

2024 June Vol.2

New Open

## 1. Sample the Best of Kochi Culture All in One Place at OMO7 Kochi by Hoshino Resorts, Opens June 13



©Hoshino Resorts

Concentrating the appeals of Kochi Prefecture in one place, the new OMO7 Kochi by Hoshino Resorts builds a space that is both exciting and relaxing, perfect for pampering and entertaining guests. Just a short 5-minute taxi ride from Kochi Station, the hotel is conveniently located to explore the city. Guests may admire the hypnotizing performances of the Yosakoi dance which is presented nightly. The enthusiastic movements and lively music are sure to stick with you even after the show has come to a close. Soaking in the massive public baths also cannot be missed, with indoor and outdoor baths washing away the day's fatigue. The guest rooms and dining emulate the hospitality of Kochi's banquet culture, allowing sake and snacks to be enjoyed while basking in the inviting atmosphere.

[OMO7 Kochi by Hoshino Resorts](#)

New Open

## 2. TWIN-LINE HOTEL YANBARU OKINAWA JAPAN's New Forest-Themed Annex is Opening on July 11



©TWIN-LINE HOTEL YANBARU OKINAWA JAPAN

Situated on the western coast of Okinawa, the hotel boasts superb views of the sparkling azure waters. Its interior is decorated with colors and designs that are inspired by Okinawa and accentuate the feeling of a tropical vacation. The hotel's new annex, GREEN WAVE, is set to open on July 11. It will add 50 new rooms aligning with 8 different concepts, including connected rooms, as well as ones that can fit up to 6 people, which are perfect for group or family stays. All of the rooms are equipped with covered balconies holding hot tubs that can be enjoyed while taking in the calming views of the dense surrounding greenery and the sounds of nature. The nearby large-scale sports facility is a great place for exercise and training camps, and clothes can be cleaned at the hotel's laundromat. For a taste of delicious local cuisine, head to the hotel's restaurant. At dinnertime, you can indulge in mouthwatering Okinawan dishes while listening to live performances of Okinawan music.

[TWIN-LINE HOTEL YANBARU OKINAWA JAPAN](#)

#### Festival and Event

### 3. Inspire the World and Japan's Contemporary Art Scene at Tokyo Gendai, July 5 – 7, Kanagawa



©Tokyo Gendai 2023

Tokyo Gendai, an international art fair, is scheduled to take place between July 5-7 (VIP and Vernissage on July 4) at the PACIFICO Yokohama. It will bring together leading galleries and share Japan's invigorating contemporary art scene. The exhibition will feature a total of 70 exhibiting galleries from 18 different countries, including 27 galleries participating for the first time, providing visitors the opportunity to delve into Japan's thriving contemporary art scene while getting to admire works presented by galleries from around the world. The art fair also hosts Art Talks, during which attendees can learn more about art and society through lectures and discussions given by knowledgeable specialists and professionals.

[Tokyo Gendai 2024](#)

#### Festival and Event

### 4. Watch a Captivatingly Unique Heron Dance at the 600-Year-Old Yamaguchi Gion Festival, July 20 - 27



The Yamaguchi Gion Festival takes place in Yamaguchi City, which was listed by The New York Times as one of "52 places to go in 2024." The festival's beginnings can be traced back to the 14th century, when the deity of Yasaka Shinto Shrine was transferred from Kyoto to Yamaguchi Prefecture, and the festival was later adopted from Kyoto's Gion Festival. On the first day of the festival, a majestic heron dance is performed, in which dancers donning pure white costumes with large wings transform themselves into the graceful birds. On the final day, the festival closes with an exciting parade to bring the deity back to its home at the shrine in Yamaguchi. Many gather to partake in the lively festivities, with the locals gathering in hordes to dance and embrace the vibrant summertime atmosphere.

[Yamaguchi Gion Festival](#)

#### Festival and Event

### 5. Join Music Lovers at the FUJI ROCK FESTIVAL on July 26 - 28, Niigata



© uchutaishi ☆ star

Embrace the vibes and lose yourself in the moment at the FUJI ROCK FESTIVAL '24, one of Japan's largest outdoor music festivals. With a lineup that features over 200 big-name artists from Japan and abroad such as Awich, Kraftwerk, and Noel Gallagher, this year, the grounds of the Naeba Ski Resort in Niigata Prefecture will come alive as people flock to bask in the tunes washing across the fields. This year, the 27th festival will be held from July 26 to 28, with different artists taking the stage each day. Soaking up the beats produced by the performers is the perfect way to forget about the summer heat, and listening with other music lovers heightens the experience. Check the link below to see how to get tickets!

[FUJI ROCK FESTIVAL '24](#)

## Festival and Event

### 6. A Mesmerizing Traditional Drum Performance - Matsumoto Castle Taiko Drum Festival, July 27 – 28, Nagano



©Matsumoto City

©Matsumoto Castle Management Office

Let the powerful sounds of taiko drums reverberate through your body as you watch some of the best taiko groups from around the country perform at the Taiko Drum Festival at Matsumoto Castle in Nagano Prefecture. A national treasure of Japan and one of its premier historic castles, Matsumoto Castle's impressive structure paints a vivid picture of Japan's feudal age, showcasing traditional architecture and a superbly preserved castle tower. The castle is a sublime setting for the Taiko Drum Festival, with its majestic facade complementing the powerful beats of the traditional drums. In the evening, its solemn silhouette towers above the illuminated taiko drummers, the mixture of resounding booms and historic scenery creating magical summer memories.

[Matsumoto Castle Taiko Drum Festival](#)

## Seasonal Topic

### 7. Trekking Route on the Picturesque Mountaintop Gassan Shrine Open July 1 - September 15, Yamagata



Perched on the top of the 1,984-meter-tall Mt. Gassan, Gassan Shrine has long been revered for enshrining the moon god Tsukuyomi. Rabbits have been thought of as messengers of the moon god since ancient times, and the god of Mt. Gassan is said to have appeared in the year of the rabbit. Making a pilgrimage to the sacred mountain creates the opportunity to pay respect to the departed and appreciate the blessings of the world we currently live in. Additionally, the site

is regarded as an excellent location for experiencing Japanese spirituality, situated within the Bandai-Asahi National Park offers ample untouched, lush nature brimming with a variety of flora and fauna to discover. The peak location of Gassan Shrine presents panoramic views of the surroundings, including the Shonai Plain, Mt. Chokai, and more rocky facades of faraway mountains. The mountain's elevation also allows snow to remain into July, letting visitors enjoy winter-esque hiking in the summer.

[Gassan Shrine](#)

### Special Experience

## 8. Adventure Through the Setouchi Region with the Beloved Anpanman Trains, Shikoku



©Takashi Yanase / Froebel-kan, TMS, NTV

The idyllic scenery of the Setouchi region can be enjoyed on the side of the widely beloved cartoon-themed trains that run through the island of Shikoku during weekends and the summer season. There are five Anpanman Trains, and not only are the exteriors of the trains decorated with the adorable Anpanman and friends, but the vibrant interiors have their smiling faces ready to welcome passengers onboard. Views of the sparkling Setouchi Inland Sea can be enjoyed from the windows of the Seto-Ohashi Anpanman Torokko, and for a bit of a thrill, the ground can also be seen racing past through the transparent flooring. Don't forget to take photos next to Anpanman to commemorate your ride! The trains are perfect for families with small children, as certain trains are equipped with convenient family-friendly amenities. The Anpanman Museum can also be accessed by bus from one of the stops along the Dosan Line route.

[Anpanman Train](#)

## Adventure Travel

### 9. Be in Tune with Yourself and Nature by Meditating Under a Waterfall on the Nakasendo Route, Nagano



©Nagano Tourism Organization

Despite its proximity to the sprawling metropolis of Tokyo, Nagano Prefecture is awash with abundant nature. It is home to the breathtaking Kiso Valley, where stunning natural sceneries and traditional townscapes practically unchanged for hundreds of years can be found, offering a glimpse into Japan's past. Here, Mt. Ontake stands tall at 3,067 meters, an icon of Japanese spirituality. The mountain has long been revered for ascetic practitioners, and the ritual of waterfall meditation has been practiced here since ancient times. Although once restricted to monks and dedicated devotees, the waterfall meditation is now open to everyone, both Japanese and international alike, taking place under the 30-meter-tall Kiyotaki Falls. Losing yourself in the rush of the falls is an ineffable experience that cleanses both the body and mind, helping you reconnect with yourself and nature.

[TAKIGYO: WATERFALL MEDITATION IN JAPAN](#)

## Japan Heritage

### 10. Ancient Culture Nestled in the Impressive Yabakei Gorge, Oita



Yabakei Gorge in Oita Prefecture is a Japan Heritage that is full of otherworldly scenery, including jagged rock formations cut by gently flowing bodies of water, mystical temples and Buddhist statues, and ancient chisel marks left in the man-made Blue Tunnel for hundreds of years. A visit to Yabakei Gorge will fill a day with breathtaking views and mesmerizing culture, as delicious local cuisine and detailed architecture can be enjoyed set against the grand wilderness that has

attracted people from all walks of life for centuries. There is plenty to explore in the gorge, from seasonal scenery that includes lush, fresh verdure surrounding a trickling stream in the summer and vivid foliage in the autumn to an elegant Japanese-style garden, old-fashioned buildings, and even a castle.

[Yabakei Gorge](#)

**Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai**

### The “Expo2025 Official Experiential Travel Guides” Website is Now Open

The Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition opened the “Expo 2025 Official Experiential Travel Guides” website in April 2024 to attract Expo visitors to the regions and help revitalize them. It focuses on promoting Expo + nationwide Japan tourism and encouraging prospective Expo participants to visit different regions by showcasing experiences and activities in various parts of Japan related to the Expo theme. The site not only introduces regional attractions through special stories and videos, but also regional events and even sells Expo-themed experiences. The Expo 2025 Official Experiential Travel Guides website will remain open until the Expo ends on October 31, 2025. The available experiences are designed to be compatible with the Expo theme. In addition, more experiences will continue to be added to the website, and businesses from all over Japan are invited to submit their experiences. Please keep a lookout!

[Expo 2025 Official Experiential Travel Guides](#)

**Notes:**

- The above details are correct as of the time of publication, and are subject to change.

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