

# Walking through History along Koseki no Michi: Exploring Influential Industrial Heritage and Takeda-jo Castle Ruins, the Castle in the Sky

This course offers a stroll through history, starting from Kinokuni-ji Onsen. One of the highlights is Takeda-jo Castle Ruins, the Castle in the Sky. Other highlights include Koseki no Michi-connecting Ikuno, the cornerstone of Japan's mining development, to the Former Mikobata Mine and Akenobe Mine. From Asago to Yabu, the panoramic structure of the former Mikobata Mine nestled in the Chugoku mountains is truly a breathtaking sight.



## B6 Former Mikobata Mine

Following the rediscovery of silver veins in 1878, the Mikobata Mine operated as a branch of the Ikuno Silver Mine. The mine eventually closed in 1917. Afterwards, the mine became a processing center for ore mined at Akenobe Mine, becoming East Asia's largest processing center at its peak.  
Address: 1826-1 Sano, Asago City | Tel.: 079-677-1165 (Asago Tourist Association, Asago City; weekdays) / 079-677-1717 (Mikobata Senkoujyo Tourist Association; Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) | Fee: Free to tour | Web: <http://mikobata.com/>



\*Handicapped-accessible lavatory only

## B1 Takeda-jo Castle Ruins National Historic Site



Complete ruins such as those of Takeda-jo Castle Ruins are a rare find in Japan when it comes to mountain castles. Resembling a tiger reposing, this former castle is often dubbed "Torafusu-jo" and "Koga-jo" (the Lying Tiger Castle). The ruins have been selected as one of Japan's top 100 castles. Also known as the "Castle in the Sky" and "Japan's Machu Picchu," Takeda-jo Castle Ruins is a popular destination for tourists from throughout Japan.

Address: 169 Takeda-aza Kojozan, Wadayama-cho, Asago City | Hours: 4:00 am – 5:00 pm (during "Sea of Clouds" season) \*Visit the website for details. | Closed: Entry to Takeda-jo Castle Ruins is not allowed from Jan. 4 to the end of February. | Fee: Adults (high school and above): 500 yen; Junior high and younger: Free | Tel.: 079-674-2120 (Castle in the Sky Information Center) | Web: <http://www.city.asago.hyogo.jp/takeda/>



Photos courtesy of Toshihisa Yoshida

### Description of Icons



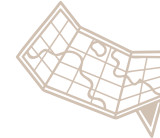
## B2 Hotel EN (The Old Kimura Distillery)

Located at the foot of the Takeda-jo Castle Ruins, this hotel repurposes a traditional-style brewery nestled in a historic castle town with a history beginning some 400 years ago. The brewery was renovated as a hotel while keeping the atmosphere of its origins. Offering French cuisine made with locally grown produce in addition to Asago City sightseeing information and more, Hotel EN is a community gathering place where visitors can connect with each other. Address: 363 Uemachi Nishigawa, Takeda-aza, Wadayama-cho, Asago City | Hours: 11:00 am – 2:00 pm (last order; lunch), 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm (last order; dinner) | Closed: Irregular; Visit the website for details. | Tel.: 0120-210-289 | Web: <http://www.takedacastle.jp/>



## B3 Akenobe Mine Exploration Tunnel

Legend has it that copper from the historic Akenobe Mine in casting the great Buddha at Nara's Todai-ji Temple. Following the discovery of tin ore at the mine in 1909, Akenobe became the leading tin mine in Japan. The mine was closed in 1987 but remains partially open to the public as an "exploration tunnel" where visitors can see the mine's exposed rock face as well as ore veins, rock drills, and other informative sights. (Reservations required at least 3 days in advance.) Address: Oyacho Akenobe, Yabu City | Hours: 8:30 am – 5:15 pm (reservation required) | Closed: Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, New Year's Holiday (and days with no customers) | Fee: High school and above: 1,200 yen; Elementary and junior high: 600 yen (includes guide fee) | Tel.: 079-668-0258 (Akenobe Shizen School) | Web: <http://www.fureai-net.tv/akenobesizen/>



## B4 One-Yen Train

## B5 Akenobe Shizen School



Akenobe Shizen School is a hands-on learning and accommodation facility that takes advantage of natural mountainous environment and the characteristics of the former mining town. Akenobe Mine goods are also available to purchase. At Akenobe Rest House Square, volunteers undertake operation of the One-Yen Train once a month from April to November with the goal of reviving operation of the historic train. \*The train operates between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm. For 2017, the train is scheduled to operate every day during Golden Week (May 3-7) and during summer break (July 23 and 30, and August 6, 13, 20, and 27).  
Address: 1184 Oyacho Akenobe, Yabu City | Hours: 8:30 am – 5:15 pm (reservation required) | Closed: Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, New Year's Holiday (and days with no passengers) | Tel.: 079-668-0258 | Web: <http://www.fureai-net.tv/akenobesizen/>



\*One-Yen Train only



## B8 Mikobata Cast Iron Bridge

Designated an important Japanese cultural property, the Mikobata Cast Iron Bridge is one of five cast iron bridges created for carrying ore mined at the Mikobata Mine to the Ikuno smeltery. The bridge was constructed in 1885, making it Japan's oldest cast iron bridge and third-oldest iron bridge. Address: 1637-7 Sano-aza Mizuta, Asago City | Hours: Free | Tel.: 079-677-1165 (Asago Tourist Association, Asago City)



## B7 Old Mouchet House

The Old Mouchet House is the former residence of a French engineer who contributed to the development of the Ikuno mine. In 1887, the house was transferred to Mikobata, where it was used as an office. Address: 1826-1 Sano, Asago City | Hours: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm Saturdays and Sundays (Also open on public holidays; closed in winter from Dec. 29 to end of February) | Fee: Free to tour | Tel.: 079-677-1165 (Asago Tourist Association, Asago City; weekdays) / 079-677-1717 (Mikobata Senkoujyo Tourist Association; Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays)



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### Recommended Courses and Map

Time	Itinerary
7:58 am	Kinosakionsen Station
9:45 am	Tenku Bus*1 (Takeda Station)
10:25 am	B1 Takeda-jo Castle Ruins National Historic Site
11:35 am	Chufuku bus stop
12:00 pm	B2 Hotel EN (The Old Kimura Distillery)
1:00 pm	Charter taxi** from Takeda Station to Akenobe Mine Exploration Tunnel
1:55 pm	B3 Akenobe Mine Exploration Tunnel
2:45 pm	B4 One-Yen Train
3:15 pm	B5 Akenobe Shizen School
4:30 pm	B6 Former Mikobata Mine / B7 Old Mouchet House
5:35 pm	B8 Mikobata Cast Iron Bridge
6:46 pm	Nii Station
8:11 pm	Himeji Station

\*1 For a more accurate bus timetable, contact the bus operator directly.

\*\*2 Asago Taxi; Tel.: 0796-72-0404; 15 Wadayamacho Hodoji, Asago City, Hyogo; Jumbo bus (up to 9 passengers); 6,480 yen per hour (incl. tax), or regular taxi; 4,396 yen per hour (incl. tax); Business hours: 7:30 am – 1:00 am; Open year-round

