

Setonaikai National Park
Fukuyama

Tomonoura

Historic port town along the Seto Inland Sea

鞆の浦

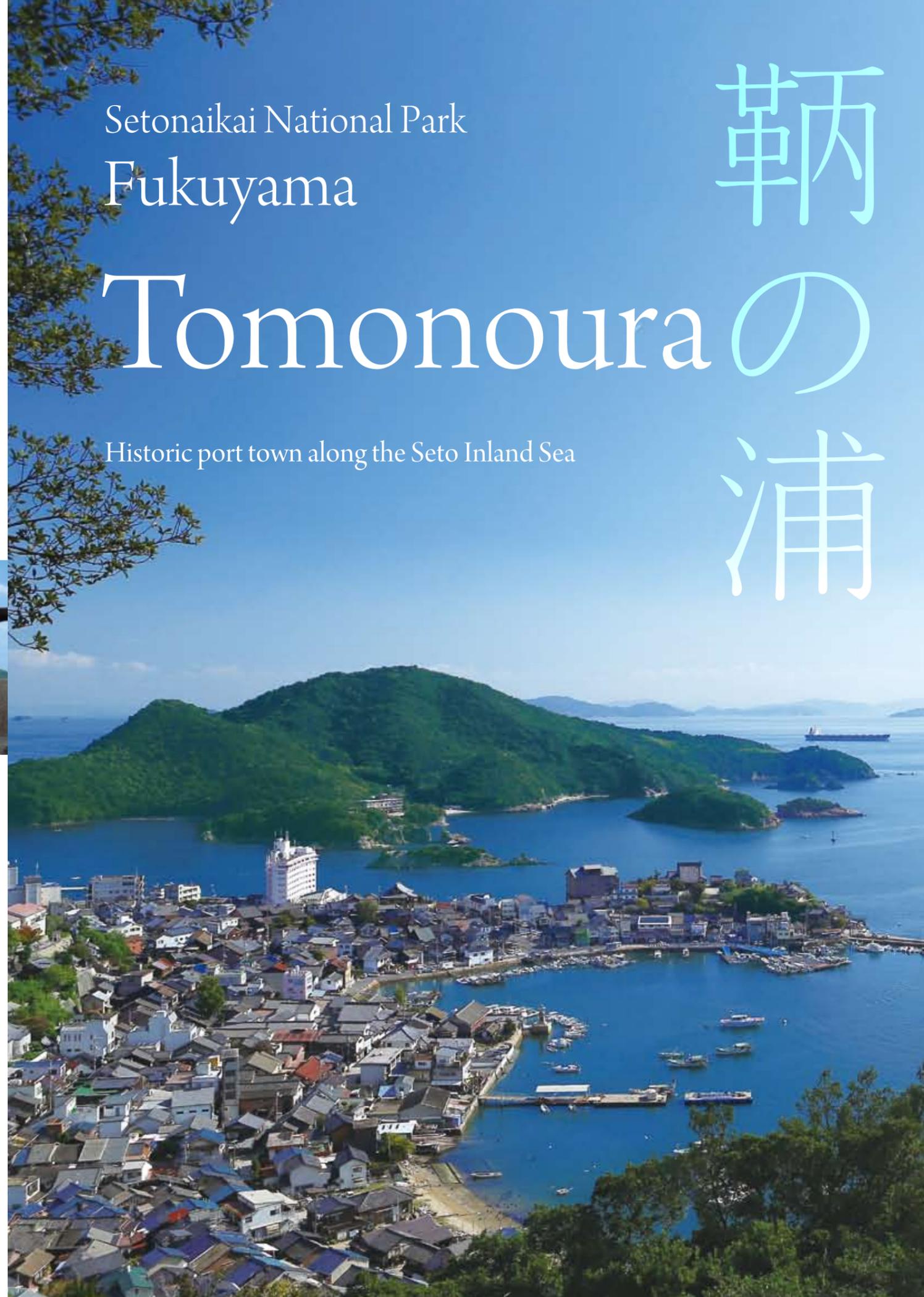


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Tomonoura, a port town of Fukuyama situated at the southern end of the Numakuma Peninsula near the center of the Seto Inland Sea, has flourished since the late 7th century as a location for boats to wait for favorable winds and tides. From the Edo period (1603-1868) to the present day, many people have lived within the historic townscape, and the nostalgic and peaceful atmosphere of the town warmly welcomes visitors. Furthermore, within the picturesque scenery woven by the sea and islands are the footprints of famous figures throughout history, such as Sakamoto Ryōma and Ashikaga Takauji, as well as freshly caught seafood raised in this rich natural environment. Just walking around this town decorated by its impressive history can lead you to new discoveries and inspirations.



The Scenic Beauty of the Seto Inland Sea

Walk around Tomonoura

the port for awaiting favorable tides



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Feel the Atmosphere of the Port Town



1

Historic port that tells of the prosperity of the Edo period

The Port of Tomo is situated in an important location of the Seto Inland Sea where eastern and western currents meet. When ships used to rely on the wind and tides for their voyages, this port was bustling with people awaiting favorable tides. In all of Japan, this is the only location where you can find port facilities from the Edo period still standing today. These facilities include: Jōyatō (lighthouse), gangi (tiered dock), hatoba (wharf), tadeba (boat repair dock), and funabansho (boat guardhouse station). Furthermore, the white-walled merchant houses and other traditional buildings interspersed around the area tell even now of Tomonoura's history as a trade town when the ships of the shipping routes (Kitamaebune) once came calling at the port.



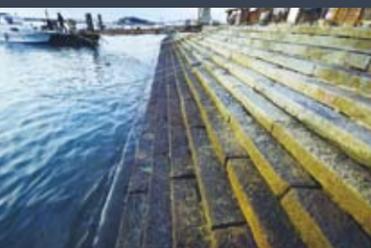
1. Jōyatō (lighthouse)...This is the tallest lighthouse made of stone in Japan, with a height of 10 meters between its top and its base in the sea. It was built in 1859 and served many years as the lighthouse for the area.

2. Gangi (tiered dock)...In Tomonoura, a step-like dock was built to facilitate cargo loading and unloading at either high or low tide. Records show that this stone tiered dock with twenty-one steps was built in 1811.

3. Hatoba (wharf)...These breakwaters, built out of large pieces of granite during the Edo period, were one of the largest built during that time. After the wharf was extended and repaired in 1824, it grew to its current length of 144 meters.

4. Tadeba (boat repair dock)...In order to make ships last longer, this facility was used to smoke boats with leaves and repair the bottoms of ships that were covered with shells and seaweed. As the largest dock situated in the Seto Inland Sea at the time, it used to be the pride of the area.

5. Funabansho (boat guardhouse station)...This station was built on the top of a cliff during the beginning of the Edo period by Ogino Shinemon Shigetomi, the first magistrate of Tomo, to observe ships entering and leaving the port as well as maintain security. The existing building was constructed around 1955.



2



3



4



5



Ōta Residence

The Ōta Residence consists of nine buildings, which includes the main house and hōmeishu, or medicinal liquor, brewery. The Nakamura family thrived on their hōmeishu brewery business between the middle and the end of the Edo period. The family extended the buildings to approximately the same scale as they exist today. Later, the Ōta family, which ran a shipping agency during the Meiji period (1868-1912), took over the site. The site is designated as an Important Cultural Property.



Tomonotsu Merchant House

The main house was built at the end of the Edo period and features a typical layout of the townhouses of Tomo, with the dirt floor stretching between the front and back of the house. The house was used as a shop that sold kimono fabric and fittings for ships until the beginning of the Meiji period.



Nagaya-mon Gate of the Okamoto Residence

The Nagaya-mon Gate, once part of Fukuyama Castle, was relocated in the beginning of the Meiji period and is now used as a hōmeishu store (below photo: hōmeishu on display). The gate used to be symmetrical, but now only the left side remains.



Director Hayao Miyazaki and Tomonoura

When Hayao Miyazaki visited Tomonoura on a trip as part of Studio Ghibli, he liked the area so much that he came back to develop his idea for his new film, renting a house on top of a cliff for two months. The animated film he then created, *Ponyo*, features scenery and elements that remind viewers of Tomonoura, such as the bonnet buses that run in the town, the nursery school facing the sea, and the tunnel in the area.



The director visited "Onfunayado IROHA" (refer to page 7) and drew sketches of the interior and exterior of the building during its renovation. These ideas and images can be seen throughout the building. Currently his sketches are displayed in the shop.





Visit Historic Scenes

Traces of historical figures throughout the town

Tomonoura has many anecdotes of famous figures from its multifaceted history. The Iroha Maru incident by the Kaientai (association of lordless samurai), led by Sakamoto Ryōma, is the most famous. Iroha Maru, a steamship, collided with a warship of the Kishū Domain and later sank off the coast of Tomonoura. Tomonoura was where Ryōma had negotiations to obtain compensation from the Kishū Domain. Some buildings related to the incident still remain there, including the merchant house where Ryōma and his companions stayed and the place where the first maritime trial was conducted in Japan.

The Site of Sakamoto Ryōma's Lodging

It is said that Ryōma and his companions of the Kaientai stayed at this house belonging to Masuya Seiemon, a shipping agent, during the negotiations of the Iroha Maru incident. A hidden room (on the right), where Ryōma stayed, was discovered in its original state in 1987, and the room is currently open to the public.



Taichōrō

Taichōrō is a reception hall adjacent to the main hall of Fukuzen-ji Temple and was used as a guest hall and accommodation for Joseon missions to Japan throughout the Edo period. Visitors can enjoy a magnificent view of Benten-jima Island and Sensui-jima Island from the tatami reception room, where the window frames the view like a painting.



Iroha Maru Museum

Materials related to the Iroha Maru incident are displayed in this building, which used to be a large storehouse built at the end of the Edo period. A diorama shows the state of the ship when it sank and its seabed excavation. Relics lifted from twenty meters below the sea are displayed here as well. (Left: Exterior of the Iroha Maru Museum)



The Site of the Negotiations of the Iroha Maru Incident (Onfunayado IROHA)

This building, known as the former residence of Uoya Manzō, served as the municipal office where negotiations between Ryōma and the Kishū Domain were held. The non-profit organization "Tomo Machizukuri Kōbō" renovated the building into a ryokan (Japanese-style inn) and restaurant.

Kaiganzan Senjuin Fukuzen-ji Temple

Fukuzen-ji Temple is said to have been built during the Tenryaku era (947-957) of the Heian period (794-1185). This ancient temple was built on top of the mountain near the coast. The grounds of the temple are designated as a National Historic Site and are said to be the place where the Kaientai and Kishū Domain negotiated.



Ankoku-ji Temple

This temple was originally built and named Kinpō-ji Temple during the Kamakura period (1185-1333). During the Muromachi period (1336-1573), it was renamed Ankoku-ji Temple following a provincial construction project by Ashikaga Takauji. The main hall burned down in 1920 and currently only the Shakadō Hall where the Butuden (the building where the Buddhist figure is enshrined) is located remains.



Nunakuma-jinja Shrine

A favorite Noh stage of the preeminent feudal lord Toyotomi Hideyoshi is located within the shrine grounds. Although currently it is fixed in place, it is the only demountable and portable stage remaining in Japan. It is designated as a National Important Cultural Property.



Iō-ji Temple

This old temple is said to have been built on the mountainside in 826 by Kōbō-Daishi. It is renowned for the beautiful panorama seen from the temple grounds. The name of this temple also appears in the travel records of German physician and traveler Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796-1866).



Tomonoura Museum of History and Folklore

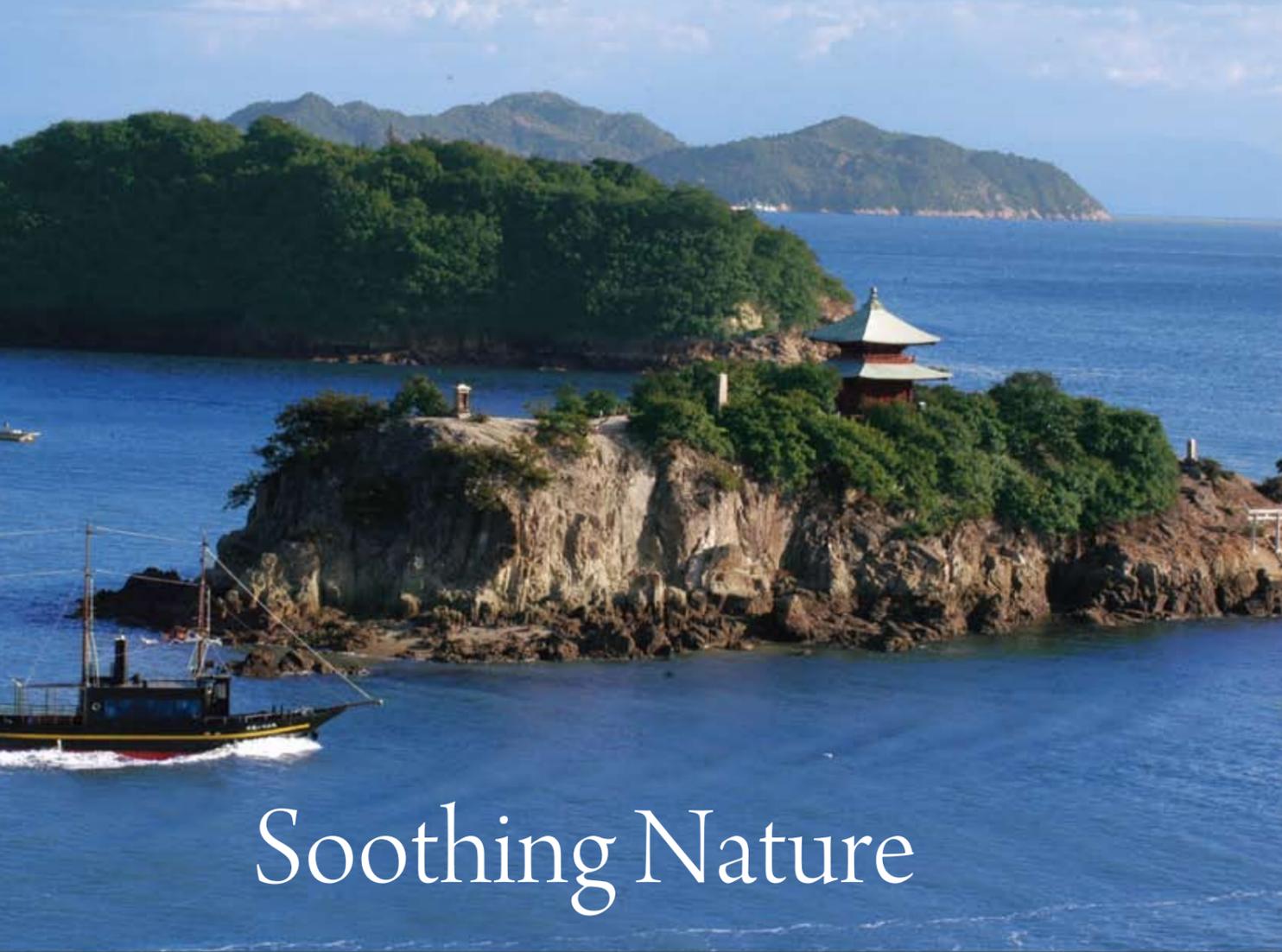
This museum is built on the ruins of Tomo Castle. The castle was built as an important site for maritime affairs during the Sengoku (Warring States) period (1467-1603) and was renovated by the daimyo Fukushima Masanori. The museum that stands there today displays materials regarding the history and festivals of Tomonoura. A panoramic view of Tomo Bay can be enjoyed from the open space in front of the building.

Scenery of Tomonoura as described by poets of the Man'yōshū

Tomonoura appears in Japanese tanka (short poems) written by Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, Ōtomo no Tabito, and others who travelled to the capital of Kinki, Kyushu, and the continent (mainland China). Three tanka written by Ōtomo no Tabito out of eight from the *Man'yōshū* (the oldest existing collection of Japanese poetry) are on the tanka inscriptions located at the foot of the mountain of Fukuzen-ji Temple and the grounds of Iō-ji Temple. Unfortunately, the location of the "needle juniper tree" (muronoki) referenced to in six tanka is unknown.



The tanka inscriptions of Ōtomo no Tabito, whose tanka express the suffering he endured when remembering his wife, who passed away on the way from Dazaifu (the regional government in Kyushu) to the capital. From left to right: foot of the mountain of Fukuzen-ji Temple and the grounds of Iō-ji Temple.



Soothing Nature

Picturesque scenery created by the calm seas and verdurous islands

Since long ago, Tomonoura has been renowned for its magnificent scenery. The coastal area and offshore islands are designated as areas of national scenic beauty and are part of one of the first national parks in Japan (the Setonaikai National Park). Rai San'yō, a scholar of the Edo period, admired the outstanding natural beauty of Tomonoura, which still exists today. You can find many facilities and viewing locations to soothe your body and mind, such as Sensui-jima Island where in the midst of nature you can go hiking, camping, or sea bathing, or Tomonoura, where you can enjoy one of the highest radium-containing onsen (hot springs) in Japan.



Camping sites are available year-round with the beach located right in front of the site.



The Tomonoura Swimming Beach is open between mid-July and mid-August.



Enjoy nature from season to season through hiking courses.

Sensui-jima Island

Sensui-jima Island is located just five minutes by municipal ferry off the coast of the Port of Tomo and is only six kilometers in circumference. It was named after its beauty, as the island is said to be beautiful enough to mesmerize (*sui*) an immortal mountain sage (*sennin*). There are five hiking courses throughout the island that allow visitors to see the nature that has lasted since olden times. From the Senningaoka Observation Hill visitors can see an excellent view of the sunset—in fact, this location was chosen as one of the top 100 sunset-viewing locations in Japan. In addition, there are other leisure facilities such as camping sites, a swimming beach, and a salt workshop as well as lodging facilities such as Kokumin Shukusha Sensui-jima. On Sensui-jima Island, visitors can also find the only five-colored rock in Japan, known as a spiritual location that has become very popular with tourists.



Five-colored Rock

There are only a few places in the world where you can find a five-colored rock (black, red, blue, yellow, and white), and this is the only such location in Japan. This raised rock is approximately 200 meters lengthwise and found on the southern coast of the island.



Edo Baths

Several detoxing resort spas themed after the baths of the Edo period include "cave steam baths," "tainai (mother's womb) baths" that have a higher concentration of salt than seawater, and "medicated open-air baths."



Salt Workshop

This workshop was chosen as one of the top 100 salt locations in Japan. Sea salt is produced daily using an old-fashioned process that involves sun drying seawater drawn from the Seto Inland Sea. Visitors can observe the salt-making process as well as try making salt themselves at this workshop.



Benten-jima Island

Benten-jima Island, also called Hyakkan-jima Island, is a deserted island located between Tomonoura and Sensui-jima Island. Benzaiten, the guardian deity of fishermen, is enshrined in the vermilion-lacquered Bentendō Hall, the main landmark of the island. The pagoda that stands close to the hall is etched with a date from the Kamakura period, making it the oldest pagoda in Hiroshima Prefecture compared with those with a known construction year. This pagoda is designated as a Prefectural Important Cultural Property.



Tomonoura Onsen (Hot Spring)

The water, which has been used by local residents for a long time, was discovered to contain radium, and an onsen named "Shiomachi-no-Yu" was opened in 2002. A single onsen source leads to four hot spring facilities.



Sea Kayaking

A different view of the town can be enjoyed through sea kayaking. Sea kayak rentals are available at Kokumin Shukusha Sensui-jima (a lodging facility on Sensui-jima Island), and guided sea kayak tours run by local shops are also available. The waves are gentle enough for beginners to try kayaking in Tomonoura.



Mt. Ushiroyama

Mt. Ushiroyama is a mountain located right behind the town of Tomo, and located in the middle of this mountain is Iō-ji Temple, from which visitors can enjoy a panoramic view of the town and the Seto Inland Sea.



Rebirth of the Heisei Iroha Maru

The ship that was at the center of the Iroha Maru incident, the British-made steamship "Iroha Maru," still stands at the bottom of the sea off the coast of Ujishima Island in Fukuyama. After 143 years since the incident in 2010, a replica of the ship named "Heisei Iroha Maru" was produced to serve as a municipal ferry. At 22.3 meters and 19 metric tons, the ferry is only two-fifths the size of the original ship that Ryōma sailed. Within the Heisei Iroha Maru are photos of Ryōma, old compasses, and other items of that time period, and the wood grain interior of the ferry creates a calming atmosphere for those who ride it.



The maximum capacity of the ship is 99 passengers, and it runs every 20 minutes between Tomonoura and Sensui-jima Island.



Tomonoura Tai-ami
(Display of traditional net fishing technique viewed from a sightseeing ship)
Early to late May

A sightseeing ship is available to see up-close this traditional fishing method that has lasted 380 years, in which a fleet of fishing boats catch schools of red sea bream. (Reservations required.)



Fukuyama Tomonoura Benten-jima Island Fireworks Festival
The last Saturday of May

This event is a fireworks festival that represents the beginning of summer in the Seto Inland Sea. Two thousand fireworks are set off at Benten-jima Island and decorate the night sky spectacularly every year.



Opening of the Tomonoura Swimming Beach to Swimmers
Mid-July

The municipal swimming beach on Sensui-jima Island is open between mid-July and mid-August. Special events take place during the opening ceremony on the first day of the beach's opening to swimmers.

TOMONOURA Event Calendar



Otebi Fire Festival
The Saturday before the second Sunday of July

This is one of the three major fire festivals in Japan. One hundred people carry three "otebi" (enormous flaming torches) and bravely ascend the long stone steps of Nunakuma-jinja Shrine.



Hassaku no Umadashi Festival
September

People have their children ride on Hassaku no Uma (a white wooden horse with a moving cart) and parade throughout the town, wishing for the good health and growth of their children.



Tomo Machinami Hinamatsuri
(Doll Festival) **Mid-February to late March**

This is a community event in which each household displays their dolls for Hinamatsuri (also known as "Doll Festival" or "Girls' Festival") to the public. Dolls are passed down in families from generation to generation. Valuable dolls from the Edo and Meiji periods can be seen during this time of the year.



Recommended Sightseeing Routes

1 Hour Sightseeing Course

A short course to visit selected locations mainly around the Port of Tomo

1

Tomonoura Tourist Information Center (Tomonoura Bus Stop)

Approx. 5 minute walk

2

Muronoki (Needle Juniper Tree) Tanka Inscription

Approx. 2 minute walk

3

Taichōrō and Fukuzen-ji Temple (Time required: approx. 20 min.)

Approx. 5 minute walk

4

Gangi (Tiered Dock)

Approx. 3 minute walk

5

Iroha Maru Museum (Time required: approx. 15 min.)

Approx. 1 minute walk

6

Ōta Residence (Time required: approx. 20 min.)

Approx. 5 minute walk

7

Tomonotsu Merchant House

Approx. 4 minute walk

8

Tomonoura Tourist Information Center

2 Hour Sightseeing Course

A course that allows you to see many of the main locations in Tomonoura

1

Tomonoura Tourist Information Center (Tomonoura Bus Stop)

Approx. 5 minute walk

2

Muronoki (Needle Juniper Tree) Tanka Inscription

Approx. 2 minute walk

3

Taichōrō and Fukuzen-ji Temple (Time required: approx. 20 min.)

Approx. 3 minute walk

4

Tomonotsu Merchant House

Approx. 3 minute walk

5

Tomonoura Museum of History and Folklore

Approx. 5 minute walk

6

Iroha Maru Museum (Time required: approx. 15 min.)

Approx. 1 minute walk

7

Ōta Residence (Time required: approx. 20 min.)

Approx. 6 minute walk

8

Burial Mound for the Severed Head of Yamanaka Shikanosuke and Sasayaki-bashi Bridge

Approx. 6 minute walk

9

Nunakuma-jinja Shrine and Chikarashi (Power Stones)

Approx. 5 minute walk

10

Hayashi Residence

Approx. 5 minute walk

11

Tomonoura Tourist Information Center

Sakamoto Ryōma Course— Experience the Late Edo Period!

One hour course to visit historical locations where Ryōma stayed during the negotiations of the Iroha Maru incident

1

Tomonoura Tourist Information Center (Tomonoura Bus Stop)

Approx. 15 minute walk

2

Iroha Maru Museum (Time required: approx. 20 min.)

Approx. 1 minute walk

3

Ōta Residence (Time required: approx. 20 min.)

Approx. 6 minute walk

4

Site of the Negotiations of the Iroha Maru Incident

Approx. 6 minute walk

5

Enpuku-ji Temple and Taigashima Castle Ruins

Approx. 6 minute walk

6

Taichōrō and Fukuzen-ji Temple (Time required: approx. 20 min.)

Approx. 3 minute walk

7

Tomonotsu Merchant House

Approx. 2 minute walk

8

The Site of Sakamoto Ryōma's Lodging

Approx. 2 minute walk

9

Tomonoura Tourist Information Center



Handy Travel Guide

By using these options you can make your visit more enjoyable!

(Audio Guide)

An audio handset provides users with detailed information on the attractions of Tomonoura. It contains 62 points of interest and is recommended for visitors who would like to see the sights and visit historical locations at their own leisure. Japanese and multilingual audio guides are available. (No reservation required.)

◎Price: ¥500 per visit per handset
*Deposit of ¥1,000 is required (Refundable when handset is returned.)

◎Rental/return locations:
Hotel Ōfutei (8:00AM–4:30PM),
Tomonoura Tourist Information Center (9:00AM–4:30PM)

◎For questions, contact the Fukuyama City Tourism Convention Association
TEL 084-926-2649



(Tomonoura Tourist Information Center)

This is a general information center of the town where you can get tourist maps and the latest recommendations. Special products that represent Tomonoura are available for sale at the Tomonetsu Bus Center attached to the Information Center.
TEL 084-982-3200



(Guided Tour)

A local guide takes visitors on a tour of the town and provides various information about the sights. (Reservation required/no set hours of operation/available in Japanese only.)

◎Price: ¥2,000 (up to 2 hours), available at the Tomonoura Tourist Information Center. Free guided tours are available on Saturday, Sunday, and national holidays. (No reservation required.)

◎1.5-hour guided tour (twice a day)
Starts at: 11:20AM, 2:20PM
Meeting location: Municipal ferry port

◎2-hour guided tour (once a day)
Starts at: 10:30AM
Meeting location:

Tomonoura Tourist Information Center
◎For questions, contact the Tomonoura Tourist Information Center TEL 084-982-3200

(Rental Bicycles)

Rental bicycles are available next to the municipal ferry port. (No reservation required.) ¥100 for the first 2 hours, then ¥50 every 30 minutes.

TOMONOURA
Prized Souvenirs

Various collections of products, including seafood products, local favorites, and new specialties, are available to visitors of Tomonoura.



2



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1

1. Hōmeishu (Medicinal Liquor)

Hōmeishu was first made at the beginning of the Edo period in Tomonoura. It is made using sweet glutinous rice wine, in which 16 types of spices, including oriental plant extracts, are steeped. It is highly nutritious and has been said to be a cure-all and a bringer of longevity since long ago. It is also known as a drink served to entertain Commodore Matthew Perry and his party, famous for the "Black Ships" that arrived in Japan during the late Edo period. Four breweries currently produce this liquor and the taste differs slightly depending on the brewery.

2. Sensuisennin Hōmeishu Cake

This is a cake made using the famous hōmeishu of Tomonoura. The harmony of the gentle sweetness of the liquor and dough creates this mild-flavored cake. This product also won the Monde Selection Gold Award for three consecutive years and the International High Quality Trophy.
©Tomotetsu Bus Center TEL 084-970-5102 ◎ ¥ 1,400 each (tax inclusive)

3. Gasuten

Gasuten are fish paste products unique to Tomonoura. They are made using a mixture of mashed small fish such as nebuto (*Apogon lineatus*), bone and all, and burdock. This mixture is then deep-fried. This product was named due to its bony texture, which in Japanese is described as "gasugasu."
©Amochinmi Co., Ltd. TEL 084-982-3333 ◎ ¥ 170 each (tax inclusive)

4. Tai (Red Sea Bream) Chikuwa

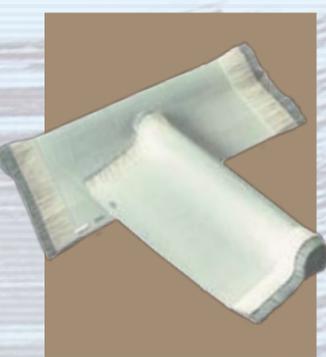
This is a traditional specialty of Tomonoura. These chikuwa (grilled fish paste in a tubular shape) are made of local fish, shaped by the hands of experts, and grilled. They are exquisite products with a tender, chewy texture and subtle flavor of bamboo.
©Tomonoura Shunsen-ichiba Taikōbō Uohisa Main Store TEL 084-983-5017
©Taikōbō Branch Store TEL 084-982-2772 ◎Higashifukatsu Branch Store TEL 084-928-8080
◎ ¥ 250 each (tax inclusive)



Crafts

Bingo-gasuri (Bingo Kasuri) (Splashed Patterned Fabric)

This style of splashed patterned fabric, called "kasuri," has a 160 year history and is one of the three major forms of kasuri in Japan. Kurume-gasuri and Iyo-kasuri are the other two major forms of kasuri. Seventy percent of kasuri in Japan were produced in the Bingo Province due to industrialization between 1955 and 1964. It is designated as a traditional craft of Hiroshima Prefecture.



◀Bingo Tatami Facing

This tatami facing is made using carefully selected igusa, or Japanese mat rush, with a silver-white and bluish hue and a glossy, thick outer layer. It is renowned throughout Japan under the name "Bingo-omote" and has a history of over 660 years.

Matsunaga Geta (Wooden Clogs)▶

Matsunaga geta have a history of over 130 years, and the current production of geta account for 60 percent of the total amount produced nationwide. Geta were first produced using the firewood used to boil down seawater to make salt, and between 1965 and 1974, Matsunaga, an area in Fukuyama, developed as a footwear production center.



Fukuyama Koto (Japanese Harp)

The Fukuyama koto, also known as Fukuyama-goto, is designated as a traditional craft by the national government and is famous for its clear sound and durability. The Fukuyama koto has a history of over 160 years and its production accounts for 70 percent of the total amount of koto produced in Japan. It was registered for a Regional Collective Trademark in 2006.



Highly Recommended Dishes of Tomonoura Red Sea Bream Dishes

In Tomonoura, there are many different variations of dishes featuring red sea bream (tai). For instance, red sea bream somen noodles are an essential dish on festive occasions, and rice with red sea bream used to be eaten by fishermen on fishing boats. Other dishes include red sea bream shabu-shabu (hot pot) and red sea bream chazuke (rice with green tea). These dishes are available at many restaurants in Tomonoura.



Map of Tomonoura



Ferry Timetable between Tomonoura and Sensui-jima Island

*Approx. 5 minute trip

From Tomonoura		From Sensui-jima Island	
7	10:30-50	7	15:35-55
8	10:30-50	8	15:35-55
9	10:30-50	9	15:35-55
10	10:30-50	10	15:35-55
11	10:30-50	11	15:35-55
12	30-50	12	35-55
13	10:30-50	13	15:35-55
14	10:30-50	14	15:35-55
15	10:30-50	15	15:35-55
16	10:30-50	16	15:35-55
17	10:30-50	17	15:35-55
18	10:30-50	18	15:35-55
19	30	19	35
20	00-30	20	05-35
21	00-30	21	05-35

Round-trip Adult ¥ 240 Round-trip Child ¥ 120

Local Recommended Spots

These are the main noteworthy spots around the Numakuma Area and the northwestern part of the Numakuma Peninsula.



Abuto Kannon (Goddess of Mercy of Abuto)

The beauty of the vermilion-lacquered Kannon-dō Hall, which towers at the edge of the cape, has been introduced in an ukiyo-e print by Andō Hiroshige and the novel *A Dark Night's Passing* by Shiga Naoya.



Miroku no Sato

Miroku no Sato is a theme park that the whole family, young or old, can enjoy. In addition to an amusement park and a 1960s Japan-themed townscape, the park also includes a natural radon onsen (hot spring), Japanese garden, and art museum.



Access to Tomonoura

■ By Shinkansen/Sanyo Main Line/Fukuen Line
Approx. 30 min. from JR Fukuyama Station by local bus bound for "Tomo"

■ By Airplane
Approx. 60 min. from Hiroshima Airport to JR Fukuyama Station by Highway Express Bus

■ Via Expressway
Exit Fukuyama-higashi I.C., then drive 30 minutes south to Tomo via Route 182

Extensive Sightseeing Course

■ Onomichi ← (Approx. 20 min. by JR) → Fukuyama → Tomonoura
■ Kurashiki ← (Approx. 30 min. by JR) → Fukuyama → Tomonoura

