

Kumamoto Best 5 Area Map



- Around Kumamoto Castle**
- Downtown**
- The History and Charm of Shinmachi & Furumachi**
- Suizenji**
- The History and Charm of Kawashiri**



Around Kumamoto Castle

Access ●10-min walk<>> from Sakuramachi Bus Terminal, from Hanabatacho tram stop, from Kumamoto Castle/City Hall tram stop

●From Kumamoto Airport>>> Airport Limousine Bus: Kumamoto Airport bus stop to Sakuramachi Bus Terminal, Fare: ¥730, Time: about 50 mins

●From JR Kumamoto Station>>> Tram: Kumamoto Station to Kumamoto Castle/ City Hall tram stop, Fare: Adult ¥170 Child ¥90, Time: about 17 mins

Bus: Kumamoto Station bus stop to Sakuramachi Bus Terminal, Fare: ¥160, Time: about 10 min

The earthquakes of 2016 devastated Kumamoto and its castle, resulting in damage to 13 Important Cultural Properties and 20 reconstructions of original buildings, as well as collapse, deformation, or weakening of about 30% of all of the castle's stone walls. Reconstruction on the Main Keep—the symbol of the castle—began in 2017, and the shachihoko (decorations placed atop the corners of the keep) were finally replaced in April 2018. Starting on October 5th, 2019, the plaza in front of the Main Keep will be open to the public on Sundays and holidays via a temporary access bridge from the entrance on the west side of the keep. The Nagabei Wall, which spans 242 meters and is the longest such castle wall in Japan, suffered a partial collapse in the earthquakes and is also scheduled for repair. Current conditions and ongoing construction work for some of the surrounding buildings and stone walls is expected to be ready for public viewing by Spring 2020. Repairs to the Main Keep are expected to be completed by Spring 2021, after which visitors will once again be able to enter the reconstructed Keep. Access ramps and elevators are part of the new construction and will allow more visitors to enjoy the castle than ever before.

Activities

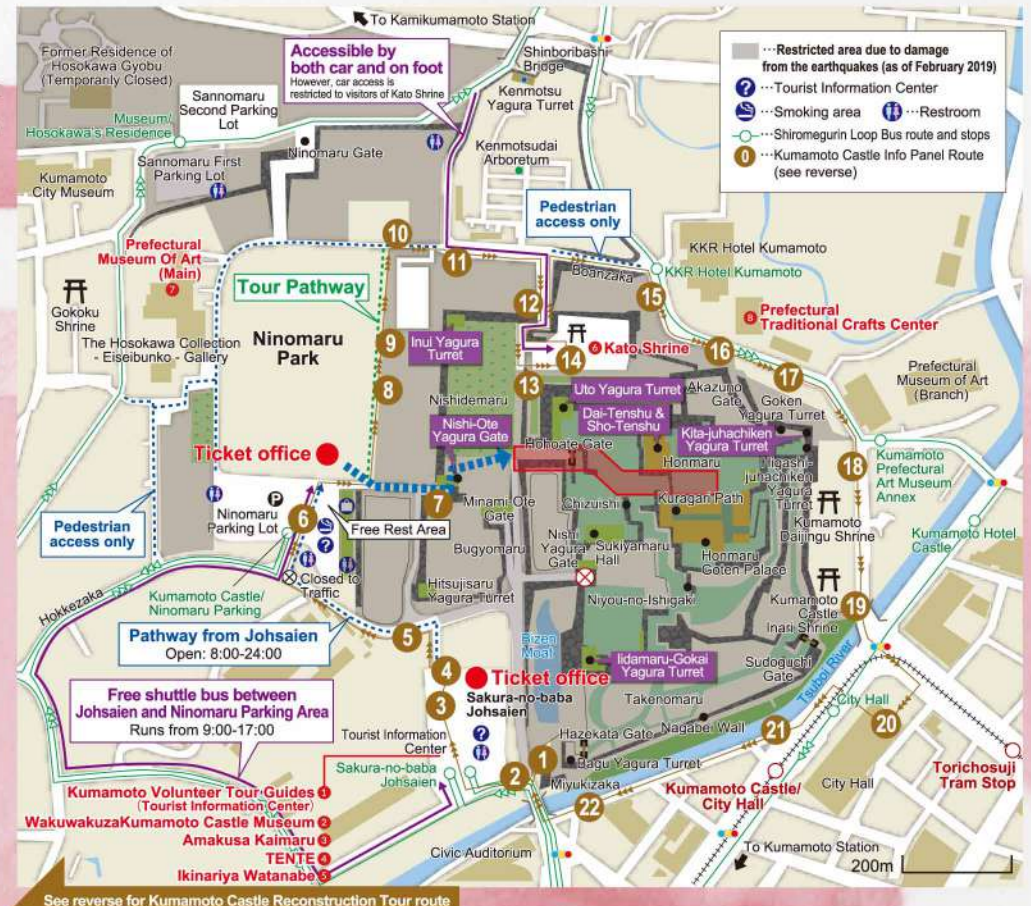
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1 Kumamoto Volunteer Tour Guides
Available Year-Round 9AM-5PM
☎096-356-2333(Reservation required)
Kumamoto Volunteer Tour Guides will tell you all about Kumamoto, from the castle to little-known points of interest. All the guides are amateurs who promise to entertain you with interesting trivia delivered with a smile. Tours in English, Korean, and Chinese are available. Visit <https://www.k-yokato.com/english.html>



2 Wakuwakuza Kumamoto Castle Museum
Closed: 12/29-12/3
9AM-5:30PM (last entry: 5PM)
Check out the Kumamoto Castle Projection Mapping exhibit to see a stunningly realistic recreation of the damage caused by the earthquakes projected on a miniature replica of the castle. Next, check out the Kumamoto Castle Virtual Reality show to see what the castle looked like before the earthquake and even hundreds of years ago. There is also a set of cameras offering live feeds of the castle, plus a kimono rental area where you can rent different kinds of kimono and samurai outfits and take them out for a stroll around the castle grounds!



Gourmet



3 Amakusa Kaimaru
Open Year-Round
9:30AM-5:15PM (last entry 4:45PM)

Kaimaru lets you enjoy fresh Amakusa seafood in an atmosphere styled like an old Japanese home. In addition to its seafood donburi, fans of uni (sea urchin) are sure to be pleased, as Kaimaru is famous for its Uni Korokke, a fried potato croquette stuffed with thick rich creamy uni.



4 TENTE
Open Year-Round
9AM-7PM (Dec to Feb: 9AM-6PM)

TENTE is a popular shop with a menu packed with the finest fruits you'll find in Kumamoto. Especially popular are their fresh juices, their Kudamon Ice Cream topped with 5 seasonal fruits, and their seasonal Oni Mori Strawberry and Oni Mori Melon Ice Creams.



5 Ikinariya Watanabe
Open Year-Round
9AM-7PM (Dec to Feb: 9AM-6PM)

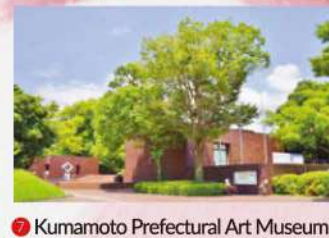
Ikinariya Watanabe specializes in ikinari dango, a local treat made with sweet potatoes (from neighboring Aso & Ozu) and Hokkaido sweet beans, wrapped in a chewy dough and steamed. The piping hot potato and delicate sweetness make this a perennially popular homestyle treat.



Spots



6 Kato Shrine
Always open
Kato Shrine, the shrine where Kato Kiyomasa is revered as a god, was built in 1871 and originally stood between the castle keep and Uto Yagura. It was later moved to nearby Kyomachi in 1874, and then moved again to its current location in 1962. Visitors can purchase a shrine stamp book at the shop and have one of the shrine workers sign and stamp their book with the seal of Kato Shrine. The stamp book can then be used at any other shrine you visit!



7 Kumamoto Prefectural Art Museum
Closed: Mondays (or following day if holiday)
9:30AM-5:15PM (last entry 4:45PM)
The Kumamoto Prefectural Museum of Art has art from a variety of different disciplines on display and is an excellent place to stop by during a trip to the castle. One exhibit is that of the Eisei Bunko, an organization that preserves and researches over 700 years' worth of cultural properties, precious art works, and classical documents. The Hosokawa Collection Gallery, opened in 2008, features a number of historical objects from the Hosokawa Collection on loan from Eisei Bunko. Works by artists like Tsuguharu Foujita, Chimei Hamada, and other artists with a connection to Kumamoto are also available for viewing.



8 Kumamoto Prefectural Traditional Crafts Center
Closed: Mondays (next day if holiday), 12/28-1/4, 9AM-5PM
The Crafts Center has 90 different kinds of prefecture-designated crafts on display, including Higo Zogan inlay, woodwork, bamboo crafts, folk toys, pottery, knives, and more. Crafts in the Permanent Exhibition Room can be touched and picked up for a closer look, and some are even available for purchase in the shop.



Downtown



Two covered shopping arcades, Kamitori and Shimotori, comprise the downtown area of Kumamoto City. The Kamitori Shopping Arcade, stretching 360m long and 11m wide, features a variety of stores both old and new, ranging from fashion to boutiques and bookstores. The Shimotori Shopping Arcade features more fashion options and has a more active nightlife while also having a number of cafes and izakayas specializing in local dishes. Foreign visitors have greatly increased in recent years and now there are more shops able to cater to visitors from other countries.

Access

- From Kumamoto Airport >>> Airport Limousine Bus: Kumamoto Airport bus stop to Torichosuji bus stop, Fare: ¥700, Time: about 40 mins
- From JR Kumamoto Station >>> Tram: Kumamoto Station to Torichosuji tram stop, Fare: Adult ¥170 Child ¥90, Time: about 20 mins
- Bus: Kumamoto Station bus stop to Torichosuji bus stop, Fare: ¥210, Time: about 17 mins

Bars



1 Glocal BAR Vibes

Closed: Sunday 8:00PM-11:30PM

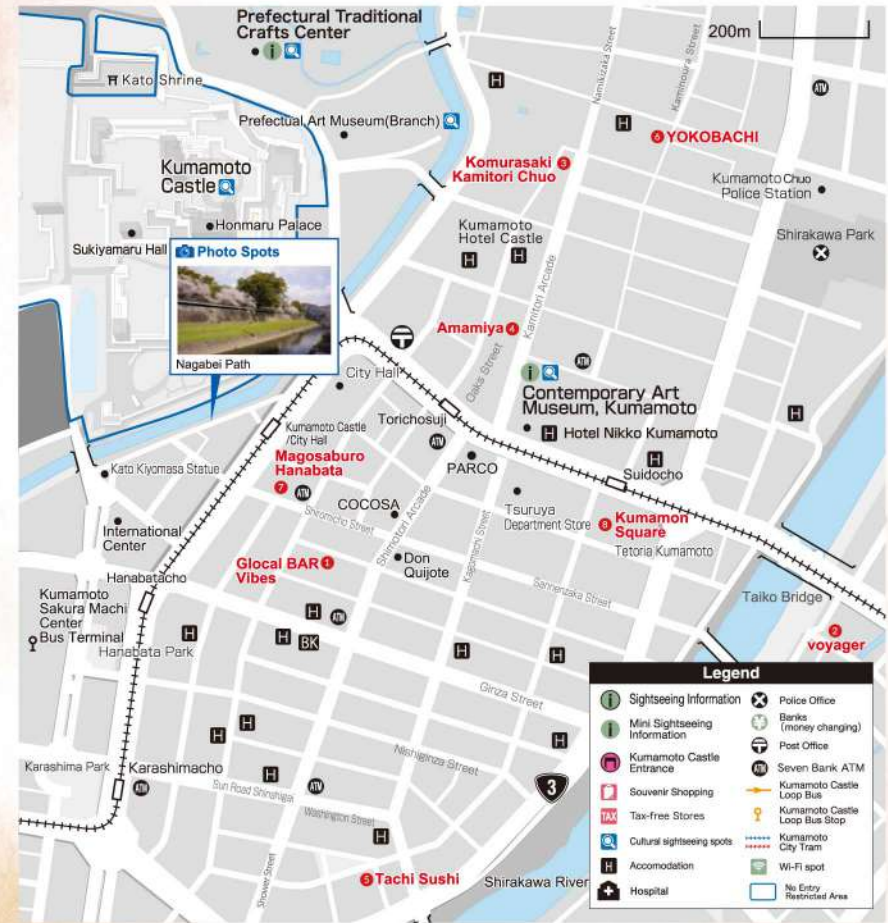
The bar of the Japanese, by the Japanese, for the world! The owner Nori-san is a true expert on shochu (a traditional Japanese distilled spirit most popular in Kyushu) and he shares his passion with every guest in his bar. Nori-san is ready to explain any of the dozens of shochus he has on hand in both Japanese and English. Glocal BAR Vibes is #1 on TripAdvisor in the Bar & Restaurant category for all of Kumamoto and is a must-stop for any visitor to Kumamoto City! Tasting set (4 kinds of shochu) + half glass + 2 kinds of finger food + tasting note



2 Voyager

Closed: Thursdays Lunch: Mon, Tue, Wed 11:30AM-2:30PM, Bar: 6PM-1AM, Sat/Sun 3PM-1AM

Voyager Craft Beer & Book Bar offers a wide selection of some of the finest craft beers from around the world, including a few local Kumamoto beers. It also frequently showcases exciting music artists and local performers. Voyager rents itself out to other shops for lunch on Monday (handmade sausage lunch), Tuesday (modern Japanese curry), and Wednesday (Vietnamese food). Check the website for schedule and details.



Gourmet



3 Komurasaki - Kamitori Chuo

Open Year-Round
11AM-4PM (last order: 3:30PM), 6PM-10PM (last order: 9:30PM)

Founded in 1954, Komurasaki is a proud purveyor of the classic Kumamoto style of ramen, consisting of original Komurasaki medium-thin noodles in a tonkotsu broth, topped with fried garlic chips and black garlic oil.



4 Amamiya

Closed: 12/31, 1/1 11:30AM-10PM (L.O. food 9PM, dessert 9:30PM), Mondays 11:30AM-6PM (L.O. 5:30PM), Fridays, Saturdays, day before holiday 11:30AM-11PM (L.O. food 9PM, dessert 10:30PM)

With the motto "Serving Healthy Food that Tastes Great," Amamiya specializes in sweets & desserts made with local kinako and chestnuts, tea ceremony-grade matcha, and other high quality ingredients. Meals are also available, including dishes made with traditional local vegetables.



5 Tachi Sushi

Closed: Contact us
11:30AM-2PM, 6PM-11PM

Tachi Sushi offers fresh seafood sushi at a reasonable price, and their popular Uni Ikura Kobore Mori and Chu Toro Butsugiri are both over-the-top and delicious. A four-language menu is available and Tachi Sushi is also open for lunch.



6 YOKOBACHI

Open Year-Round
5PM-12AM

Yokobachi is a popular izakaya offering all the Kumamoto specialties like basashi, karashi renkon, and hitomoji guruguru at low prices. Yokobachi also features numerous other Asian-style dishes and is situated in a stylishly renovated traditional Japanese home with outdoor seating.



7 Magosaburo - Hanabata

Open Year-Round
5PM - 11:30PM (last order: 10:30PM)

Magosaburo is a charcoal-grill yakiniku restaurant that buys Kurohona Gyu (Kumamoto wagyu beef) by the cow, meaning they can offer select and rare cuts you can't find elsewhere. Their famous homemade yakiniku sauce is made from over 20 kinds of vegetables and fruits and nothing else.



Spots



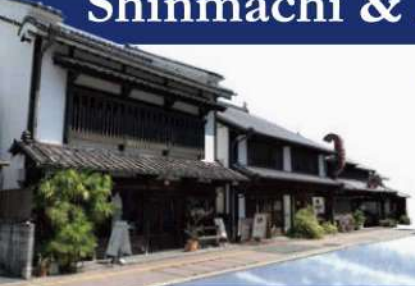
8 Kumamon Square

Closed: around New Year's
10AM-7PM

Kumamon Square is the headquarters for all things Kumamon, Kumamoto's globetrotting world-famous mascot. You'll find all kinds of info on Kumamon, plus sightseeing and local info on Kumamoto Prefecture. There's even a Kumamon souvenir shop and snack space!



The History and Charm of Shinmachi & Furumachi



The neighborhoods of Shinmachi and Furumachi lie between Kumamoto Station and Kumamoto Castle. The historical castle town of Kumamoto, the area still retains the atmosphere of old Japan and you can find many shops offering traditional crafts and foods. Enjoy tea and a snack in a café situated in a renovated home, or try your hand at making Higo Zogan or Japanese sweets under the tutelage of a true artisan. Tours given by local guides are also available.

Access

Getting to Shinmachi

- From JR Kumamoto Station >>> Bus: Kumamoto Station bus stop to Shinmachi bus stop, Fare: ¥160, Time: 6 mins
- From Sakuramachi Bus Terminal >>> Tram: Kumamoto tram stop to Shinmachi tram stop, Fare: ¥170, Time: 4 mins
- Bus: Sakuramachi Bus Terminal to Shinmachi bus stop, Fare: ¥160, Time: 5 mins

Getting to Furumachi

- From JR Kumamoto Station >>> Tram: Kumamoto tram stop to Gofukumachi tram stop, Fare: ¥170, Time: 4 mins
- Bus: Kumamoto Station bus stop to Gofukumachi bus stop, Fare: ¥160, Time: 3 mins
- From Sakuramachi Bus Terminal >>> Tram: Karashimacho tram stop (3-min walk from Sakuramachi Bus Terminal) to Gofukumachi tram stop, Fare: ¥170, Time: 6 mins
- Bus: Sakuramachi Bus Terminal to Gofukumachi bus stop, Fare: ¥160, Time: 4 mins



Gourmet



1 Gen ZONE

Closed: Contact us
Reservations req'd (Gen ZONE), 10AM-7PM (Candle House)

Gen ZONE is known as the place to go to learn about Furumachi. Genzo, the proprietor, isn't satisfied with running just a simple izakaya, so his operation is more of a combo café, bar, event space, and he even does outdoor BBQ. Candles handmade by Genzo's wife are also available for purchase.



2 Kairakuen

Closed: Mondays, 2nd, 4th, and 5th Tuesdays (next day if holiday)
11:30AM-2PM, 5PM-7:30PM (reservations req'd 1 day in advance for dinner)

Kairakuen was founded in 1933 and is supposedly one of the originators of taipien, a Chinese-style noodle soup only found in Kumamoto. Unchanged for decades, the recipe calls for harusame noodles and plenty of vegetables in a flavorful chicken broth.



3 Purely Café & Market

Closed: Wednesdays
10AM-7PM (Restaurant: 11:30AM-5PM)

Purely is a combination restaurant and market in a 140-year-old renovated house. You can find excellent dishes made with local ingredients, along with organic Kyushu veggies, rice, and naturally fermented foods, as well as various lifestyle goods and more!



Activities



4 Mitsusuke Higo Zogan

Closed: Contact us
9AM-5PM (weekends and holidays: 10AM-4PM)
☎096-324-4488 (Reservation required)

The Higo Zogan style of gold inlay was developed centuries ago by a weaponsmith to Lord Hosokawa in Kumamoto, and Mitsusuke preserves the tradition and austere style of this art. Workshops are also available to make your own Higo Zogan pins, pendants, and more (reservations req'd 1 day in advance).



5 Kawakami Liquor Shop

Closed: Sundays, holidays
9AM-7PM
☎096-326-1568 (Reservation required)

Kawakami Liquor Shop offers an excellent selection of Kumamoto sakes, shochus, and wine. Tastings available for 3-4 sakes or shochus, and with prior reservations, sake and shochu tasting lessons are available (Fee charged). For one or more. Interpreter req'd. You're sure to find a bottle of something you love here.



6 Tomodachiya Seika Honpo

Closed: Contact us
9AM-Sunset
☎096-325-2212 (Reservation required)

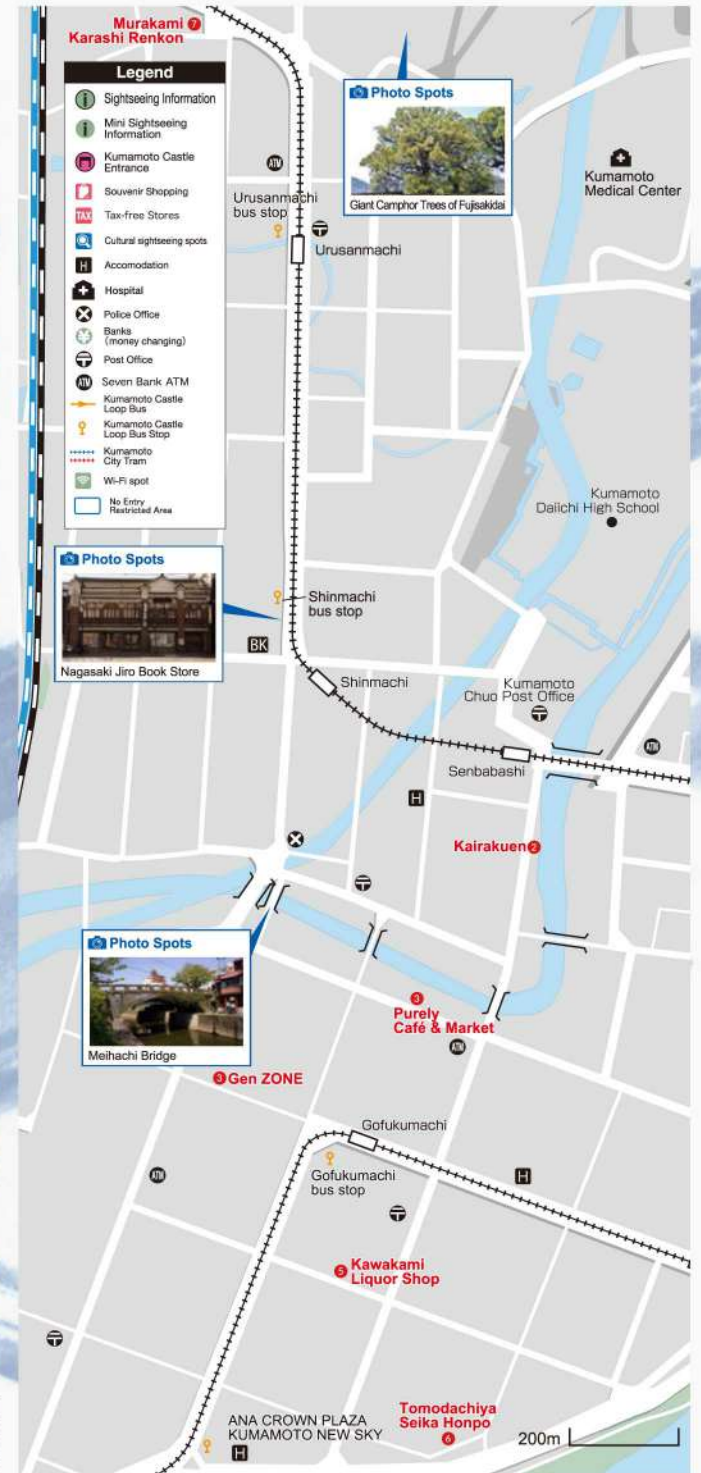
Tomodachiya offers artisan-made Japanese sweets crafted with seasonal ingredients, all for the reasonable price of around 100 yen each. Join a workshop and learn to make your own sweet in the traditional Japanese style.



7 Murakami Karashi Renkon

Closed: Saturdays
8:30AM-5PM
☎096-353-6795 (Reservation required)

Karashi Renkon, a traditional Kumamoto snack of lotus root stuffed with spicy miso mustard and fried, has been around for centuries. Founded in 1955, Murakami Karashi Renkon sells tasty new items like the popular Karashi Renkon croquettes. Karashi Renkon workshops are also available.



Suizenji

Suizenji Park is one of Kumamoto City's top tourist spots and is just a short tram ride from the downtown area. Where Suizenji now stands today, Hosokawa Tadatoshi, the first Hosokawa lord of Kumamoto, discovered a natural spring and decided to build a teahouse nearby. His grandson Tsunatoshi then transformed the surrounding area into a sprawling park designed to recreate different views along the Tokaido Way, including views of Mt. Fuji. The park is also the site of a number of events throughout the year. Yabusame (horseback archery) exhibitions are held twice a year in the spring and fall and Noh performances are held throughout the year, along with a number of other music and cultural events. Within the park is located Izumi Shrine, which is a shrine dedicated to the members of the former ruling Hosokawa family. At the shrine shop, you can purchase a shrine stamp book designed over 400 years ago by Hosokawa Garasha, wife of Lord Tadaoki and a convert to Christianity.



Spots

1 Izumi Shrine

Open Year-Round
7:30AM-6PM (last entry 5:30PM, Nov-Feb: 8:30AM-5PM last entry 4:30PM)
Izumi Shrine is located inside Suizenji Park and was built in 1877 (and rebuilt in 1973) to enshrine the past lords of Kumamoto. There is "Water of Longevity" on the left side of the shrine. This water is spring water coming from Mt. Aso and it is good for drinking. To the left of the shrine is the Water of Longevity: fresh spring water that comes from the Aso region and is available for visitors to drink. At the shrine shop, you can buy a stamp book that you can get signed and stamped at each shrine you visit.



2 Statue of Luffy from ONE PIECE

Open Year-Round
With a global print total exceeding 450 million copies, ONE PIECE is one of the world's most famous manga and its creator, Eiichiro Oda, hails from Kumamoto. Since the Kumamoto Earthquakes, Oda has been involved in a variety of recovery activities, one of which was placing a bronze statue of Monkey D. Luffy, hero of ONE PIECE, in front of the Prefectural Offices. Statues of eight other characters are planned to be erected elsewhere in the prefecture.



Access

- From Sakuramachi Bus Terminal>>> Tram: Karashimacho tram stop (3-min walk from Sakuramachi Bus Terminal) to Suizenji Park tram stop, Fare: ¥170, Time: 22 mins
Bus: Sakuramachi Bus Terminal to Suizenji Park bus stop, Fare: ¥220, Time: 18 mins
- From JR Kumamoto Station>>> Tram: Kumamoto Station tram stop to Suizenji Park tram stop, Fare: ¥170, Time: 35 mins
Bus: Kumamoto Station bus stop to Suizenji Park, Fare: ¥280, Time: 28 mins

Gourmet



3 Kaminomizu

Closed: Contact us
11:30AM-2PM, 6PM-9:30PM

Kaminomizu specializes in traditional Japanese cuisine, incorporating local ingredients to create dishes that reflect the seasons. Kaminomizu's bento took the gold in a 2014 Kumamoto bento contest, and these bentos are available for purchase by reservation.

url: <http://kaminomizu.com/>



4 Ajisen Ramen - Flagship Shop

Closed: 1/1
11AM-10PM (last order: 9:30PM)

Started in Kumamoto in 1968, Ajisen Ramen now has shops all over the world. Ajisen's take on Kumamoto ramen features a rich tonkotsu broth with medium-thick noodles, special Senmai oil to bring out the flavor of the soup, and is topped with fried garlic chips.



5 Higo Sougawa - Kenchodori

Closed: 12/31-1/3
10AM-5:30PM (lunch: 11AM-3PM)

Higo Sougawa was named champion of the Kumamoto Surprise! Gourmet Contest. Specializing in somen noodles, Higo Sougawa also offers a variety of other noodle styles, all hand-pulled. Their famous Junsei noodles are also available in souvenir packs.



Activities



6 Mito Wa Collection

Closed: 12/31 10AM-6PM
☎096-240-5032 (No Reservation required)

Mito is a kimono rental shop located just outside the entrance to Suizenji Park. Friendly staff will help you pick out and put on an outfit from over 150 kimono and 300 yukata. All-day rentals are available and Japanese-style accessories are also available for purchase.



7 Kokindenju no Ma

Open year-round 9AM-5PM
☎096-383-0074 (No Reservation required)

The Kokindenju no Ma is a rare thatched-roof teahouse located on the grounds of Suizenji Park. The building was originally built around 400 years ago in Kyoto and was granted to the Hosokawas in 1871. In 1912, the entire building was dismantled and transported to Suizenji Park, where it was rebuilt as it once stood in Kyoto. Kokindenju no Ma offers serene views of the park and visitors can enjoy a traditional sweet and bowl of matcha green tea inside.



The History and Charm of Kawashiri

Access

- From Sakuramachi Bus Terminal>>> Bus: Sakuramachi Bus Terminal to front of the Kumamoto Handicrafts Hall bus stop, Fare: ¥380, Time: 29 mins
- From JR Kumamoto Station>>> Train: Kumamoto Station tram stop to Kawashiri Station, Fare: ¥210, Time: 6 mins



Centuries ago, Kawashiri acted as an international port that brought prosperity to the nearby Midorikawa River area through commodity trade. Kawashiri is also famed for its many woodworking, blacksmithing, and dyeing artisans, and you can watch knives being made at the Kumamoto City Handicrafts Promotion Center. A stroll among the old port constructions and white-walled sake brewery storehouses is a must. Kawashiri's sweets makers have gained a name for themselves thanks to their eminently photogenic traditional sweets.

Activities



1 Tateyama Kaho

Closed: Contact us
9AM-7PM (Sundays, holidays: 9AM-6PM)
☎096-357-9356(Reservation required)

Tateyama is one of the Kawaseri Rokkasho group of sweets shops working to preserve and innovate the Kawashiri tradition of sweets-making, and they have a lot of flower- and fruit-patterned sweets for sale. You can also try to make some yourself at the Kumamoto Handicrafts City Promotion Center.



2 Kumamoto City Handicrafts Promotion Center

Closed: Mondays (or next day if holiday)
9AM-5PM
☎096-358-5711(No Reservation required)

The Handicrafts Center is located in downtown Kawashiri and houses exhibits on Kawashiri bladework and Higo Zogan, as well as modern crafts like pottery, leatherwork, and stained glass. Numerous workshops are open to the public and crafts are available for purchase.



Spots



3 Daijizenji Temple

Open Year-Round 5AM-7PM (winter: 5AM-6PM)

Daizenji is a Zen temple founded in 1278 and is a main temple of the Soto sect of Buddhism. The temple houses a number of priceless treasures, one of which is a National Important Cultural Property. The Zazendo is open to the public on the 3rd Sunday of each month for Zen meditations.



Photos from around Kawashiri

Kasegawa River

Kawaseri Rokkasho

This group consists of six traditional confectioners in Kawashiri.

- ▲ Tenmeido
- Kaho Ishihara
- Tateyama Kaho
- Kaho Umezono
- Kaho Kazusaya
- Iwamoto Kaho

The group uses traditional Japanese confectionery to strengthen the community and holds exhibits and demonstrations of artisanal confections.

Gourmet

4 Kokotei Ramen

Closed: Tuesdays,
11:30AM-3PM, 5PM-9PM

Kokotei was founded 40 years ago and continues to delight ramen fans of all ages. We make all of our soup, noodles, and gyoza in-house with no preservatives or additives so our customers can enjoy a bowl of ramen that is both healthy and tasty.



5 Zuiyo

Closed: Saturdays, Sundays
8:30AM-5:10PM (tours from 10AM to 5PM)

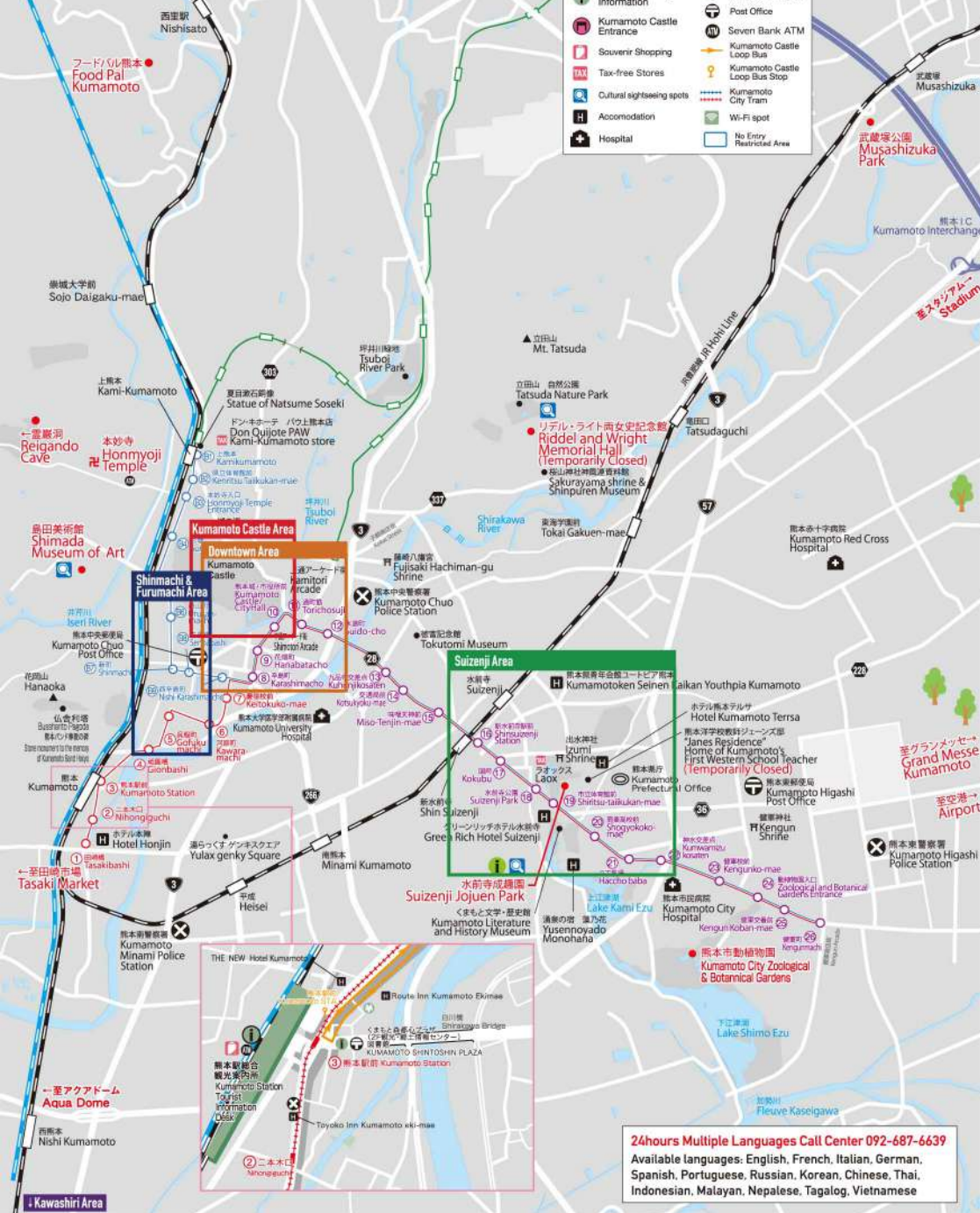
Founded in 1867 when a liqueur called "akazake" was the only alcohol permitted for production in Kumamoto, Zuiyo was the first brewery to try producing sake. Check out the Tohi Taisho-gura to try and buy some rare full-strength shochu and learn about akazake and Zuiyo.



KUMAMOTO WIDE AREA MAP

Legend

- Sightseeing Information
- Mini Sightseeing Information
- Kumamoto Castle Entrance
- Souvenir Shopping
- Tax-free Stores
- Cultural sightseeing spots
- Accommodation
- Hospital
- Police Office
- Banks (money changing)
- Post Office
- Seven Bank ATM
- Kumamoto Castle Loop Bus
- Kumamoto City Tram
- Wi-Fi spot
- No Entry Restricted Area



24hours Multiple Languages Call Center 092-687-6639
 Available languages: English, French, Italian, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Korean, Chinese, Thai, Indonesian, Malayan, Nepalese, Tagalog, Vietnamese

For sightseeing inquiries, contact: Kumamoto City Information Center
<https://kumamoto-guide.jp/en/tourist-information/> Phone: 096-322-5060

Publisher **Kumamoto City Tourism Policy Division**
<http://kumamoto-guide.jp/en/> Phone: 096-328-2393

Map of Kyushu & Kumamoto

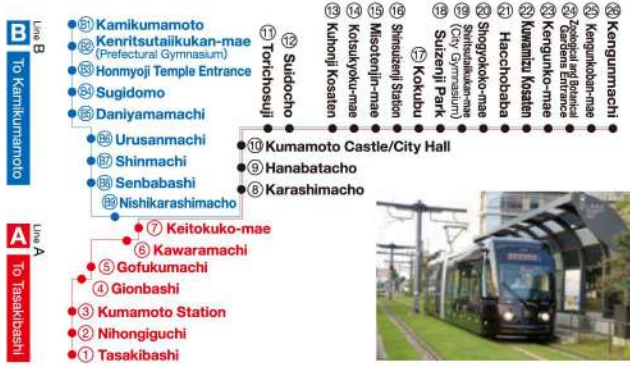


Travel time from Fukuoka to Kumamoto
 Express Bus ... 2hr
 Shinkansen ... 30-50min



Access

Shiden (Kumamoto City Tram)



How to Get on the Bus and Tram

- Enter from the back door and take a ticket. There is no need to take a ticket on tram because the fare doesn't change.
- When your destination is called, press the button.
- Check your fare on the board at the front of the bus. For example, you have a ticket with a "2" on it. You should pay the fare amount that appears below the "2" on the board, in this case 210 yen. Tram fare is always 170 yen per adult and 90 yen per child.
- Put your fare and ticket in the fare box next to the driver's seat. If you need change, use the change machine attached to the fare box.



One Day Pass

Kumamoto City Tram and Bus 1-Day Pass

Sightseeing facilities offer discounts for pass holders, so it is convenient for touring the city.

Tram and bus 1day pass	Tram only 1day pass
Zone ticket ... 700yen	Adults ... 500yen
All line ticket ... 900yen	Children ... 250yen

Shiromegurin Kumamoto Castle Loop Bus

The Shiromegurin Bus runs in a loop starting in front of Kumamoto Station, stopping by the Kotsu Center Bus Terminal, then stopping at a number of sightseeing spots around the Castle. Visitors can get the best view of the Castle immediately after getting off at the Kumamoto Castle/Ninomaru Parking Area bus stop.

Flat fare	One-Day Pass
Adult ¥160	¥400
Child ¥80	¥200

*Fares are the same no matter where you get on or off.
 *One-Day Passes can be used for unlimited rides on the day the pass is purchased.

For sightseeing inquiries, contact: Kumamoto City Information Center
<https://kumamoto-guide.jp/en/tourist-information/> Phone: 096-322-5060

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