

**Oguni Town Hall, Information Division,  
Commerce and Tourism Section**

+81-967-46-2113

1567-1 Miyahara, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

Business hours 8:30 - 17:15  
(excluding national holidays and year-end / New Year holidays)

**Aso Oguni Tourism Association**

+81-967-46-4440

1754-17 Miyahara, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

Business hours 8:30 - 17:00 (excluding 12/29 to 1/3)



Nature | Hot Springs | History and Festivals | Art and Architecture | Industry

**ASO OGUNI**


# ASO OGUNI TRAVEL GUIDE



**A small but beautiful land**



\*The information in this travel guide is current as of March 2025. Please note that details may change without prior notice.



**A place that will make you  
want to take a deep breath**

There's a place that will make you feel at peace just  
by being there.

Open skies over the satoyama landscape.

Hot springs seeping out gently.

A valley where a clear stream trickles down.






This is the small yet beautiful land of Oguni.

A place connected to the depths of the Earth.

We invite you to explore the unique landscapes you  
can find only here.

## Nabegataki Falls

Nabegataki Falls is renowned for its endless stream of water resembling a curtain. With a width of approximately 20 meters and a height of approximately 10 meters, the waterfall cascades over the lava-formed terrain, creating a space behind the falls large enough for people to walk through and enjoy seasonal views through the mist. It is a natural masterpiece formed by the massive eruption of Mount Aso.

-  +81-967-46-4440 (Oguni Call Center)  
\*Reservations by phone are not accepted.
-  4100 Kurobuchi, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture
-  **Fee** Adults (high school students and above) 300 yen /  
Children (elementary and junior high school students) 150 yen
-  **Hours** 9:00-17:00 (Last admission: 16:30)
-  **Season** December 28 to January 3




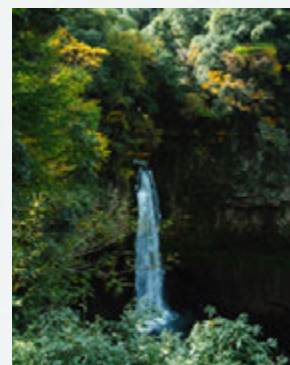
\*Admission to Nabegataki Falls requires advance reservation  
\*Online reservations and ticket purchases can be made on the day of your visit  
\*Ticket cancellations must be made at least 3 days prior to the reservation date  
(No refunds will be given after this deadline)



## Shimojo's Great Ginkgo / Shimojo Falls / Nabekama Falls



Designated as a National Natural Monument, this is the largest and most magnificent ginkgo tree in the prefecture. Nabekama Falls gets its name from its waterfall basin, which resembles the shape of a pot or kettle, and offers beautiful views of the complex rock formations and flowing water. There is also a walking trail, and Shimojo Falls is within walking distance.

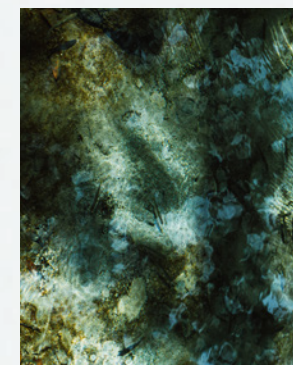
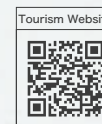
-  715-1 Shimojo, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture
-  **Fee** Free of charge



## Keyaki Spring

The 1,000-year-old zelkova tree is impressive with its majestic presence. To this day, clear water continues to gush forth from the base of the tree, marking the passage of time. Since ancient times, a water deity has been enshrined here to protect this spring that supports the lives of the local residents.

-  1682 Miyahara, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture
-  **Fee** Free of charge





## Waita Onsen Village

Six unique hot spring spots

Enjoy the distinct qualities that each spring offers

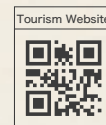
Mount Waita, which lies on the border between Oguni in Kumamoto Prefecture and Kokonoe in Oita Prefecture, is home to six hot spring spots known as the Waita Onsen Village. Known as a hot spring resort with unique baths such as Hagenoyu Onsen and Takenoyu Onsen, this area offers a variety of spring qualities—from milky white to clear. Each spot offers a distinct and enjoyable scenic view.

+81-967-46-5750 ( Waita Onsen Association )

2816 Takenoyu, Nishizato, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

**Festival** Waita Onsen Thanksgiving Festival  
(Held every year on the first Tuesday of October)

2816 Nishizato, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture  
(Yukemuri Chaya)



## Yamakawa Onsen

Milky white hot spring water rich in mineral deposits.

A quiet hot spring area nestled in the mountains.

+81-967-46-4440 ( Aso Oguni Tourism Association)

1441-1 Kitazato, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture



This hot spring is known for its milky white spring water rich in mineral deposits, characterized by strong sulfur scent and smooth, silky texture (which can vary depending on the time of day and the specific hot spring). This serene hot spring area, located along the Kitazato River, which is recognized as one of "Kumamoto's Top 100 Firefly Habitats," features about eight onsen ryokan (traditional Japanese inn) scattered throughout the area. Fireflies can be seen here from June to July.



## Tsuetate Onsen

Enjoy the charming atmosphere created by the row of traditional Japanese-style inns along the riverside. Natural hot spring source with high temperature.

This historic hot spring town was established about 1,800 years ago. Its naturally flowing spring water reaches temperatures of 98°C, and the steam room and steam baths that utilize the hot steam are popular. These natural steam saunas are typically built in cave-like style with low ceilings and are found in most inns. The annual Koinobori Festival (Carp Streamer Festival) also draws large crowds each year.

+81-967-48-0206 (Tsuetate Onsen Tourism Association)  
4173-5 Shimajo, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

**Festival** Koinobori Festival (Held every year from late March to late April)

Tsuetate Onsen Area, Shimajo, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

MAP



Tourism Website



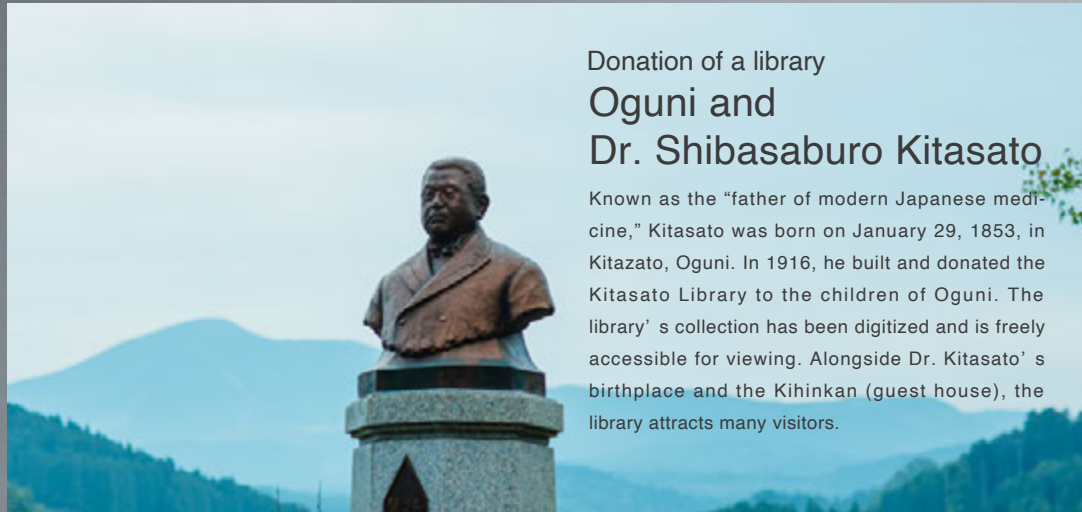
## Great historical figure from Oguni Achievements of Dr. Shibasaburo Kitasato

Shibasaburo Kitasato was a world-renowned bacteriologist born in Oguni during the late Edo period. While studying abroad in Germany, he succeeded in growing the pure culture of tetanus bacillus, paving the way for tetanus serum therapy. Using this treatment, he saved many diphtheria patients in Japan. He also founded the Institute of Infectious Diseases and the Japan Medical Association, contributing greatly to the advancement of medicine and public health in Japan.



## Donation of a library Oguni and Dr. Shibasaburo Kitasato

Known as the “father of modern Japanese medicine,” Kitasato was born on January 29, 1853, in Kitazato, Oguni. In 1916, he built and donated the Kitasato Library to the children of Oguni. The library’s collection has been digitized and is freely accessible for viewing. Alongside Dr. Kitasato’s birthplace and the Kihinkan (guest house), the library attracts many visitors.



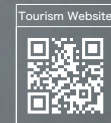
## Featured on the new 1,000 yen note Dr. Shibasaburo Kitasato and the 1,000 yen note

Dr. Shibasaburo Kitasato was chosen as the portrait on the new 1,000 yen note, which began circulation on July 3, 2024. He was the first person to successfully grow pure culture of the tetanus bacillus, paving the way for tetanus serum therapy. He contributed to the enactment of the Infectious Diseases Control Act, which laid the foundation for public health. He spent his life fighting infectious diseases.



## Kitasato Shibasaburo Memorial Museum

- ☎ +81-967-46-5466  
\*Reservations by phone are not accepted.
- 📍 3199 Kitazato, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture
- 🎫 **Fee** Adults: 800 yen /  
Elementary, junior high, and high school students: 400 yen /  
Children under elementary school age: Free
- 🕒 **Hours** 9:30-16:30 (Last admission: 16:00)
- 📅 **Holiday** December 29 to January 3



1

2

3

4

1. Kitasato Shibasaburo Memorial Museum
2. Donner Hall (Theater Room)
3. Kitasato Library (Exhibit Showcase)
4. Kihinkan (Guest House)



## Summer and autumn festivals in Oguni

As summer tradition, the Miyahara Gion Shrine Grand Festival is held in July, followed by the Furusato Summer Festival, which takes place during the Obon season, attracting large crowds every year. Fireworks displays are sometimes held simultaneously. In autumn, the Autumn Grand Festival, which has been held for over 250 years, and the Furusato Autumn Festival take place in October. During the festival, a procession carrying portable shrines (mikoshi) parades from the temporary shrine (okariya) to the two main shrines. People pass beneath the mikoshi to pray for good health and safety.

**Furusato Summer Festival** (Held every year during the Obon season)

📍 Keyaki Hiroba area, 1754-14 Miyahara, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

**Furusato Autumn Festival** (Held every year in October)

📍 Miyahara city center



## The natural landscapes of Oguni as his inspiration

Zenzo Sakamoto, also known as the “Gray Painter,” drew deep inspiration from the natural landscapes and climate of Oguni, which formed the backdrop of many of his works. He received high international acclaim, including winning the Grand Prix at the Paris International Print Exhibition. This museum houses and displays approximately 500 of his works in a traditional Japanese house built in 1872 that was relocated from within the town. It is a rare museum where visitors can leisurely enjoy the works of art in a tatami-mat room. Special exhibitions and events are held regularly throughout the year.

## Sakamoto Zengo Museum of Art

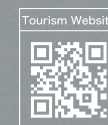
☎ +81-967-46-5732

📍 2877 Kurobuchi, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

**Fee** General admission: 500 yen /  
University and high school students: 400 yen /  
Junior high and elementary school students: 200 yen

**Hours** 9:00-17:00 (Last admission: 30 minutes before closing)

**Notes** Closed every Monday  
(if Monday is a public holiday, closed the following day),  
during New Year holidays (December 29 to January 3),  
and temporarily closed for exhibition changes



# Michi-no-Eki Oguni Yu-Station

Designed by Shoei Yo  
Completed in 1987

The building features a three-dimensional wooden truss structure and serves as a symbol of the "Yuki no Sato" concept, utilizing 2,461 square timber pieces of Oguni cedar. It also acts as a gateway to the town and features a gift shop where visitors can purchase souvenirs.

📍 1754-17 Miyahara, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

🆓 Free of charge

🕒 8:30-17:00

🚫 Closed during the New Year holidays (please check the website for any temporary closures or changes)



## Group of wooden buildings in Oguni

Oguni is one of Japan's leading forestry regions. Since the 1980s, the "Yuki no Sato" initiative has served as a model for new approaches to satoyama (forest-farmland) living, with a series of wooden public buildings constructed using Oguni cedar. The buildings feature Japan's first full-scale wooden three-dimensional truss structure, and their innovative design has helped reshape Oguni's image.

## Oguni Dome

Designed by Shoei Yo  
Completed in 1988

This town gymnasium has a capacity of 3,000 people, and is one of the largest wooden structures in Japan, constructed using 5,602 pieces of Oguni cedar. Known for its excellent acoustics, it has hosted numerous concerts and events.

📍 214-2 Miyahara, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

\*Please check the Oguni Town website for information on the use of the facilities.



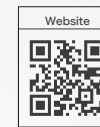
## Mokkonkan

Designed by Hideaki Katsura + Sekkei Keikaku Ishimaru Office  
Completed in 1988

This training and lodging facility features a unique construction method called the "box beam" technique. One of the main highlights of the structure is its varied and dynamic architectural composition. Inside the building, where visitors can enjoy the natural scent of wood, there are conference rooms, training rooms, and a traditional tea room.

📍 371-1 Kitazato, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

\*Please check the Manabi no Sato website for information on the use of the facilities.



## NISHIZATO TERAS (formerly Nishizato Elementary School)

Designed by Yasufumi Kijima + KEIKAKU Inc.  
Completed in 1991

The central structure is a 48-sided dome, surrounded by classrooms arranged around it. After closing down, the school was renovated and is now used as a facility for various exchanges centered on work, food, and people.

📍 985-2 Nishizato, Oguni-machi, Aso-gun, Kumamoto Prefecture

\*Please check the NISHIZATO TERAS website for information on the use of the facilities and business hours.





## Oguni daikon radish grown in the cool climate of the highlands

The Aso region has been designated as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS). Among the towns in this region, Oguni, located at altitude of 500 to 1,200 meters, is famous for its production of highland vegetables. Oguni daikon radishes, which are grown in the cool climate and can be shipped even in summer, are particularly popular for firm texture and crisp taste. Enjoy the freshness of these radishes harvested from the vast fields.



Website  
For information on direct sales stores, please access the QR code on the left.



Website  
For information on direct sales stores, please access the QR code on the left.



## A treasure trove of geothermal energy. Envisioning the future of energy.

Oguni is a treasure trove of geothermal energy. The geothermal power plant, which commenced operations in 2015, generates approximately 17 million kWh annually—enough to cover the electricity consumption of all households in Oguni and Minamioguni. In Waita, steam rises vigorously from the ground, with many hot springs and steam baths, reflecting the abundance of geothermal resources. As a result, achievement of energy self-sufficiency is expected in the future.

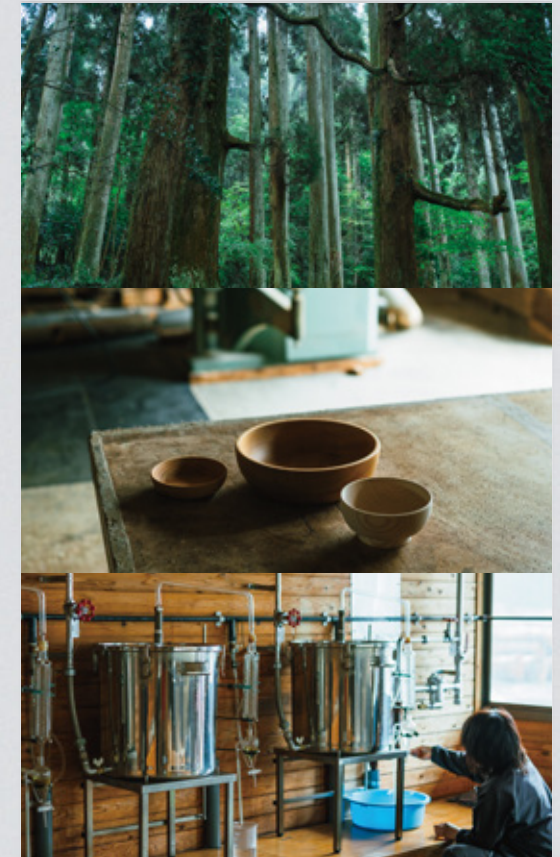


Map



## Milk from the rare Jersey cows, which accounts for less than 1% of dairy cows in Japan

Jersey cows, a small breed of cattle, are known for their brown color and large eyes. A herd of 98 cows were introduced to Oguni in the 1950s. They make up less than 1% of dairy cows across Japan, making them quite rare. Compared to the common Holstein dairy cows, Jersey milk has a higher fat content and a rich flavor, making it smooth and easy to drink while still offering a creamy, full-bodied taste.



## 270-year-old Oguni cedar In pursuit of sustainable forestry

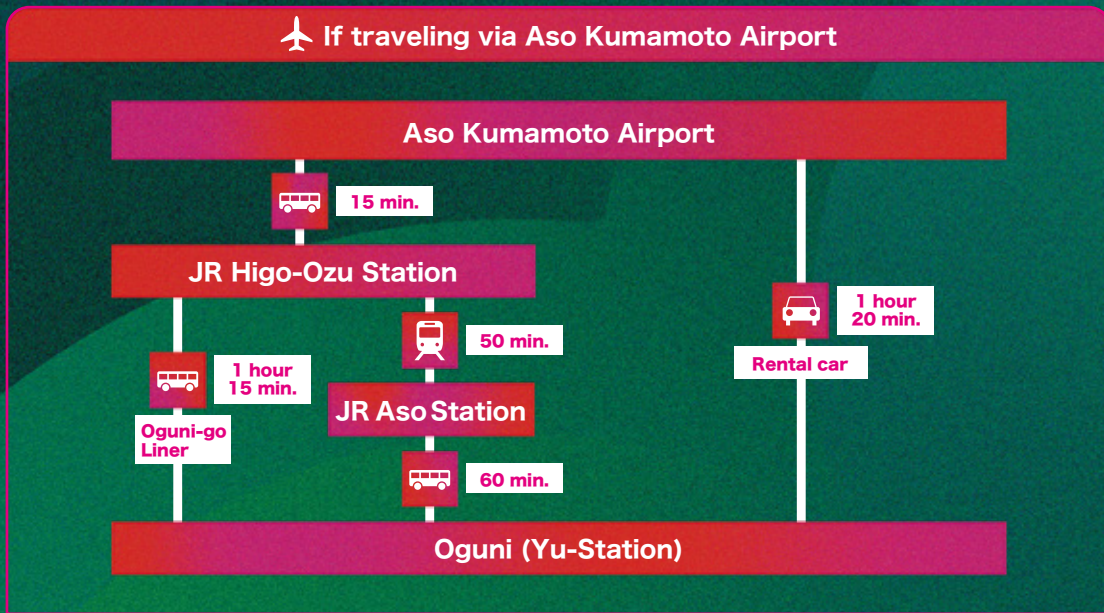
About 270 years ago, the Hosokawa clan, who ruled the Higo Province, distributed 25 saplings to each household and encouraged forestry, which is said to be the beginning of Oguni's forestry industry. As a result, the Aso Oguni cedar brand was carefully nurtured over the centuries. Recently, essential oils extracted from the branches and leaves are also produced, known as Oguni cedar essential oil.



Website  
For more details, please access the QR code on the left.



Video  
For more details, please access the QR code on the left.



### If traveling by car

- Hita IC**  
From Hita IC on the Oita Expressway, take National Route 212 toward Aso
- Kokonoe IC**  
From Kokonoe IC on the Oita Expressway, take National Route 387 toward Aso
- Kumamoto IC**  
From Kumamoto IC on the Oita Expressway, take National Route 57 toward Aso. From Aso City, head north on National Route 212.

### If traveling by bus

Bus services may be suspended depending on the season or weather conditions. Please contact each operator in advance for the latest information.



|   |  |  |                                       |
|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Nature</b><br>Nabegataki Falls<br>Keyaki Spring<br>Shimojo's Great Ginkgo<br>Shimojo Falls | <b>History</b><br>Kitasato Shibasaburo Memorial Museum | <b>Architecture</b><br>Yu-Station<br>Mokkonkan<br>Oguni Dome<br>NISHIZATO TERAS (formerly Nishizato Elementary School) | <b>Information</b><br>Oguni Town Hall |
|   | <b>Art</b><br>Sakamoto Zenzo Museum of Art             |  |                                       |