



Website

Photographer: Daisuke Akita  
Production: Yamatobito  
curioswitch  
Editorial: JPH / Metropolis  
Published by Nara Prefecture  
January 2025



THE TIMELESS PATH  
DISCOVER NARA YAMANOBE

NARA  
YAMANOBE



## INTRODUCTION

Discover the Nara Yamanobe region – a place where timeless traditions, stunning landscapes, and vibrant local culture come together.

This brand book offers a glimpse into the history, culture, and nature that define the area, inviting you to explore its timeless beauty and experience all that Nara Yamanobe has to offer.

奈良 山の辺。伝統、美しい自然、豊かな文化が息づくこの地を訪れる人は、日本の様々な原風景に出会う。

## HISTORY

### A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

Along the western foothills of the Yamato plateau in Nara prefecture runs *Yamanobe no michi*, literally “the road in the vicinity of the mountains”. This road is mentioned in two 8th century court chronicles, the oldest recorded by name in any of Japan’s extant written sources and was clearly an important and well-known landmark.

Although the exact trajectory and length of the original Yamanobe road cannot be ascertained, it is thought to have run between the present-day cities of Tenri in the north and Sakurai in the south. The road likely developed from a natural north-south pathway along the mountain range on the eastern edge of the fertile Nara basin.

Archaeological and mythological evidence shows that Mt. Miwa, a triangular mountain located at the southern end of Yamanobe road, was a ritual center from as early as the late 3rd century. In fact, the mountain itself was – and is – the object of worship and the embodiment of the deity.

At the road’s northern end, we find another ritual site, Isonokami Jingū, where a 4th century seven-branched sword from Baekje, one of the kingdoms of the Korean Peninsula, is enshrined. Both sites were important to the political lineages that had started to emerge in the Nara basin and that would eventually culminate in the ancient Japanese state.

In the following centuries, an alliance of powerful local families known as the Yamato polity came to dominate and extended its influence over an increasingly large area. Due to increased contact with China and the Korean Peninsula, the cultic, cultural, and political landscape of the area also changed drastically. With the official introduction of Buddhism in the mid-6th century, Buddhist temples appeared in addition to traditional places of worship.

In the late 6th century, a ruler posthumously known as Suiko established her palace in the Asuka Valley, the south of Yamanobe road. Half a century later, Chinese modes of government and urban planning were brought over via Korean intermediaries. These changes further propelled the state formation process and the first capital cities as well as a centralized bureaucracy took shape.

記録に残る最古の道、山の辺の道。  
周辺には古代史と関わる神社仏閣、旧跡などが数多くある。



高山波志云根  
身架與相神  
如此而育良  
育育許中  
給良志吉

## TRAIL

### YAMANOBE NO MICHI

Although the exact trajectory and length of the original Yamanobe road cannot be ascertained, it is thought to have run between the present-day cities of Tenri in the north and Sakurai in the south. The road likely developed from a natural north-south pathway along the mountain range on the eastern edge of the fertile Nara basin. Today, it passes through a landscape rich with archaeological sites, offering a direct link to Japan's distant past.

山の辺の道には、日本の歴史と精神文化、そして自然が凝縮されている。



## CULTURE

### LIVING TRADITIONS

Nara Yamanobe is a region where Japan's rich cultural heritage comes to life through its history, traditions, and spiritual practices—such as Hasedera Temple, a cultural gem known for its serene Nobori-ro walkway and sweeping views that capture the essence of the past. Beyond its sacred sites, Nara Yamanobe is a living testament to Japan's timeless customs, from local festivals to ancient craftsmanship. With lush landscapes as its backdrop, the region offers a unique opportunity to experience Japan's spiritual and cultural roots, inviting visitors to connect with the traditions that have shaped this land for centuries.

歴史と伝統が息づく奈良 山の辺。記録に残る日本最古の道と自然豊かな風土から誕生した有形・無形の文化が、古より現代に受け継がれている。

## NATURE

### FOUR SEASONS OF SCENIC BEAUTY

From the cherry blossoms of Mt. Miwa in spring to the golden hues of autumn, the Nara Yamanobe region's landscapes – verdant forests, tranquil rivers and waterfalls, and rolling fields – invite exploration in every season.

Scenic trails wind through valleys and hills, offering sweeping views and perfect opportunities for hiking, birdwatching, and seasonal fruit picking.

Nara Yamanobe's natural beauty perfectly blends nature, culture, and the changing seasons.

盆地に点在する古墳と広大な田畑。稜線越しの夕焼けに続く漆黒の闇と星空。万葉集を育んだ豊かな風景が現存する場所で、古の人々に思いを馳せる。





## EXPERIENCE

Immerse yourself in the spiritual heritage of Nara Yamanobe. Visit Hasedera Temple and its revered *Jūichimen Kannon* (Eleven-Faced Kannon), or explore sacred sites like Ōmiwa Shrine, where you can experience the Sake Festival, celebrating the region's *sake* brewing traditions, and visit *Kusuri-ido* (the Sacred Well), believed to have healing properties. From *sake* tasting to relaxing in a traditional *onsen* (hot springs), Nara Yamanobe offers a wealth of seasonal experiences to enjoy.

十一面観音のお御足に触れる。朝勤行への参加。神鶏と記念撮影。酒祭りや薬水。文化財の修復工房見学ツアーなど。唯一無二な体験を通して、この地域で育まれてきた日本の精神に触れることができる。



## ACCOMMODATION

Traditional *ryokan* like Itaniya offer a true taste of Japanese hospitality, with cozy *tatami* rooms, relaxing hot springs, and personalized service that make your stay unforgettable. Whether you prefer the peaceful charm of a countryside inn, the warmth of a family-run guesthouse, or the serene atmosphere of a spa resort.

Nara Yamanobe has accommodations to suit every traveler. After a day of exploring the region's sacred sites and scenic landscapes, unwind in a space that seamlessly blends tradition with tranquility.

奈良 山の辺を巡る旅に欠かせない宿泊施設は、伝統的な温泉旅館、古墳の麓に泊まれる宿、地元食材が堪能できるオーベルジュ、世界的ホテルブランドなど実に多彩。