

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.

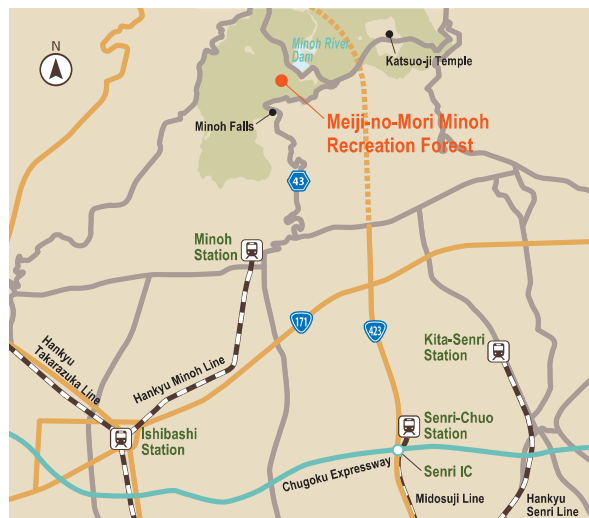
With more than 70% of Japan landmass covered in abundant
greenery, the Forestry Agency is working to create "Recreation Forests"
to inspire as many as possible to rediscover the wonder of nature.

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

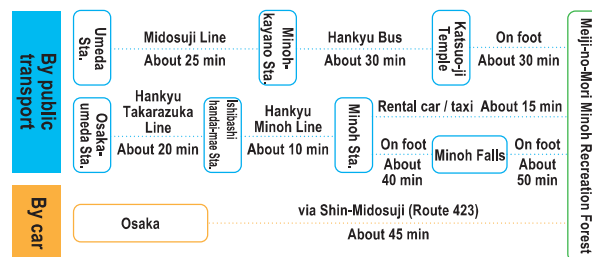
Know before You Visit: General rules for visitors

- 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.

Meiji-no-Mori Minoh Recreation Forest Access Map



Access



Meiji-no-Mori Minoh Recreation Forest

Location : Minoh City, Osaka Prefecture

Management office contact details :
Kyoto/Osaka Forest Administration Office
FAX : 075-432-2375

Meiji-no-Mori Minoh Recreation Forest Management Committee
(Secretariat: NPO Minoh Sanroku Conservation Committee)
FAX : 072-724-3615

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



MINOH

Recreation Forest



Suburban forest with abundant nature designated in commemoration of the centennial of the Meiji Restoration

Meiji-no-Mori Minoh Recreation Forest Map



Geographical/ topographical features

The Recreation Forest is located in northern Minoh City, at the southern end of the Hokusetsu Mountain Range. From the Osaka Plain, the mountains look like steep walls, and rivers flowing down the steep slopes cut deep, V-shaped valleys. Minoh Falls, known as one of Japan's most renowned waterfalls, can be found in one of these valleys. It is said that the waterfall was named "Minoh" (meaning "the face of a winnowing basket") because the water cascades dramatically off a rock cliff resembling a "mi" (a winnowing basket used in agriculture), and that this is the origin of Minoh as a place name. In the Hokusetsu Mountain Range, new strata (from the Osaka Group) randomly overlays older strata (from the Tamba Group), and many cracks are found running north-south in the old strata. It is believed that these topographic and geological features are associated with the fact that communities of the cherry species, Edohigan (*Cerasus itosakura f. ascendens*), are found in this area.



Historical/ cultural features

The Recreation Forest consists of land that was formerly a domain's estate (Settsu Province) and the estates of two temples (Ryuan-ji Temple / Katsuo-ji Temple).

*Ryuan-ji Temple: This temple was originally founded as Minoh-ji Temple by a mountain ascetic, En no Gyoja, in 650 CE. To this day, Ryuan-ji Temple serves as the central training hall for Shugendo, which is based on mountain worship. Ascetic Buddhist monks gather from all over Japan to take part in large-scale "goma" (holy fire) services in April, July and November every year.

*Katsuo-ji Temple: The temple was founded in 727 CE. It is the 23rd holy site in the 33 Saikoku pilgrimage sites, and is also famous for helping its visitors win in competitive situations.

The Minoh River gorge's dense maple foliage has been a renowned autumn-leaves viewing spot since around the early 18th century.

Japan's first long-distance nature trail (the Tokai Nature Trail / 1,697 km long), connecting the Meiji-no-Mori Minoh Quasi-National Park and the Meiji-no-Mori Takao Quasi-National Park, was completed in 1974.



Climate/ flora and fauna

The forest of Minoh is affected by the warm Osaka Bay, the cold seasonal winds in winter and complicated topographic and geological features. About 1,100 species of plants, including ferns, have been found in the forest. The forest has developed a rich ecological system that more than 3,000 species of insects call home in addition to a large variety of wild birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles. It is known as one of Japan's three major insect habitats, along with Takao in Tokyo and Kibune in Kyoto, and the habitat of the Nihon Zaru (Japanese macaque (*Macaca fuscata*)) in the forest has been designated as a natural monument.



Attractions

The area was designated as the Meiji-no-Mori Minoh Quasi-National Park and the Meiji-no-Mori Minoh Recreation Forest in 1967 in commemoration of the centennial of the Meiji Restoration. Only about one hour from central Osaka by train or car, the forest has a rich ecological system, offering hiking trails, nature study trails and other facilities for getting in touch with nature. The Minoh Visitor Center in Masanochaya Enchi Park also provides a variety of displays and services. Forest visitors can enjoy the beauty of the gorge, including Minoh Falls (a drop of 33 m), which has been selected as one of Japan's 100 best waterfalls. Many historical sites redolent with history and culture can also be seen, such as Ryuan-ji Temple and Katsuo-ji Temple.

Many hiking trails leading from the foot of the mountain to the quasi-national park have signposts—a reassurance for hikers.



Information

■ Elevation (m)	150 - 600
■ Area (ha)	581.96
■ Entrance fee	Free
■ Opening seasons	[Katsuo-ji Enchi Park of Forest Agency] 8:30 am – 5:00 pm, 365 days a year [EXPO '90 Minoh Kinennomori Picnic Site]: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Closed on Tuesdays (Wednesday if Tuesday is a national holiday), The year-end and New Year holidays.
■ Operation hours by staff	[Minoh Visitor Center]: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm *Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays from April to November: 9:30 am – 5:00 pm Closed on Tuesdays (Wednesday if Tuesday is a national holiday), The year-end and New Year holidays.
■ Accommodation options	[Outside the forest] Accommodation facilities in Minoh City, campsites (some require a fee)
■ Car parking capacity / parking charges	Minoh Visitor Center: Free parking for about 20 vehicles EXPO '90 Minoh Kinennomori Picnic Site: Free parking for about 30 vehicles Katsuo-ji Enchi Park of Forest Agency: Free parking for 113 vehicles Minoh Falls Dainichi Parking Lot: Parking for 70 vehicles (paid depending on the season)