

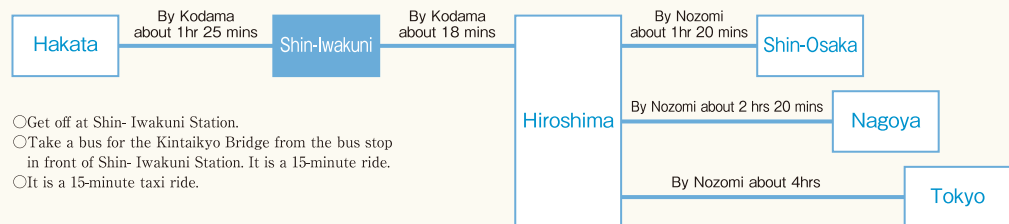
Kintaikyo Bridge  
A road to becoming a world heritage

### Air Line (All Nippon Airways)



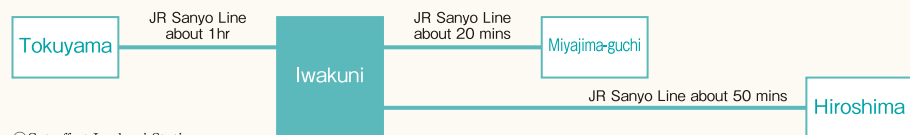
- Take the shuttle bus from the airport to Iwakuni Station. It is about a 10-minute ride to Iwakuni Station.  
Then take a bus which is bound for the Kintaikyo Bridge at a bus stop on the right side when facing Iwakuni Station.
- Take a taxi, and it is about a 20-minute ride to the Kintaikyo Bridge.

### Via Shinkansen (bullet train)



- Get off at Shin-Iwakuni Station.
- Take a bus for the Kintaikyo Bridge from the bus stop in front of Shin-Iwakuni Station. It is a 15-minute ride.
- It is a 15-minute taxi ride.

### Via JR local train



- Get off at Iwakuni Station.
- Take a bus for the Kintaikyo Bridge from the bus stop in front of Iwakuni Station. It is a 20-minute ride.
- It is a 20-minute taxi ride.

### Charges

Kintaikyo Bridge toll	Adult:¥300	Child:¥150	Groups:¥250
Iwakuni Castle admission	Adult:¥260	Child:¥120	Groups:¥200
Ropeway (round trip)	Adult:¥550	Child:¥250	Groups:¥430
Ropeway (one way)	Adult:¥320	Child:¥150	Groups:¥260
Ticket including all services	Adult:¥940	Child:¥450	Groups:¥750
*Iwakuni Castle is closed on ropeway inspection days.			
**Groups consist of 15 people or more.			

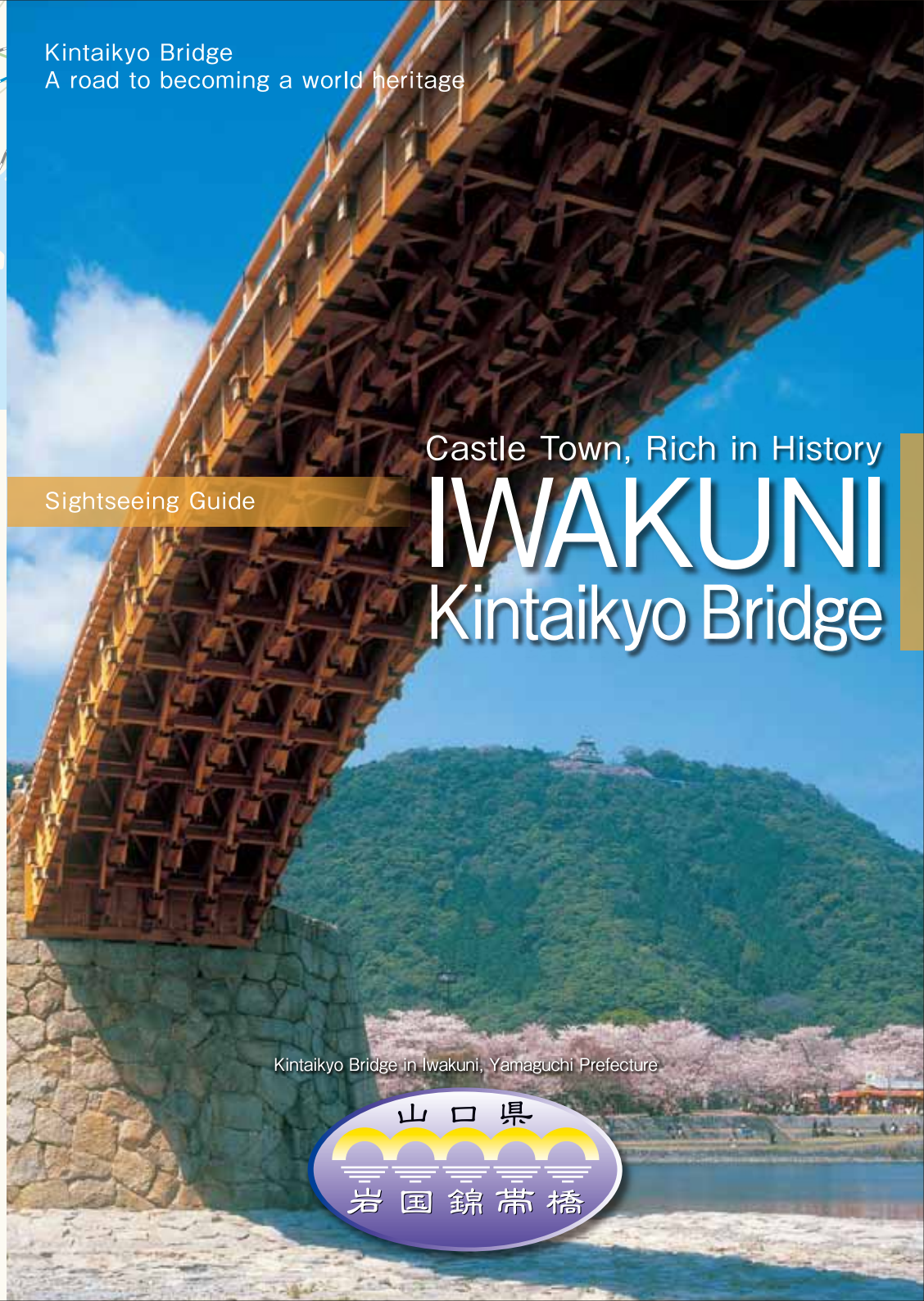
### Tourist Information

Iwakuni City Tourism Promotion Office	☎ (0827) 29-5116
Iwakuni Tourist Association	☎ (0827) 41-2037
Council for Iwakuni Tourism Promotion Initiative	☎ (0827) 93-3460
Kintaikyo Bridge	☎ (0827) 41-1477
Iwakuni Castle	☎ (0827) 41-1477
Ropeway	☎ (0827) 41-1477

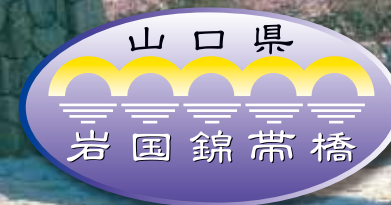
### Sightseeing Guide

Castle Town, Rich in History

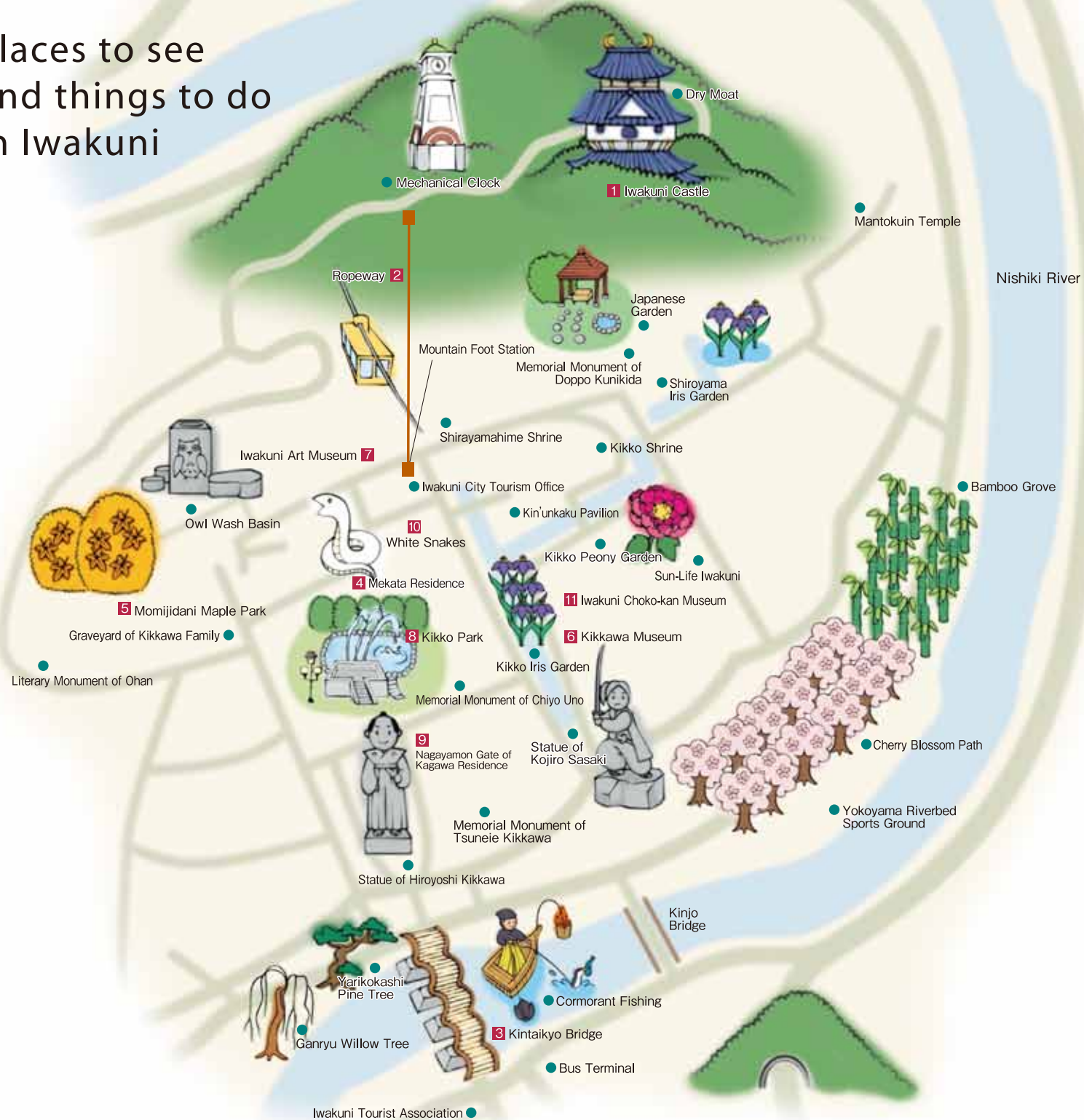
# IWAKUNI Kintaikyo Bridge



Kintaikyo Bridge in Iwakuni, Yamaguchi Prefecture



# Places to see and things to do in Iwakuni



## 1 Iwakuni Castle

Iwakuni Castle, with its white donjon, was built in the Momoyama-Nanban style of the late 16th century. The area has a park where you can enjoy a walk. The castle is a 5-minute walk from the cable car station at the summit.

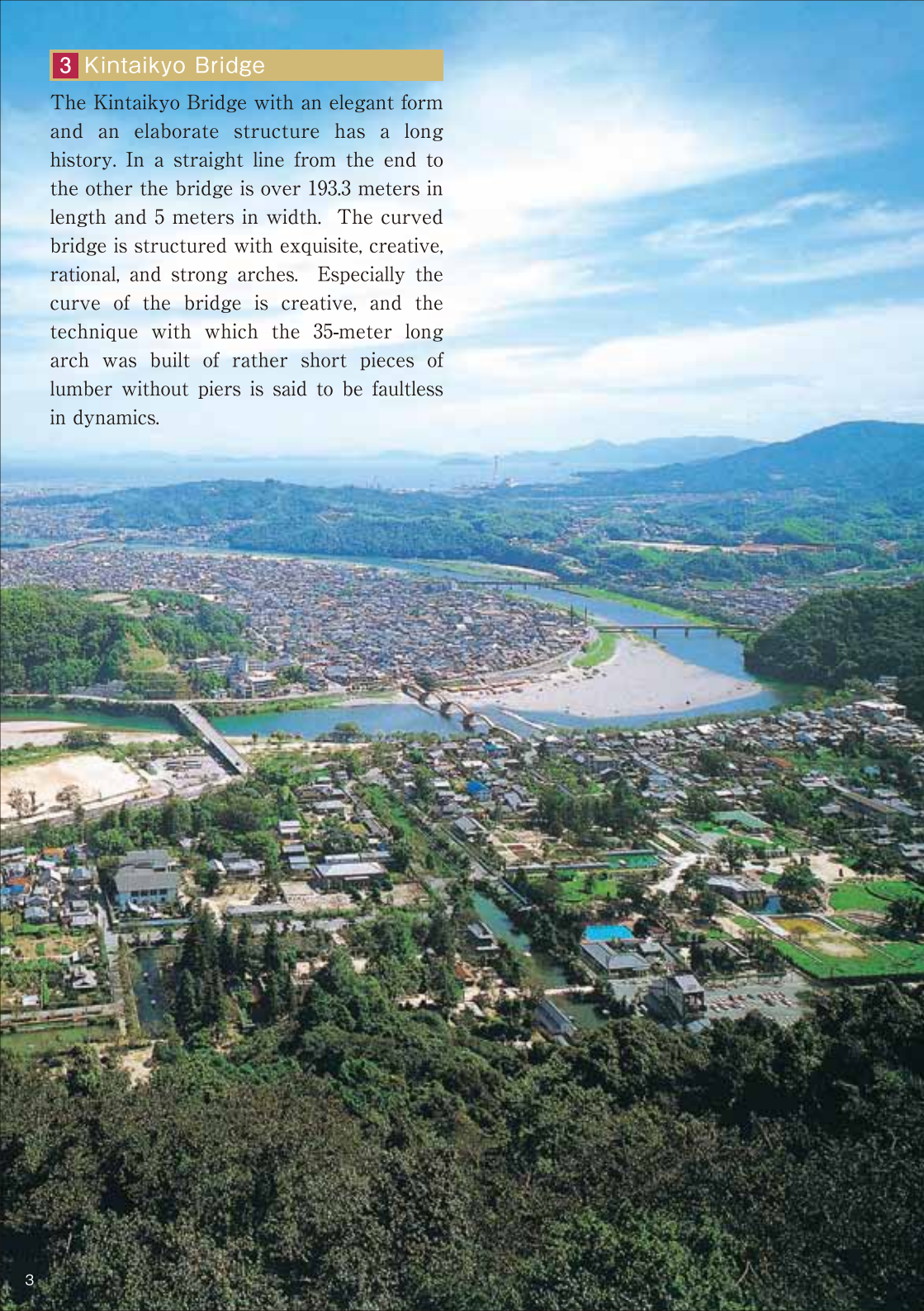


## 2 Ropeway

The panorama from the summit is magnificent. You can see the islands in the Seto Inland Sea and the mountain ranges of the Shikoku region far out in the sea. It takes 3 minutes to go to the summit. Each gondola holds 30 people.

### 3 Kintaiyo Bridge

The Kintaiyo Bridge with an elegant form and an elaborate structure has a long history. In a straight line from the end to the other the bridge is over 193.3 meters in length and 5 meters in width. The curved bridge is structured with exquisite, creative, rational, and strong arches. Especially the curve of the bridge is creative, and the technique with which the 35-meter long arch was built of rather short pieces of lumber without piers is said to be faultless in dynamics.



### 4 The Mekata Residence

Built in the middle of the 18th century, the Mekata Residence is one of the few remaining residences of the mid-ranking samurai. It has been designated as an important national cultural property. The Mekatas was a retainer of the Kikkawas before the latter moved to Iwakuni. The Mekatas settled in Iwakuni together with the Kikkawas.



### 5 Momijidani Maple Park

The park used to be a garden in a temple. It is near the start of the trail up to the Iwakuni Castle. The park is beautiful especially in spring with fresh greenery and in autumn with crimson leaves.



### 6 Kikkawa Museum

Arms, swords, and documents owned by the Kikkawas are on display.



### 7 Iwakuni Art Museum

Ceramics, glassware, armor, calligraphic works and furniture used by feudal lords are featured for display.



### 8 Kikko Park

Kikko Park is an old residence site of the former feudal lords of Iwakuni-han (feudal domain). Buildings with reminiscences of good old days are scattered in the park, where various flowers are in bloom in each season. A big fountain adds color to the park as a recreation area for tourists and citizens.



### 10 White Snakes

White snakes are said to be messengers of Benzaiten (the goddess of good luck) and to bring riches and fortune. They are designated as a national natural treasure. A lot of people visit the site to pray for their success in business.



### 9 Nagayamon Gate of Kagawa Residence

The Nagayamon gate (front gate) is said to have been built by Masatsune Kagawa in 1693. The original appearance of a samurai residence has been kept to this day, and it is designated as a prefectural cultural property. There are also other gates which were used for other occasions or by people of different social status.



### 11 Iwakuni Choko-kan Museum

Iwakuni Choko-kan Musuem is a museum of history and folklore in Kikko Park. A variety of peonies bloom around late in April in Kikko Peony Garden.



## Sightseeing strolls

### 2-hour stroll

- Bus Terminal ▼ 1 min
- Kintaikyo Bridge ▼ 3 mins
- Nagayamon Gate of Kagawa Residence ▼ 5 mins
- Mekata Residence ▼ 1 min
- White Snakes ▼ 1 min
- Ropeway ▼ 10 mins
- Iwakuni Castle ▼ 10 mins
- Iwakuni Art Museum ▼ 5 mins
- Iwakuni Choko-kan Museum ▼ 2 mins
- Kikkawa Museum ▼ 1 min
- Statue of Kojiro Sasaki ▼ 5 mins
- Kintaikyo Bridge

### 1-hour stroll

- Bus Terminal ▼ 1 min
- Kintaikyo Bridge ▼ 3 mins
- Nagayamon Gate of Kagawa Residence ▼ 5 mins
- Mekata Residence ▼ 1 min
- White Snakes ▼ 2 mins
- Iwakuni Art Museum ▼ 5 mins
- Iwakuni Choko-kan Museum ▼ 2 mins
- Kikkawa Museum ▼ 1 min
- Statue of Kojiro Sasaki ▼ 5 mins
- Kintaikyo Bridge



## Kintaikyo Bridge in the Four Seasons

The area around the Kintaikyo Bridge is genuinely beautiful. Natural scenic beauty including the fresh greenery in Shiroyama Mountain and the limpid stream of the Nishiki River harmonizes with the Kintaikyo Bridge. Visitors can enjoy the seasonal changes while strolling around the town. Why don't you come and experience the seasonal attractions of the Kintaikyo Bridge?



### Spring

All the cherry blossoms on the river banks reach full bloom at the same time, which brightens up the area around the Kintaikyo Bridge. People have a party enjoying the blossoms under the cherry trees lit up with Japanese lanterns.



### Summer

Around the time of the lush greenery, cormorant fishing with a 300-year history starts under the Kintaikyo Bridge. The Nishiki River is famous for its sweetfish and is crowded with anglers.

### Autumn

In autumn the leaves in the area around Shiroyama Mountain turn yellow and red. Withered leaves fall on the Nishiki River, and the water carries them away. If you walk as far as the Momijidani Park, you will feel the atmosphere of autumn.



### Winter

It snows several times each year even in Iwakuni with a mild climate. When it snows, the area around the Shiroyama Mountain reminds us of inkling painting of winter. Such scenery may have come to mind of those who built the bridge.

# Scenery and Events in Iwakuni



**Panoramic View from Shiroyama Mountain**

You can reach the summit by the ropeway. Seen from the summit, the Kintaikyo Bridge and the castle town are breathtakingly beautiful.

## Illuminated Kintaikyo Bridge

At sunset the Kintaikyo Bridge is illuminated. Visitors are fascinated with the romantic atmosphere.



## Cormorant Fishing at the Kintaikyo Bridge

Cormorant fishing is a feature of summer. Fisherman clad in traditional attire do fishing by controlling cormorants as they did three hundred years ago.



## Nishiki River Water Festival

A fireworks show is held on the first Saturday of August. With fireworks in the night sky, the Kintaikyo Bridge with five arches is very beautiful.

## Bridge Seen From Underneath

Looking at the underside of the bridge from the riverbed, you can find the elaborate wooden framework with winding wires and clamps. The arch structure of the bridge makes the bridge all the stronger with the pressure placed on it.



## Kintaikyo Bridge Festival

The Kintaikyo Bridge Festival is held on April 29th in the area surrounding the bridge. The "Sankin-Koutai" feudal lords' procession is well worth watching.

# Seasonal Flowers Around the Kintaikyo Bridge



**Japanese Apricot Trees**

From mid-February to early March 200 Japanese apricot trees are in bloom. Garyo Ume is 300 years old.



**Cherry Blossoms**

From late March to early April 3,000 cherry trees are in bloom.



**Peonies**

From late April to early May 500 peonies are in bloom.



**Azaleas**

From early May to mid-May 10,000 azaleas are in bloom.



**Japanese Irises**

From late May to early June 110,000 Japanese irises are in bloom.



**Hydrangeas**

From mid-June to late June hydrangeas are in bloom.



**Maple Trees**

From early November to mid-November the leaves of 1,000 maple trees turn red.

# The History of the Bridge

“A bridge that will never be washed away!”

Many bridges were constructed over the Nishiki River flowing through the castle town. However, the fast currents in rainstorms washed away all of them. Hiroyoshi Kikkawa, the third feudal lord ardently wished to build a bridge that would never be washed away. The only way to realize his wish was to build a bridge without piers, or to create new types of piers. Kikkawa Hiroyoshi, who was interested in the culture of the Ming dynasty, had a chance to see a picture of stone bridges spanning islets dotted in West Lake in a manuscript of “History of West Lake.” He hit upon an idea of building bridge piers like islets in the Nishiki River and constructing a strong arch-structure bridge. In 1673 after repeated trial constructions and failures the bridge was completed with the most use of the techniques of castle construction and wood framework.

## The Loss of the Global Heritage

During and after World War II it was impossible to properly maintain the invulnerable bridge. On September 14, 1950, Kijiya Typhoon hit the Iwakuni area and the Kintaikyo Bridge.

The citizens tried to prevent the Kintaikyo Bridge from being washed away by using the six-foot-high sake barrels as weights to apply pressure on the arches with the slogan of “Save the Kintaikyo Bridge.” However, at 9:40 a.m. the third pier started to crack and was destroyed, and the third and fourth arches were washed away. The Kintaikyo Bridge, which was expected to be designated as the national property, was swept away into the muddy water as many citizens watched.



## The Bridge to Be Rebuilt

The citizens were very sad to have lost the bridge, but in less than a week the city council announced to rebuild the bridge. The campaign to rebuild the bridge started all over the city. Then the next year the city launched an enormously expensive project.

The structure of the bridge was so elaborate that the engineers who did research about rebuilding the bridge concluded that the construction method of the bridge meets the law of modern dynamics and leaves nothing to be desired. After about two years the Kintaikyo Bridge was rebuilt on January 15, 1953.

## Replacement of the Bridge in the Heisei Period

Because the wooden Kintaikyo Bridge began to deteriorate, it was replaced with the new one for the first time in five decades. In this replacement the current wooden parts were replaced as they had been, and the project turned out to be a big one with the total cost of 2.6 billion yen. The replacement of the Kintaikyo Bridge was completed on March 20, 2004.



## Specialties of Iwakuni



### Iwakuni-zushi

Iwakuni-zushi is a local specialty. Sushi for as many as 150 people can be prepared at one time.



### Iwakuni Renkon (lotus root)

Iwakuni is famous for its lotus root. In whatever way it is prepared, it is delicious, and vinegared lotus root is a delicacy. In taste it is different from other vinegared food due to its crispness.

### Ishi Ningyo (stone dolls)

“Ishi ningyo” is a nest of insects in the river called “Goera japonica Banks.” It is also said to be the incarnation of human sacrifice when the Kintaikyo Bridge was built for the first time. Ishi Ningyo is processed and sold as an folkcraft article.

### Ohira

“Ohira” is a simmered dish of vegetables, wild plants and chicken. It has been an everyday dish. Ohira, Iwakuni-zushi, and vinegared lotus root are indispensable items on auspicious occasions in Iwakuni.

### Kikkogama Iwakuni-yaki (artistic pottery)

Kikkogama Iwakuni-yaki (artistic pottery) is elegant and has a warm feel to it. It is an artifact passed down from the days of the feudal lords.

## Other Sights in the Neighborhood



### Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park

The Peace Memorial Park has many monuments such as the Peace Memorial Museum and the Memorial Cenotaph for the victims of the atomic bomb. Many people visit the park to pray for peace from all over the world every year.



### Atomic Bomb Dome

The Atomic Bomb Dome conveying the horrific devastation caused by the dropping of the atomic bomb was designated as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site in December 1996.



### Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima Island

Itsukushima Shrine, known as one of Japan’s Three Great Views, was designated as a World Cultural Heritage site along with the Atomic Bomb Dome. The island conserves numerous national treasures and important cultural assets.