tohoku region, with 7 of 10 spring types found in Japan. This hot spring resort is famous for its self-catering hot spring cure using local foodstuffs, based on the hot spring’s culture, relaxing life of daily activity.

[Tamatukokurino no Yado Miyama]
Open hours: Check-in: 3:00 PM, Check-out: 11:00 AM
Address: 91 Yasui, Naruko Onsen, Osaki City
Tel: 0229-84-7641

**Learn more about Agricultural Heritage Systems**
Recommended Experience

Roasting goose
Kabukurinuma Pond is visited by 100,000 migratory birds, including white-fronted geese, from autumn to winter. It is also a wetland of the Ramsar Sites, and a fantastic sight can be seen in the early morning and evening.

[Kabukurinuma Park]
Acceptance period: October to November
Tel: 0229-56-3578

Brewery tour
Visitors can learn about the "handmade" sake brewing process using traditional fermentation techniques with explanations, while touring the dedicated pathway.

[Brewery tour]
Open hours: 8:00 AM-4:30 PM
Tel: 0229-56-3578

[Tatena Field Museum]
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Enjoy an active trip to wasabi fields in Izu!

“Joren Falls,” one of the 100 best waterfalls in Japan, offers a view of wasabi fields next to the waterfall basin. Visitors can enjoy “Wasabidon,” a bowl of rice topped with fresh wasabi, wasabi harvesting, and making wasabi pickles, as well as cooking camp meals using local specialties of shiitake mushrooms and fresh wasabi in a bungalow.

The e-Bike Wasabi Field Tour is a guided tour of Izu satoyama landscapes and large-scale wasabi fields. Enjoy an active journey in the great nature.

Visit Joren Falls and wasabi fields
Joren Falls, one of the top 100 waterfalls in Japan, is a representative waterfall in Izu, located in the upper reaches of the Kanzo River. The waterfall 7 meters wide drops from basalt cliffs 25 meters high amid thick trees. Along the mountain stream, visitors can see the up-close scenery of wasabi cultivation using spring water from under the falls.

[Wasabien]
Wasabi harvesting: May to early July
Making wasabi pickles: January to early November
Visiting Satoyama Wasabien: Year-round
Open hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM (Closed Wednesdays)
Address: 1242 Jizodo, Izu City, Tel: 0558-83-2000

Agricultural Products Market Kitara
Fresh vegetables delivered every morning from nearby farmers, local specialties such as fresh wasabi and shiitake mushrooms, and thick omi-koto made from 100% Fukuyutaka soybeans produced in Izu City are available.

[Minami-Kitara]
Open hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM (Closed: Temporary closure during the year-end and New Year holidays)
Address: 252-1 Yanase, Izu City, Tel: 0558-83-2366

Making dinner and lodging in the campsite
Stay in a bungalow with a fire space and enjoy cooking dinner with fresh wasabi and shiitake mushrooms in the great outdoors.

[Pia Camp Nakajima]
Open hours: Check-in: 1:00 PM Check-out: 10:00 AM
Address: 770-1 Jizodo, Izu City, Tel: 0558-83-2204

Enjoy a sustainable journey to the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) and the Japanese Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (J-NIAHS)

Learn more about Agricultural Heritage System's Recommended Experience

E-Bike Guided Tour "Nakaizu Satoyama Nature Walk"

Meeting at the front of Shuzenji Station
Meet at "Crane BASE" in front of Shuzenji Station at 10:30 AM and give a briefing about e-Bike and fitting session.

[Crane BASE]
Open period: Year-round
Open hours: 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Closed: Wednesdays and Thursdays
Address: 176 Nakaizu R.D. Building 625-1, Izu City, Tel: 0558-77-3875

Viewing wasabi fields
Cycling
Experienced guides will explain about the history of wasabi production and provide information unique to the region, while visitors pass by hot spring stands in the Warabio area, Kisobosui Shrine that enshrines water essential for wasabi production, and wasabi fields spreading out in the mountains. The large “Tatamishi” wasabi fields that suddenly appear in the mountains are a spectacular sight.

Kadaba Koarashi Bridge (Wasabi fields)
This is the birthplace of the Tatamishi-style cultivation of “Traditional wasabi cultivation in Shizuoka,” which is designated as Agricultural Heritage Systems. The beautiful expanse of scenery filled with the wisdom of our predecessors is a must-see.

Tour to Banjo Falls
Visitors can descend so close to the waterfall that you can feel the spray, and feel the power of the waterfall up close. There are a lot of wasabi fields in the upper reaches of the waterfall. This is a spot where visitors can understand the importance of “water” essential for wasabi production.

Lunch with wasabi dishes
How about a “Wasabidon set meal” for lunch, where you can directly taste the aroma and flavor of wasabi.

[Amagochaya Amajyugashima]
Open hours: 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Closed: Varies according to the tourist season
Address: 540-1 Itoyama, Izu City, Tel: 0558-85-2016

Enjoy a day use hot spring
Hot spring hotel with 100% fresh hot spring water. (Relax and warm yourself in the hot spring water that gently moisturizes your skin.)

[Endaninoyu day-use hot spring (no)]
Open hours: 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM (except closed)
Closing at 8:00 PM
Address: 363-5 Umekai, Izu City, Tel: 0558-83-5184

Guided e-Bike tours are arranged according to your request. Please inquiry for details.

*Guided e-Bike tours are arranged according to your request. Please inquiry for details.
Enjoy a sustainable journey to the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) and the Japanese Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (J-NIAHS)

Lake Biwa region in Shiga Prefecture

Why not embark on a journey where you can experience the fishing and agriculture of the Lake Biwa region and its traditional way of life? In addition to eating fish, a traditional fishing method in Lake Biwa, visitors can enjoy the history and culture of the Lake, by making tsukudani (fish boiled in soy sauce) , trying local cuisine that uses lake fish, and viewing beautiful sunsets on “Okishima” island, the only inhabited island on Japan’s freshwater lakes. In Ryuo, which is said to be the birthplace of Omi beef, visitors can try farming of vegetables and fruits, and enjoy BBQ with the harvested crops. Experience the precious ecosystem and history of people’s ingenuity through a journey to Lake Biwa.

Trip to experience the traditional people-and-nature-friendly lifestyle of Lake Biwa

Day 1

Stay at Kojoso
The first fisherman’s guesthouse in Shiga Prefecture. Savour dishes made from lake fish caught freshly by local fishermen and view the spectacular sunset from the inn facing Lake Biwa.

Lunch of lake fish dishes
Enjoy dishes such as sandwiches and hamburgers made with lake fish (take-out available). How about small fish tsukudani or furu-zushi (fermented fish sushi) as gifts?

Fishing experience
Experience the traditional fishing methods of Lake Biwa such as “ori fishing.” Visitors can try Lake Biwa’s diverse fishing methods of Lake Biwa, observe actual fishing operations, learn about fish, and experience life on Lake Biwa from a fisherman’s perspective. Visitors can take home the fish they catch as a gift.

Sag Roadside station Aguri Park Ryuo
Visitors can harvest seasonal strawberries, cherries, and other fruits grown in the rich soil and Lake Biwa water, as well as farming experiences such as potato digging or rice growing/irrigation planting and harvesting. For lunch, how about having a BBQ with the harvested ingredients, or a meal of Omi beef and Omi rice?

Interactive Agricultural Park Roadside Station Aguri Park<br>
Open period: Year round Opening hours: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM Closed: Mondays (Tuesday if Monday is a public holiday) Address: 1073 Tennozu, Ryuo-cho, Otsu-gun Tel: 0748-55-3101

Day 2

Walking around Okishima island
Okishima is the only inhabited island in Japan’s freshwater lakes. Why not spend some relaxing island time in a nostalgic atmosphere? Enjoy walking along the lakeside, visiting the Benzaiten shrine, and viewing the scenery on the east side of the lake from the mountains of Okishima, including the Hira Mountain range and the reclaimed land of Damakanoko.

Visit Lake Biwa Museum
Following the theme of “lake and people,” this is a hands-on museum where visitors can learn about the history of Lake Biwa and the relationship between people and living creatures. Visitors can learn about the history and culture of Lake Biwa, including the ingenuity of the people who have lived in harmony with the lake, its creatures, and the ecological changes caused by changes in the environment.

Lake Biwa Museum
Open hours: 9:30 AM-5:00 PM (Last admission at 4:30 PM) Closed: Monday (open on holidays) and other temporary closures Address: 105 Otsukino-cho, Kusatsu City Tel: 077-86-4611

Make Takudani
At the Kotobuki no Omi by the mothers in Okishima, visitors can cook Shiga’s specialties, bold shrimp and soy beans, and cooked sweetfish with Japanese pepper.

Kotobuki no Omi (Fish Cradle Paddy Field)Women Group: Takudani?
Open period: Late April to late July Experience time: 10:30 AM-11:00 AM Date: Consultation required Address: 43 Otsukino-cho, Otsu-shi, Shiga Prefecture Tel: 0748-41-6787

Learn more about Agricultural Heritage Systems! Recommended Experience

Fish cradle paddy
The community initiative to manage the vast farmland with seven rice paddies. Visitors can spend time running their children’s interactions with living nature.

Kusatsu no Naka Fish Cradle Paddy Field Council
Open period: June (Date Inquiry required) Address: 317 Kusatsu-shi, Kusatsu City Tel: 0774-49-9830

An environment has been created not only for biodiversity, but also to be used as a place for community interactions, where people can live in harmony with nature.

Kusatsu no Naka
Open period: May-September (Date Inquiry required) Address: 215 Sakanos, Kusatsu City Tel: 0774-84-5402

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Osaki region in Miyagi Prefecture

By train
- Tokyo Station: Shinkansen/About 2 hours, Sendai Station: Shinkansen/15 minutes or Tohoku Main Line or Rifu-East Line/About 1 hour

By car
- From Tokyo: Shinkansen/About 5 hours and 10 minutes, Sendai Station: Tohoku Expressway/About 1 hour

Shizuoka Wasabi Cultivating region in Shizuoka Prefecture

By train
- Tokyo Station: Shinkansen/About 50 minutes, Mishima Station: Shinkansen/About 2 hours and 40 minutes, Shuzenji Station: Shinkansen/About 2 hours and 40 minutes
- Nagoya Station: Shinkansen/About 2 hours and 40 minutes, Shuzenji Station: Odoriko Express/About 2 hours and 10 minutes, Izu Hakone Railway/About 40 minutes

By car
- From Tokyo: Tohoku Expressway/About 35 minutes or National Road No. 4/About 1 hour

Lake Biwa region in Shiga Prefecture

By train
- Otsu Station: Shinkansen/About 2 hours and 10 minutes, JR Kyobashi Line/About 10 minutes, Kyoto Station
- Osaka Station: JR Kyobashi Line/About 30 minutes, Otsu Station

By car
- From Nagoya: Tomei Expressway/About 1 hour and 30 minutes, Meishin Expressway/About 50 minutes
- From Osaka: Otsu I.C. Meishin Expressway/About 1 hour

Information about Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) and Japanese Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (J-NIAHS) is also found on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).


Publisher/contact
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