

Discover the unspoiled scenery of Japan
only 3 hours from Tokyo.



Murakami City
Niigata Prefecture

Murakami City, Niigata Prefecture is a castle town with a long history. Picturesque scenery on the Sea of Japan that you must see, Japanese food culture that you can find in Murakami, festivals to feel the Japanese spirit, relaxing hot spring inns with beautiful scenery, things that have been handed down carefully from the Edo period, streets drifting with the air of a castle town, traditional handicrafts created by artisans, food treasures nurtured by rich nature and the finest quality tea... These experiences await you. Take the Joetsu Bullet train from Tokyo and discover the unspoiled scenery of Japan in about 3 hours. Visit Murakami and discover the real Japan!

You can enjoy the following in Murakami City:

- 1 Awashima Island and the sunset on the Sea of Japan
- 2 Iyoboya: Murakami food culture
- 3 The Great Murakami Festival, a traditional castle town festival
- 4 Senami Hot Spring soothes both your mind and body!
- 5 Tour of the Dolls in the Machiya Houses
- 6 Townscape of black fences
- 7 Murakami wood-carved reliefs
- 8 Enjoy rice wine and salmon cuisine in Murakami!
- 9 Tea country at the northern limit

1 Awashima Island and the sunset on the Sea of Japan 絶景! 粟島と日本海の夕日



The long coastline along the Sea of Japan is called the Sunset Line of the Sea of Japan. The coast has many scenic spots at sunset; Sasagawa-nagare in Murakami City is one of them. Sasagawa-nagare is a coastline of about 11 km and a picturesque spot designated as a place of scenic beauty and a natural monument of Japan. The twilight from spring to autumn provides a vision of beauty as the sunset fades into dusk. The sun sinking into the Sea of Japan behind Awashima Island is a picturesque sight that can only be seen here. The moment the evening sun melts into the horizon as it dyes the sky, sea and town orange is an unspoiled view of the heart of the people in Murakami who live with the Sea of Japan.



2 Iyoboya: Murakami food culture 村上に伝わる食文化『いよぼや』



salting is one of the most common. At the salting dojo a lesson on how to make salted salmon is given in winter after the salmon have gone upstream. Rub in coarse salt carefully by hand and expose the salted salmon to the cold wind. People from every corner of Japan crowd in here to learn this traditional method. Every family makes salted salmon at the end of the year, preparing to welcome the New Year. Salted salmon hanging in front of all the houses is a Murakami winter scene.



Iyoboya in Murakami means salmon. The Miomote River that runs through Murakami City is the river that had the first artificial salmon hatchery in Japan. Salmon is a food treasure of Murakami because the harvest supported the finances of the Murakami domain in the Edo period. At Iyoboya museum, the first salmon museum in Japan, you can see the propagation technology that helps the salmon go upstream in the riverbed when they return to the place of their birth in late autumn to spawn their eggs. In the corner of Iyoboya House is a salting dojo. Over 100 different ways to prepare salmon are handed down in Murakami; salmon

3 The Great Murakami Festival, a traditional castle town festival 城下町伝統の祭『村上大祭』

The Great Murakami Festival held for 2 days on July 6 and 7 every year is a traditional festival that has lasted for more than 600 years. This lively castle town festival focuses on *oshagiri*, which are floats decorated with lacquer, gold and silver. People carry the *oshagiri* from the town where they live; some are over 200 years old. People parade as a group according to their town with musical accompaniment and shout encouragement as the town changes into a festive mode for 2 days. The Great Murakami Festival is full of enthusiasm and energy as the city maintains its castle town atmosphere; experience the spirit of Japan.



4 Senami Hot Spring soothes both your mind and body! 心も体も! 癒しの瀬波温泉

Over a century ago in 1904, Senami Hot Spring started when people searching for kerosene found a hot spring. The area is proud of the abundant hot water. The Seaside Line that faces the Sea of Japan offers many accommodations and facilities with hot springs and beautiful scenery. You will be uplifted by warm water and spellbound by beautiful scenery. Murakami offers a leisurely time that soothes both your mind and body.



6 Townscape of black fences 市民の思いで復活! 黒塀の町並み

Samurai residences and *machiya* houses still remain today in Murakami City, the oldest castle town in Niigata Prefecture. Black Fence Street is a good example. The scenery of castle towns was beginning to disappear as time passed. Citizen passion for traditional black fences in Murakami lead to restoring the historical townscape; the historical townscape has won prizes. Feel the elegance of a castle town.



8 Enjoy rice wine and salmon cuisine in Murakami! 村上で堪能! 日本酒と鮭料理

Food treasures are nurtured in Murakami because the town has rich nature surrounded by the sea and mountains. One such example is rice wine; thanks to clear water and the careful manual labor of brewers, quality rice made in Murakami turns into rice wine that is easy to drink without any off-flavor. Salmon cuisine is essential to Murakami cuisine; Murakami has over 100 ways to prepare salmon and many salmon lovers. You can also find many restaurants that pride themselves on their salmon cuisine. You can simmer or grill the salmon, which goes very well with rice wine too.



5 Tour of the Dolls in the Machiya Houses 城下町村上 伝統の町屋めぐり

In spring, the Tour of the Dolls in the Machiya Houses is a big event in castle town Murakami; *machiya* houses, which are traditional houses, exhibit dolls handed down from generation to generation. The Folding Screen Festival is a big autumn event and is held in September every year. Folding screens handed down from the old days are exhibited in *machiya* houses. Murakami bustles with *machiya* house visitors in both seasons. Another attraction is communicating with local residents. Enjoy strolling in a castle town.



7 Murakami wood-carved reliefs 伝統技術! 村上木彫堆朱

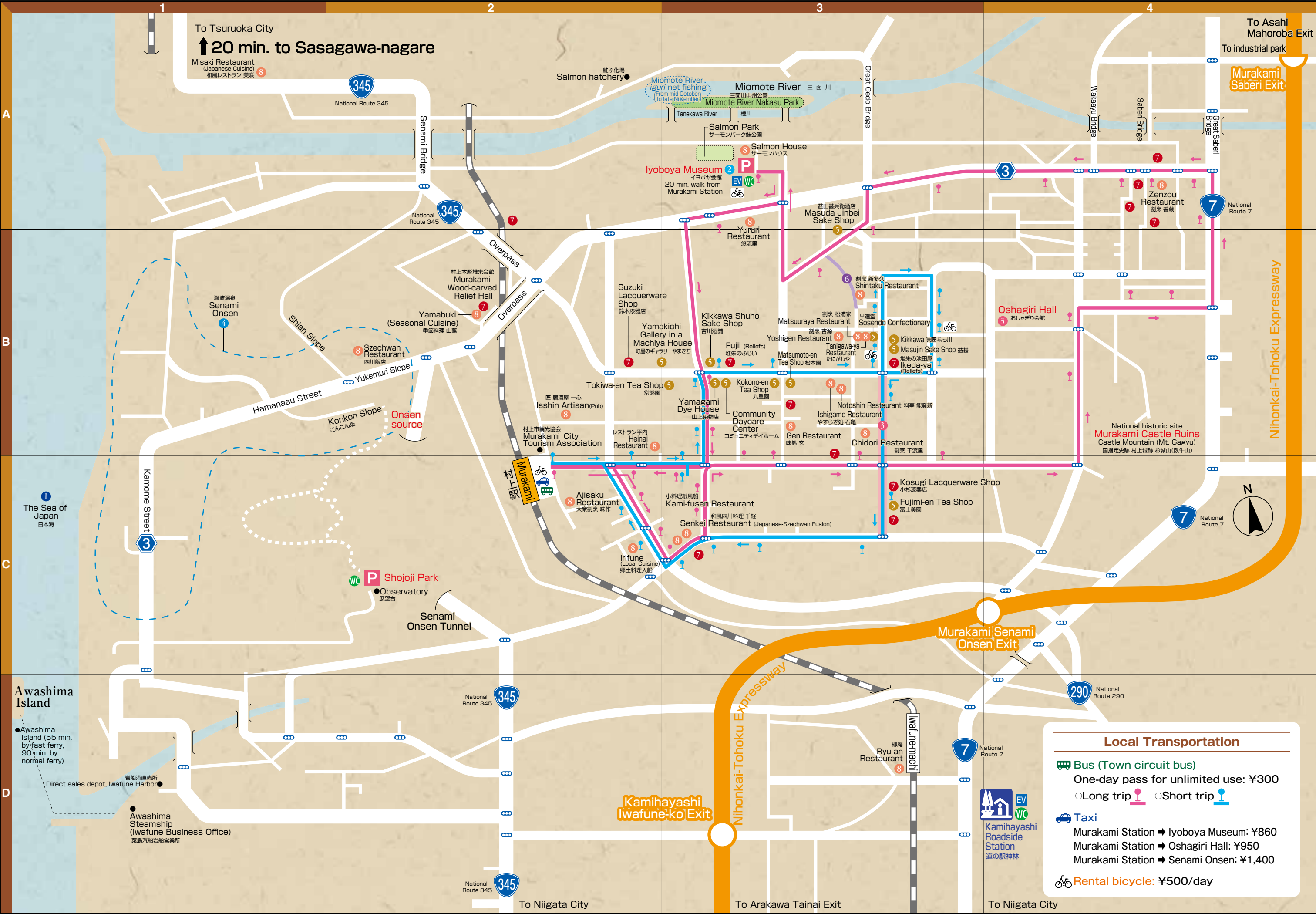
Murakami wood-carved reliefs are a traditional handicraft that are finished by applying many layers of lacquer to a carved wood base. The skill that started in the Edo period continues from generation to generation; even today craftsmen are working hard day after day to master and pass on this skill. This formidable skill, producing beautiful color tones and elaborate carving, is worth seeing. Murakami wood-carved reliefs are handed down from parents to children and children to grandchildren. As time passes, a deep luster grows.



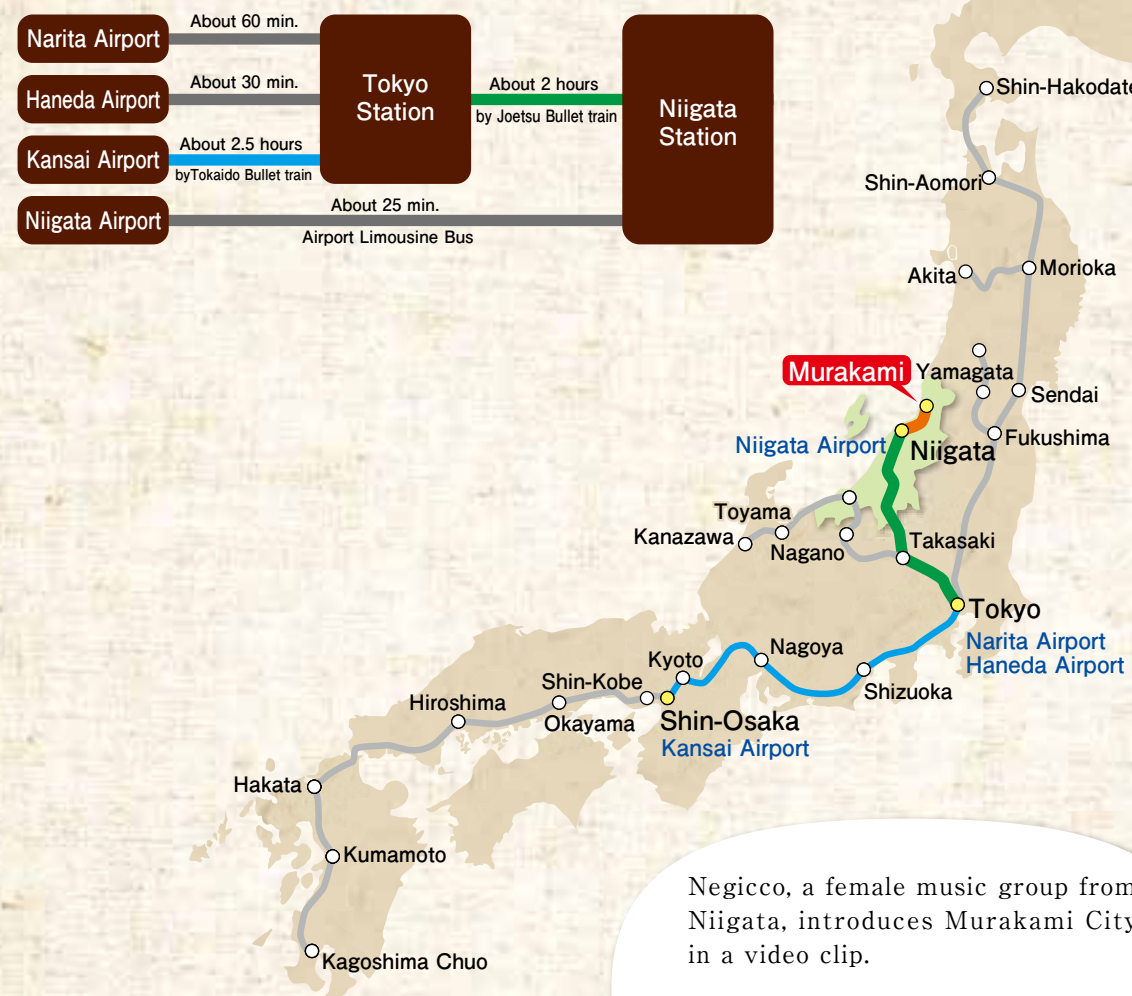
9 Tea country at the northern limit 北限の茶処! 茶ムリエって?

Murakami City is tea country at the northern limit. Tea leaves are generally cultivated in warm climates, but tea production is popular in Murakami even though the area is cold. This is due to improving cultivation technology over many years for the northern climate. Murakami tea has a unique faint sweetness and fragrance. The city has many chammeliers; these tea experts have studied the history of Murakami tea and how to make tea so that people can enjoy the taste. Enjoy a precious cup of glittering green tea.





To reach Murakami City



Negicco, a female music group from Niigata, introduces Murakami City in a video clip.

You Tube



Negicco



Murakami City Tourism Association

Phone: 0254-53-2258 <http://www.sake3.com/>

