

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 equipment. Please also fill in 'the Name List of Climbers and Visitors', which is placed at the mountain entrance.
- 7 Do not enter forests under bad weather conditions.
- 8 Do not dispose of any leftover food in the forest. Please take your garbage home with you.
- 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.

Miyajima Recreation Forest Access Map



Access

By public transport:

- Miyajima Island → (about 15 minutes on foot) → Momijidani Station → (Miyajima Ropeway: about 15 minutes) → Shishiiwa Station → (about 40 minutes on foot) → Miyajima Recreation Forest
- JR Hiroshima Station → (JR Sanyo Main Line: about 30 minutes) → JR Miyajimaguchi Station → (1 minute on foot) → Miyajimaguchi Pier → (Ferry: about 10 minutes) → Miyajima Island

By car:

- San-yo Expressway (Kochi IC) → Hiroshima-Iwakuni Road (Hatsukaichi IC) → Miyajimaguchi Pier → (Ferry: about 10 minutes) → Miyajima Island (about 70 minutes in total)

Miyajima Recreation Forest

Address : Miyajimacho, Hatsukaichi City, Hiroshima Prefecture

Management office contact details:
Hiroshima District Forest Office
FAX : 082-247-5822

National Forest Planning Division,
Forestry Agency, MAFF

The Official Recreation Forests Website of the Forestry Agency
http://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/e/national_forest/recreation_forest/index.html



 Recreation
Forests of JAPAN

| HIROSHIMA |

MIYAJIMA

Recreation Forest



Recreation Forests
Forestry Agency

Miyajima — a god-dwelling island that lies in the beautiful Setonaikai Sea

Miyajima Recreation Forest Map



Geographical / topographical features

Miyajima is a precipitous island with a circumference of 30 km and an elevation of 529 m, lying in the beautiful Setonaikai Sea 20 km southwest of Hiroshima City. A vast national forest covers up to 80% of the total area of the island.



View of the island of the gods

Historical / cultural features

Miyajima is known as one of the three most scenic places in Japan, along with Amanohashidate and Matsushima. Due to its scenic importance, it has been designated as a scenic site conservation forest, a special zone of the Setonaikai National Park, and a special historic site and special place of scenic beauty "Itsukushima Island." Meanwhile, the main shrine buildings (shaden) of the Itsukushima Shrine were built in a manner that they protrude over the sea, because Miyajima had been worshiped from ancient times as "kami wo itsuki matsu shima" (an island for worshiping and enshrining gods" and it was considered disrespectful to build shrine buildings on the sacred land. Since these shrine buildings enshrine Mt. Misen that rises behind the shrine as the object of worship, the nature of Mt. Misen has been protected intact from ancient days. The Itsukushima Shrine and its object of worship, Mt. Misen, together create Miyajima's unique scenery that cannot be found anywhere else in the world, and that has also been designated as a Cultural World Heritage Site.



Otorii Gate of the Itsukushima Shrine

Climate, flora and fauna

The area has a mild, Setonaikai climate. It is home to animals such as Nihonjika (shika deer (*Cervus nippon*)). Deer have been protected from ancient times as being messengers of the Itsukushima Shrine's gods (called Shinroku). The vegetation consists of a forest of Akamatsu trees (Japanese red pine (*Pinus densiflora*)), a mixed forest of Japanese red pine and evergreen broad-leaved trees, and an evergreen broad-leaved forest of Urajirogashi (*Quercus salicina* Blume) and Akagashi (Japanese evergreen oak (*Quercus acuta*)).



Nihonjika (Japanese sika deer (*Cervus nippon*)) in Miyajima are said to have been messengers of the gods

Attractions

Since the founding of a temple by Buddhist priest Kukai (Kobodaishi) in 806, sacred Mt. Misen, the highest peak of Miyajima, has been worshiped by key figures such as Taira no Kiyomori and Ito Hirobumi. Many historical footprints and legends still remain at Mt. Misen. The summit of Mt. Misen can be reached from three hiking trails (Momijidani Course, Daishoin Course, and Omoto Course), and also by a route using a ropeway (after a 15-minute ride on the ropeway, a 40-minute hike to the summit). Along the way, you can enjoy the view of the mainland shore across from the island and the island's virgin forest. Many spiritual sites are scattered over a small area on the summit. In particular, the observation platform offers a stunning 360° panoramic view of the beautiful islands of the Setonaikai Sea and, on clear days, the Shikoku mountain range in the distance. Every year, more than 200,000 tourists visit Miyajima from inside and outside Japan. A large number of stores and restaurants line up along the road leading up to the Itsukushima Shrine, and visitors can enjoy a variety of local specialty dishes such as yaki-gaki (grilled oysters) and anago-meshi (broiled conger eel on top of rice).



Stunning view from Mt. Misen

Information

- Elevation(m) 20–529 (Mt. Misen)
- Area (ha) 1,322.73
- Entrance fee Free
- Operating seasons Accessible 24 hours a day
- Accommodation options [Outside the forest] Hotels and Japanese inns, Group cabins (Check-in time: 3:00 p.m.; check-out time 10:00 a.m.; 365 days a year; 2,800 yen per person), Campsite (2-person permanent tents available; tents start at 1,800 yen); auto camping not allowed
- Car parking capacity / parking charges Use parking lots around Miyajimaguchi Pier to go to Miyajima Island. Generally about 1,000 yen per day.