

Welcome to Eastern Japan!

Famed for its history and culture, the beauty of its cities and natural scenery, and above all its people, eastern Japan stretches 750km from north to south, offering countless fascinating sites for visitors to explore. Let JR EAST be your guide to this enchanting region.



1 Shirakami Mountain Range (Aomori) World Heritage
Nearest station: Hirosaki (Ōu Line)
This vast mountainous region of 130,000 hectares enfolds one of the world's largest primeval beech forests and rare animals such as the Japanese serow and the black woodpecker. Registered as a World Heritage site, the Shirakami Mountain Range is perfect for mountain climbing and hiking.

2 Kakunodate (Akita)
Nearest station: Kakunodate (Akita Shinkansen)
The castle town known as "the capital of the northeast" is filled with historical buildings such as centuries-old mercantile houses and warehouses, as well as the old residences of samurai on Bukeyashiki-dori. The street attracts throngs of sightseers each spring to admire the blossoms of the weeping cherry trees.

3 Chuson-ji Konjiki-do (Iwate)
Nearest station: Ichinoseki (Tōhoku Shinkansen)
Jikaku Daishi En'nin, a Tendai Buddhism high priest, started the Chuson-ji temple in 850. The Konjiki-do, a Golden Hall within Chuson-ji, was completed in 1124. Covered in gold leaf inside and out, this precious historical jewel encapsulates the artistic genius of ancient Japan.

4 Matsushima (Miyagi)
Nearest station: Matsushima-Kaigan (Senseki Line)
The unforgettable sight of over 260 islands in Matsushima Bay is one of the three most scenic spots in Japan. The region is also rich in historical landmarks, such as Zuigan-ji, a temple commissioned by the great military commander, Date Masamune.

5 Zao Mountain Range (Yamagata)
Nearest station: Yamagata (Yamagata Shinkansen)
The majestic Zao Range spans 36km from north to south, with Kumano-dake being the tallest point. Sightseers come for its magnificent green colors in spring, the Japanese alpine cherry and dicentra blossoms in the summer, the colorful leaves in the fall, and the world-renowned beauty of the frost covered forests in the winter.

6 Aizu-Wakamatsu (Fukushima)
Nearest station: Aizu-Wakamatsu (Ban-Etsu-Sai Line)
Aizu-Wakamatsu is a 600 years old historical castle town with awe-inspiring sites such as Tsuruga-jo Castle and the mausoleums of the feudal lords of the Matsudaira clan. Natural attractions such as Mt. Otodake and Lake Inawashiro make Aizu-Wakamatsu a memorable destination year-round.

7 Temples and shrines of Nikko (Tochigi) World Heritage
Nearest station: Nikkō (Nikkō Line)
Surrounded by Nikko Mountains, there are 103 ancient historical structures including the Toshogu Shrine erected for Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Many of these sites have over a thousand years of history, and are registered along with their natural surroundings as a World Heritage site.

8 Kairakuen (Ibaraki)
Nearest station: Mito (Jōban Line)
One of Japan's three most renowned gardens, it has a cornucopia of flowers blooming over 13 hectares, including a plum grove that nurtures 3,000 trees from over 100 species. Vibrant year-round, the garden's brilliant expanse can be surveyed from Kobuntei, a traditional Japanese house with graceful beauty.

9 Sado (Niigata)
Nearest station: Niigata (Jōetsu Shinkansen)
Framed by sea and sky, Sado is an island of splendid natural beauty. Its towering cliffs, pounded by the surging waves, inspire awe for the majestic power of the sea. Among Sado's irresistible attractions are the excellent diving and fishing opportunities and the exquisite puppet theatre.

10 Kusatsu Onsen (Gunma)
Nearest station: Naganoharakusatsuguchi (Agatsuma Line)
Kusatsu, Japan's largest geothermal hot-spring resort area, has been attracting hot-spring bathers for centuries. To cool the scalding-hot waters sufficiently to permit bathing, the water is churned (yumomi) using 2m-long planks. Popular activities in nearby areas include autumn-leaf viewing and skiing.

11 Zenko-ji (Nagano)
Nearest station: Nagano (Nagano Shinkansen)
People all over have come to invest a profound faith in this 1,400-year-old temple, as a fount of compassion that promises paradise to all. The stately grandeur of this ancient temple, whose main temple building is designated as a National Treasure, befits its status of one of Japan's most exalted places of worship.

12 Kawagoe (Saitama)
Nearest station: Kawagoe (Kawagoe Line)
With its illustrious history, Kawagoe's streets are still lined today with centuries-old mercantile houses and temples. Kawagoe is rich with the feel of a real Edo-era castle town, with sites such as Toki no Kane (a bell tower) and Kashiya-Yokocho ("Confectioners' Alley").

13 Akihabara (Tokyo)
Nearest station: Akihabara (Yamanote Line)
One of Japan's largest electronics districts is Akihabara, Tokyo's "Electric Town". Unique electronics and specialized parts can be found here. Because of the bewildering variety of PC-related products, Akihabara is today winning fame as "the cutting-edge multimedia town".

14 Narita Shinsho-ji (Chiba)
Nearest station: Narita (Sōbu Line)
This sacred area was founded in 940, and incense is said to have been continually burning there every day since. Here in the spacious temple grounds you will find many cultural treasures such as Deva gates with giant hanging paper lanterns and a three-story pagoda with intricate carvings on the underside of the eaves.

15 The Great Buddha of Kamakura (Kanagawa)
Nearest station: Kamakura (Yokosuka Line)
With a height of 13.35m including pedestal and eyes over a meter wide, this is the only Buddha statue designated as a national treasure in Kamakura. The Colossal Hall was washed away by a tsunami in the 15th century, and now the Great Buddha sits in the open. The hollow interior of the statue is open to the public.

16 Atami Onsen (Shizuoka)
Nearest station: Atami (Tōkaidō Line)
Atami is a famous hot-spring resort town with history dating back 1,200 years. The record shows that Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu and his retainers stayed in Atami in the Edo era. Beloved of Japan's literary classes, countless novels have been set in the idyllic resort.

17 Mt. Fuji (Yamanashi)
Nearest station: Ōtsuki (Chūō Line)
Mt. Fuji is Japan's tallest mountain with a base stretching across the horizon and a lone symmetrical cone soaring 3,776m into the sky. Visitors can travel by bus to the Fifth Station. Mt. Fuji is surrounded by five lakes, including Lake Yamanaka, where an abundance of leisure activities like camping and fishing are available.

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