

Japan's Forests with Breathtaking Views: Selections from the Tourist Destinations in National Forest

Forests have provided both mankind – and indeed all living things
– with safety, sustenance and security for an eternity.

The lush greenery and gentle breeze of the forest is surely enough
to rekindle nature's vigor in any soul.

With more than 70% of Japan landmass covered in abundant
greenery, the Forestry Agency is working to create "Recreation Forests"
to inspire as many as possible to rediscover the wonder of nature.

The best forests to visit have been carefully selected and compiled
as "Japan's Forests with Breathtaking Views."

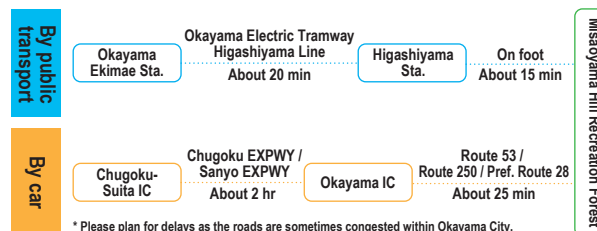
Know before You Visit: General rules for visitors

- 1 Help protect wild animals and plants. When you bring your pets, please mind your manners and give consideration to the surrounding environment.
- 2 Damaging trees or stealing any forest product is penalized by law. Even collecting plants covering the ground of forest are prohibited within protection forests designated by law.
- 3 Do not enter the area beyond walking trails, or public squares. Please follow the rules for each Recreation Forest such as no camping outside the designated area.
- 4 Do not enter the area with 'No Entry' or 'Keep Out' sign.
- 5 When making a stop for rest or any other purposes, please look around and confirm that the area is safe without any risk of being hit by falling branches or rocks.
- 6 Enjoy mountaineering on your own responsibility. Please ensure that you submit your plan for mountaineering to a police station in the area as well as to your family members, your friends or colleagues after checking out climate and other necessary information for mountaineering and fully being equipped. Please also fill in 'the Name List of Climbers and Visitors', which is placed at the mountain entrance.
Check avalanche risks before mountaineering or skiing in winter.
- 7 Do not enter forests under bad weather conditions.
- 8 In order to prevent the spread of CSF through food residues, please make sure to take your garbage home with you. We are also taking measures such as removing trash bins.
- 9 Smoking is permitted only in special areas. Make sure to extinguish any fires, e.g. after smoking cigarettes.
- 10 Mountain paths are potentially dangerous to walk. Do not use smartphone while walking. When taking photos, please remain fully aware of your surroundings and do not bother other visitors in any way.
- 11 If you wish to use an unmanned aerial vehicle (drone), you need to submit prior written notice to District Forest Office. Please contact the nearest Regional Forest Office or District Forest Office of national forest beforehand.

Misaoyama Hill Recreation Forest Access Map



Access



* Please plan for delays as the roads are sometimes congested within Okayama City.

Misaoyama Hill Recreation Forest

Location : Sawada / Haraoshima 4-chome / Kunitomi 3-chome / Okuichi / Maruyama / Minato, Naka Ward, Okayama City, Okayama Prefecture

Management office contact details :

Okayama District Forest Office

FAX : 0868-23-2150

Misaoyama Hill Recreation Forest Management Committee

(Secretariat: Misaoyama Park Satoyama Center)

FAX : 086-270-8353

**National Forest Planning Division,
Forestry Agency, MAFF**

The Official Recreation Forests Website of the Forestry Agency

https://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/e/national_forest/recreation_forest/index.html



 **Recreation
Forests of JAPAN**

| OKAYAMA |

MISAUYAMA

Recreation Forest



Recreation Forests
Forestry Agency

A forest that complements the scenery of Korakuen

—one of Japan's three most outstanding traditional Japanese gardens—

and offers a place of relaxation for locals with many historic sites to explore, including ancient burial mounds and medieval castle ruins

Misaoyama Hill Recreation Forest Map

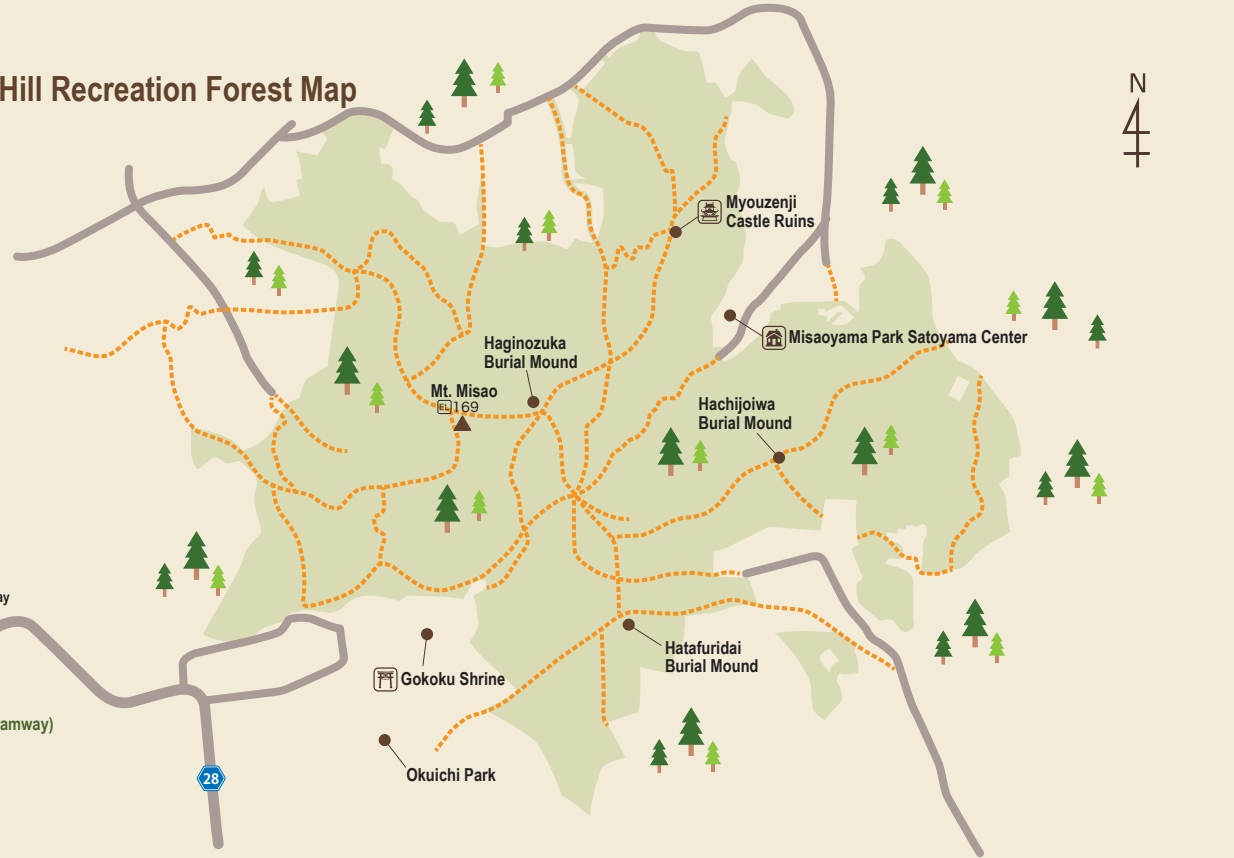


EL Elevation (m)



Higashiyama Station (Okayama Electric Tramway)

0m 100 200 300m



Geographical/ topographical features

The Recreation Forest lies at the center of the Okayama metropolitan area, about 4 km to the east of JR Okayama Station. The area consists of a row of hills with elevations of 130–170 m running from east to west. The southern slopes have been urbanized and transformed into residential areas, but the northern slopes are spotted with rural settlements and vast orchards, agricultural fields and bamboo groves. The 130 m-high Hatafuridai Observatory provides a panoramic view of Kojima Bay and islands in the Seto Inland Sea.



Historical/ cultural features

Okayama Korakuen is one of Japan's three most outstanding traditional Japanese gardens, sharing this ranking with Kairakuen in Mito and Kenrokuen in Kanazawa. It was constructed about 300 years ago by the 2nd lord of the Okayama Domain, Ikeda Tsunamasa, and represents the Genroku culture that flourished from the late 17th to early 18th century. It has been nationally designated as a special place of scenic beauty. Misaoyama Hill was originally a forest called "onbayashi" that was property of the Okayama Domain, and its beautiful landscape has been maintained and compliments the scenery of Korakuen. The forest also serves as a backdrop forest for nearby temples such as Anju-in Temple and Shorin-ji Temple, making it an extremely important forest for the local landscape. The area is also home to a large number of ancient burial mounds, Buddha statues placed beside rural paths and medieval castle ruins. Misaoyama Hill alone has over 50 burial mounds, forming a group called the Misaoyama Kofungun. Visitors can see a succession of burial mounds of various shapes and sizes that were built during different periods, such as the Hachijoiva Burial Mound and the Haginozuka Burial Mound.



Climate/ flora and fauna

Okayama Prefecture has a temperate Seto Inland Sea climate. Because it receives a large number of hours of sunlight annually (about 2,000 hours) and relatively little annual precipitation for Japan (about 1,100 mm), the prefecture has dubbed itself the "Land of Sunshine." The weather is generally comfortable year-round.

The Recreation Forest has a mix of trees, including Kashi (evergreen oak (*Quercus*)), Nara oak (*Quercus*) and Kunugi (sawtooth oak (*Quercus acutissima* Carruth.)), as well as Kanamemochi (Japanese photinia (*Photinia glabra*)) trees that have been planted to prevent the spread of fire.

It is also a habitat for various animals and birds such as Ruribitaki (red-flanked bushrobin (*Tarsiger cyanurus*)), Jobitaki (Daurian redstart (*Phoenicurus aureus*)) and Kogera (Japanese pygmy woodpecker (*Dendrocopos kizuki*)), while insects including Ruritateha (blue admiral (*Kaniska canace*)), Tsubameshijimi (short-tailed blue (*Evers argiades*)) and Hanmyo (*Cicindela japonica*) can also be found.



Attractions

Despite its location at the center of the Okayama metropolitan area, Misaoyama Hill offers a place of relaxation for locals rich in natural beauty and with many historic sites, including ancient burial mounds and medieval castle ruins. The Okuichi Park Sports Field, where the trails start, is about a 12 minute walk from Higashiyama Station on the Okayama Electric Tramway. The location is also convenient for sightseeing, with Okayama Korakuen and Okayama Castle within a 30-minute walk.

There are several short trails. The summit of Misaoyama Hill is about a 50-minute walk from the trailheads by the Okuichi Park Sports Field. Descending from the summit to the western ridge, there is a trail along which Japanese photinia trees form a tunnel. Also, many burial mounds of various shapes and sizes can be found along the route from the Hatafuridai Observatory to the Hachijoiva Burial Mound, and the Hatafuridai Observatory offers a stunning view of Kojima Bay.

Situated at the northern base of Misaoyama Hill, the Misaoyama Park Satoyama Center operated by the Okayama City Park Association offers visitors a chance to learn about Misaoyama's abundant natural splendor and the rural way of life of the local people who live in harmony with it. It is a popular spot where families can take part in nature programs, such as birdwatching and insect observation.



Information

■ Elevation (m)	5 - 169
■ Area (ha)	125.55
■ Entrance fee	None for the Recreation Forest itself
■ Opening seasons	Accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
■ Accommodation options	[Outside the forest] Accommodations are available in the Okayama city area.
■ Car parking capacity / parking charges	The Recreation Forest does not have a parking lot, so please use a parking lot elsewhere in the vicinity.