Recommended Sightseeing Routes

(Courtesy of Nara Pref. Visitors Bureau)
Nara, the ancient capital of medicine

Nara’s Three World Heritage Sites

1. Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area
   - Horyu-ji Temple
   - Hoki-ji Temple

2. Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara
   - Todai-ji Temple
   - Kasuga-taisha Shrine
   - Kasugayama Primeval Forest
   - Kofuku-ji Temple
   - Gango-ji Temple

3. Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range
   - 吉野大峰・金峯山寺
   - 熊野三山・那智大滝（和歌山県）
   - 高野山・奥院（和歌山県）

Japan’s first World Heritage Site, listed in Dec., 1993
Listed in Dec., 1998
Listed in July, 2004
From the words inscribed on the statue of Yakushi Nyorai (the Medicine Buddha) in the main hall, it is assumed that the temple was built in 607.

Until just before the completion of the Great Buddha statue, Todai-ji was known as Yamato Konkomyo-ji. The name Todai-ji "東大寺" means a temple (寺) at the east (東) of the capital of Heijo-kyo.
Nara Park Route

The unmissable

1. Nara Park

The deer get up early here.

Our antlers can be used in medicine!

2. Todai-ji

This used to be the treasure house of Todai-ji

Taking a break...

3. Nigatsudo Hall

The spectacular view from the

Rokushin-gan is said to be linked to traditional medicines used at the Shuni-e ceremony.

4. Kasuga-taisha—
a short walk away

Next to see is the Great Buddha at

Kasuga-taisha—
a short walk away

5. Himuro-jinja Shrine

The stage for the 1,300 year-old Shuni-e ceremony

This shrine was built in the Nara Period to honor the god for ice storage and ice factories believed to reside in this area.

6. Kofuku-ji Temple

The unmissable

Our antlers can be used in medicine!

Taking a break...

Shosoin

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Nara Park Map

Nara Park

Kofuku-ji Temple

Todai-ji Temple

Kasuga-taisha Shrine

Kasuga-yama Primeval Forest

JR Nara Sta.

Nara Women’s University

Tourist Information Center

JR Nara Sta.

Nara Pref. Office

Kaida-in

Great Buddha Hall

Tegaimon Gate

Shosoin

Chisoku-in

Daibutsu Pond

Nigatsudo Hall

Sangatsudo Hall

Tamukeyama Hachimangu Shrine

Sarusawa Pond

National Treasure Hall

Tokondo Hall

Five Storied Pagoda

Ichi-no-Torii Gate

New Public Hall

Kasuga-taisha Shin’en Garden

Deer Enclosure

Ni-no-Torii Gate

Wakamiya-jinja Shrine

Nara National Museum

Shosoin

Daibutsu Pond

Chisoku-in

Kaidan-in

Great Buddha Hall

Tegaimon Gate

Nara National Museum

Ichi-no-Torii Gate

New Public Hall

Kasuga-taisha Shin’en Garden

Deer Enclosure

Ni-no-Torii Gate

Wakamiya-jinja Shrine

Nara National Museum

Ichi-no-Torii Gate

New Public Hall

Kasuga-taisha Shin’en Garden

Deer Enclosure

Ni-no-Torii Gate

Wakamiya-jinja Shrine
Tenkawa Route – the Sacred Land of Shugendo

Have you ever heard the sound of a trumpet shell?

Ominesan Ryusen-ji Temple

Ryusen-ji Temple was founded by En-no-Gyoja, who was also the founder of Omine-san-ji Temple. Ryusen-ji is the head temple of the Daigo sect of Shingonshu Buddhism, and is a must-visit temple for trainee ascetics of the Shugendo tradition.

The village of Dorogawa Onsen hot springs is located about 820m above sea level, near the Sanjo River flowing from Mt. Omine. Cool even in the summer time, it is known in Japan as “Kansai’s Karuizawa”, in reference to the Nagano resort town popular in the summer with residents of Tokyo. Renowned for its rustic Japanese atmosphere, the village holds about 20 inns, 13 souvenir shops, shops for Daranisuke-gan, and more. –from the “Mt. Omine Dorogawa Hot Spring Tourism Association”

What’s nearby?

Tenkawa Benzaiten Shrine

Good medicine tastes bitter!!

How about “Daranisuke-gan” as a souvenir?

A nostalgic town

The god of performing arts! Many artists and entertainers visit here to pray.
Menfudo limestone cave

A 5-minute tram ride takes you to the cave

0.3km
3 minutes walk

Ryusen-ji Temple

0.1km
1 minute walk

Sanjo-ga-dake
Historical Museum

Walk around
Dorogawa

Famous local tofu

Daranisuke-gan

Leaves serve grilled
ayu or amago fish,
and traditional rice
crackers!

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Mt. Yoshino History Route – More than just Cherry Blossoms

Kimpusen-ji is a temple of the Shugendo ascetic sect of Buddhism. Cherry blossoms in this area are renowned as the best in Japan, and the trees are considered sacred. The temple was founded by En-no-gyoja in the late 7th century. Stories tell us that En-no-gyoja carved the images of a deity, Kongo Zao Daigongen, into cherry trees and enshrined them in the Zao-do Halls at both the peak and the foot of the mountain.

Zaodo Hall of the mountain temple Kimpusen-ji

The famous three-legged frog statues!

Two wooden-carved three-legged frogs are displayed at the “Daranisu-hompo” shop (Fujii Risaburo Yakubo). The frog is a registered trademark of the shop.

Mountains of cherry blossoms, preserved for over 1000 years!!

Sakuramotobo training hall

Yoshimizu-jinja Shrine – The place where the Emperor Godaigo’s Southern Dynasty came to an end

An ascetic training hall!

Plenty to see!!

World Heritage!!

The second largest wooden structure in Japan

“The Fuji Daranisuke-gan” is the definitive Yoshino medicine. Made with En-no-Gyoja’s secret formula for 300 years.

Genealogy of the Southern and Northern Dynasties

Northern Dynasty

Southern Dynasty

The numbers 1 - 9 shows the order of the Northern Dynasty Emperors.
1.5 km 25 minutes walk
5 minutes by ropeway

0.6 km 徒歩9分

0.1 km 10 minutes walk (steep steps)

0.7 km 10 minutes walk

0.7 km 11 minutes walk

0.1 km 2 minutes walk
Gose Imazumi Route – Home to the World’s Oldest Medicine Maker

Gose was a key production site for medicinal herbs. It is also home to Mt. Katsuragi, where En-no-Gyoja started his ascetic religious training in the Shugendo tradition. The Sankogan Museum of Pharmacy houses various displays relating to medicine in the past. In addition, by learning about the medicine “Sankogan” with its 700 years of production, visitors can also discover the history of Nara’s unique household medicine distribution business.

Open hours: 9:00–16:30, Monday-Friday, and 1st Saturday of each month

A town of spiritual heritage

Kissho-ji Temple Tondo: One of Japan’s largest bonfires - An Intangible Cultural Property of Nara Prefecture

Kisshoso-ji Temple was founded by En-no-Gyoja (En-no-Ozunu).

Tamura Yakuhin Medicinal Plant Garden

The garden consists of an experiment garden and a sample garden, the latter of which is open to the public. It has recently expanded from 7,000 m² to 8,449 m². In May, visitors can enjoy the beautiful Chinese peonies.

Still lots more to see!

The Susuki Lantern Ceremony is designated as an Important Cultural Property by Nara Prefecture!

Date: July 16
Place: Kamotsuba-jinja Shrine

This signboard from the mid-Edo period reads “Someisan,” which was the main medicine produced by the Maruta Nakajima Seiyaku company, and known for its amazing healing effect.

The “Tengu” – a long-nosed goblin – has been the symbol of Maruta Nakajima Seiyaku since 1689.

- Opening months: April – October
- Usually open from Monday – Friday; 10:00am – 4:00pm (except holidays)
- Closed months: November - March
- Visitors are kindly requested to call in advance.

TEL 0745-66-1521
FAX 0745-66-1840
Takatori Route
– Center of the Capital City of Medicine Production

Tsubosaka-dera Temple

The temple’s official name is Minami-Hokke-ji, and its main image of the 11-faced Kannon is believed to heal eye disease.

Tosa Road

One of the three largest mountain castles in Japan!

Takatori Town
Medicine Museum

Tourist information “Musokan”
A step into Imai-cho feels like a step back into the Edo period. Of the area’s 700 houses, 9 are listed as Important Cultural Properties, and nearly 70% retain the original architectural style from the Edo Period. The town thrived and centered around Shonen-ji temple, which was founded by Imai Hyobu in the early 16th century.
Uda-Matsuyama Route – See the Old Matsuyama Road

In the past the Matsuyama Road played an important role as a route to the Ise Grand Shrine. In addition, it was the main road used to bring in fish and salt from Ise and Kumano, along with exporting Uda paper, “Kudzu” (arrowroot), oil, and medicines.

Pilgrimage to the Ise Grand Shrine had been popular since the Heian Period, and became even more so from the Muromachi to Edo Periods.

Ouda in Uda City was used as a hunting ground for the imperial court during the Asuka Period, and referred to as “Akinō”. The Matsuyama area was part of Akinō, and developed around the castle of the Akiyama Clan, which was one of Uda’s three great warrior families during the warring states period. Its quality water and cold climate make it an ideal place for brewing “sake” rice wine.

The garden was opened in 1729 by the lord of the Morino Clan, Tsutei. It is the oldest privately-owned medicinal plant garden in Japan, and was listed as a historic site by the national government in 1926. Around 250 varieties of medicinal plants grow in the garden. Admission: ¥300.

Japan’s oldest medicinal plant garden

About “Matsuyama”

This building used to be home to the Hosokawa family, who became medicine traders in 1806, and sold the medicines “Ninjin Gozoen” and “Tenju-gan” from 1835. The daughter of the second-generation head of the family became the mother of Tomokichi, who founded Fujisawa Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. (currently Astellas Pharma Inc.). Open from 10:00am, Admission: ¥300

About “Matsuyama”

Former inn “Abura-ya” at Fuda-no-tsuji (famous for once lodging the philosopher Motoori Norinaga)

Kubo Brewery (founded in 1702)

Yoshimura Brewery

Morino Medicinal Plant Garden

Takai Ōsenbon Sugi: The oldest “ido-sugi” (cedar trees found by a well) in Japan

“Kusuri-no-Yakata” Medicine Museum

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Matsuyama West Gate

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