

## 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.

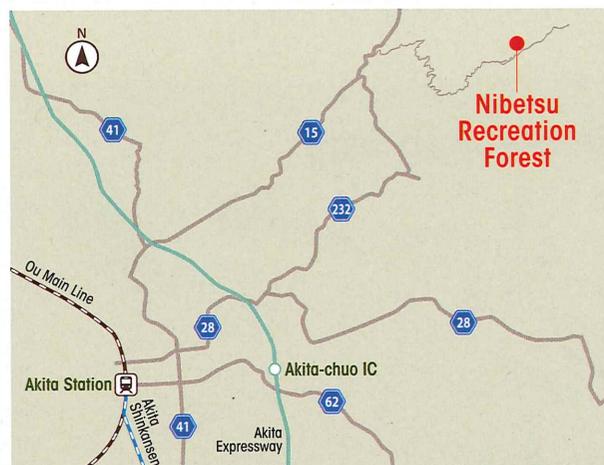
With more than 70% of Japan landmass covered in abundant greenery, the Forestry Agency is working to create "Recreation Forests" to inspire as many as possible to rediscover the wonder of nature.

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.
- 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.

### Nibetsu Recreation Forest (Nibetsu Kokumin-No-Mori) Access Map



### Access

By public transport:

- 50 minutes by taxi from Akita Station
- Tokyo Station → (Akita Shinkansen: about 230 minutes) → Akita Station

By car:

- Tohoku Expressway Akita Chuo IC → (public road, Nibetsu Forest Road: about 50 minutes, 23.6 km) → Nibetsu Shinrin Museum

### Nibetsu Recreation Forest (Nibetsu Kokumin-No-Mori)

Address : Nibetsu, Akita Prefecture

Management office contact details:

Akita District Forest Office  
FAX : 018-882-2614

### Akita City Nibetsu Recreation Forest Management Committee

(Within the Agricultural Land and Forest Development Division, Akita Municipal Office)  
FAX : 018-888-5736

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

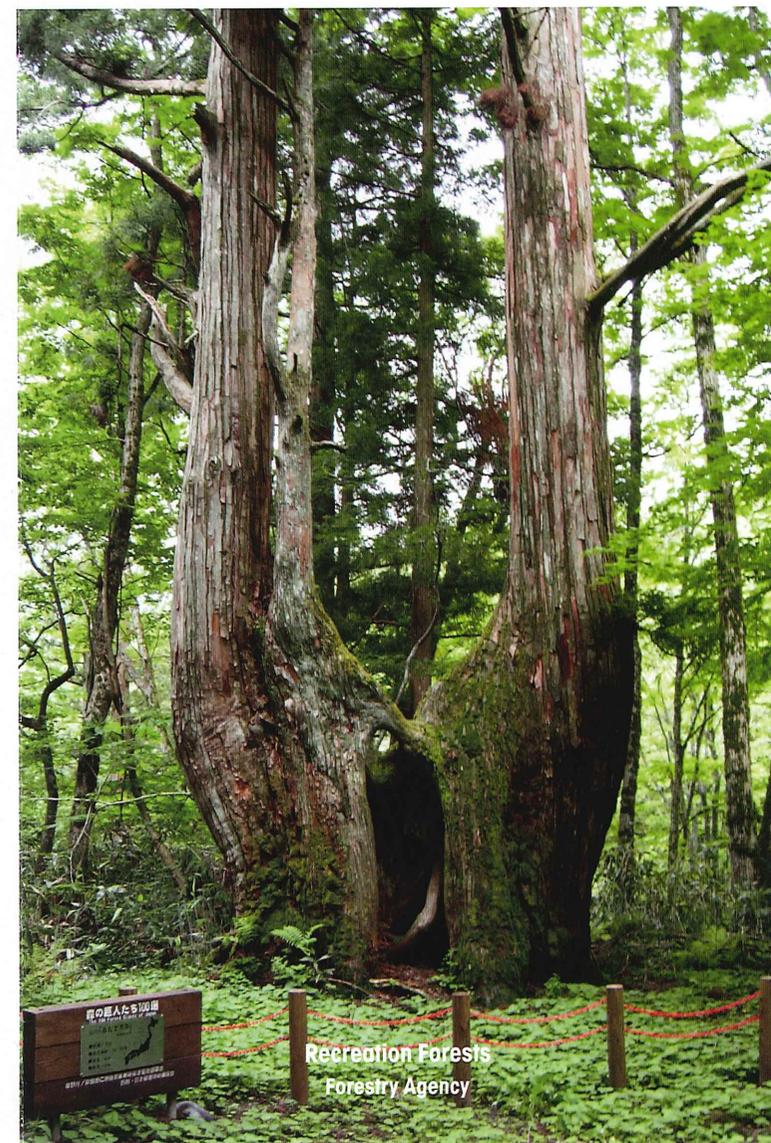
The Official Recreation Forests Website of the Forestry Agency  
[http://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/e/national\\_forest/recreation\\_forest/index.html](http://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/e/national_forest/recreation_forest/index.html)



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# NIBETSU

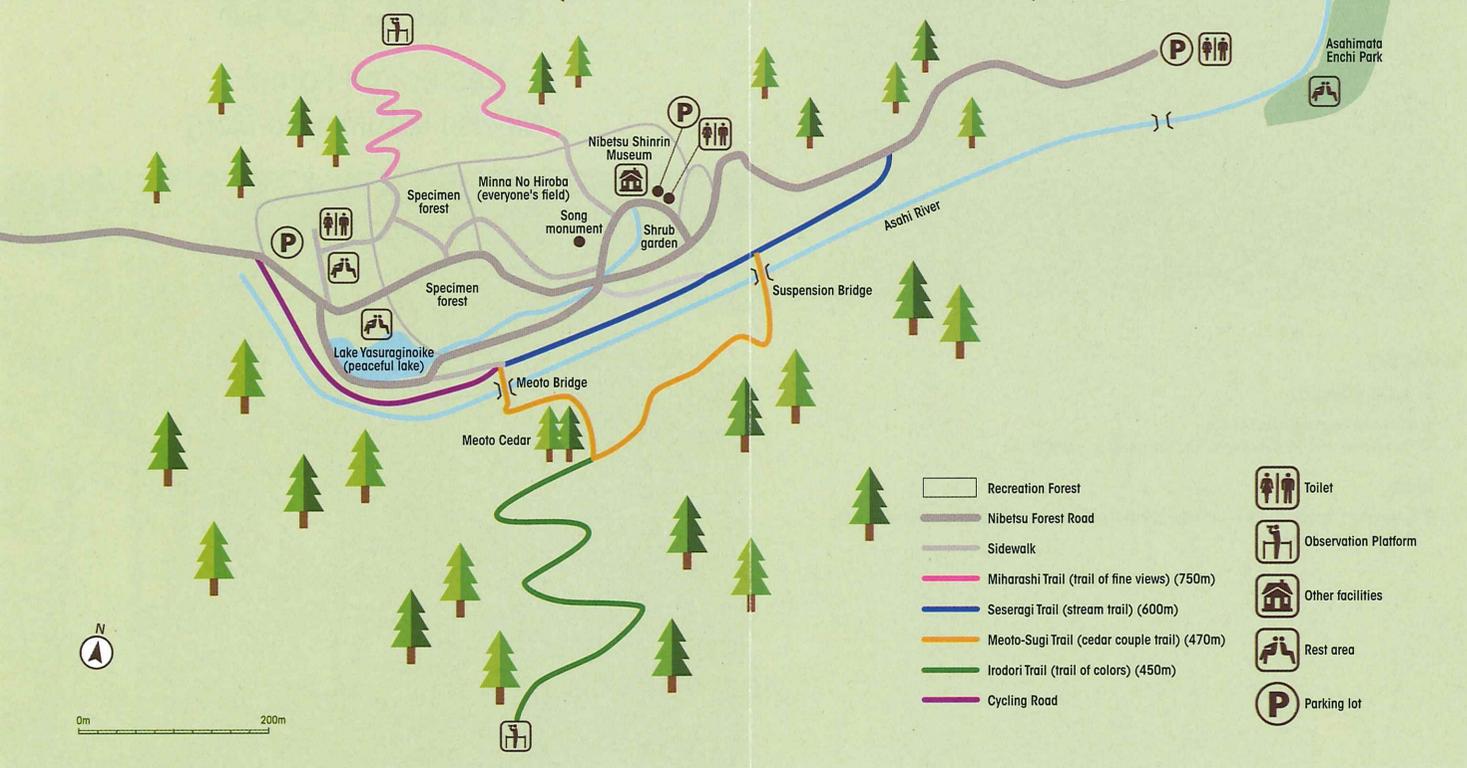
Recreation Forest  
(Nibetsu Kokumin-No-Mori)



Recreation Forests  
Forestry Agency

# Nibetsu Recreation Forest — home of natural Akita Cedar

## Nibetsu Recreation Forest (Nibetsu Kokumin-No-Mori) Map



## Climate, flora and fauna

The area up to an elevation of 700–800 m is a mixed forest of conifer trees—mainly Akita Cedar—and broad-leaved trees such as Buna (Japanese beech (*Fagus crenata* Blume)). The broad-leaved forest begins at an elevation of 800 m and mainly consists of Japanese beech and Mizunara (Japanese oak *Quercus crispula* Blume). The scenery is splendid year-round. In the spring, the fresh green leaves of the Japanese beech and the pink flowers of Benizakura (sargent cherry (*Cerasus sargentii* (Rehder) H.Okba) decorate the mountain, and in the autumn, colored maple leaves (*Acer*) are reflected by the river. Nihon Kamoshika (Japanese serow (*Capricornis crispus*)), which have been designated as a special natural treasure, can sometimes be seen along the Asahi River and the forest roads.



## Attractions

The Nibetsu Forest Museum has been constructed largely out of wood, and is a precious museum where you can learn history and experience the forest and forestry. A car from the steam train that formerly ran on the forest railroad is displayed, and the Museum explains the background of the beautiful natural forest of Akita Cedar. Free wood craft activities are also available.



The walking trails include the wooden Meoto Bridge and a suspension bridge over the limpid upper Asahi River. A symbol of the forest—the Meoto Cedar—is also found here.

## Geographical / topographical features

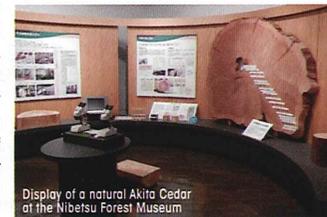
The Nibetsu Recreation Forest is in the Mt. Taihei Prefectural Natural Park, and extends across the base of Mt. Taihei almost at the center of Akita Prefecture. It is the headwaters area of the Asahi River, which runs through central Akita City. The mainly-granite bedrock has eroded to create a steep landscape despite the moderate elevation. The wide variety of topography, with valleys and waterfalls large and small, is one of the attractions of the forest.



Summit of Mt. Taihei

## Historical / cultural features

In 1966, the Forestry Agency designated six areas throughout Japan as Kokumin-No-Mori (forests for citizens) as a Meiji Restoration 100th anniversary project. One of them was Nibetsu Kokumin-No-Mori, which conserved natural Akita Cedar, Akita Prefecture's naturally grown Sugi (Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica* (L. f.) D. Don)), and contributes to preserving the landscape while providing a place for recreation (the area was later designated as a Recreation Forest). According to a local legend, En no Gyoja, a mountain ascetic in the Nara period (8th century) who is known as the founder of the Shugendō religion and the founder of sacred sites in various regions, opened a temple on Mt. Taihei. Mt. Taihei has been a sacred mountain and pilgrimage site from ancient times. Near the summit (outside the Recreation Forest) stands "okumiya" (the interior shrine) of Miyoshi Shrine on Mt. Taiheizan, which is famous for the Miyoshi Bonden Festival, also known as "Bonden fighting," which takes place annually in mid-January.



Display of a natural Akita Cedar at the Nibetsu Forest Museum

## Information

▪ Elevation(m)	200–1,171 (Mt. Taihei's summit)
▪ Area (ha)	2,795.23
▪ Entrance fee	Free
▪ Opening seasons	The forest is closed when Nibetsu Forest Road is covered with snow (mid-November through late April).
▪ Operation hours by staff	Nibetsu Shinrin Museum Operating season: April 28 through November 6 (may vary depending on snowfall) Operating hours: 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (April through September), 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. (October through November) Closed on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays (except for national holidays)
▪ Accommodation options	[Outside the forest] Hotels and inns in Akita City
▪ Car parking capacity / parking charges	Free parking for about 15 vehicles (unpaved)