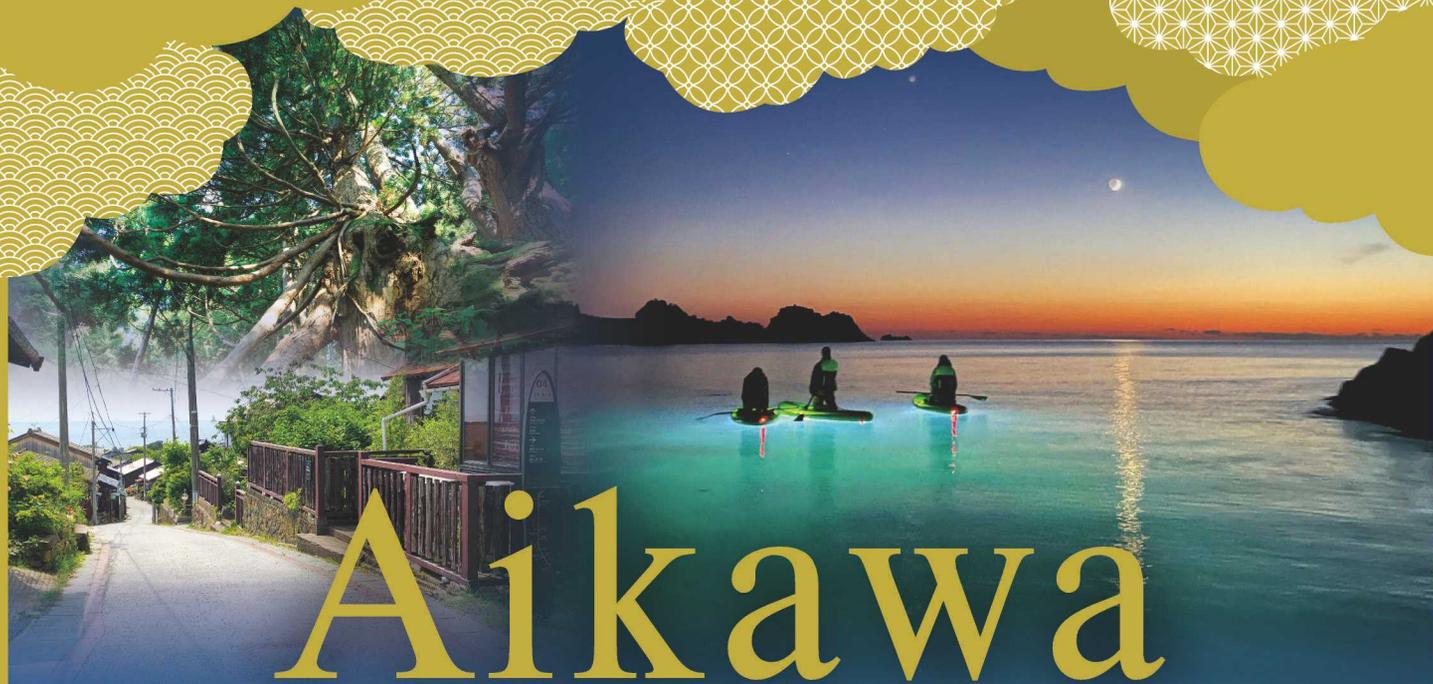
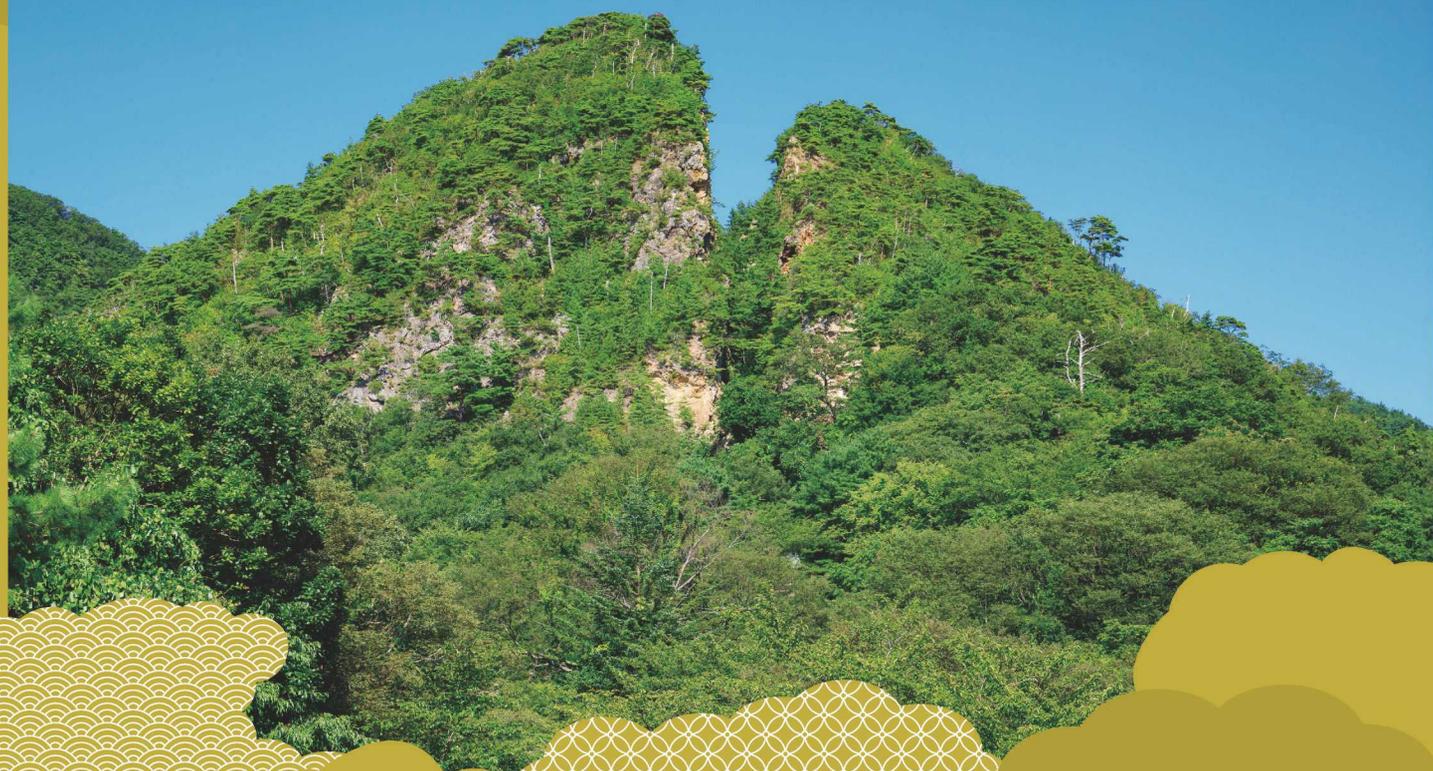


S A D O I S L A N D



# Aikawa Area

Guide Book



# Exploring Aikawa

Explore Aikawa's abundant natural beauty, shaped by volcanic activity long ago.

Discover its unique townscape, which flourished during the gold rush.

Tour the numerous places that weave the tapestry of its rich history.

Let this map be your guide to discovering all the fascinating places around Aikawa, while immersing yourself in its diverse history and culture!



Meotoiwa



Osado Ishina Cedar Forest



Cape Nagate

Mt Kinpoku



Stop here First!

# Sado Gold mine Information Center Kirarium Sado



## Discover the history behind the Sado Gold and Silver Mine

A gateway to the Sado Gold Mine World Heritage Site, the Information Center Kirarium Sado serves as a base for exploring Aikawa. Four projection theatres showcase dramatic reenactments that bring you back in time over 400 years ago, when gold was first discovered on the island (with English subtitles). Allow 30 to 40 minutes for your visit.

- 🕒 Hours: 8:30-17:00 daily  
(Exhibition entry until 16:30)  
Closed: For year-end holidays 12/29 - 1/3
- 💰 300 yen for Adults  
(High school students and up),  
150 yen for children (Entry to the Information Center only, without viewing the exhibitions, is free)
- ☎ 0259-74-2215

Find Kirarium on  
GoogleMaps:



きりarium

## YOUR GATEWAY TO AIKAWA

### Getting Here

#### Ride the Local Bus

**From Ryotsu Port:** Take the Honsen Line (main line) from Ryotsu to Kirarium Sado (Approx 50 minutes, 840 yen one way)

**From Ogi Port:** Take the Ogi Line to Sawata Bus station (Approx 1 hr, 840 yen). From there, take the Honsen line to Kirarium Sado (Approx 15 min, 420 yen)

**From Kirarium,** the Gold Mine is a short taxi, rental bicycle ride, additional busride, or 30-45 minute walk away from Kirarium Sado. Depending on the season, an express bus runs from Ryotsu to Kirarium Sado, and a shuttle is available to from there to the gold mine. Inquire with Sado Tourism Association or check [visitsado.com](http://visitsado.com) for updates.

**Bus Passes for unlimited rides** are available for purchase (1-day, 2-day and 3-day). Buy the pass with the bus driver, at tourism info centers on the island, or on the ferry.



#### Come by Car

If you are driving, Kirarium can be reached in about 40 minutes by car from Ryotsu Port via Sawata, or in about 50 minutes from Ogi Port

#### Explore Aikawa on an E-Bike ▶ P.10

# EXPLORE THE SADO GOLD MINE

Explore the 400-year history of the Sado Gold Mine.  
The main attractions are two mine tunnels that are open to the public.



## The Sodayu Mine

The Sodayu Mine is the older of the two tunnels open to the public. It was mined by hand during the early Edo period, over four centuries ago, and now showcases animatronics depicting historical mining activities. The tunnel takes around 30 minutes to view.

## The Doyu Mine

The Doyu Mine is the more modern of the two tunnels, and was machine-dug in 1899. Machinery and tools used to dig the tunnels are exhibited, and visitors can see the symbolic mountain split, Doyu no Warito, from Takato Park. The course takes around 40 minutes to view.



## 400 Year History of the Sado Gold Mine

**1601**

Three prospectors started mining.

**1603**

The Tokugawa Shogunate established a magistrate office and minted gold coins on Sado.

**1869**

Meiji government started managing Sado Gold Mine. Western engineers helped its modernization

**1889**

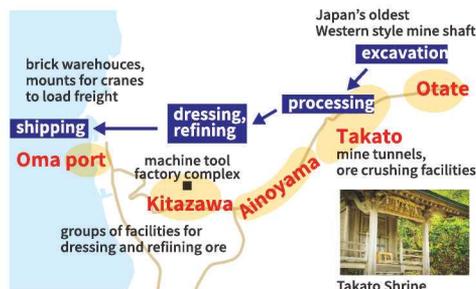
The Mine became the property of the then Ministry of Imperial Household.

**1896**

Mitsubishi bought the mine and increased its contribution to Japan's economic development.

**1989**

The mine business discontinued due to exhausted resources.



🕒 **Hours: 8:00-17:30 from Apr.-Oct.**  
(Entry until 30 min before closing)

**8:30-17:00 from Nov.-Mar.**

**Closed:**

For year-end holidays 12/29 - 1/3

💰 **Adult tickets are required for middle-school students and up**

Adults: 1,000 yen /

Children: 500 yen for either the **Sodayu** or **Doyu Mine**, or

Adults: 1,500 yen / Children 750 yen for **both**.

**Yamashi Tour**

\*Reservations Required

Adults: 2,500 yen (groups of 2-10)

**Island Mirror VR**

\*Reservations Required

Adults: 3,000 yen / Children 2,550 yen

☎ **0259-74-2389 (Golden Sado)**

**Note that it can be cold in the tunnels,** as it remains around 10 degrees Celsius (50 degrees Fahrenheit) year-round.

## The biggest gold and silver mine in Japan



The Sado Gold Mine, designated a World Heritage Site in 2024, was the most productive gold mine in Japan. The total output from the mine was 78 tons of gold and 2,330 tons of silver over its 388 years of operation, from 1601 until 1989. Eight large gold veins stretched 3km east to west, 600m north to south and 800m deep. The total length of the mine tunnels reaches 400km long, an equivalent distance from Sado to Tokyo

Watch the Sado Gold and Silver Mines Promotional Video on Youtube:



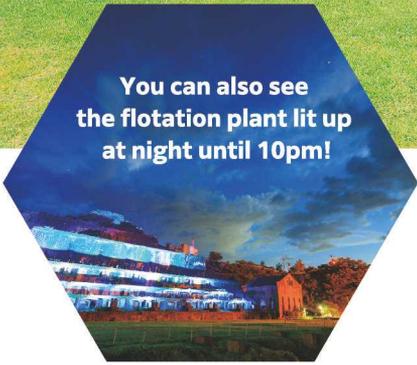


This district contained facilities that were used for dressing and refining ores taken from the gold and silver mines.

# Kitazawa District



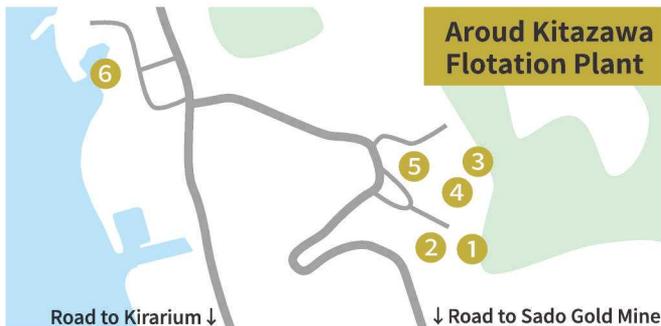
You can also see  
the flotation plant lit up  
at night until 10pm!



## 1 Kitazawa Flotation Plant Ruins

Always open, admission free

The sight of these ruins looks just as if it were taken from a scene from the Studio Ghibli film Laputa: Castle in the Sky. The plant was in operation from 1938 until 1952. It was used to extract gold and silver with what was at the time cutting edge technology. While in operation, it could process over 50,000 tons of ore in just one month, leading it to be called the greatest flotation plant in the East. You can walk around the grounds, but not inside the ruins.



## 4 Aikawa Traditional Skills Museum

Learn about the traditional arts of Aikawa. Take a hands-on workshop on Sakiori weaving. Pottery by artists in Sado, Sakiori works and Bunya puppets are on display.

🕒 8:30-17:00  
 💰 Rag-weaving (sakiori) workshop:  
 1,800JPY  
 ☎️ 0259-74-4313



## 2 Kitazawa Mumyoi Ceramics

Mumyoi ware is made from Mumyoi clay, which contains a lot of iron from the gold mine, and when fired, is so hard that it makes a metallic sound when struck. This shop right next to the flotation plant has a variety of pieces crafted by local artisans.



🕒 9:00-17:00 ☎️ 0259-74-3280

## 5 Aikawa Folk Museum

The three-story exhibition halls display materials related to the gold mine and the Sado Commissioner's Office, tools used by courtesans in Aikawa, art work, folk materials, and archeological objects.

🕒 8:30-17:00  
 💰 Adults 300 yen /Children 100 yen ☎️ 0259-67-7750



## 3 Kitazawa Terrace Café

A café with a view, located right in front of the Flotation Plant Ruins. It offers a mix of western cuisine and dishes using local sado ingredients, as well as coffee drinks and sake.



🕒 11:00-16:00, closed Weds.  
 ☎️ 0259-58-7085

## 6 Oma Port

Down the hill from Kyomachi Street and the Kitazawa district lies Oma Port. This port was used for loading ore and unloading materials for the mines, such as coal. This heritage site includes masonry seawall, a truss bridge, loader pier and crane support pedestals.



## The Brick Wall

This wall is part of a former court building, and inside serves as the Sado Print Art Museum (Hangamura).

## The Bell Tower

The first "time bell" was cast with Sado-produced bronze in 1712. The time bell rang out to let people know the time until around 1871, but it then went silent. In recent years, the bell is struck in the morning and evening.

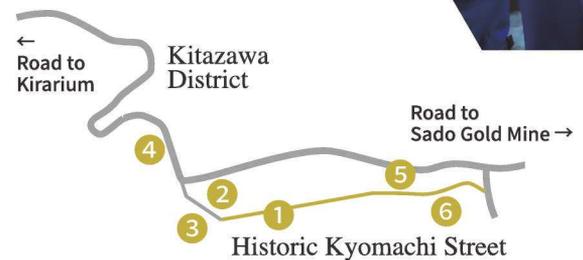
# Kyomachi

Seasonal Event of Kyomachi Street "Yoi-no-mai", is held in early June. Dancers, clad in kimonos of the past, dance to Aikawa Ondo folk songs.



## A Town Born from a Gold Rush

The town of Aikawa was a bustling city at the height of Sado's gold rush in the early Edo period (1603–1868). The booming mining industry brought great numbers of people to Sado. At its peak in the early 1600s, Aikawa alone had a population of 40,000 to 50,000.



### 1 Historic Kyomachi Street

Kyomachi Street is the main street that connects the gold mine with the Commissioner's Office. In the past, residences of both mine-related workers and merchants used to stand side-by-side on this street.



### 2 Sado Print Art Museum (Hangamura)

Exhibits a collection of woodblock prints, which are the crowning achievements of the movement led by print artist Shinichi Takahashi.

🕒 9:00-17:00, Closed Mon.  
(Tue.if Mo. is a holiday) Closed Dec - Feb  
💰 Adults: 400 yen / Children: 200 yen  
☎ 0259-74-3931



### 3 Kyomachitei

Enjoy beautiful views of Aikawa from this café near the bell tower. Here both western and Japanese dishes highlight Sado-sourced ingredients.

🕒 Lunch 11:30-14:00  
Dinner by reservation only  
18:00-22:00, Closed Tue., Wed.  
☎ 0259-67-7538



### 4 Sado Commissioner's Office

After the discovery of gold veins, Sado was placed under the direct control of the Shogunate, and the Sado Commissioner's Office was established in 1603. In addition to judicial and administrative purposes, the office functioned as a place for refining and grading gold.

🕒 8:30-17:00, daily - last entry 16:30  
💰 Adults: 500 yen / Children: 200 yen ☎ 0259-74-2201



### 5 Gashima Cinema and Café

This former residence of a Sado Gold Mine captain, built about 80 years ago, has been converted into a cinema/café. The café offers a selection of teas, coffee, and light dishes. An old carbon arc film projector is on display.



### 6 Former Aikawa Detention Center

Opened as a branch of Niigata Prison in 1954, and was in use until 1972. Designated as a Tangible Cultural Property, a wooden detention house still in existence such as this is rarely found in Japan. Open to the public and free of charge.



## Aikawa Walking Tours

Aikawa Walking Tours Up to 23 participants per guide 1 hour 2,500 yen 2 hours 3,500 yen  
\*Advance reservation required ☎ 0259-74-2220(Sado Tourism Association)

# Aikawa Seasonal Events

\* Dates are subject to change

- 2** 2/3 **Gomadaki and Bean-throwing for Setsubun (last day of the season)** 📍 Manpukuji Temple, Himezu
- 3** 3/15 **Nehane** (Buddhist rite held on the day of Buddha's death) 📍 Ogawa
- 4** 4/8-22 **Sado Gold Mine Sakura Blossom Light-up Event** 📍 Sado Gold Mine  
4/15 **Koda Festival** 📍 Koda North of Ishina  
**Second Saturday in April Kitakawachi Festival** 📍 Kitakawachi
- 5** 5/3 **Himezu Festival** 📍 Himezu
- 6** 6/3-4 **"Yoi-no-mai" dance parade on Kyomachi Street** 📍 Kyomachi Street  
April - February **Kitazawa Flotation Plant Light Up Event** 📍 Kitazawa Flotation Plant
- 7** 7/9-8/20 **"Gozen" Dance parade** 📍 Sado Commissioner's Office  
7/17 **Kasuga Shrine Fire-lit Noh** 📍 Kasuga Shrine  
7/23 - 24 **Gold Mine Festival** 📍 Aikawa Area  
End of July-Mid-August **Ogawa, Kitaebisu, Ishige Sunflower Field** 📍 Sotokaifu Coast
- 8** 8/23 **Ojizo Festival** 📍 Tassha
- 10** October second Sunday **Tassha Festival** 📍 Tassha  
10/18 **Aikawa Festival Yoimiya Uemachi Festival** 📍 Daikumachi, Kyomachi  
10/19 **Aikawa Matsuri** 📍 Utou-jinja Shrine



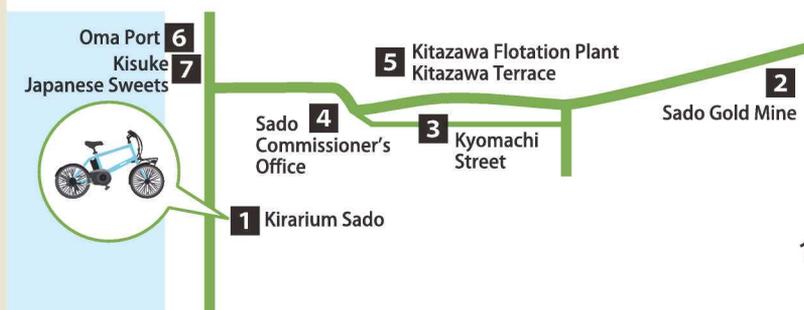
**Explore by E-bike Rental!**

## Itinerary for a day in Aikawa

Sports-type panasonic e-bikes start at 2,000 yen or a 2-hour rental. Add 500 yen for each additional hour, or rent for 24 hours at 4,500 yen.

### 5-Hour Course

9:00 - 9:40	<b>1 Kirarium Sado Gold Mine Guidance Facility</b>	Learn about the history of the gold mine and rent an e-bike to explore Aikawa.	
20 minutes			
10:00 - 11:00	<b>2 Sado Gold Mine (UNESCO World Heritage Site)</b>	Explore the Sado Gold Mine! Choose between two tunnels, Doyu or Sodayu tunnel.	
10 minutes			
11:10 - 11:50	<b>3 Kyomachi Street</b>	Take a ride down Kyomachi Street and see the bell tower, first cast in Sado-produced bronze in 1712. Grab lunch at Kyomachi-tei, right next to the bell tower. (Lunch at Kitazawa Terrace is another option - see 5)	
10 minutes			
12:00 - 12:30	<b>4 Sado Commissioner's Office</b>	Explore the core of Sado's governing body when it was under direct control of the Shogunate!	
5 minutes			
12:35 - 13:00	<b>5 Kitazawa Flotation Plant / Kitazawa Terrace</b>	While in operation, this flotation plant could process over 50,000 tons of ore in just one month, leading it to be called the greatest flotation plant in the East. The café overlooking the grounds, Kitazawa Terrace, offers set meals, drinks and dessert.	
10 minutes			
13:10 - 13:30	<b>6 Oma Port</b>	This port was used for loading and unloading materials for the mines, such as coal.	
13:30 - 13:45	<b>7 Kisuke Japanese Sweets</b>	For those with a sweet-tooth, wrap up your journey with a stop at Kisuke, a Wagashi (Japanese sweet) shop loved by the local community. Be sure to try the manju (red bean paste stuffed buns)!	
15 minutes			
14:00	<b>1 Kirarium Sado Gold Mine Guidance Facility</b>		<b>Return E-bike Rental</b>





## 1 Senkakuwan Bay

Senkakuwan Bay is known for its dramatic cliffs, clear waters, and unique rock formations. Popular for glass-bottom boat tours, it offers stunning views and a vibrant marine life, making it a must-visit for nature lovers and adventurers. Entry to the park, Agheshima Yuen, gets you access to a small aquarium that showcases the sealife found around Sado, and the observation deck, where you can enjoy a dynamic panoramic view.

### Senkakuwan Agheshima Yuen

🕒 Mar. - Apr. 8:30-17:00 May - Sept. 8:30-17:30  
Oct. 8:30-17:00 Nov. 8:30-16:30

December - Feb: Closed

🎫 Park Admission Adults:500 yen / Children:300 yen  
Glass-bottom Boat Rides (park admission included)

🎫 Adults:1,400 yen / Children:800 yen

☎️ 0259-75-2311

HP: <https://sado-ageshima.com/en/about/>

One of Japan's  
100 most  
beautiful  
coastlines!

## 2 Hiranezaki Coast

This coast line, just north of Senkakuwan Bay, features thousands of round holes on a 500m stretch of rock, formed by the rough Sea of Japan. This natural monument, the largest group of potholes in Japan, showcases pebbles whirled by turbulent waves, accelerating erosion.



## 3 Benkei no Hasami-Iwa

An interesting photo spot featuring a rock lodged between two giant rocks. According to legend, Sado Benkei, a powerful warrior, threw the rock during a contest of strength with a demon while heading to Mount Kinpoku for ascetic training. Nearby, you'll find the grave of Ichizaemon Shizume, a notable governor of Sado.



## 5 Meotoiwa

Meotoiwa, located on Nanaura Coast, features two giant rocks symbolizing the first "husband" (22.6 meters) and "wife" (23.1 meters) from Japan's creation myth in the ancient book "Kojiki." These rocks, nestled together by the sea, are believed to bring luck in finding a partner.

## 4 Kasugasaki

Kasugasaki, situated at the tip of Kabuse village, is a marine terrace that offers a sweeping panorama of the town of Aikawa, including the scenic Doyu no Warito. The Kasugasaki Lighthouse was established on the cape in 1628 for the safety of ships passing by offshore.



# EXP

## 6 Osado Skyline

The Osado Skyline, a 30km-long scenic drive between Aikawa and Kanai, offers stunning views of forests, cliffs, and the Sea of Japan. The view from Hakuundai, a rest area with a viewing deck, is stunning.

Open in Spring, Summer and Autumn.



## 7 Osado Ishina Natural Cedar Forest

Get up close with the beautiful natural cedars that Sado Island is famous for.

Recommended season: Mid-May to early November

🕒 Course Time: approx. 1 hour

## 8 Osado Nature Trail

The Osado Nature Trail starts at the Ishige Trailhead. From there, it is a 2.5 - 3-hour hike up to the ridgeline of the Osado mountain range.



Trekking Map

## Eco-Tour of a Pristine Forest

This tour inside the Niigata University Forest is organized by the Sado Tourism Association in cooperation with Niigata University and Sado City. Entry to the forest trail is limited to 15 people per day.

Recommended season: May through early November

🕒 Course Time approx. 6.5 hours 🏷️ Fee: 10,000 yen

Bookings and more information:

Sado Tourism Association 📞 0259-27-5000



Mountains

LORE



*lunch & dinner*

# Eat

in Aikawa



## Café•Western food

#coffee #curry #cake #pasta #parfait

### Gashima Cinema Café

☎0259-67-7644

#curry #coffee #cake

🕒 9:30-17:00

Closed Mondays, Tuesdays

📍 11 Aikawa Kamikyomachi, Sado

### Kyomachitei

☎0259-67-7538

#pasta #snowcrab #parfait

🕒 11:30-14:00, Dinner by Reservation Only, 18:00-22:00

Closed Tuesdays, Wednesdays

📍 13 Aikawa Yaoyamachi, Sado

### Kitazawa Terrace

☎0259-58-7085

#hamburger #pasta #curry

🕒 11:00-16:00

Closed Wednesdays

📍 2 Aikawa Kitazawamachi, Sado

### Café de Cattleya

☎0259-74-3348

#coffee #tea #cake

🕒 8:00-22:00

Open daily

📍 65 Aikawa Hanedamachi, Sado

## Japanese food

#sushi #seafood #soba #buckwheatnoodles  
#setmeals #yakitori #katsu #tempura

### Gin Sushi

☎0259-74-3911

#sushi #seafood

🕒 12:00-14:00 / 17:00-22:00

Closed on Mon.

📍 65 Aikawa Hanedamachi, Sado

### Isonoya

☎0259-74-2213

#setmeals #soba #buckwheatnoodles #katsudon

🕒 11:00-19:00 (Open daily, open from 13:00- on Thursdays)

📍 16 Aikawa Edozawamachi, Sado

### Itamae no Mise Takeya

☎0259-74-3328

#burikatsu #seafood #curry

🕒 11:30-14:00/18:00-21:00 (Last Order 30 mins before closing)

Lunch only Sundays. Closed Thursdays.

📍 5-3 Aikawa Itchome, Sado

### Mochidaya

☎0259-67-7268

#setmeals #seafood #tempura

🕒 11:30-14:00/18:00-21:00 (Last Order 30 mins before closing)

Lunch only Sundays. Closed Mondays.

📍 7 Aikawa Itchome, Sado

### Parlour Tsuruya

☎0259-74-2495

#pasta #katsu #curry

🕒 11:30-19:30 (Last Order 19:20)

Closed Mondays (Unless a holiday) (No reservations)

📍 27 Aikawa Itchome, Sado

### Kushiyaki Kinpuku

☎0259-74-3934

#chickenskewers #yakitori

🕒 17:00-21:30

Closed Sundays

📍 9 Aikawa Nichome, Sado

### Kappo Nakasho

☎0259-74-3901

#setmeals #seafood

🕒 11:30-14:00/17:30-21:00

Closed Sundays

📍 1 Aikawa Nichome, Sado

### Soba Tomi

☎0259-74-2747

#soba #buckwheatnoodles

🕒 11:00-13:30/17:00-19:00

Closed Sundays.

📍 5-3 Aikawa Ichimachi, Sado

### Sushi Hatsu

☎0259-74-0124

#sushi #seafood

🕒 12:00-14:00/17:00-23:00

Closed Sundays

📍 131-2 Aikawa Orito Sumiyahamamachi, Sado

### Kinzanjaya

☎0259-74-2389

#curry #ramen

🕒 10:00-15:00, Reservations required for groups of 10+

Open daily Apr.-Oct. / Closed Nov.-Mar.

📍 1305 Shimoaikawa, Sado

## Soba Yozaemon

☎090-7832-5806

#soba #buckwheatnoodles

🕒 11:00-14:30 Weekends only.  
Closed Mon.-Fri. (unless a holiday)  
📍 11 Aikawa Shingoromachi, Sado

## Kaneyoshiya

☎080-9158-6268

#filledpancakes #redbeanpaste

🕒 8:45-15:00  
Closed on Sun.  
📍 62 Aikawa Hanedamachi, Sado

## Izakaya

#sake #beer #grill #seafood

## Izakaya Olfe

☎0259-74-3851

#sake #beer

🕒 17:30-21:00  
Closed Tuesdays, Saturdays (subject to change)  
📍 27 Aikawa Nichome, Sado

## Colombia

☎0259-74-4151

#sake #karaoke #grill

🕒 11:30-14:00/18:00-23:00  
Closed Wednesdays  
📍 436 Aikawa Oritomura, Sado

## Bar•Karaoke

#sake #beer #karaoke

## Hinoki

☎080-2531-8589

#sake #beer

🕒 17:00 - 22:00  
open daily  
📍 74-4 Aikawa Hanedamachi, Sado

## A Rabu

☎0259-74-3933

#sake #beer

🕒 19:00-24:00  
open daily  
📍 72-2 Aikawa Hanedamachi, Sado

## Hettapi

☎090-1833-2419

#okonomiyaki #sake #beer

🕒 16:00 - 21:00 Last Order at 20:30  
Closed Sundays and Holidays  
📍 11-3 Aikawa Itchome, Sado

## Aburiya Charakurage

☎0259-74-2067

#sake #grill

🕒 18:00-23:00  
Closed Wednesdays  
📍 13-1 Aikawa Itchome, Sado

## Okesa Bar Bunzo

☎0259-74-2252

#sake #seafood #ramen

🕒 18:00-1:00am  
Closed Tuesdays  
📍 32 Aikawa Itchome, Sado

## Night Spot J1

☎0259-74-0030

#sake #beer #karaoke

🕒 19:00-2:00am  
Closed Mondays (subject to change)  
📍 18 Aikawa Oritomachi, Sado

## Sports Bar Sushika

☎080-4730-3873

#karaoke #darts #shisha

🕒 21:00-5:00am  
Open daily  
📍 7-1 Aikawa Orito Hamamachi, Sado

## Apple

☎0259-74-3938

#karaoke #sake #beer

🕒 19:00-2:00am  
open daily  
📍 6 Aikawa Orito Sumiyahamamachi, Sado

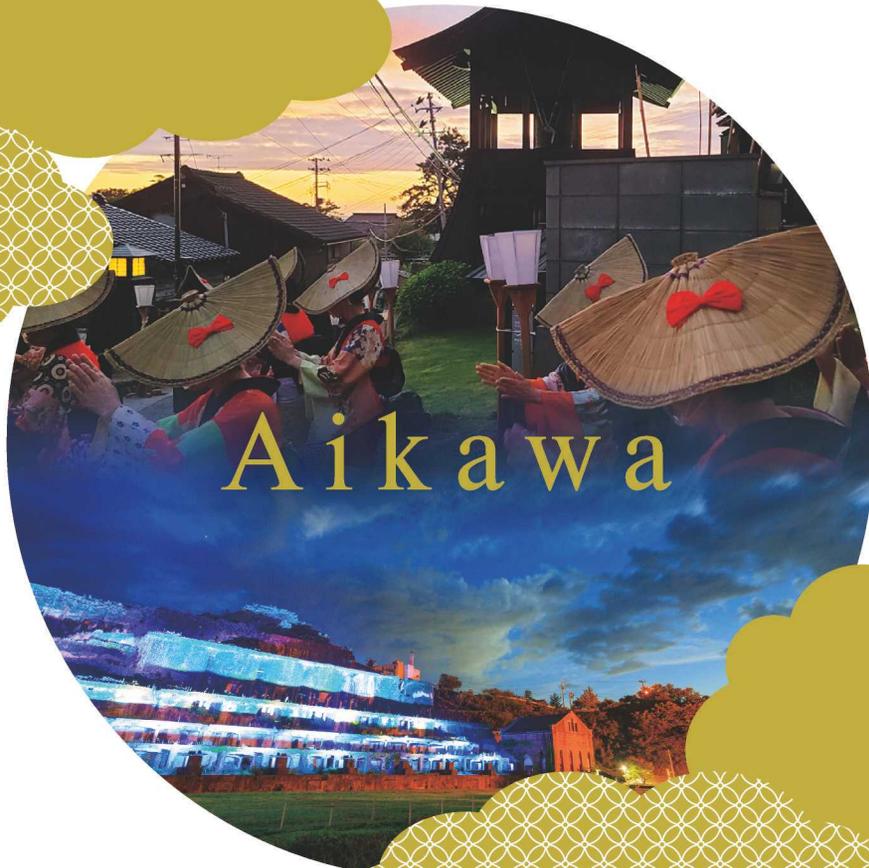
## Ouna to Okina

☎0259-58-9392

#sake #beer #karaoke

🕒 19:00-2:00am  
Closed Sundays and holidays  
📍 62-6 Aikawa Orito Hamamachi, Sado





**Sado Tourism Association  
Aikawa Tourist Information Center**

Hama-machi 18-1, Aikawa-Sanchome, Sado City,  
Niigata Prefecture 952-1562  
Email: [aikawa@visitsado.com](mailto:aikawa@visitsado.com)  
Instagram: [@aikawa\\_sadoisland](https://www.instagram.com/aikawa_sadoisland)

Support for this project was provided by the Japan Tourism Agency's FY2024 project to promote expansion and improvement of inbound tourism through providing special tourism experiences.