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# Recommended Sightseeing Spots



#### Aso Shrine

Aso Shrine is an ancient shrine whose history dates back to over 2,000 years. Among the twelve deities enshrined here is Takeiwatatsu no Mikoto, who was the grandson of Emperor Jimmu and who developed the Aso area. Aso Shrine boasts one of Japan's three largest gates, and it functions as the head office for about 500 Aso Shrine branches located across Japan.



### Sensuikyo

Sensuikyo, which, at an altitude of 900 m is the starting point for climbing Aso Takadake, is known for the about 50,000 Kyushu azaleas, which are best seen from around mid-May when they are in full bloom and the whole area turns a pink hue. Aside from the walking trail, beautiful views can also be enjoyed from the parking lot.



#### Kokuzo Shrine

One of the oldest shrines in the prefecture. It is one of the twelve Aso shrines and is dedicated to four deities, including Hayami Katama no Mikoto. In the compound, visitors can admire the trunk of a 2,000-year-old cedar, a reminder of Kokuzo Shrine's ancient history.



### Nakadake Crater

Of the five peaks (Aso Gogaku) rising in the center of the Aso caldera, Nakadake is still the most active. It's possible to view from up close the white volcanic fumes rising furiously from the 4 km wide crater (restrictions apply depending on the intensity of volcanic activity).



Mountaineering "Sensuikyo" Information

Hiking trails lead from Sensuikyo to Takadake and Nakadake, allowing hikers to reach the top of both mountains. However, since some of the trails may be closed, depending on volcanic activity and volcanic gas levels, you should always check in advance. Before venturing out on the trail, please drop your hiking registration form in the box provided.



Mountaineering "Kusasenri" Information

From Kusasenri, you can climb Mt. Eboshidake and Mt. Kishimadake, while from Aso Sanjo Square, you can climb Mt. Nakadake and Mt. Takadake. However, since some of the trails may be closed, depending on volcanic activity and volcanic gas levels, you should always check in advance. Before venturing out on the trail, please drop your hiking registration form in the box provided.



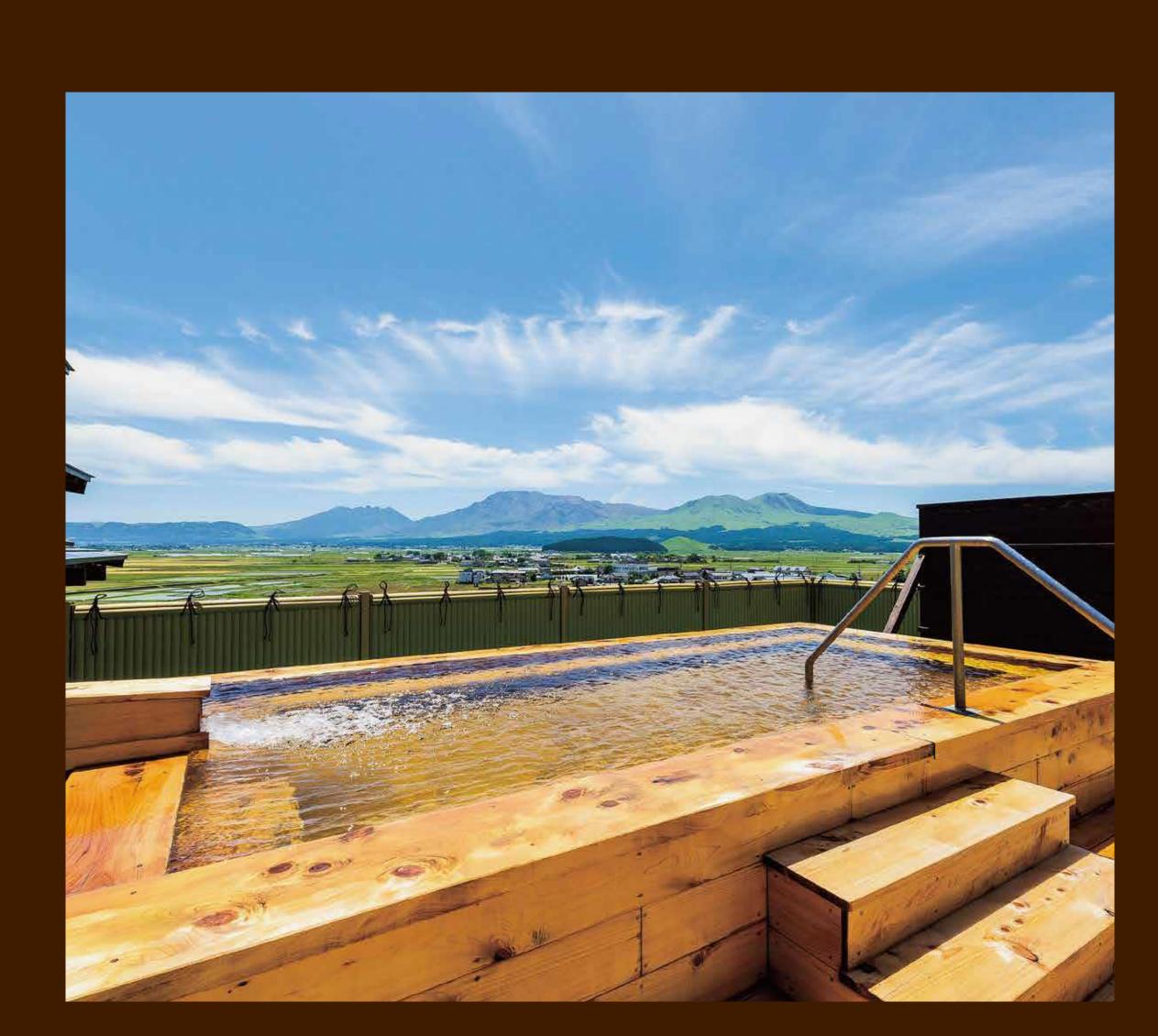
### Aso Gogaku

The name "Mount Aso" refers collectively to several volcanoes within the caldera, while the five mountains of Mt. Neko, Mt. Takadake, Mt. Nakadake, Mt. Kusasenri, and Mt. Kishimadake are collectively called Aso Gogaku. It is said to resemble a reclining Buddha and has been worshiped since ancient times.



# Shiroyama View Point

This view point is located along the Yamanami Highway leading down to Aso's Ichinomiya Town from Mizuwake Pass in Yufuin, Oita Prefecture. It sits on Mt. Aso's outer mountain ring at an altitude of 748 m. From here you can see the streets of Ichinomiya Town and the countryside below, as well as Aso Gogaku in front of you.



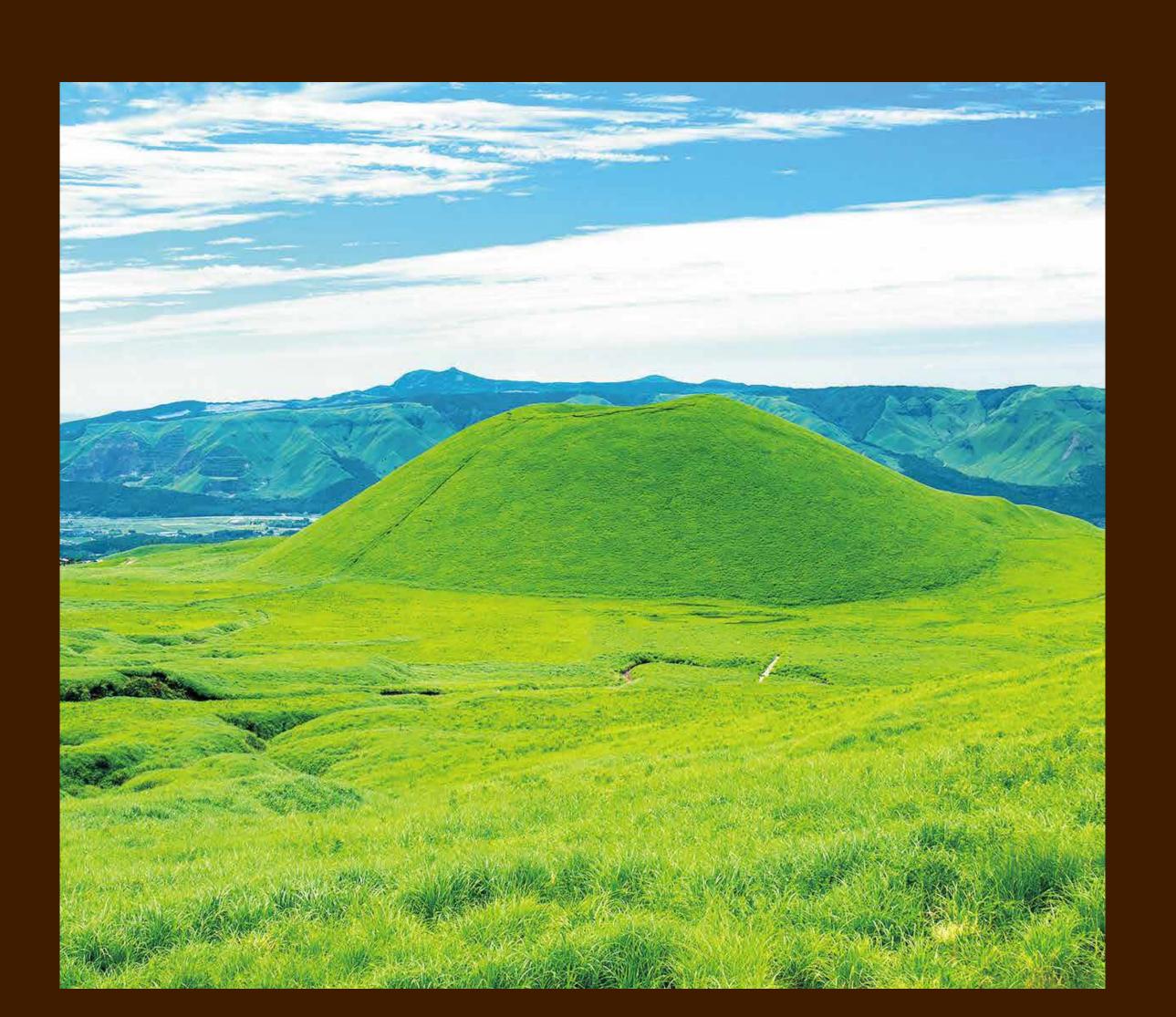
### Uchinomaki Onsen

One of Aso's most iconic hot spring towns, it is known for being frequented by famous literary figures. Some of the hot water flowing directly from the spring is transparent and colorless, and it is okay to drink. The public hot spring complex of Machiyu is particularly loved by locals as a place to relax.



Aso mountaintop, Kusasenri

Kusasenri, one of Aso's most representative tourist destinations, boasts a fabulous location near the top of Mt. Aso, from where you can see up close Mt. Nakadake sending plumes of smoke up in the sky, and is surrounded by grasslands, a large pond, and grazing horses. It has been designated both a national scenic spot and a natural monument and is visited by a great number of people throughout the year.



#### Mt. Komezuka

Standing 80 m tall, Komezuka, said to have been formed by an eruption about 3,300 years ago, has been designated both a national scenic spot and a natural monument. It has a beautiful inverted-bowl shape, and it features a large depression at the top. The beautiful scenery changes with the seasons with the color of pampas grass varying from fresh green to golden.



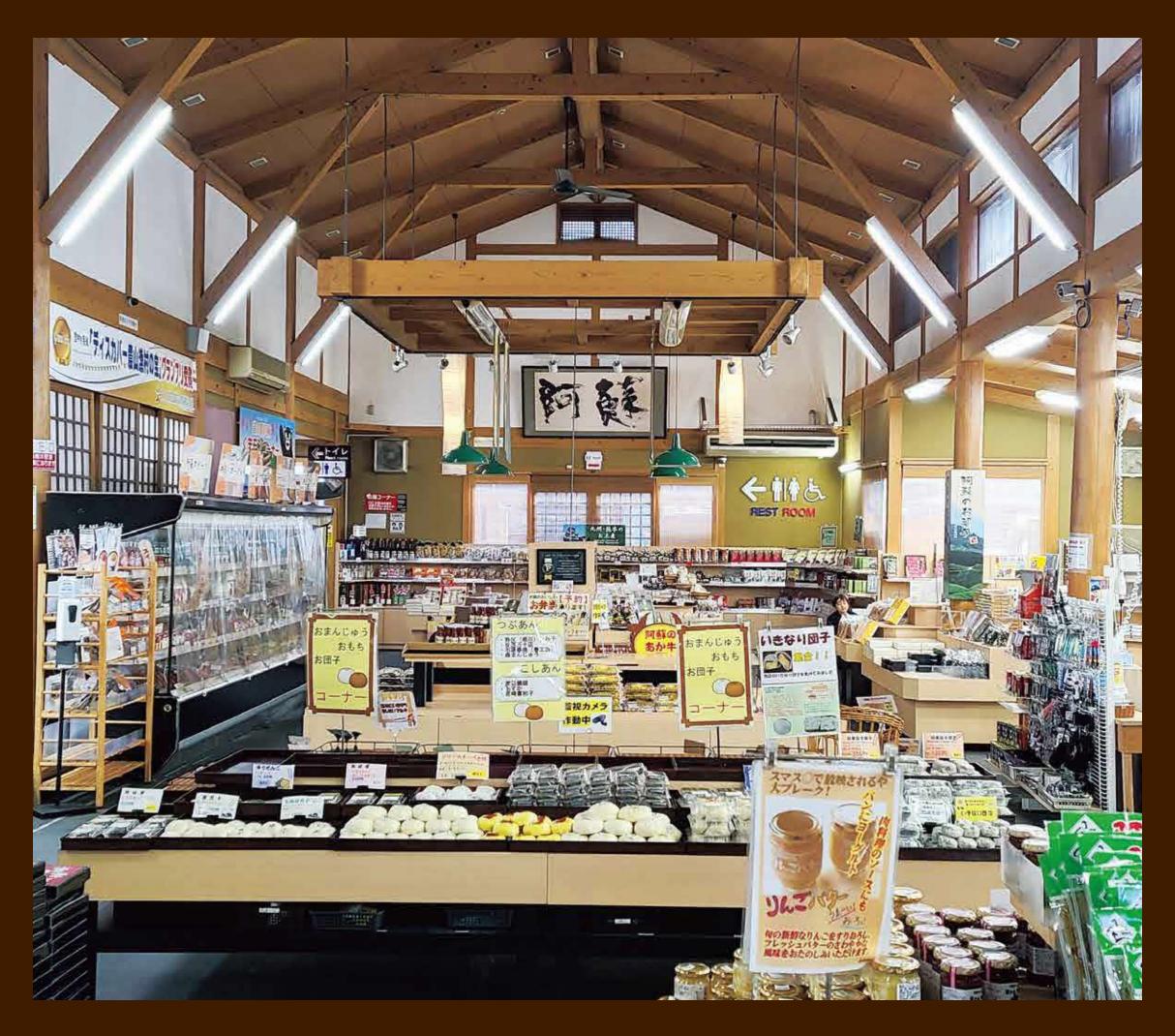
#### Ogidake View Point

From the view point on the summit of Mt. Ogidake, located in the eastern section of Mt. Aso at an altitude of 843 m, visitors can enjoy 360-degree panoramic views of the surrounding mountains, including Aso Gogaku, the Kuju mountain range, and Mt. Sobo. While it's possible to hike up to the mountaintop, you can also get there by car or motorbike by following the paved road.



#### Daikanbo

One of the peaks of Aso's northern outer mountain ring, northeast of Uchimaki Onsen, it was named Daikanbo by literary master Tokutomi Soho. It is a prime viewing spot in Aso, offering 360-degree panoramic views over the streets of Aso, Aso Gogaku, and the Kuju mountain range.



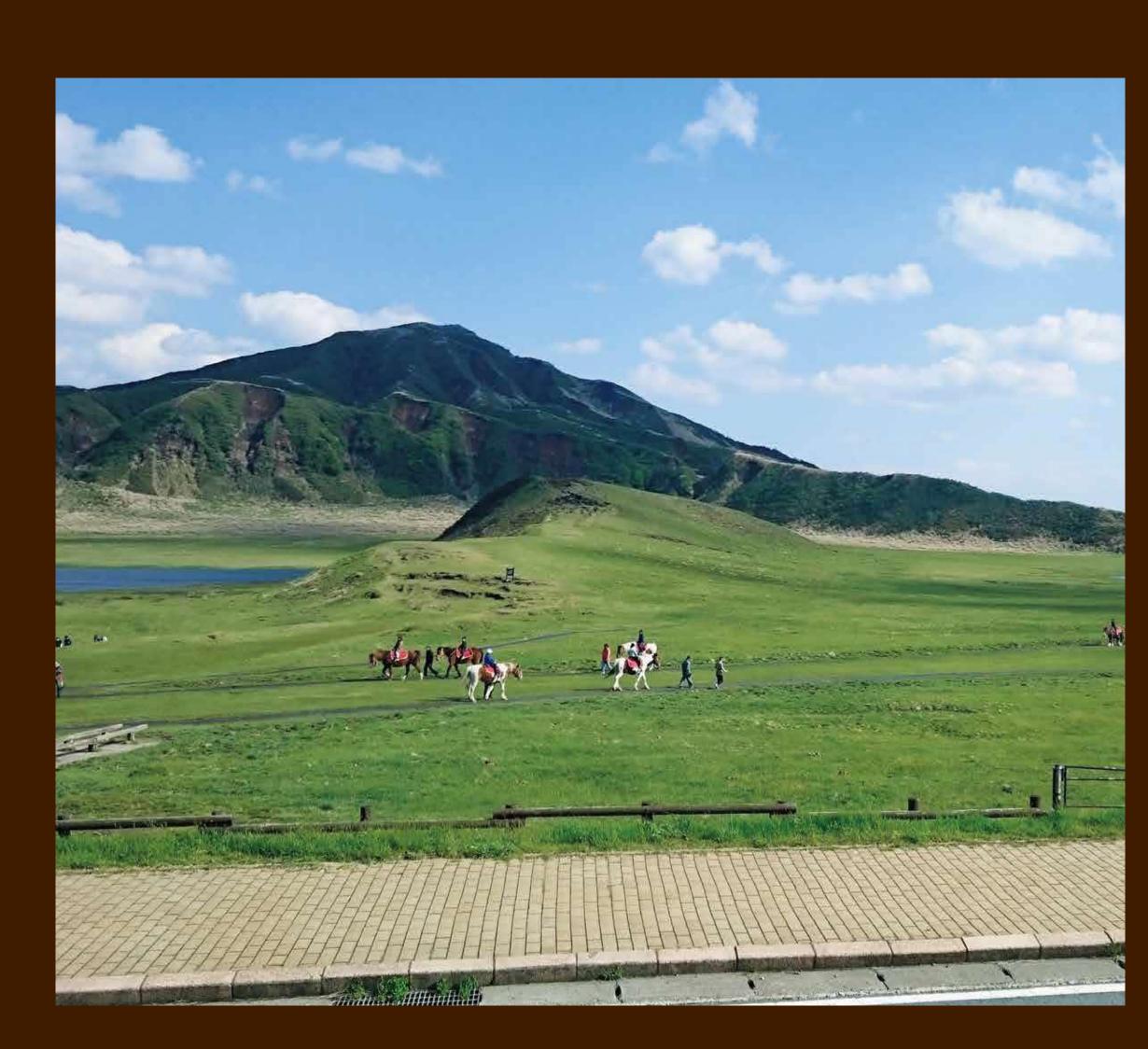
### Roadside Station Aso

This roadside station, adjacent to the JR Hohi Honsen line's Aso Station, boasts a great location with views of Aso Gogaku. It offers a vast selection of Aso's specialty products, including seasonal vegetables and fruits, processed red beef, and dairy products. It also hosts a tourist information desk providing information on Aso City.



Lily of the Valley Natural Habitat

From mid-May to early June, 50,000 lilies of the valley bloom on the Namino Plateau, enveloping the entire plateau in their sweet scent. It is the southernmost place in Japan where these flowers grow naturally, and since it is very rare to see them in Kyushu, the area is currently designated as a Kumamoto Prefecture's protected natural area.



### Kusasenrigahama

Designated both a national scenic spot and a natural monument, what was originally a shallow circular double crater is now a 1 km wide circular grassland. There is a small hill in the center and ponds east and west of it. The ponds serve as a drinking spot for released horses, a traditional spectacle in Aso.



Roadside Station Namino, Kaguraen

Many special products are on sale here, including cabbage, a local specialty, and fresh vegetables grown in the area. There is also a restaurant where you can eat locally produced Namino soba, and you can taste soba soft serve ice cream at the shop. There is also a deck for special events.



## Namino, Kagura

Namino village's Nakae Iwato Kagura Dance, which has been preserved for over 250 years, has been designated a national intangible folk cultural property. Another form of the dance, Yokobori Iwato Kagura, has been handed down for about 200 years, and 13 types of performances are still performed today, preserving this great tradition.