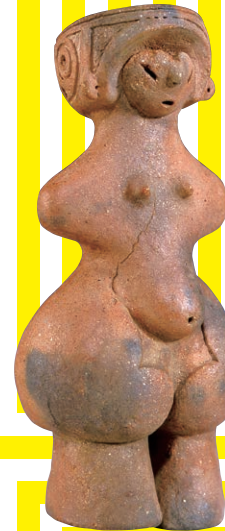


Let's take a trip to



**the wonderful  
Jomon world!**

<http://jomon.co>



Let's take a trip to  
**the wonderful  
Jomon world!**

A story guide to Japanese heritage:  
The starry-skied Jomon world of the Central Highlands

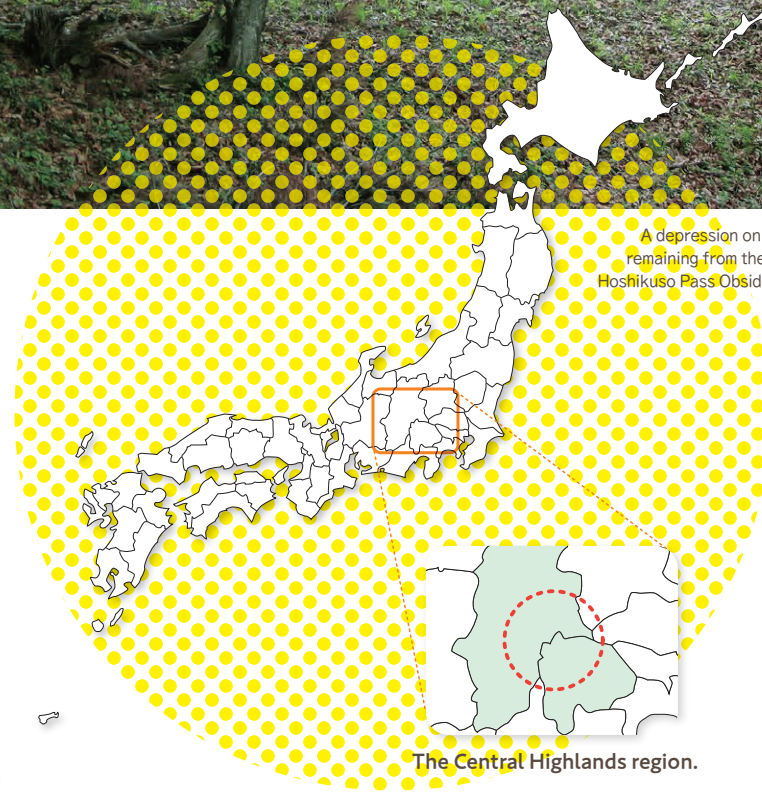




# Discovering the Primitive Culture of the Japanese Archipelago.

In the Central Highlands, your mind can travel to the time of the Jomon people, while tracing the roads where they carried valuable obsidian, visiting the ruins of the Jomon villages, and appreciating primitive artworks such as the Jomon venus, that symbol of female vitality, as well as finely crafted animal-shaped artifacts.

Let's time travel back to the origin of Japanese culture which has always been close to Mother Nature, and has been kept deep in the heart of the Japanese people.



A depression on a mountainside remaining from the Jomon Period.  
Hoshikuso Pass Obsidian Mining Site.

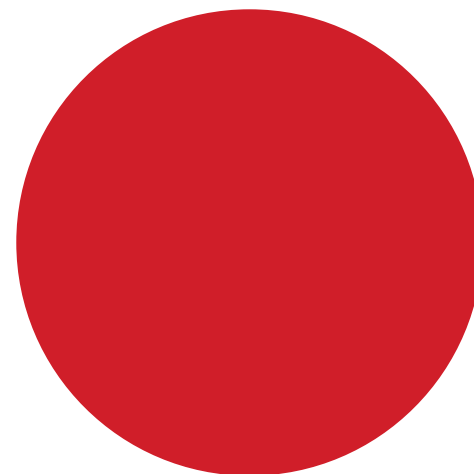
The Central Highlands region.



## What is Japan Heritage?

It is a certification system designed by the Agency of Cultural Affairs. It aims to revitalize local communities through promotion of their cultural assets and traditional customs.

There are stories with traditions and customs that have roots in the local history and local climate. And they have been handed down for generations. We certify those stories as Japan Heritage. And we would like to introduce the attractive material or intangible cultural properties to everyone, both in Japan, and abroad.



JAPAN HERITAGE

日本遺産



## The Allure of the Shining Black Stone.

The culture of manufacturing in the Japanese archipelago, which produces sophisticated and diverse tools, has its roots in the creation of the modern human stone tools that came from the continent about thirty thousand years ago.

One of the best known materials for stone tools is obsidian, which is a type of natural volcanic glass. The obsidian produced in Shinshu is of very high quality. Since it's easy to process and creates a sharp edge when broken, it was widely used all over Japan as a material for making various stone tools such as arrowheads and knives.

The fact that, at a time when there were no means of transportation like today, a large quantity of the obsidian produced in Shinshu has been found to be distributed nationwide tells us that this natural resource was highly valued as the oldest brand in Japan.



Obsidian from Hoshigato





## What is Obsidian?

Obsidian is a type of volcanic glass produced when magma cools down rapidly near the surface. It was utilized to make stone implements such as knives and arrowheads since it breaks into a shell-like form with a razor-sharp edge.

Both practical and beautiful, this mysterious shining black stone must have been “precious” to the people of prehistoric times. With more than 100 mines, the volcanic Japanese archipelago is one of the biggest producers of obsidian in the world. Some of the largest and most representative sites in the mainland are the “Shinshu Obsidian Mining Sites”.

Moreover, it is known that the obsidian in this area has been distributed in various parts of the country, with top quality as well as good production. Obsidian from the Shinshu area has been excavated from some Jomon archaeological sites such as the Sannai-Maruyama site in Aomori prefecture, and the Tate-saki site in Hokkaido which is beyond the Tsugaru Strait. That’s around 600 km as the crow flies! That’s an amazing fact considering the lack of transportation in those days.

This tells us that the Jomon people, just like us, desired to own and use excellent implements.

Shinshu Obsidian  
was distributed nationwide!



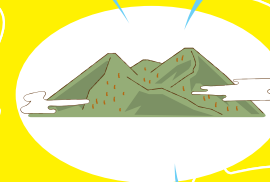
The Deer Hunters’  
Favorite!?



I want  
high-quality  
obsidian.

Sannai-Maruyama site

It has been found in  
Sannai-Maruyama site  
in Aomori which is  
around 600km away!



It was distributed nationwide  
and used to make hunting  
implements.

## Takayama, the Stardust Village

## Obsidian Experience Museum



Wide-scale distribution supported local craftsmanship

3670-3 Daimon, Nagawa,  
Chiisagata-gun, Nagano  
386-0601

☎ 0268-41-8050

- Admission Elementary and Junior High School Students: ¥100  
High School Students and older: ¥300
- Hours 9:00 – 16:30
- Closed Mondays (except holidays, in which case the following day will be closed),  
New Year Holidays, No closures in August
- <http://www.hoshikuso.jp/>



The interactive museum is located at the foot of the Hoshikuso Pass, the production site for obsidian. The museum introduces 30,000 years of obsidian's history, which dates back to the Paleolithic period and all the way through the Jomon period, along with abundant stone artifacts excavated around the site. The experience room holds a maximum of 180 people, and offers twenty interactive events to choose from. Programs, such as the museum's one of a kind stone tool making activity, let participants experience the wisdom of the Jomon period.



The Obsidian Experience Museum stands at the foot of the Hoshikuso Pass

## Permanent Exhibit



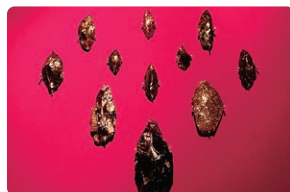
## From Collecting in the River to the Mining of Obsidian

The Takayama archaeological site groups from the Paleolithic period are located directly below the Hoshikuso Pass and they show the traces of people at the time collecting obsidian pieces eroded off the mountain in the river. After the rocks in the riverbed were exhausted, the Jomon people climbed up the mountain and started mining the resources underground.



## From the Birth of Obsidian to Wide-scale Distribution

The high-quality obsidian specimens produced in Nagano area were widely distributed throughout the Kanto area heading to the Kansai region, and as far as Hokkaido. The dispersion of ruins concentrated around the production site in Mt Kirigamine and the way they spread, indicate the routes on which obsidian rocks were transported nationwide.



## The Brilliance of Craftsmanship Seen in Obsidian

Obsidian is a natural glass that is formed when magma solidifies, is easy to process and was a popular material for making sharp stone tools. Exquisitely crafted stone tools and their brilliance convey the respect people had for their life-supporting tools.



## Obsidian and Tool Boxes from the Paleolithic and Jomon Periods

People of the Paleolithic and Jomon periods are known for their craftsmanship. The origins of the basic tools we use today date back to the Paleolithic period; and obsidian rocks were utilized for tools that required sharp edges.

## Primitive and Ancient Peoples Experience Museum

1581 Daimon, Nagawa,  
Chiisagata-gun, Nagano  
386-0601

☎ 0268-68-4339

- Admission Elementary and Junior High School Students: ¥100  
High School Students and older: ¥200
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00
- Closed Mondays (except holidays, in which case the following day will be closed),  
New Year Holidays
- <http://www.hoshikuso.jp/>



This small museum is located by the Daimon River; on the site of a Jomon-era obsidian mining community. The town of Nagawa is located on the Sea of Japan-side of the obsidian mountain, which forms the watershed of the area. A variety of earthenware from regions such as Hokuriku, Kanto and Tohoku were excavated from the historic ruins of the Jomon period, along with the local-style wares from the southwest foot of Mt. Yatsugatake. It indicates that this region, as the homeland of obsidian production, used to play a significant role as a crossroads of cultural exchange. As the predecessor of the Obsidian Experience Museum, the facility is capable of accommodating up to eighty people, and offers Jomon ware making experiences and the viewing of actual artifacts,



A reconstructed residence, and the Jomon ware artifacts excavated from the settlement ruins near the source of the Chikuma River, exhibited in the museum.

## Permanent Exhibit



## Onitan Historic Ruins – The Center of Obsidian Mining Management and Large-scale Distribution

The Onitan Historic Ruins are located at the entrance of the Daimon River Valley that runs through the obsidian mountain at the southwest foot of Mt. Yatsugatake. As the hub for the obsidian distribution, the historic ruins, dating mostly from the mid-Jomon period, show traces of a village with a facility for ceremonies in the center.

## Traces of Cultural Exchange in the Homeland of Obsidian

An excavation at the Onitan Historic Ruins unearthed Jomon ware in various designs: created in areas of Suwa; the southwest foot of Mt. Yatsugatake; the Hokuriku, Tohoku and Kanto regions; along with the local wares unique to the area. The homeland of obsidian was also a crossroad of cultural exchange.



## Incense Burner-Shaped Earthenware from the Nakamichi Historic Ruins – Holding the Light of Life

The Nakamichi Historic Ruins were another major village near the source of the Chikuma River. The lamp-shaped earthenware decorated with the design of a mother holding a child in her arms exemplifies the culture of the area, connecting both the obsidian distribution, and the respect the villagers had for the continuation of life.

Nagawa's special product is the hot topic in town!  
“Dattan Soba” (Tartary Buckwheat Noodles)

The home of the Primitive and Ancient Peoples Experience Museum, Daimon, Nagawa, is also a popular place for Tartary buckwheat cultivation. The Daimon-produced Tartary buckwheat noodle is characterized by its delicious taste and lack of bitterness, despite its high content of the flavonoid rutin – 120 times more than typical buckwheat noodles. Highly recommended to try when in town.







## From the Jomon Obsidian Mining Site to the Whole Country!

There are obsidian mining sites deep in the woods of the Central Highlands, where the Jomon people continued mining for millennia.

When you visit the mining site at Hoshikuso pass in the volcanic mountain range of Kirigamine, you can still see the vestiges of Jomon-era mining as a crater-like depression in the center of the circular bank, even after thousands of years have passed. This mysterious landscape was formed by the accumulation of gravel that was thrown away beside the mining pit, building up to a depth of over 5 meters. Underneath the ground, a wooden fence erected to prevent landslides of the gravel still remains exactly as it was first built 3,500 years ago. This reminds us of the hardship the people had to face and their great passion to obtain better stone material.

Some of the obsidian mining sites that were found in the highlands have names with the word, “Hoshi”, which means stars; such as “Hoshikuso pass” and “Hoshigato”.

There are a lot of glittering pieces of obsidian scattered over the highlands which are over 1,500 meters in altitude. Our

ancestors looked up at the stars in the night sky and believed that these pieces of obsidian were pieces of the stars that fell to the earth, and so these place names were born.

Even now, after thousands of years have passed, standing in the pass under the brilliance of the night sky, you will still see the everlasting twinkle at your feet.

The shining black stones were transported from village to village. Eventually the roads that connected the villages became known as the “Obsidian Road”. At the foot of Mt. Yat-sugatake, large villages sprang up in places where people could collect an enormous amount of obsidian. Those villages became meeting places for Jomon people from remote regions who sought high quality Shinshu obsidian and an exchange network between eastern and western Japan was formed.



## National Historic Site:

## The Hoshigato Obsidian Mining Site

Higashimata, Shimosuwa, Suwa-gun, Nagano

☎ 0266-27-1627

(Shimosuwa Lake Suwa Museum)

■ Not open to public on regular basis. Please join a study tour conducted by the town of Shimosuwa (schedule to be determined).

Though the Hoshigato Obsidian Mining Site was discovered in 1920, the fact that it was an obsidian mine during the Jomon Period was not known until an investigation carried out from 1959 to 1961. During another investigation conducted by the Shimosuwa Board of Education from 1997 to 2013, 193 Jomon Period obsidian mining sites were found distributed across an area of 32,000 m<sup>2</sup> along with the remains of mining pits from both the early and late stages of the same period. The site was designated as a National Historic Site on March 10, 2015.



The obsidian mining site from the Jomon Period is located on the eastern slope of Mt. Hoshigato, the largest source of obsidian in the Nagano area.

## Highlights



## The Obsidian Mining Site From the Jomon Period

The pits from which the Jomon people mined obsidian still remain as visible depressions in the earth after thousands of years have passed.



## Obsidian Mining Pits From the Early Jomon Period (approx. 5,700 years ago)

The Jomon people mined the obsidian contained within deposits from a volcanic eruption. The size of the pit is just big enough to fit one person.



## Obsidian Rock Mined From This Site

A large amount of obsidian was excavated from a mining pit from the Final Jomon Period. Each piece is approximately 3 to 8 centimeters in length with some sharp broken edges due to impacts mining.

## Lake Suwa — Landmark for the Jomon People!?

The largest lake in the Nagano area, Lake Suwa has a circumference of approximately 16 kilometers. Visible from virtually all of surrounding mountains, the lake may have served as a landmark for the people dwelling in the area. The Sone Ruins can be found on lake bed on the eastern side. Large amounts of stone artifacts were excavated from these ruins, including finely crafted arrowheads, which could very well be the origin of the craftsmanship tradition in the Suwa area.

Lake Suwa (view from Tateishi Park)



## Hoshigato Museum Yanoneya

3289 Shimosuwa,  
Suwa-gun, Nagano  
393-0015

☎ 0266-27-0001

■ Admission Adults: ¥600, Elementary and Junior High School Students: ¥300  
(Includes admission to the Clock Studio Gishodo)

■ Hours Mar to Nov: 9:00 – 17:00 / Dec to Feb: 9:30 – 16:30

■ Closed Open year-round

■ <http://konjakukan-oideya.jp>



Hoshigato Museum Yanoneya showcases the archeological artifacts excavated in the town of Shimosuwa, mainly from the historic Jomon Period Hoshigato Obsidian Mining Site. It aims to give visitors a deeper understanding of the historic relationship between humans and obsidian. Exhibitions include a life-size diorama that faithfully reproduces the Jomon Period obsidian mining pits discovered at the Hoshigato Obsidian Mining Site, panoramic illustrations of how the mining was thought to have been done, and actual obsidian relics excavated in Shimosuwa.



Yanoneya is located in the Shimosuwa-shuku area among the historical spots adjacent to the keyhole-shaped Aotsuka tumulus.



## Life-sized Diorama of a Jomon Period Obsidian Mining Pit

This exhibit showcases a faithful, life-sized reproduction of one of the Jomon Period obsidian mining pits excavated at the Hoshigato Obsidian Mining Site, the only such site in Japan.

## Permanent Exhibit



## Hoshigato Ruins Historic Overview

This exhibit features panoramic illustrations that reconstruct how the Jomon people may have mined obsidian based on the surveys conducted at the excavated obsidian mining sites. You will also find other artifacts excavated from the Hoshigato Obsidian Mining Site.

## Kamegaoka-style Pottery: Cultural Exchange and the Jomon People

Pieces of the Kamegaoka-style pottery brought from the Tohoku (Northeast Japan) area, were excavated from the Tsuchida Ruins in Shimosuwa, suggesting the cultural exchange through obsidian trading between the people of the Suwa and Tohoku regions.



## Wada Pass and the Path of History

Pronominal to Nagano area's obsidian, the Wada Pass was the starting point for the nation-wide trading of obsidian rock from the Paleolithic and Jomon Periods and continued to play a significant role in the movement of people and goods even after ancient times. Crossing the pass at the elevation of 1,531 meters was the hardest point in the Nakasendo road and many people still visit the location today to experience its history.

View of the Suwa area from the top of the Wada Pass



The top of the Wada Pass





National Historic Site:

# Hoshikuso Pass Obsidian Mining Site

3670-3 Daimon, Nagawa,  
Chiisagata-gun, Nagano 386-0601

☎ 0268-41-8050

(Inside the Obsidian Experience Museum)

Admission Free

Hours 9:00 – 16:30

Closed Mondays (the following day if a holiday), Nov to Apr

http://www.hoshikuso.jp/



The Hoshikuso Pass of Mt Kirigamine gets its name from a local name for obsidian which literally means “star droppings.” What the local legend described as the pieces of shining stars covering the pass were actually accumulated scrap pieces of obsidian left over from Jomon mines. The ruins located behind the Obsidian Experience Museum are open to public as a historic park. An outdoor exhibition where visitors will be able to observe what is underground is planned to be opened in 2021.



It takes about 30 minutes to walk the path from the Obsidian Experience Museum to the Hoshikuso Pass obsidian mine.

## Highlights



### Crater-shaped Traces From Jomon Period Mining

The Jomon people used to mine obsidian by digging into the side of Mt. Mushikura located to the east of the Hoshikuso Pass. The crater-shaped depressions lined up in staircase-like succession are the traces left behind from these former mining sites.



### Mining Areas Covered by Glittering Pieces of Obsidian

From the pass to the forest, there are many spots where pieces of glittering obsidian peek through patches of grass. Innumerable and shining like stars in the sky, these pieces of obsidian could be the fragments touched by the Jomon people who mined them.



### The Obsidian Mining Pit and the Removed Soil

Underneath the depressions, deep obsidian mining pits that were dug down from the surface of the earth during the Jomon period were discovered along with massive layers of removed soil piled around them. The outdoor exhibition facility will allow visitors to see the actual remains of these pits.



### White Volcanic Deposits Containing Obsidian and the Uneven Mining Landscape

The white layer of earth containing obsidian rock was discovered 3 to 5 meters underground and is thought to be the volcanic ash layer originating from a pyroclastic flow that came down from the Wada Pass 870,000 years ago. The unevenness at the upper part of the layer was created by mining works 7,000 and 3,500 years ago.

※You are not allowed to take home any obsidian at Hoshikuso Pass. Please be sure to put it back to where it was, after observing.

A Mecca for Jomon Culture

## Experience the History of Obsidian – 【Historic Site of Chino】

National Historic Site:

### Uenodan Stone Age Ruins (Designated on October 14th, 1942)

map A-16



The Uenodan Stone Age Ruins are located on the low tableland extending from the foot of Mt. Tateshina, at 970 meters elevation. With the Daimon Road running through the west side, the site is very close to the obsidian production site at Mt. Kirigamine. The first excavation research was conducted in 1941, and remains of large stone-surrounded hearths from both mid- and late Jomon periods were discovered. Most of the Jomon Ware excavated was from the late-to-last stages of the period, and showed influences from the culture of Tohoku and Kanto regions. Dogu (earthen figures), pulley-shaped earrings, and earthenware bells were also unearthed. The Uenodan Ruins is a long-standing historic site, ranging from the early to the last stages of the Jomon period. It has long been known for its abundant flint arrowhead samples, and the raw materials, obsidian stones, were brought in from the production site in Mt. Kirigamine. The Uenodan Ruins are also located at a strategic traffic juncture, and it is considered to be an important historic ruin that may have been the hub of cultural exchange between Eastern and Western Japan for a long period of time, through its cultural influence and distribution of obsidian.

National Historic Site:

### Komagata Historic Ruins (Designated January 16th, 1998)

The Komagata Historic Ruins is located on the delta at the southern foot of Mt. Kirigamine, at the elevation of 910 meters, and is south-facing with good sunlight. Soaring behind the ruins is Mt. Kirigamine, the largest production site of obsidian on the main island of Japan, which holds many ruins of obsidian mining sites from the Jomon period, including the designated national historic ruins of the Hoshigato Obsidian Mine. The Komagata Historic Ruins is located approximately 10 kilometers below the famous production site, and has been long known as a place where numerous obsidian rocks, and the flint arrowheads made from them, can be discovered. The excavation research has proven that the site was a large-scale settlement that existed throughout the early-to late Jomon periods, and unearthed a large amount of obsidian stone tools and stone debris. The Komagata Historic Ruins were designated as a National Historic Site because of its high scholarly value as a successful stoneware production site, and the distribution hub, both utilizing obsidian from Mt Kirigamine during the Jomon period.



Nagano Prefectural Historic Ruins:

### “Ikenodaira Goza Rock Ruins” (Designated on September 27th, 1962)



The mass of andesite rock sticking out from the northern shore of Lake Shirakaba is known as ‘Goza-ishi’ (literally, ‘resting bench rock’). The chasm in the rock had been utilized as residence, and many artifacts have been discovered, including stone tools from the Paleolithic period; as well as earthenware, stoneware and animal bones from the Jomon period. Located close to the obsidian production site, the area is considered to be one of the hubs for obsidian distribution during the Paleolithic and Jomon periods. The origin of its name comes from the legend that the deity of Suwa Daimyojin Shrine once sat on the rock to rest, while another legend claims that it was Takeda Shingen, a famous warlord from the Age of Provincial Wars, who had sat on it on his way to the famous battle of Kawanaka-jima.

### Giant Obsidian Rock Outcrop in Mt. Yatsugatake (Mt. Tsumetayama Obsidian Production Site)

The Mt. Tsumetayama (a.k.a., Reizan) Obsidian Production Site is located on the west side of the Mugikusa Pass that connects Mt. Yatsugatake from east to west. Though it is impossible to locate obsidian rocks in the mountain from a distance due to the dense forest that covers the site, there are two gigantic outcrops of obsidian, about 10 meters each in height. Countless pieces of obsidian can be found scattered around the surrounding mossy outcrops in the area.





National Historic Site:

# Kinsei Historic Ruins Park

105 Yato, Oizumi, Hokuto,  
Yamanashi, 409-1502, and other places

☎ 0551-42-1375

(Hokuto City Office Science Section)

- Admission Free
- Hours Always open to public
- Closed Always open to public
- Restrooms closed from December to March
- <https://hokuto-maibun.com>



The historic Kinsei Ruins is the remains of a village in the last stage of the Jomon period, approximately 3,000 years ago. The stone-built altar for memorial ceremonies for the ancestral spirits was constructed around a tomb, making the landscape of the village unique. After designation as a National Historic Site in 1983, the historic park was developed. The shallow pit dwellings have been reconstructed with mud walls. A large number of obsidian rocks were unearthed, suggesting the village's connection to the mining at the Hoshigato Obsidian Production Site Ruins.



Kinsei Historic Ruins Park

A lot of historic ruins  
you can feel Jomon people's lives at!



## Tomb Inside the Stone-Built Altar

The circular space surrounded by stones is the reburial grave. This photograph was taken in 1980, when it was excavated.



## Stone Pole Erected at the Altar

The stone pole was modeled after a male symbol, and also symbolizes the ancestral spirits.

## Highlights



"The Hollow Dogu" is  
an earthen figure  
that is completely  
empty inside!



## Excavation Site of the Hollow Dogu

The Hollow Dogu was unearthed at the stone-built altar. It is also referred to as the Dogu-shaped vessel, and is on exhibit along with other excavated artifacts at the Hokuto City Archaeological Data Hall.



## Excavated Dwelling Sites

Dwelling sites are not in the pit-style. Although mud-walls were chosen for their reconstruction, the true form of their structure is, as yet, known.



## 2-ton Megalith

A large granite stone transported from Kamanashi River over 5 kilometers away was placed on the stone-built altar. It suggests that many people must have participated in the ritual to carry the stone.

## What were Jomon people's lives like?



A major feature of the Jomon period is the existence of pottery. After the invention of pottery, people were able to eat new foods that could not have been eaten until then. This groundbreaking invention is said to mark the beginning of the Jomon period.

## CLOTH ING

They likely used yarn made from hemp or the stems of the Ramie plant, as well as furs.

## FOOD

It is thought that they hunted in the forest or, gathered nuts that they processed in pottery, as their principal foods. By gathering wild vegetables in spring, seafood in summer, nuts or fruits in autumn and hunting deer or boars in winter, they maximized the blessings of the four seasons.

## HOME

Jomon people generally lived in pit-dwellings. They dug into the ground to make a floor, and added low walls and roof. It was basically a kind of shack or hovel.





## Let's go to the graceful villages of Yatsugatake.

The Jomon people of the Central Highlands lived in a diverse environment covering an altitude difference of 1,000m. About 5,000 years ago, this flourishing mountain culture made the best use of the natural resources and had the largest number of villages in Japan.

As you head down from the Jomon mine towards the village, the broadleaf forest becomes a brightly colored mixed forest. At the Togariishi Historical Site in Nagano, which preserves the appearance of a Jomon village with replicated pit houses, you will find yourself back in the atmosphere of those days. The village was surrounded by a variety of useful trees, such as chestnut, that were planted for food, construction material, and fuel. Trees that didn't bear fruit were cut down, and instead, trees that provided food, such as acorns and nuts, were planted.

In the bosom of the great forest, there were a large number of villages where families gathered and travelers were welcomed.

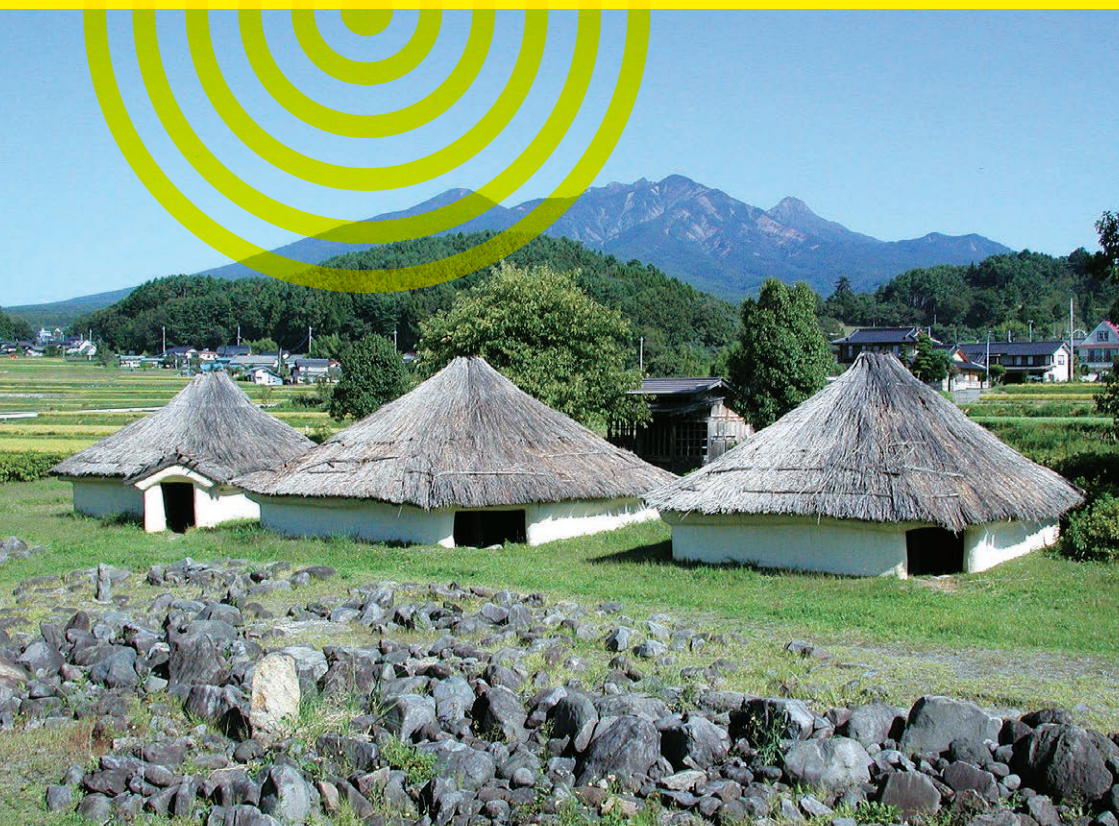


Yosukeone Historical Site





The rural landscape created by the Japanese, who are said to be an agricultural people is often thought of as originating in the Yayoi Period, since rice farming began in that era. But long before that, some thousands to tens of thousands years ago, there was a different landscape. It is that landscape of forests and mountains that is the true roots of Japanese culture, stored deep in the memories of the Japanese.



Kinsei Historical Site

We can see those nostalgic landscapes in the highlands of central Japan when we view the historical sites and rich nature, which seem unchanged since those ancient days. Past the forest surrounding the village, flows a large river into which gathers pure water filtered through the mountain foothills. Standing by the river, Mt. Yatsugatake or South Japan Alps can be seen rising behind the forest, where a panoramic view of Japanese nature throughout the four seasons emerges. Fresh wild vegetables spring up at once, as soon as the snow has melted, and spring approaches from the lower foothills towards the high peaks. When the deep, green forest of summer turns to autumn colors, accompanied by cool winds blowing through the village, we receive the news of mushrooms growing, acorns and wild grapes bearing fruit. In this ever-changing scenery, Jomon people learned of the bounty of nature, and cultivated the wisdom to store the foods required to survive the harsh and quiet winter season. Many food products and traditions were cultivated and passed down through generations of people who faced the greatness of nature over thousands of years.

From the village at the Umenoki Historical Site, which is the gateway to the Central Highlands, we can look out over the mountain ranges spreading out in layers. The Jomon people who moved from the Kanto plains (around Tokyo) to the distant mountain ranges, must also have stood here, excited and happy, with their hearts full of the blessings of nature from the deep mountains.



## National Historic Site:

## Idojiri Historic Ruins



Harvest Festival at the Jomon Kingdom in the Highlands

Sakai, Fujimi,  
Suwa-gun, Nagano  
399-0101

■ Admission Free  
■ Closed Open year round  
■ <http://userweb.alles.or.jp/fujimi/idojiri.html>



The Idojiri Historic Ruins is located on the ridge, where the fountain of “Idojiri” wells up on the east side. Blessed with scenic views of Mt. Fuji, the mountains of the Southern Alps and Mt. Yatsugatake, the location is surrounded by a rural landscape unchanged since olden times. After the first excavation unearthed an enormous amount of splendid earthenware in 1958, the Idojiri Historic Ruins Preservation Society was organized. It was designated as a National Historic Site in June 1966, as a historic ruin representative of the mid-Jomon period in the Central Highlands.



Present Idojiri Historic Ruins Park (National Historic Site)

## Highlights



## Earthenware from the Dwelling Site #4 of the Idojiri Historic Ruins

Shown above are parts of the collection of earthenware unearthed during the first excavation. It was rare at the time for such highly crafted earthenware to be excavated in such large numbers, and led to the formation of the Idojiri Historic Ruins Preservation Society and the Idojiri Archeological Museum.



## Botanical Garden for Aquatic and Wetland Flora, where Ancient Lotus Flowers Bloom

The land around this historic site is developed as a botanical garden for environmental conservation purposes. With ancient lotus flowers blooming in summer, it is a popular spot many people like to visit.



## Incense Burner-shaped Earthenware

(Town-Designated Tangible Cultural Property)

The incense burner-shaped earthenware was excavated from dwelling site #3 at the Idojiri Historic Ruins, and is 23.5 centimeters in height. Exceptionally unique in its shape among artifacts found in the same era, the incense burner-shaped earthenware is believed to have held a sacred flame.



## Excavation at the Idojiri Historic Ruins

(in 1958. Photographed by Mitsuru Muto)

The excavation at the Idojiri Historic Site was led by Mr. Fusakazu Miyasaka, who also carried out the excavation at the Togariishi Historic Ruins. Local farmers and high school students participated in the excavation. It was the beginning of “Oraatou (Our own) Archeology.”

## Town-Designated Historic Sites:

## Tonai and Idaira Historic Ruins



Present Idaira Historic Ruin

Ochiai, Fujimi,  
Suwa-gun, Nagano  
399-0214

■ Admission Free  
■ Closed Open year round

Tonai Historic Ruin is located on a ridge between Kikkake and Mujinasawa Rivers, stretching across the area of 25,000 m2. Four investigations have been conducted since the first excavation took place in 1953, and over thirty dwelling sites have been unearthed. Some of the excavated artifacts have been designated as National Important Cultural Properties. Idaira Historic Ruin is located on the left bank of Mujinasawa River, and the core portion of a typical circular settlement was discovered there during an excavation in 1986. Jewels made of jadestones were also unearthed from what seems to be a grave.



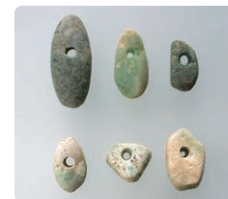
The Unearthed Circular Settlement (Idaira Historic Ruin)

## Highlights



## Tonai Historic Ruin Dwelling Site #32

Enormous amounts of stoneware and earthenware were excavated from Dwelling Site #32. Especially, this cylindrical earthenware idol became well known both at home and abroad, as one of the most representative pieces of Japanese Jomon Ware.



## Jadestone Jewels

These jewels were excavated from a number of pits, which are believed to be graves. The fact that those jadestones were produced in the basin of Himegawa River suggests that jade trading was widespread in the region.



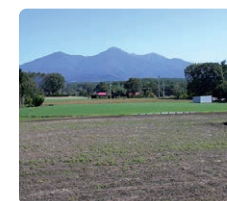
## One day in the Village of Idaira (Reconstructed illustration by Masao Kasahara)

This illustration depicts the village of Idaira, based on results from excavation. It accurately shows how people lived then, with their dwellings encircling the grave.



## Tonai Historic Ruins being excavated (1984)

Though the area of excavation was limited, remarkable results came one after another.



## Present Tonai Historic Ruin

(Town-designated historic site)

After some of the ruin became part of the town, it was designated as a Historic Site of the Town in 2006.



# Idojiri Archeological Museum



The cultural heritage of Idojiri conveys the spirit of the ancient times

7053 Sakai, Fujimi,  
Suwa-gun, Nagano  
399-0101

☎ 0266-64-2044

- Admission Adults/High School Students: ¥300 (¥310 after October 1st, 2019),  
Elementary and Junior High School Students: ¥150
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00
- Closed Mondays and the day after public holidays
- <http://userweb.alles.or.jp/fujimi/idojiri.html>



Overlooked by the gorgeous Mt. Fuji to the south, and with the mountains of the Southern Alps such as Mt. Kai-Komagatake and the three peaks of Mt. Ho-o soaring in front, the Idojiri Archeological Museum stands on the southern foot of Mt. Yatsugatake. Originally established and operated by the Idojiri Historic Ruins Preservation Society, the jurisdiction of the museum was transferred to the town's education board in 1965. Nine years later, the archeological museum was opened in the present location, on the ridge adjoining the Idojiri Historic Ruins. Its unique research and exhibitions, on such topics as Jomon farming theory and Jomon iconography, set the museum from any other historic museums nationwide, and is well worth taking a look.



The present archeological museum built near the Sori Historic Ruin.



The collection of Jomon ware is overwhelming in both quality and quantity



Understanding stoneware as tools



5



National Important Cultural Properties: Artifacts excavated from the Tonai Historic Ruin



What do those strange patterns express?



Let's look a little closer!

## ① Cylindrical earthenware idol

(Dwelling Site #32, Tonai Historic Ruin/National Important Cultural Property)

An exquisite piece that is the pinnacle of earthenware modeling. The slender cylindrical earthenware boasts a head complete with a pair of eyes, a back represented by an inverted triangle, and curling arms that stretch from round shoulders that bulge out. The design is thought to depict a figure of a god.

## ② The Originator Goddess Figure

(Dogu figure from the Sakaue Historic Ruin/National Important Cultural Property)

Being larger than a typical dogu from the later half of the mid-Jomon period, this excellent piece is extraordinary for its kind. With its face tilted upwards as if gazing at the sky, and its chest thrust out, you can feel the vitality and the joy in the vigor of life in the unconstrained posture of the figure.



## ③ 7 Pieces of Jomon ware from the Sori Historic Ruin

(Dwelling site #4, Sori Historic Ruin/ Nagano Prefectural Treasure)

All seven pieces were excavated together from the dwelling site #4 of the Sori Historic Ruin, which is within the Idojiri Archeological Museum building. With the large, swirling water-flame patterned pot heading the list, all seven pieces were designated as Nagano Prefectural Treasures, as a good example of a set of styles in the mid-Jomon period.

## ④ Half-Human Half-Frog Patterned Earthenware with Holed Brim

(Special Remnants of the Tonai Historic Ruins/National Important Cultural Property)

Among numerous earthenware pieces with a holed brim, this is one of the best-known pieces. Carved into the surface are a figure of a half-human half-frog spirit and a design that symbolizes the Jomon understanding of astrology are considered to depict the worldview of the days.

## ⑤ Dogu Figure with a Snake on Its Head

(Dwelling Site #16, Tonai Historic Ruin/ National Important Cultural Property)

Though the lower half of its body has been destroyed, a coiled snake can be clearly recognized on top of its head. It is an unprecedented clay figurine that has attracted a lot of attention since its discovery.

## ⑥ Large, swirling water-flame patterned pot

(Dwelling Site #4, Sori Historic Ruin/ Nagano Prefectural Treasure)

This piece is also designated as the Nagano Prefectural Treasure along with six other earthenware pieces excavated together. This exquisitely balanced, three-dimensional pot captures the minds of all who see it. From this piece we get the name

"Suien-mon (water-like flame pattern)," which is used for the many other earthenware pieces that followed.

## ⑦ Earthenware with Human Figure Painting

(Todonomiya Historic Ruin/Town-Designated Tangible Cultural Property)

This large-sized earthenware figure is full of curvaceous gracefulness, and has paintings of human figures painted around the bottom with pigments similar to sumi ink. The image depicted is thought to be the scene of a woman giving birth to a baby, and is a unique and precious example of a representational painting.

## ⑧ Deep Pot with Frog and Mizuchi (Mystical beast) Patterns

(Dwelling Site #54, Sori Historic Ruin/Nagano Prefectural Treasure)

A large bucket-shaped earthenware pot with a flat mouth. Stylized forms of a mystical aquatic beast, the "mizuchi", just about to bite at a cute, semi-spherical frog attract the eyes of the viewer.

## ⑨ Five-Layer Deep Pot with Twin Eyes

(Dwelling Site #14, Tonai Historic Ruin/Town-Designated Tangible Cultural Property)

The five-layered shape of the pot and its profound, deep brown-colored surface make it a breathtaking piece. Pictograph-like patterns and their composition are especially remarkable, as if they are telling a secret story.

## ⑩ Deep Pot with Vertical Division-Pattern

(Dwelling Site #14, Tonai Historic Ruin/Town-Designated Tangible Cultural Property)

Excellent piece with a slender shape, elegant and delicate pattern and light brown-colored surface. The vertical division-pattern is a popular pattern seen on various types of earthenware around the middle stage of the mid-Jomon period. This piece is an extremely rare example, showing outstandingly ordered patterns.



## National Historic Site:

## Umenoki Historic Ruins Park

6315 Asao, Akeno,  
Hokuto, Yamanashi 408-0201

☎ 0551-25-2019

(Hokuto City Center for  
Buried Cultural Property Investigation)

- Admission Free
- Hours 8:30 – 17:00
- Closed Mondays, the day after public holidays,  
and New Year's Holidays (Guidance Facility Only)
- <http://www.hoshikuso.jp/>



The Umenoki Historic Ruins Park is the remains of a village from the mid-Jomon period some five thousand years ago. The dwelling area contains; traces of pit houses lined up in circle like a donut; stone-paved houses; hot stone cooking pits by the river; and paths from the Jomon period, that were all discovered in a set. The discoveries were designated as a National Historic Site on March 18th, 2014. In order to recreate the village-scape of the Jomon period, local volunteers reconstruct one Jomon residence every year.



Distant view of the Umenoki Historic Ruin (Photographed in 2003)

Each white circle is the trace of pit dwellings.

## Permanent Exhibit



## Reconstructed Pit Dwelling

The Umenoki Historic Ruins Park contains a reconstruction of a soil-roofed pit dwelling. Pit dwellings of the North-American indigenous people and the results of excavation from various sites were used as reference in the reconstruction.



## Reconstructed residence built by local volunteers

Pit dwelling reconstructed in 2018. Half-covered roof allows the exhibition of its structure.

You can listen to the details!



## Exhibition at the Guidance Facility

The guidance facility is annexed to the historic ruins park, exhibiting some earthenware and stoneware excavated at the Umenoki Historic Ruin.



## "The Jomon Path" that Leads to the River

A path was found on the steep slope facing north. It is presently reburied for preservation purposes, and the park tour is built on the same route to follow the ancient path.



## Earthenware with Hanging Handle and Human Face Decoration

It is believed that this earthenware with a hanging handle was used in the rituals for the deity of fire. Human faces decorate both front and back of the vessel.

## Kirigamine Highland and Wetlands

The three wetlands of Kirigamine Highland are high moors, where dead plants such as sphagnum moss did not fully decompose, and so became peat, and accumulated over time. They were designated as a National Natural Monument in 1960, and named the "Kirigamine Wetland Plant Community."

Yashima Visitor Center  
Azamikan

10618 Yashima-Shitsugen, Shimosuwa,  
Suwa-gun, Nagano 393-0000

☎ 0266-52-7000

- Admission Free
- Hours 9:30 – 16:30
- Closed Closed in winter.  
Open from late April to mid-November
- <http://shimosuwaonsen.jp/yashima/>



The visitor center situated next to Yashima Wetland, run by Shimosuwa Town, displays an exhibition that explains the origin of the wetlands, a diorama, as well as videos which introduce the history and nature of Kirigamine Highland.



Yashima pond



Day lilies on Mt. Kurumayama

## Kurumayama Wetland

Mt. Kurumayama which is the highest mountain in Kirigamine Highland, and is known as one of the 100 Famous Japanese Mountains, has elevation of 1,925m, and has an attractive 360 degree view. We can look down over the National Natural Monument; Kurumayama Wetland, that is situated north of Mt. Kurumayama.

## Yashimagahara Wetland

There are many remains of obsidian stone processing to be found around the mid-point between Shimosuwa Town and the Obsidian Mining Site in Nagawa-machi. The wetland is about 4 km around and you can observe about 400 kinds of subalpine plants throughout the year.. The wetland is raised in a dome shape by the action of plants carbonizing into layers of peat.



"Yachibozu" in the wetland

## Odoriba Wetland

Known locally as the "Walnut Marsh", the Odoriba Wetland is surrounded by many remains of obsidian stone processing. From the northern slope we can see the base of Mt. Yatsugatake and beyond, Mt. Fuji.

Kirigamine Nature  
Conservation Center

7718-9 Kirigamine, Shiga, Suwa,  
Nagano 392-0008

☎ 0266-53-6456

- Admission Free
- Hours 9:00 – 16:00
- Closed Closed in winter.  
Open from 15 April to 15 November  
Closed on Wednesdays during opening season
- <http://www.lcv.ne.jp/~kirivc/kirigamine.htm>



The visitor center at Kirigamine Highland in Yatsugatake-Chushin Kogen Quasi-National Park, run by Nagano Prefecture, presents an exhibition about the nature, animals, plants and history of Kirigamine Highland. They also offer guided tours and programs for groups.



Kirigamine Nature Conservation Center



An unearthed pit

## Jacoppara Historical Site

Many pits were found in the area running south from Kirigamine Highland and the forests in this area were also hunting grounds. If you go down along the river, you will reach the Komagata Historical Site in the Yonezawa region or the Tanabatake Historical Site in Chino-city.



## National Historic Site:

## Omiyama Historic Ruins

944-3 Oaza Omiyama, Kawakami,  
Minamisaku-gun, Nagano 384-1405

☎ 0267-97-2000

(Kawakami Village Culture Center)

- Admission Free
- Hours During daylight hours
- Closed Open year-round (Caution required during winter)
- <http://www.vill.kawakami.nagano.jp>



The Omiyama Historic Ruins are the remains of a village from the mid-Jomon period, around 4,500 to 5,000 years ago. During excavations carried out from 1955 onwards, remnants of structures including 51 dwelling sites and some stonework were unearthed alongside numerous artifacts. The large-scale settlement located at an elevation close to 1,300 meters attracted much attention, and it was designated as a National Historic Site in 1966. Just taking a stroll within the ruins brings back the atmosphere of the Jomon Period.



Reconstruction of a pit dwelling within the Historic Ruins Park



## Recent Survey Status

Surveys for redevelopment have been carried out since 2016 in order to confirm the preservation status of the dwelling sites excavated from late 1950s to early '60s. Sites are reburied after the inspection.

## Highlights



## Dwelling site

Excavated dwelling sites have been reburied, and are now recognizable as crater-shaped depressions.



## Central Square

There is an empty space without any dwellings in the central area of the ruins. Remains of homes are found in a ring around the open space.

## Kawakami Village Culture Center

348-9 Oaza Omiyama, Kawakami,  
Minamisaku-gun, Nagano 384-1405

☎ 0267-97-2000

- Admission Free
- Hours 9:00 - 17:00
- Closed Mondays (except holidays, in which case the following day will be closed), New Year's Holidays
- <http://www.vill.kawakami.nagano.jp>



The Kawakami Village Cultural Center opened in 1995 as a complex with a music hall, a library, and an exhibition room. A permanent exhibition room is set up on the second floor, displaying historical materials from the Paleolithic era of Kawakami Village. Stoneware from the Paleolithic period excavated from the historic sites of Misawa, Kashiwadare and Babadaira ruins, the Jomon period artifacts unearthed at the Higashihara A and Omiyama Historic Ruins, gold mine-related materials from the mid- to early-modern periods, and materials related to the modern-day forest industry are among the collection, which aims to help visitors learn about the history of Kawakami Village.



The exhibition focuses on the Jomon ware collection unearthed at the Omiyama Historic Ruins

## Earthenware excavated from the Omiyama Historic Ruins

A pottery group with patterns common to the Suwa and Yamanashi areas.



## Cup-shaped Earthenware

Seemingly a vase-like vessel, this piece of earthenware may carry some special significance. (Village-designated Tangible Cultural Property)



## Human Faced Incense Burner-shaped Earthenware (Mask-like Incense Burner-shaped Earthenware)

An incense burner-shaped pottery that looks like a human face is the most excellent piece among all the artifacts excavated from the Omiyama Ruins, and was possibly used as a kind of lamp. (Nagano Prefectural Treasure)

Showcasing two mysterious pieces of earthenware!



## Earthenware with Hanging Handle

Only a few pieces of this type were excavated from the Omiyama Ruins, and is not considered likely to have been a piece for daily use, but rather a special kind of vessel that may symbolize the spirituality of the Jomon period. (Village-designated Tangible Cultural Property)

Permanent Exhibit



## Crystal produced in the Kawakami Area

During the Jomon period, various rocks were used as materials for stone tools. Crystals are also used, and there are crystal production sites in the village.

## Did the Jomon people eat these fruits!? This is also a Japan Heritage Cultural Asset. Ishinashi (literally, 'Rock Pear' a.k.a., Aonashi)

Because the village of Kawakami is in a cold zone, the locals have a long tradition of cherishing trees that bear edible fruits and there are huge trees such as Ishinashi, Japanese Horse Chestnut and Chinese Apple in the village today. Their existence shows us the Jomon spirit of making good use of natural resources. Ishinashi got its name from the stone-like hardness of its fruits, even though it originally was a type of Aonashi, or Chinese pear.





## STORY 04



### Let's visit the Jomon people gathering in the forest.

The Jomon people developed a pottery culture that is unique in Japan and abroad, depicting in three dimensions the flow of water, plants and trees that grow in the forest, and the figures of people and animals that lived in their world. This is the ultimate in Jomon art.

Pots for daily family use depict such things as the face of baby just about to be born from its mother, or scenes of singing and dancing. A pot showing a mother's face peering into the contents, seems to be watching over, looking forward to the food simmering inside.

The work left by the Jomon artist "Forest Artist", portrays a scene of daily life at the time. The various expressions of the "Dogu" clay figurines, and the pot showing the faces of a family, seem to stare out now, and back into thousands of years of time and space.

Shussan-Mon (Giving Birth),  
pot excavated from the Tsugane-Goshomae Historical Site



# Hokuto City Archeological Data Hall



2414 Yato, Oizumi,  
Hokuto 409-1502

☎ 0551-20-5505

- Admission Adult: ¥200 (¥100)  
Elementary and junior high school students: ¥100 (¥50)  
\* Prices inside brackets are group rates for twenty people or more
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00 (Last admission at 16:30)
- Closed Mondays, days following public holidays, and New Year's holidays
- <https://hokuto-maibun.com>



The city of Hokuto stretches along at the foot of beautiful mountains such as Mt. Yatsugatake, Mt. Kai-Komagatake and Mt. Kayagatake, and has played an important role in history in various periods: during the Jomon period when brilliant earthenware culture prospered; the Heian period when state-owned stock farming was conducted; and from the Kamakura until the Warring States period when numerous castles were built. The Hokuto City Archeological Data Hall unravels the history of the city through over 1,000 archeological artifacts excavated from local historic ruins, along with artifacts unearthed from the National Historic sites including the Kinsei Historic Ruins and the Yato Castle Ruins.



The Hokuto City Archeological Data Hall is located in Oizumi-cho, the part of the city where the ruins of the Jomon period are the most concentrated.



The cutest dogu ever!

**Mini-Venus, Small-type Dogu excavated from the Swanoharu Historic Ruins**

A small Dogu, about 5.4 centimeters in length. Though tiny, the figurine is well equipped with the characteristic features of the early stages of the mid-Jomon period, features such as the short arms stretched wide, almond-shaped eyes and the triangular pattern around its navel.

## 1 Earthenware with Handles and Water-flame Pattern, excavated from the Tsuganegoshō-mae Historic Ruins

Two large decorative handles rise up way beyond the rim of the vessel, taking forms of circles and S-shapes like mist over the water. Its dynamic form is the pinnacle of Jomon art.

## 2 Earthenware with Dogu-shaped Decoration excavated from the Swanohara Historic Ruins

A three-fingered dogu figurine forms the body of this vessel featuring a perforated brim, which, according to some theories, may have been used as a sake-brewing tool. The design of the hairstyle on the head of the dogu provides clues to the customs of that time.



Is it an Octopus?

Snake?

A pregnant dogu?

Giving birth!?



Each of these pots shows us an amazing worldview!

## 3 Hollow Dogu Figurine excavated from the Kinsei Historic Ruins

Excavated from the remains of a stone foundation, this earthenware has a strange shape in which the lower part of the body is omitted, and the legs are placed under an open-mouthed, octopus-like head. Showing signs of the influence from the Goggle-eyed Dogu, it is an extremely rare, almost unprecedented dogu piece.

## 4 Earthenware with Abstract Pattern, excavated from Teradoko Historic Site

A large, snake-like abstract pattern is attached to a vessel decorated with an arrangement of squares and triangles. The abstract snake pattern is ornamented with fine, delicate triangle pressed patterns like scales, making the piece highly impressive.

## 5 Earthenware with Childbirth Design, excavated from Tsuganegoshō-mae Historic Ruins

The vessel is decorated with the face of a mother on its rim and the face of a child on both the front and back of its body. This piece is straightforward evidence that indicates how the Jomon people connected the image of the womb with earthenware.

## 6 Earthenware with Human Face and Handles, excavated from Chikuu Historic Ruins #1

This piece was unearthed intact, lying under a covering of soil inside a dwelling site. The bulging body suggests the form of a pregnant woman. Two-fingered hand-like designs can be seen near the neck part.



## Earthenware with Twin-Circle Pattern Decoration, excavated from Ishiharada-North Historic Ruins

A large, deep pot with animal images on the rim and a projection with a twin circle-pattern, suggestive of a face. Two abstract patterns resembling aquatic animals decorate the main body.

## Earthenware with Tower-Shaped Handles, excavated from Takamatsu Historic Ruins

The bent rim spreading away from the main body is equipped with four large tower-shaped handles. Excellent bas-relief of vortexes and letter W patterns decorate the rim and tower-shaped handles.

## Deep Pot-type Earthenware Excavated from Oyashiki Historic Ruins

The egg-shaped body shows such excellent balance that is hard to believe it was made by hand. Vortex and fern patterns are combined to divide the surface in sections, and empty spaces are filled with a rope design, creating beautiful contrast between patterns.



# Shakado Museum of Jomon Culture

\*Closed from June 1st, 2019 to April 2nd, 2020 (estimated) due to renovation. Details including admission fees may change after the renovation. Please refer to the website for more information.

764 Senbeiji, Ichinomiya,  
Fuefuki, Yamanashi  
405-0054

☎ 0553-47-3333

- Admission Adults and college students: ¥200  
Elementary, junior high and high School students: ¥100
- Hours 9:00 - 17:00 (Last Entrance at 16:30)
- Closed Tuesdays (except public holidays) and days following public holidays (except Saturdays or Sundays), New Years Holidays
- <http://www.eps4.comlink.ne.jp/~shakado/>



The Shakado Museum of Jomon Culture holds 5,599 pieces of important cultural properties including Jomon ware, Dogu figurines and stoneware, and is one of the best Jomon culture museums in Japan. Over twenty thousand people participated in the major excavation carried out prior to the construction of the Chuo Expressway from February 8th, 1980 to November 15th the following year, unearthing close to thirty tons of earthenware and Dogu statues.



The museum is surrounded by peach orchards, which go into full bloom in early April.



This collection focusing on water-flame patterned earthenware expresses the beauty of the Jomon culture.



A reproduction of Jomon period life.



Numerous excavated dogu figures are also on display.

Permanent  
Exhibit



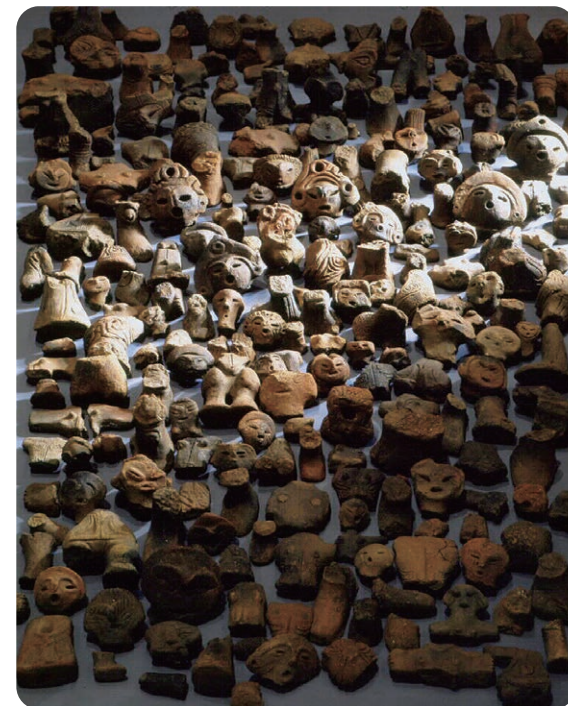
Let's go and see  
the cute and expressive  
Dogu figurines!

## 1,116 Dogu figurines

The 1,116 Dogu found at the Shakado Historic Ruins was a unusually large number for a group of artifacts to be unearthed from a single location. The Dogu provide clues as to how the Jomon people lived, through their expressive facial expressions and patterned bodies. Each Dogu figure brims with individuality and each is unique, conveying the spirit of the Jomon people from within.

## Witness the Jomon Earthenware

In the exhibition room, you can see some Important Cultural Property Jomon pottery up-close. Some unusually large pieces have a great presence, while others display exquisite workmanship.



HELLO!



## Earthenware with Water-flame Patterns

The symbolic example of Jomon ware, Earthenware with Water-flame Patterns, excavated from the Shakado Historic Ruins has both beauty and a sense of strength in the curvy forms. The high quality of craftsmanship and the mysterious forms consisting of numerous vortices are astonishing and inspiring even a few thousand years after their creation.

## Shaka-chan

Among the collection of 1,116 Dogu, about 200 of them are just heads. Among them, the most popular one has earned the friendly nickname, "Shaka-chan (literally, 'pretty Shaka').". Its gentle expression with carefully crafted oval eyes and round mouth gives the viewer a warm feeling.

## Childbirth Dogu Figurine

This mysterious Dogu is believed to represent the moment of giving birth. The protuberance from the groin is evidently depicting the baby's head coming out. With a clear median line on the belly, this statuette symbolizes the hope for new life that Jomon people prayed for.



# Okaya Art & Archeological Museum



Communal area in the 1st floor lounge

9-8 1-chome, Chuo,  
Okaya, Nagano 394-0027

☎ 0266-22-5854

■ Admission Adults: ¥350, Children: ¥150  
(separate fee may apply for special exhibitions)

■ Hours 10:00 - 19:00

■ Closed Wednesdays, days after public holidays, Dec 29th to Jan 3rd

■ <http://www.okaya-museum.jp/>



The Okaya Art & Archeological Museum was renovated and reopened in 2013 at the present location on Dougakan-dori Street. The museum holds a collection of works by local artists, as well as artifacts from the Jomon to Nara and Heian periods that were excavated in the historic ruins located within the city. The archeology room exhibits the National Important Cultural Property: Deep Pot-Shaped Earthenware with Human Face and Handles; as well as other artifacts such as Pregnant Female Dogu Holding a Jar, on permanent display. It is a facility full of both fine art and archeology.



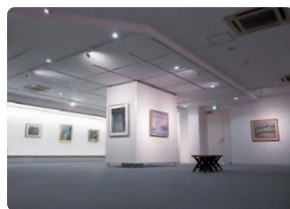
The Okaya Art & Archeology Museum was reinvented as a base for "culturally-focused community development."



Exhibiting excavated artifacts from the Jomon to Heian periods.



Various samples of deep pot-shaped earthenware from the Jomon period.



The art gallery showcases first-class artworks created by artists local to Okaya City.

## Permanent Exhibit

### Micro-sized Dogu Figurines excavated from the Kajoji Historic Ruins

This miniature Dogu, only 4 cm in height, was unearthed from a highland village site overlooking Lake Suwa. Though small in size, minute details such as eyes, mouth, nose and digits on hands and feet are clearly defined. The similarities in shape between this Dogu figurine and the one from the Hirohata Historic Ruins suggest that it may be depicting a scene of childbirth.



### Hirohata Historic Ruins and the excavated Dogu figurines

The Hirohata Historic Ruins is considered to have been a place for daily living, where Jomon people enjoyed the riches of the mountains and rivers. The Dogu excavated from here is in a squatting position and around 7 cm in height. It represents the sitting birth pose, which was a common position for giving birth in the ancient times.



### Deep Pot-shaped Earthenware with Human Face and Handles excavated from the Enokigaito Historic Ruins

The juxtaposition of a beautiful female figure at the top of the vessel and the violent snake that represents a male symbol, shows the overwhelming expressiveness of the Jomon people.



### Designated Important Cultural Property - A Jomon Beauty: Deep Pot-Shaped Earthenware with Human Face and Handles, excavated from the Kaido Historic Ruins

A Jomon beauty with almond-shaped eyes, a turned-up nose, a small round mouth and a well-defined waist. It is designated as a National Important Cultural Property for its unique style with the face looking outward, as well as the completeness of the reconstructed form - qualities which make it a very rare example, seldom found anywhere else.

### Pregnant Female Dogu Holding a Jar, excavated from the Mekiri Historic Ruins

A rare Dogu, posing with its right hand on its hip, and holding a jar in its left. Can you try to imagine what was in the jar? A lovely representation of a Jomon woman that has been chosen as one of the representative artworks of "Cool Japan."



### The Nashikubo Historic Ruins National Historic Site, and accessories made of amber and jade

The Nashikubo Historic Ruins are the closest remains of a settlement have been found to an obsidian mining site. Many Jomon people gathered here in search of high quality obsidian rocks, making the site the hub for exchange between East and West Japan. Evidence suggests that highly-sought rocks such as amber, jade and obsidian were brought here and distributed.

### Raw obsidian stone from Simizuda Historic Ruins

A gigantic obsidian rock that weighs 6.5 kg. It is one of the largest obsidian rocks unearthed from the ruins around the Wada Pass. It helps us to imagine how the Jomon people may have created their stoneware by breaking the obsidian rocks they acquired from the rich mountain.







## Understanding the Spiritual Heart of the Jomon People

The Jomon people developed obsidian mines, opened trade routes, and were skilled in growing chestnuts but it was still important for them to pray to their gods when something went wrong, or when to express gratitude in their daily life.

Above all, wishes for safe childbirth and the healthy growth of children were entrusted in prayer to a “dogu” figurine in the shape of a pregnant woman, that we call Venus or Goddess. When we stand on Nakappara Historical Site, we can see a reconstruction of the Masked Goddess Dogu, exactly as she was at the moment of being unearthed, having been long buried after her role in Jomon life had ended. We can also meet many more unique faces of Venus at the museum.

There are also examples of festivals based on astrological cycles, at which Jomon people prayed for birth and rebirth. At places such as the Kinsei Historical Site in Hokuto City, where the sun sets directly on top of the mountain on particular days, such as the winter solstice, Jomon people would set up altars and hold festivals at locations which command a good view of the phenomenon.

Through these simple rituals we can see the pure heart of the Jomon people who lived in harmony with the working of nature, as hunters and gatherers.

“Dogu” National Treasure,  
excavated from the Nakappara Historical Site (the Masked Goddess)



“Dogu” National Treasure,  
excavated from the Tanabatake Historical Site (the Venus of Jomon)

# Chino City Togariishi Museum of Jomon Archaeology



View from the gallery on the observation platform

4734-132 Toyohira,  
Chino, Nagano  
391-0213

☎ 0266-76-2270

- Admission Adults :¥500 (¥400), High school students :¥300 (¥200), Junior high and elementary school students :¥200 (¥150) ( ) are prices per person for groups of more than 20 people
- Hours 9:00 - 17:00 (Enter by 16:30)
- Closed Mondays, New Year Holidays (Dec29-Jan3), days following a public holiday (except Saturday or Sunday)
- [http://www.city.chino.lg.jp/togariishi\\_m/](http://www.city.chino.lg.jp/togariishi_m/)



Jomon culture prospered on the beautiful and abundant foothills of Mt. Yatsugatake 5,000 years ago. The Togariishi remains are the most representative archaeological site of the Jomon culture in the Yatsugatake area. The Togariishi Museum of Jomon Archaeology exhibits more than 2,000 superb artifacts excavated from the Jomon sites at the base of Mt. Yatsugatake, including the National Treasures: the Venus of Jomon and the Masked Goddess.



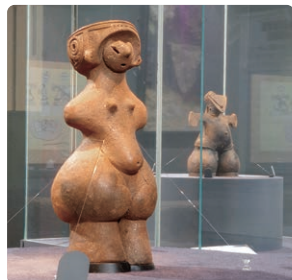
The exterior of the Museum. The building was renovated in 2000. The 2nd floor contains an exhibition room and the Historic Park Center. The 1st floor holds the Unearthed Cultural Properties Center.



Special Historic Landmark "Togariishi Stone Age Site" (Exhibition Room A)  
The Togariishi Historical Site, the first Jomon settlement excavated in history, and the achievements of the archaeologist Fusakazu Miyasaka are presented here.



Jomon Culture in the foothills of Mt. Yatsugatake (Exhibition Room C)  
This room displays stone implements, clay figures, ornaments and pottery with fancy decorations and three dimensional handles made in the prosperous mid-Jomon period.



Dogu National Treasures: The Venus of Jomon and The Masked Goddess (Exhibition Room B)

Displaying the 2 dogu National Treasures, along with a replica of the excavation site, photos, and a further 8 supplementary artifacts also designated as National Treasures.



The Life of Jomon People. (Exhibition Room D)

You can experience the lifestyle of the Jomon period through the seasons via models, videos and hands-on learning.



Deep bowl with snake-shaped handles

The life-like snake decoration on the edge of this pot seems as if it's about to attack you. It is often called the Symbol of the Togariishi Historical site, and it is said that Fusakazu Miyasaka valued it highly. In September 2018, it was designated as a Prefectural Treasure of Nagano.



Interactions with faraway places

Pendants made of jadestone and amber that cannot be produced in the Chino area have been excavated from the mid-Jomon era ruins. If they were taken in barter trade, obsidian might have been given in return.



The Jomon people had a great sense of beauty. Venus indeed!

## The Venus of Jomon The Masked Goddess



A mysterious mask and whirling pattern!

The Venus of Jomon, **Dogu National Treasure**  
Excavated from the tanabatake Historical site

The dogu was excavated intact from the Tanabatake Ruins, lying in a small hole in the village square. The characteristics of the mid-Jomon period clay figurines of the Yatsugatake mountain range, such as the large overhanging abdomen, are well-shaped and excellent. Furthermore, having clear knowledge of when, where, how, and by whom it was excavated, it was designated as a National Treasure in 1995. Height 27 cm. Weight 2.1 kgs.

The Masked goddess, **Dogu National Treasure**.  
Excavated from The Nakappara Historical Site

This large hollow dogu made in the late-Jomon period was excavated from the grave having been buried with a dead person's body. It's distinguishing characteristic is the inverted triangular mask. In virtue of its good condition and beauty, it was designated as a National Treasure in 2014. Height 34 cm. Weight 2.7 kgs.



Precious stone: obsidian

The archeological materials from the Komagata Historic Ruins site are displayed here. You can see the raw obsidian, cores, and flakes, and understand the stages of manufacturing of flint arrowheads.



Become a Jomon Man!

Trying on Jomon clothing such as "Kantoi" is not just fun for kids but adults too. Pretend to be a Jomon Man!



Designated as National Treasures alongside the Masked Goddess

These thin bowls were made by carefully polishing the surfaces and drawing patterns with accumulated thin lines to make it look black, a manufacturing method similar to that of the masked goddess.



The history of the museum

Fusakazu Miyasaka displayed the artifacts on his veranda to show them to visitors. If we say his veranda was the very first museum, the current one is the fifth generation.



National Special Historic Site:

# Togariishi Stone Age Historic Ruins

Toyohira, Chino, Nagano

A historic ruins from the mid-Jomon period, located on the plateau on the west foot of Mt. Yatsugatake at an elevation of 1,070 meters. An archeological survey was carried out in 1930 by a local researcher, Fusakazu Miyasaka, which resulted in the excavation of numerous pit dwellings and hearth remnants, along with earthenware and stoneware revealing mid-Jomon culture and settlements that flourished in the Chubu Highlands. It was designated as a National Historic Site in 1942, and as the first Special Historic Site from the Jomon period in 1952. Moreover, north of the Togariishi Ruins and across a shallow valley with flowing natural spring water, the Yosukeone Historic Ruins were also added to the designation in 1993.



The Togariishi Historic Ruins commands a view of the Yatsugatake Mountains – quite possibly the same mountain views that the Jomon people enjoyed.



## The Togariishi Stone

On the southern slope of the plateau where the ruins are located, there is a large pyramid-shaped rock about one meter tall. The name given to the ruins comes from respectful nickname of this cherished stone: “Togariishi-sama” (literally, The Great Mr. Togariishi). The depression in its shoulder is believed to be the spot where the Jomon people used to sharpen their stoneware.



## Residence #33

This particular residence was excavated by Fusakazu Miyasaka together with His Highness Prince Mikasa. After reburying the pit, stones were arranged on top to indicate the size of the dwelling and the placement of the hearth.



## Revealing the Jomon Village

Miyasaka's idea that the Togariishi settlement “consists of two groups of residences to the north and south, with a space in between them that has no dwellings,” was the first time the structure of a Jomon village had been described. Thus, the Togariishi Historic Ruins are said to be “the origin of the study of Jomon settlements”

## Highlights



## Reconstructing the Jomon village

The first ever Jomon village to be reconstructed in Japan was developed here at the Yosukeone Historic Ruins by Fusakazu Miyasaka and the local residents. There are currently six restored dwellings that were built in line with the development of the historic park in 2000.



## Fusakazu Miyasaka

After supporting His Imperial Highness Prince Fushimi's excavation in the Togariishi Historic Ruins in 1929, Miyasaka continued the excavation mostly on his own and was the first to reveal the structure of a Jomon settlement in Japan.

Experience Jomon people's lives!

# Nakappara Historic Ruins

Kohigashi, Chino, Nagano



The Nakappara Historic Ruins viewed from above

The ruins are located atop a long and narrow plateau running from east to west at 950 m elevation, from the northern edge of the west foot of Mt. Yatsugatake, along the foot of Mt. Tateshina and the southern foot of Mt. Kirigamine. It is a large-scale ruins that supported a civilization for approximately 1,500 years, from the mid- to the first half of the late-Jomon period. Since the first excavation carried out by His Imperial Highness Prince Fushimi in 1929, over 200 pit dwelling remnants had been unearthed by 2001. About 3,300 other pits have also been excavated, and the Masked Goddess Dogu, which was designated as a National Treasure in 2014, was unearthed from one of the grave pits near the center of the ruins.

## Highlights



The part of the ruins around the grave pit where the Masked Goddess was found were preserved, and developed as the Nakappara Jomon Park in 2002.



## Reproduction of the unearthing of the Masked Goddess.

The grave pit where the Dogu was excavated has been preserved in its original condition, and the moment of discovery is reproduced using a replica of the Dogu.



## The excavated condition of the Masked Goddess

The Dogu was unearthed inside an oval-shaped grave pit, 201 centimeters long, 105 centimeters wide, and 50 centimeters deep, with its head pointing west, the left side of the body down and the right leg detached from the body.



What's that!?  
Mysterious column holes!



## Rows of square postholes

Remains of 80 centimeter-wide columns were discovered in eight holes lined up in a rectangular shape, and these wooden pillars have been erected based on that evidence. Various opinions exist as to what those pillars could be: a building, a storehouse, a “mogari-ya” (a kind of funeral facility), a cage for animals, or they may even point to the origin of the Onbashira Festival.



## Graves with covering bowls

Numerous shallow bowls and bowl-shaped earthenware pieces, which were put on the head of the deceased, were discovered around the grave pit. This style of burial method is referred to as “Hachikabuse Burial” (literally, bowl-covered burial), and was commonly practiced in the area around the present Nagano prefecture during the late-Jomon period.

## Get your Jomon goods here in the Jomon Kingdom, Chino City!

Chino City is full of various Jomon souvenirs with motifs from the National Treasure dogu such as the Venus of Jomon and the Masked Goddess, excavated in Chino City! Sold at museum shops such as the Togariishi Museum of Jomon Archaeology and others.



Salty yokan with agar-agar



Chopstick rests



Mascot dolls



Cookies



# Yamanashi Prefectural Archeological Museum

923 Shimosone, Kofu,  
Yamanashi 400-1508

☎ 055-266-3881

- Admission Adults and college students: ¥210  
(for groups with over 20 people: ¥170 per person),  
no admission fee for elementary, junior high and high school students
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00
- Closed Mondays, days following public holidays, and other pre-decided days
- <https://www.pref.yamanashi.jp/kouko-hak/>



Located within the Kaifudoki no Oka / Sone Kyuryo Park in the south of the Kofu basin, the Yamanashi Prefectural Archeological Museum holds approximately 1,500 archeological artifacts, from Paleolithic stoneware excavated within Yamanashi prefecture, to materials of the Meiji period on permanent exhibit. Among them, there are many beautiful pieces from the Jomon period including the National Cultural Property Designated artifacts excavated from the Tonobayashi Ruins, Ichinosawa Ruins and the Sakenomiba Ruins, as well as the archeological findings from the Andoji and Kaido Mae C Historical Ruins.



Touring the museum followed by enjoying the nature with stroll about the ruins in the park makes a great combination!



Introducing the Important Cultural Properties and the transition and life of Yamanashi Jomon pottery



Large Jomon vessels used in festivals and for burials are on exhibit outdoors.



Photo by T.Ogawa

## Artifacts excavated from the Tenjin Historic Ruins

This large gemstone made of jade from the latter half of the early Jomon period is considered to be one of the oldest of its kind in the nation. Raw obsidian stones were among various artifacts found, all of which indicate interaction with other regions.



## Crystals excavated from the Kamikobuke Historic Ruins

Compared to obsidian, most crystals are unsuitable for crafting, and among the excavated stoneware artifacts only about 30% were crystal arrowheads, raw stones and broken pieces of crystal.

## Permanent Exhibit



Photo by T.Ogawa

## 1 Artifacts excavated from the Ichinosawa Historic Ruins (Important Cultural Properties)

There are a number of excellent pieces showcasing the achievements of Jomon Period craftsmanship, including deep pot-shaped vessels with large handles and decorations, carefully polished earthenware with perforated brims, Dogu and stoneware.

## 2 Deep Pot-Shaped Earthenware, excavated from the Tonobayashi Historic Ruins (Important Cultural Properties)

This 72 cm tall, large earthenware vessel has a well-balanced beauty. The carefully adjusted surface and the arrangement of curved line patterns can only be described as superb. It has been featured in exhibitions overseas four times.

## 3 Artifacts excavated from the Andoji Historic Ruins (Designated Prefectural Cultural Properties)

This 83 cm tall, large earthenware vessel with four large handles and swirling water-flame design was intentionally destroyed and buried following a festival. The earthenware with decorations of boar and snake is also well-known.

## Artifacts excavated from the Sakenomiba Historic Ruins (Important Cultural Properties)

Consisting of vessels with various shapes and diverse patterns, this collection of artifacts demonstrates the evolution in Jomon ware that took place during the transition of villages at the southern foot of Mt. Yatsugatake.



Photo by T.Ogawa

## 4 Artifacts excavated from the Kabuppara Historic Ruins

The most famous of the group is the piece with large handles featuring a boar design, derived from the style of the water-flame patterned earthenware. Amber gemstones produced in the Tohoku region were also excavated.

## 5 Artifacts excavated from the Uenohara Historic Ruins

An earthenware vessel with in the water-flame pattern style, featuring a scroll design that resembles decorations on confectionary. It is considered to be a representative example of a water-flame patterned earthenware vessel, and was discovered alongside the artifacts excavated from the Andoji Historic Ruins.

## 6 Artifacts excavated from Haranachi Nogyo-koko-mae Historic Ruins

These unique artifacts reflect the characteristics typical of the region, such as abstract animal patterns, clay vessels with perforated brims, earthenware with featureless human face decorations, as well as Dogu.

## 7 Artifacts excavated from the Kaido-mae-C Historic Ruins (Designated Prefectural Cultural Properties)

These artifacts tell about the beliefs and festivals of the Jomon period. A piece of earthenware with a human face decoration was buried along with a stone pole.



# Suwa City Museum



A collection of artifacts illuminating the dawn of archeological study in Suwa

171-2 Nakasu, Suwa,  
Nagano 392-0015

☎ 0266-52-7080

- Admission Adults: ¥300, elementary and junior high school students: ¥150  
(For groups with more than 20 people, adults: ¥200, elementary and junior high school students: ¥100)  
Separate fees may apply for special exhibitions
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00
- Closed Mondays (days following public holidays),  
New Year's holidays, during inventory periods
- <https://suwacitymuseum.jp>



Located in front of the Suwa-Taisha Shrine, which is the general headquarters of all Suwa-jinja shrines nationwide, the museum focuses on “Time, Nature and Belief in the Suwa Region”. Displaying priceless artifacts from various periods including a number of Nagano Prefectural Treasures and Suwa City Designated Cultural Properties, the museum examines the climate and natural features of the Suwa Region that fostered the unique Jomon culture and history. It also introduces the local beliefs and practices of the Suwa region, including the Onbashira Festival, which is believed to date back to the Jomon period.



Exterior of the museum



**Artifacts excavated from the Sone Historic Ruins**  
(Jomon period: Suwa area archeological resources)

The collection includes earthenware with finger-nail-pressed designs from the beginning of the Jomon period and stoneware such as flint arrowheads. The arrowheads have unique shapes with long-stems or triangular shapes, which are not present in other periods. The fact that they were finely crafted and discovered in vast numbers indicates the possibility that there was a flint arrowhead production factory here.



**Permanent Exhibition Room #1**  
This room exhibits archeological materials such as Paleolithic obsidian stone-ware and Jomon ware.



**Permanent Exhibition Room #2: Eiichi Fujimori Memorial Room**  
This room introduces the life and achievements of Mr. Fujimori based on his diary and the artifacts he collected.



**Suwa Ancient Information Center**  
A number of specialized books on archeology and the history of Suwa are available for viewing.

## Permanent Exhibit

### Prefecture-designated Jomon Ware Vessels



### Earthenware excavated from the Kojinyama Historic Ruins

(Jomon Period: Nagano Prefectural Treasure)

Located at the mountain foot on the western side of Suwa Basin, this major central village ruin holds the most substantial of all sites in the city of Suwa, in both scale and contents. Large-sized earthenware vessels with especially superb forms and decorations were excavated in concentration, which showcase the high quality of both technique and artistry of the Jomon people.

### Earthenware with Perforated Brim, excavated from the Odassho Historic Ruins

(Jomon Period: Nagano Prefectural Treasure)

Earthenware with perforated brim is a characteristic of vessels found in the Chubu highlands, and they are from the mid-Jomon Period. There are many opinions for their possible use, including drum-like musical instrument and sake-brewing vessel. The one unearthed from the Odassho Historic Ruins has an extremely strange shape that seems to be modeled after a leather bag, and is a valuable example for investigating the use of mysterious earthenware vessels with perforated brims.

### Earthenware excavated from the Chikatosha and Juninoki Historic Ruins

(Jomon Period)

Village ruins from the early- to late Jomon Period, located at the western shore of Lake Suwa. Rows of wooden pillars that suggest the relation to the Onbashira Festival as well as earthenware vessels brought in from the Western Japan were discovered. The Lake Suwa Service Area on the Chuo Expressway adjoining the ruins overlooks the lake, Mt. Kirigamine and Mt. Yatsugatake.



Lamp-shaped pottery with snake decoration

### Earthenware with Hanging Handles, excavated from the Anaba Historic Ruins

(Jomon Period: Nagano Prefectural Treasure)

A village ruins from the mid-Jomon Period, located where the Kakuma River from Mt. Kirigamine reaches Suwa Basin. Various earthenware and stoneware were unearthed from the Residence #18 site, in a condition suggestive of some kind of ritual being conducted. Especially, the earthenware with hanging handles with snake-design decoration shows an artistic form reminiscent of prayers for prosperity and fertility.

One-of-a-kind pottery with perforations and projecting rim.



Pottery believed to be from western Japan (Otoshiyama-style pottery)



Suwa area archaeological materials



Aramichi-style pottery

### Archaeological materials from the Suwa Area collected by Eiichi Fujimori, registered Tangible Cultural Properties

Eiichi Fujimori, an archaeologist who was born in Suwa-City, collected many archaeological materials. These are very important materials for studying the Jomon Period not only in the Suwa area but throughout Japan. Fujimori used a set of pottery found at the Aramichi Historical Site as the basis for his Jomon period farming theory.

## Suwa Grand Shrine and Onbashira Festival

Suwa Grand Shrine has a very old history, and appears in literature from the 7th century. It consists of four main shrines; 2 Upper Shrine (or Kamisha); and 2 Lower Shrines (or Shimosha). At the Onbashira Festival, which is held every 6 years in the years of the tiger and the monkey in the Chinese zodiac, townspeople drag big trees down from a mountain, and erect them at the four corners of each of the four shrines. It is thought that this festival originates in the Jomon Period, because traces of wooden poles have been found at Jomon historical sites.





# Yatsugatake Museum of Art

(Hara Village History Folk Customs Data Hall)

17217-1611 Hara Mura,  
Suwa-gun, Nagano 391-0115

☎ 0266-74-2701

- Admission Adults: ¥510, elementary and junior high school students: ¥250
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00
- Closed Open year-round except New Year's holidays and some other temporary closures
- <http://www.lcv.ne.jp/~yatsubi1/>



This museum is located in the highlands among the nature at the foot of Mt. Yatsugatake. Exhibits feature the sculpture and paintings of local artist Takashi Shimizu, as well as works by calligrapher, Kakusen Tsugane, another artist from the village of Hara Mura. Moreover, stoneware and the Jomon ware excavated from the Hara Mura Historic Ruins, including the Earthenware with Handles and Human Face, are also on display. Get in touch with the energetic figures created by the Jomon people, and experience a part of the Jomon culture that flourished in the foothills of Mt. Yatsugatake.



The innovative building was designed by the architect Togo Murano. The outdoor exhibition of bronze sculptures is also eye-catching.



## The Akyu Historic Ruins from the early-Jomon Period, representative of the ruins at the foot of Mt. Yatsugatake

The Akyu Historic Ruins is a National Historic Site, and is considered to be a "turning Point in our understanding of the world-view of the early-Jomon Period," due to the excavation of standing stones, stone rows and circular stone groups. The museum exhibits the artifacts excavated, including earthenware and stoneware.

Permanent Exhibit



CHECK!

The puckered mouth is a great feature!

## Earthenware with Handles and Human Face has been kept in perfect condition

The Earthenware with Handles and Human Face was excavated from the hearth of a residence in the Maeone Historic Ruins. Its face retains a sense of innocence, with its almond-shaped eyes and puckered-up mouth. The overall shape of the vessel gives the impression of a person carrying a large pot in his arms.



## The Jomon earthenware collection from Hara Mura

Numerous earthenware pieces from the mid-Jomon period that flourished in the foothills of Mt. Yatsugatake, are on display. The collection of Chubu Highland earthenware in various designs is worth a look.

National Historic Site:

# Akyu Historic Ruins



Take a walk on the wood chip-paved path around the ruins.

Kashiwagi, Hara Mura, Suwa-gun, Nagano

The remains of a village that flourished during the early-Jomon period were discovered along with groups of circular stones, consisting of individual stone groups arranged in a donut-shape. The number of stones collected is estimated to be from 100,000 to 300,000. Encircled by grave pits, there is what appears to be a large ritual site in the central open space, with a 120cm long, prism-shaped standing stone pillar, and a series of stone rows lined up straight from the pillar. The standing stone shows traces of having being burnt, suggesting that the rituals may have involved fire. The Akyu Historic Ruins had been a place of daily life throughout the early-Jomon period, and is an important site for the study of Jomon society, including the burial system and religious rituals. It tells us of the process of transition from "place to live" to "place to pray," as its residential area decreased gradually.



The Akyu Historic Ruins were excavated when the construction of the Chuo Expressway began. The social movement to preserve it helped the site achieve the National Historic Site designation. Before the opening of the highway, the ruins discovered during the investigation were completely reburied.

Highlights



## Jomon ware from Hara Mura, not exhibited on a regular basis

The Hara Mura Repository for Buried Cultural Properties, adjoining the Akyu Historic Ruins, holds artifacts excavated in the village, such as Jomon earthenware. Though the collection is not exhibited to the public on a daily basis, viewings can be arranged by reservation.

Tourism Information

## Hara Mura - Peaceful village scenery around the foot of Mt. Yatsugatake

Located at the west side of Mt. Yatsugatake, Hara Mura in Nagano Prefecture is cool in the mornings and evenings in summer, and very popular as a summer resort. There are about 60 attractive lodgings in the village. Mountain vegetables, flowers and local handicrafts from the village make great souvenirs.



A buckwheat field in early September with panoramic views of Mt. Yatsugatake



The Yatsugatake Nature and Cultural Park at 1,300m altitude features a planetarium, miniature golf course and strider bike area.  
(☎0266-74-2681)

Hara Mura Information Center ☎ 0266-74-2501



# Yamanashi Prefectural Museum

1501-1 Narita, Misaka,  
Fuefuki, Yamanashi  
406-0801

☎ 055-261-2631

- Admission Adults: ¥510, College Students: ¥210  
\*Free of charge for seniors over 65 years old and high school students or younger  
\*Separate fee may apply for special exhibitions.
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00
- Closed Tuesdays, days following public holidays
- <http://www.museum.pref.yamanashi.jp>



The overall theme of the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum is “The People and Nature of Yamanashi”. Opened on October 15th, 2005, the history museum examines and displays the interactions between the rich nature and the people of Yamanashi. The museum aims to be a place for people of all ages can join across the generation divide, and to provide information and opportunities to learn about local history and culture.



Exterior of the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum



## Climate and lifestyle in Yamanashi

Introducing a variety of natural features including mountains, deltas and rivers, and their affects on the lives of the people. The Jomon period is especially featured in the corner named “In the Natural Forest”, where we introduce how wisdom and technology were fostered in the abundant nature of Yamanashi through the presentation of artifacts, sound and images.



## Yamanashi as a Stage

Geographical features of Yamanashi are displayed as a 3D model, created from high-definition satellite photographs.

## Permanent Exhibit



A masterpiece of amazing swirling patterns!



## Large, Deep Pot Earthenware, excavated from the Katsurano Historic Ruins

(Yamanashi Prefectural Cultural Property)  
(Collection of the Fuefuki City Education Board)

This deep pot-shaped earthenware from the latter half of the mid-Jomon period, was excavated from the Katsurano Historic Ruins. Vortex patterns cover the entire surface of the cylindrical body of the vessel. It is a form reminiscent of a raging current, giving a vibrant feel to this exceptional masterpiece.

National Important Cultural Property:

# Kofu City Fujimura Memorial Museum

(Former Mutsuzawa School Building)

2-2-1 Kitaguchi, Kofu,  
Yamanashi 400-0024

☎ 055-252-2762

- Admission Free
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00
- Closed Mondays, days following public holidays, New Year's holidays
- <http://www.city.kofu.yamanashi.jp/bunkashinko/shisetsu/bunka/fujimura.html>



The building housing the Kofu City Fujimura Memorial Museum was originally built in 1875 as the Mutsuzawa School building in Mutsuzawa-mura, Koma-gun (present-day Kamezawa, Kai City). It was restored and reconstructed inside the precincts of Takeda-jinja Shrine in 1966, and was designated as a National Important Cultural Property the following year. The building was later moved again, to the north side of Kofu station in 2010, when it was restored and reopened as a guidance facility for cultural interaction. Exhibitions consist mainly of historical artifacts from the Meiji period to the present, introducing the charm of the city of Kofu to citizens and tourists.



An elementary school classroom of the period has been recreated on the second floor.



## The Nezu Pianos

(donated by Kaichiro Nezu)

The Nezu Pianos were pianos donated to local elementary schools during the early-Showa period by Mr. Kaichiro Nezu, a successful businessman from the prefecture. He donated approximately two hundred pianos, based on his belief that “the profits gained from society must be returned to society.”



## Permanent Exhibit

## Deep Pot-shaped Earthenware with Human Face Decoration

(Ushiro Historic Ruins) [Japan Heritage]

Due to the construction of a funeral hall for the wider Higashi-Yatsushiro area, surveys were conducted at the Kuyoji Ruins Historical Site in Ubaguchi-cho and at the Ushiro Ruins, which resulted in excavations of settlement remains from the Jomon and Kofun periods. This particular earthenware was unearthed from a pit-dwelling site from the Jomon period, along with numerous other earthenware and stoneware artifacts. The two faces which seem to express “laughter” and “anger,” may very well be expressing the “agony” of giving birth and the “joy” of embracing a child.

**Kofu City Takeda Family Museum of History (Shingen Museum) has opened at the National Historic Site, former home to three generations of the Takeda family, famous lords in the Sengoku period.**

- Address 3-1-14 Ote, Kofu, Yamamashi
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00  
Tuesdays (or the following day if a public holiday),  
29 – 31 December
- Admissions Permanent exhibition: Free. Special exhibition room: Adults ¥300,  
¥240 for groups of more than 20 people,  
Free for high school students and younger,

- Access By car: 20 minute drive via Alps Street from the Kofu Showa Interchange (IC) on the Chuo Expressway  
By train: About 10 minutes bus ride from Japan Railway (JR) Kofu station. Please get on the Yamanashi Kotsu bus bound for “Takeda Jinja shrine” or “Sekisuiji temple.”  
>> Opening on April 4th, 2019!



# Minami-Alps City Furusato Bunka Denshokan

(Hometown Culture Museum)

2727 Yagoshima, Minami-Alps,  
Yamanashi 400-0205

☎ 055-282-7408

- Admission Free
- Hours 9:30 – 16:30 (tbc)
- Closed Thursdays (tbc), New Year's holidays
- <https://www.city.minami-alps.yamanashi.jp/sisetsu/shisetsu/bunkazai-denshokan/>



The museum exhibits archeological artifacts excavated from historic ruins in the city, such as Dogu figurines and earthenware. The most famous one is of course, Ravi, The Goddess of Fertility, a National Important Cultural Property excavated from the Imojiya Historic Ruins. Daily necessities from the olden days are also on display. There are also a variety of experiences available that do not require reservation.

\*Currently under renovation. Expected to reopen in late May, 2019. Note that the information described here is subject to change.



The museum will be reopened as a pavilion filled with the appeal of Minami-Alps City, while retaining the impressive character of the Jomon exhibition rooms. The Dogu mascot character, "Ravi", will welcome visitors inside.



Permanent Exhibit



CHECK!

Did we come from outer space?!

**Ravi, the Goddess of Fertility**  
(National Important Cultural Property)

One of the most recognized works of Jomon culture, this cone-shaped Dogu, excavated from the Imojiya Historic Ruins, has been transported overseas for exhibitions seven times. With its characteristic pregnant female shape, the large Dogu is popularly known by the nickname "Ravi, the Goddess of Fertility." It has been made into a mascot character and was selected as the best Dogu character in Japan.



**Excavated artifacts from the Imojiya Historic Ruins**

205 artifacts consisting of earthenware, stoneware and Dogu were designated as National Important Cultural Properties as a group. The collection includes many excellent pieces, such as an earthenware vessel that has Dogu figure decorations on both sides, a Dogu figurine that has eyeballs, as well as a clay artifact in the shape of a monkey.



**Obsidian rocks excavated from the Osadaguchi Historic Ruins**

Four large obsidian rocks were unearthed, with the largest one weighing 940 grams. They are the largest obsidian stone cores excavated within Yamanashi Prefecture, and are thought to be a product of Hoshigato.

**Earthenware with Human Body Design and Perforated Brim, excavated from the Imojiya Historic Ruins**  
(National Important Cultural Property)

The surface of this vessel is decorated with reliefs of Dogu figures, which seem to be dancing. It is large with a somewhat magical atmosphere.

# Nirasaki City Folk Museum

786-3 Minami-Gejo, Fujii,  
Nirasaki, Yamanashi 407-0004

☎ 0551-22-1696

- Admission Free
- Hours 9:00 – 16:30 (Opens at 13:00 on Thursdays)
- Closed Mondays (except public holidays), Thursday Mornings, days following public holidays, New Year's holidays
- <https://www.city.nirasaki.lg.jp/docs/2013021607668/>



The City of Nirasaki commands dynamic natural views of Mt. Yatsugatake to the north, the three mountains of Ho-o to the west, Mt. Kayagatake to the east and the sacred Mt. Fuji in south. Many ruins of the Jomon villages have been discovered with the rich nature of the southern foothills of Mt. Yatsugatake in the background. Artifacts left behind by our ancestors are the vestiges of the Jomon people, who kept their lively way of life going for thousands of years.



Many Japan Heritage Cultural Properties are on display!

**A Jomon landscape - the Meotoishi Historic Ruins and the sunset at Mt. Jizogatake**

The Meotoishi Historic Ruins command a view of a unique mountain, known as Mt. Jizogatake. On vernal and autumnal equinox days, the sun can be seen setting on the peak of Mt. Jizogatake from the ruins. The location of the ruins may be a clue to understanding how the Jomon people viewed the world.



**A Dogu treasure trove! The Mystery of the Meotoishi Historic Ruins**

Numerous Dogu have been excavated from around the uniquely shaped rock in the Meotoishi Historic Ruins, probably the greatest density in all Japan. What were the Jomon people thinking of as they handcrafted them, one by one?



**JOMON... as in the historical period, or the castle gate?!**

Nirasaki is known as the "Homeland of the Takeda Clan," with historic sites such as the "Takeda Hachimangu Shrine" that enshrines the family deity of the Takeda family, as well as the last of the Takeda castles, "Shinpu Castle." Keep your eye out for another Jomon, (this one means the 'castle gate') it's not to be missed!

Permanent Exhibit

CHECK!

What a beautiful profile! Check it out from different angles!



**Dogu Figurine with Beautiful Skin, "Miss Ishinotsubo"**

The carefully polished surface is sure to leave you spellbound. Her facial expression shifts between different emotions depending on the viewing angle. The varied expressions of this life-bringing maternal figure are a must-see!



Compare it to the Masked Goddess!

**Masked Dogu figurine from the Ushirotta Historic Ruins: "Uula"**

The famous masked dogu National Treasure, commonly referred to as the Masked Goddess, is in the city of Chino, Nagano. She actually has a sister in Nirasaki. The masked Dogu excavated from the Ushirotta Historic Ruins is nicknamed, "Uula." Take a look, and compare it to the Masked Goddess.



# Kasugai Local Museum and Masako Ogawa Memorial Museum

170-1 Teramoto,  
Kasugai, Fuefuki,  
Yamanashi 406-0013

☎ 0553-26-5100

- Admission Adults and College Students: ¥200  
(¥160 per person for groups of more than 20)  
Elementary, junior high and high school students: ¥100  
(¥80 per person for groups of more than 20)
- Hours 9:00 – 17:00 (Last entrance at 16:30)
- Closed Tuesdays, days following public holidays, New Year's holidays (Dec. 27th to Jan. 5th)

The city of Fuefuki boasts numerous historic ruins from the final stages of the early-Jomon period to the end of the mid-Jomon period, around 5,500 to 4,500 years ago. Excavations have been carried out at the Shakado, Katsurano, Sanko, Choshippara, Ichinosawa and Nishihara historic ruins. The Dogu excavated from the Katsurano Historic Ruins were given names such as "Misakappa" or "Yahho," and became part of the Japan Heritage Cultural Properties group titled, "the Starry-skied Jomon World of the Chubu Highlands". They are on exhibit at the Kasugai Local Museum.



Brilliant naming!

Permanent Exhibit

Hurrah for Dogu!



## 1 Part of an Earthenware vessel with a Pregnant Female Dogu Figurine

Excavated from the Katsurano Historic Ruins, this piece was a decorative part in a pregnant female-shape, from the brim of an earthenware vessel. This piece was found alone in the floor of a dwelling. No more was found of the vessel this decoration should have been a part of at the site where the piece was unearthed. The dwelling was found in a rather unusual condition, having been covered with stones as if to conceal something.

## 2 Dogu Figurine with Stiff Shoulders

Excavated from the Katsurano Historic Ruins, this figure is identified as a "Posing Dogu" from the first half of the mid-Jomon period. A pregnant woman massaging her own fatigued shoulder is realistically depicted. A few other Posing Dogu figures similar to this one were found at the Katsurano Historic Ruins.

## 3 Misakappa

Excavated from the Katsurano Historic Ruins, this is a Dogu from the beginning of the mid-Jomon period, in a shape of "Kappa," or a river sprite. Though missing a part of its foot and one of its ears, it is in almost perfect condition. It was unearthed just below the floor, almost in the center of a dwelling, its body broken into two halves.

## 4 Yahho

Excavated from the Katsurano Historic Ruins, this is a "Banzai Dogu" from the latter half of the mid-Jomon period. Similarly to Misakappa, it found on the floor of a dwelling, broken in two. The hole that represents the mouth continues down inside to where the stomach would be.

\*Both Misakappa and Yahho were named by the students attending Misaka-Higashi Elementary School at the time of the excavation.

\*Objects are sometimes on loan to other museums and may not be on display. Please make inquiries at the Cultural Properties section of the Fuefuki City Office for details. (Tel: 055-261-3342)

## List of Japan Heritage Cultural properties: The Starry-skied Jomon world of the Central Highlands

### Nagano

#### Chino City

The Venus of Jomon Dogu  
The Masked Goddess Dogu  
Togariishi Historical Site  
Nakappara Historical Site  
Uenodan Historical Site  
Komagata Historical Site  
Ikenodaira-Gozaiwa Historical Site  
Yatsugatake Obsidian Mining Site  
Mt. Tateshina, Mt. Yatsugatake



#### Fujimi-machi

Idojiri Historical Site  
Artifacts of Tonai Historical Site  
Artifacts of Sakaue Historical Site  
Artifacts of Sori Historical Site  
Tonai Historical Site and Idaira Historical Site  
Pottery with Figure of a Human (Todonomiya Historical Site)

#### Hara Mura

Akyu Historical Site  
Lamp-shaped Pottery with Face Decoration (Maeone Historical Site)

#### Suwa City

Sone Historical Site  
Jakoppara Historical Sites  
Yashimagahara Wetland, Kurumayama Wetland, Odoriba Wetland  
Chikatosha Shrine, Juninoki Historical Site  
Suwa area archaeological materials collected by Eichi Fujimori  
Artifacts of house number 18 in Anaba Historical Site  
Artifacts of Kojindani Historical Site  
Artifacts of Odasho Historical Site (Special Shaped Pottery)

#### Okaya City

Artifacts of Kaido Historical Site  
Artifacts of Enokikakisoto Historical Site  
Artifacts of Mekiri Historical Site  
Artifacts of Kajoji Historical Site  
Obsidian gemstone of Shimizuda Historical Site  
Nashikubo Historical Site and its artifacts  
Odasho Historical Site and its artifacts (dogu)



#### Shimosuwa-machi

Wada-Pass and The Historic Road  
Hoshigato Obsidian Mining Site  
Vermillion Colored Pot (Tsuchida ruins)  
Yashimagahara Wetland

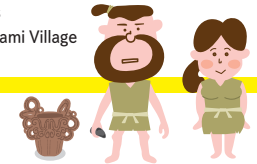
#### Nagawa-machi

Otomokura Ruins  
Takayama Obsidian Mining Pits  
Hoshikuso Pass Obsidian Mining Pit  
Oiwake Ruins  
Onitan Ruins  
Incense Burner-shaped Pottery (Nakamichi Ruins)



#### Kawakami Mura

Omiyama Ruins  
Artifacts of Omiyama Ruins  
Crystal Produced in Kawakami Village  
Ishinashi (Pear Tree)



### Yamanashi

#### Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Archaeology

Deep Bowl-Shaped Pottery (Tonobayashi Ruins)  
Artifacts of Ichinosawa Ruins  
Artifacts of Sakenomiba Ruins  
Artifacts of Kaidomae Ruins  
Artifacts of Andouji Ruins  
Artifacts of Haramachi Highschool of Agriculture Ruins  
Artifacts of Kabuppara Ruins  
Artifacts of Tenjin Ruins  
Uenohara Ruins

#### Kofu City

Deep Bowl-Shaped Pottery with Human Face Decoration (Ushiro Ruins)

#### Hokuto City

Umenoki Ruins  
Kinsei Ruins  
Artifacts of Tsugane Goshomae Ruins  
Artifacts of Suwahara Ruins  
Artifacts of Ishiharada Kita Ruins  
Artifacts of Kinsei Ruins  
Teradokoro 2nd Ruins  
Artifacts of Chikuu Ruins



#### Nirasaki City

Artifacts of Ishinotsubo Ruins  
Artifacts of Meotoishi Ruins

#### Minami Alps City

Artifacts of Imojiya Ruins  
Osadaguchi Ruins

#### Yamanashi Prefectural Museum

Deep Bowl-shaped Large Pottery from the Katsurano Ruins

#### Fuefuki City

Artifacts of Katsurano Ruins

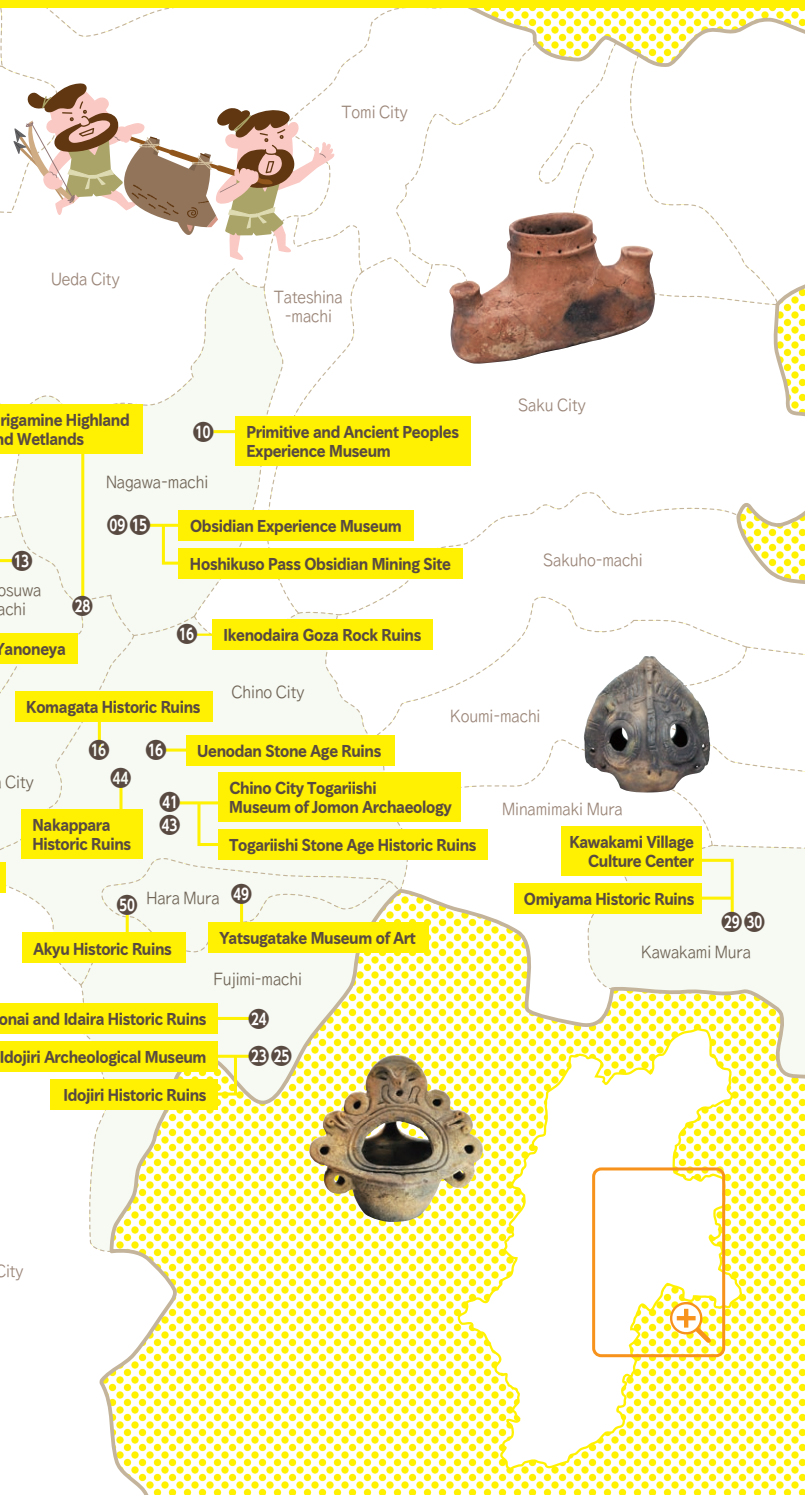
#### Koshu City Shakado Ruins Museum

Artifacts of Shakado Ruins



# A

## Nagano



# B

## Yamanashi

