

Day 2 Takahara → Chikatsuyu Distance and elevation

Total walking distance approximately 10-15km/6-9.3miles

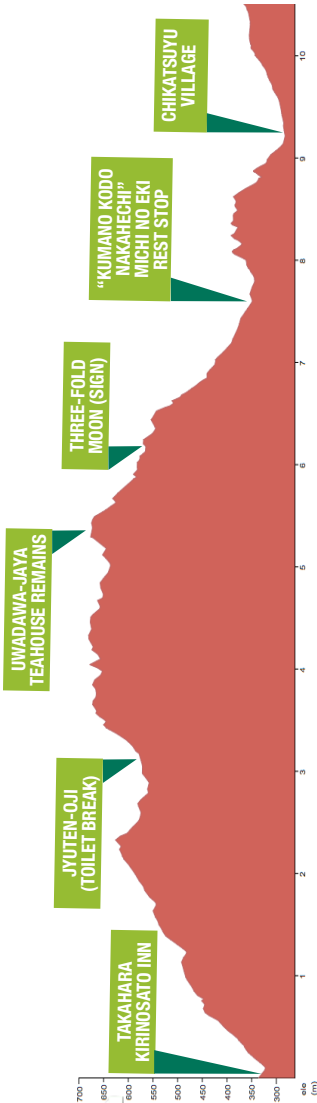
Takahara → Chikatsuyu:

Distance: 9.7 km

Elevation: + 464 / - 508 m

Max Grade: 21.5 %

Avg. Grade: -0.3 %



Overview

Walking course options

RECOMMENDED WALKING COURSE:

Today, you will be continuing along the Kumano Kodo's Nakahechi route, passing many oji and remnants of past imperial processions along primarily forest trail. Leaving Takahara, head ever up to your peak at the site of an old teahouse, followed by a steep down to lunch at a *michi-no-eki* rest area. Soon after, reach the town of Chikatsuyu. Restock on supplies, break for coffee, and/or visit a modern art museum here, before continuing to your inn.

NOT FEELING WELL/NEED A BREAK:

If not feeling up to walking today, ask Kirinosato inn staff to call your next inn and tell them you would like to arrive early. Then either order a taxi or ask staff to drive you to nearby KURISUGAWA bus stop. Continue on to Chikatsuya town by bus. See bus time and fare details in your walking notes.

Recommended Course Schedule Itinerary Summary

7:30am	Breakfast (Kirinosato Inn)
8:30-9:00	Depart Kirinosato Inn
10:00-10:30	BREAK Jyuten-(Jujo)-oji (toilet available)
11:30	Arrive Uwadawa-jaya Teahouse remains site (688m)
12:15	Have LUNCH at “Kumano Kodo Nakahechi” <i>michi-no-eki</i> rest stop (Gyuba-doji guchi bus stop option)
13:15-13:30	Depart michi-no-eki rest stop
14:00-14:30	Arrive Chikatsuyu village (Optional break for restocking supplies, coffee, art museum visit)
Optional	Visit Nakahechi Art Museum
15:00	Arrive at your inn



Day 2 Walking Directions from Kirinosato Inn

Good Morning! "Ohayo Gozaimasu!"



•After an 7:30 or 8:00am breakfast, be ready to LEAVE Kirinosato Inn by 9:00am.



WHEN CHECKING OUT, BE SURE TO LEAVE YOUR MAIN LUGGAGE NEAR THE FRONT DESK AND CONFIRM WHERE IT IS BEING SENT WITH THE INN STAFF.



DON'T FORGET TO PAY FOR ANY DRINKS 飲み物代 YOU HAD LAST NIGHT, AND RETURN YOUR ROOM KEY!

/ Photo

•Leaving Takahara Kirinosato, continue straight from the inn entrance across the parking lot. Just across the road, you should see a sign pointing to the Kumano Kodo trail.

30m

/ Photo

• Take the narrow, hydrangea-lined way until it comes to a dead end. Turn left and start up the cobbled path.

50m

/ Photo

•Reach the asphalt road, turn right (following Kumano Kodo signs), then follow the curve of the road left and up. Passing the last old home (actually newly inhabited by a young couple from the city), you will soon reach the forest trailhead.

260m

/ Photo

/ More about Dainichi Nyorai and Koushin

Two Buddhist statues--one to Dainichi Nyorai, the other to Koushin--mark the way and protect you as you depart Takahara village.



·Passing the site of an old teahouse and some beehives (no longer in use), the path changes to *ishidatami* cobblestone.

170m



You will be encountering more moss-covered cobblestone paths in the next few days. These can be very slippery in the rain, so best to aim for the cracks or dirt sidelines when/where appropriate.

/ More on charcoal and local timber uses

·Reach the site of an old charcoal-making kiln and hut, a good spot for a breather. Though this site is no longer in use, Wakayama prefecture is renowned for its *Binchō-tan*, or white charcoal. You will also see a stone commemorating the site of an old *ichirizuka*, or distance marker designating one *ri* (approximately 3.9km, or 2.4 miles) of travel.

250m

/ More on Ichirizuka

·Follow the intuitive path and Kumano Kodo signs. (DON'T go left at a green sign). You will soon pass the #10 marker, meaning you are 5km from yesterday's Takijiri start.

400m

/ More on Takahara-Ike Pond

·The path rises and briefly becomes more rocky, Soon reach Takahara-Ike Pond, another good spot for a breather if you need it.

270m

·Follow trail signs right and up the wooden log stairs. Soon reach **Daimon-oji**.

300m



Daimon-oji 大門王子

Roughly 2km from Takahara Kumano Shrine and 1.5km on to your next oji (and toilet break), lie the remains of the Daimon or “large gate”-oji. There were once said to be six torii gates to enter the spiritual domain leading to the grand shrine of Kumano Hongu Taisha. This was one of them, and you can see the remnants of where the gate stood on two, nondescript rocks surrounded by rope at your feet. Though not listed in official oji records until 1722 (implying that is a fairly new oji in historical terms), the site was known as a water stop and rest point and is listed as such in the 1109 records of Fujiwara Munetada (a court noble), as well as the 1201 records of Fujiwara no Teika, the famed poet. Teika was accompanying Emperor Gotaba from the Kyoto capital. His travel records are notable for their distinct lack of spiritual flourish, often exhibiting disdain for rain and uncomfortable travel conditions...a far cry from the Imperial court indeed.

/ More on Fujiwara no Teika

•Your undulating path will get rockier and steeper for 300m (*take care not to slip!), then flattens out after another 100m. Soon pass marker #12, then it is primarily down for 440m. You should pass a view of the mountains on your left.

840m

•A brief up followed by a steeper, rocky down, follow the path **straight** at a confluence of Kumano Kodo signs, then **right** (left will lead you to a “Not Kumano Kodo” sign).

250m

/ Photo

• Reach the shelter just before Juten(Jujo)-oji. If adverse weather, this is a good spot for a break. Otherwise, continue on another 130m to the outdoor benches and toilet area.

260m

/ More on
Juten(Jujo)-oji

• Arrive at the remains of **Juten(Jujo)-oji ★TOILET available here** (your next opportunity will be at lunch)

130m



Have a break. Your path will continue straight, but toilets are available to the left of the trail. The way is distinctly up from here.



• Passing the Jujo-oji rock and marker #14 on your right, continue straight and up on your original path (*DO NOT take the path down past the toilets).



BE CAREFUL TO STAY CLOSE TO THE ROCKFACE ON THE MORE NARROW SECTIONS OF THE PATH.



•Pass the Koban Jizo statue, dedicated to a traveller who placed a gold *koban* piece in his own mouth before dying here, so as not to be a burden those who would have to take care of his remains.

330m

/ More on
landslides
and rainfall in
Kumano

•Pass a small landslide on your right, common in the area due to Kumano's average annual rainfall of over 3,000 mm.

120m

/More on Akushiro

·Continuing ever up, pass the former site of Jujo Akushiro's home, a legendary local strongman also known for his wit.

150m

· The path may be described as undulating, going down and level (again, best to stay close to the rock face on narrow sections), then continues steadily up. You will pass another Ichirizuka (traditional 3.9km/2.4 mile marker and modern marker #17. Head down 100m.

1,230m



From here, there is short but steep switchback up. Please take it slowly and carefully.

130m

/More on teahouses

·It is not far up the rocky and narrow terrain. Reach a flat area and sign for the old site of **Uwadawa-jaya Teahouse**. This is the end of your big up for this morning!

120m



YOU HAVE TRAVELLED APPROXIMATELY 5.3 KM FROM TAKAHARA THIS MORNING. IT IS ANOTHER 2.7KM DOWN TO LUNCH.



·After breaking at your former teahouse peak, continue down the sometimes steep and narrow path.

550m

/More on Kumano forestry

★*Vegetation note:* On your way up, you primarily encountered the timber industry's *sugi* (Japanese cryptomeria "cedar") and *hinoki* (Japanese cypress) trees. Now you will be surrounded by more native forest: Japanese oak, beech and cherry among them.

/ More on the
Three Fold
Moon

Reach a sign detailing the legend of the Three-Fold Moon. Go LEFT and DOWN here, following the sign to “0.9km to Osakamoto-oji” (★DO NOT go right and up) .

300m

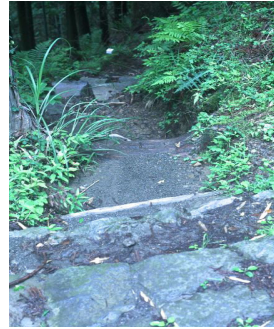


Take care on rocky terrain down to Osakamoto-oji. Full attention is needed on this section (especially in damp conditions), and it is also recommended for multiple travellers to avoid walking together in pairs, as the earth on the sides of the trail may give way.

/ Photo

• After the steep switchbacks down to a wider path, continue STRAIGHT to a gravel road. Go ACROSS the road to the small opening in the trail leading down.

300m



/ More on
Osakamoto-oji

• Follow the bridge over a stream, and you will soon reach the site of **Osakamoto-oji**. Osakamoto means “base of the big slope”, and now you know what that means!

500m

• Follow the path and bridges crisscrossing the stream.

130m

/Photo

★*Wildlife note:* You may run into *sawagani* freshwater crab (*Geothelphusa dehaani*), hear the distinctive croaking of *moriaogaeru* forest green tree frog (*Rhacophorus arboreus*) or catch a fleeting glimpse of *shika* deer (*Cervus Nippon*) here.

150m

Cross the road and break for lunch here.

620m

■ Lunch: “Kumano Kodo Nakahechi” *michi-no-eki*

• The “Kumano Kodo Nakahechi” *michi-no-eki* rest stop is a perfect spot to break for lunch, relax with a coffee or ice cream, peruse the various local *omiyage* souvenirs and/or use the nearby toilet facilities. Free wifi is also available (some devices may need a staff-provided password). Buying snacks for tomorrow also recommended. Take some time to relax here or continue on another 1.3km (approximately another 30 minutes) to Chikatsuyu village. *If you feel you have ample time, you may rather choose to take a 600m detour from your route in Chikatsuyu to shop at the larger A-Coop supermarket there.*



PICNIC LUNCH

If you have brought lunch from last night's inn, the benches outside the *michi-no-eki* shop make for a good picnic spot. You may also buy snacks or *bento* portable packages of the local delicacies inside the shop: *mehari-zushi* are rice balls wrapped in pickled mustard green leaves (*mehari* means “wide-eyed”, as this is what happens when you try to fit the entire rice ball in your mouth), *sanma-zushi* is vinegared rice topped with pickled Pacific saury, or mackerel pike, and *kakinoha-zushi* are rice balls with fish wrapped in persimmon leaves. You may also enjoy trying Wakayama prefecture's famed *amanatsu* and *mikan* citrus, in season, pickled *umeboshi* apricots, or *jabara* citrus juice (sold in the yellow cans). For those with a sweet tooth, the local *kusamochi* (pounded rice cake made green with either *yomogi* Japanese mugwort or *hahakogusa* Jersey cudweed, then wrapped around sweet *azuki* bean paste) or the ume apricot and *yomogi* mugwort-flavored ice creams. Coffee to go also available.

LUNCH INDOORS

If the weather is not cooperating or you would rather have a proper sit-down (and hot) meal, the *michi-no-eki* restaurant is as good a choice as any. Thick *udon* wheat noodles, Chinese-style wheat and egg-based *ramen* noodles, soba buckwheat noodles, Japanese curry (“*kareri*”) with rice, *gyudon* beef and *oyakodon* chicken-and-egg rice bowls abound. Order and pay at the register, then pick up the meal when called, or staff will bring it to your table. English menu available.



★IF ANY TRASH TO THROW AWAY HERE, PLEASE ASK THE STAFF AND DO NOT TIE THE BAG, AS COUNTRYSIDE SEPARATION RULES ARE STRICT.

Day 2 Afternoon Walking Directions



AFTER YOUR BREAK AT THE *MICHI-NO-EKI*, CONTINUE ANOTHER 1.3KM ON INTO CHIKATSUYU VILLAGE. IT IS THEN APPROXIMATELY ANOTHER 4KM TO YOUR INN.



IF NOT FEELING UP TO TOO MUCH MORE WALKING, YOU MAY TAKE THE BUS FROM HERE AT GYUBADOJI-GUCHI 牛馬童子口 BUS STOP (ACROSS THE ROAD FROM THE MICHI-NO-EKI REST STOP). GET OFF AT NONAKA-IPPOSUGI 野中一方杉 BUS STOP AND FOLLOW THE MAP AT THE END OF THIS DAY'S WALKING NOTES TO YOUR INN. ★BUSES LEAVE GYUBADOJI-GUCHI AT 12:39, 13:39 AND 15:54. YOU MAY ALSO CHOOSE TO WALK INTO CHIKATSUYU (1.3KM AWAY) AND TAKE THE SAME BUS DEPARTING AT 12:50, 13:50 AND 16:05 REPECTIVELY.

★IF UNABLE TO WALK FOR ANY REASON, ASK THE MICHI-NO-EKI STAFF FOR ASSISTANCE AND SHOW/TELL THEM THE NAME OF YOUR INN TONIGHT.

/ Photo

/ Photo

•From the *michi-no-eki rest stop*, head back over the road and continue on the trail right and up the steps .You are heading toward *Gyubadoji* (800m away),

50m

/ Photo

•Reach an asphalt road and continue right following signs for *Chikatsuyu-oji* (1.1 km).

200m

/ Photo

•Soon be on the lookout for a SIGN LEFT pointing off the asphalt road and up forest trail. Follow it up.

100m

•Pass underneath an old lumbering track and past another commemorative *ichirizuka*—里塚 distance marker.

400m

•Before heading straight down the path (0.5km to Chikatsuyu), visit the **Gyubadoji statue**. It is 50m on, up the rock steps.

100m



Gyubadoji 牛馬童子

Gyubadoji, meaning “ Boy sitting on the cow and horse”, is one of the more iconic images on the Nakahechi route. The statue depicts Kazan (967-1008), a young Fujiwara emperor who, politically bamboozled out of his imperial title, became

an itinerant Buddhist monk. The image of a cow and horse harkens to the tradition of placing these images in the family entranceway during the Obon season, when ancestral spirits return to Japan. Family members' spirits are encouraged to ride the “fast” horse in to visit, and the “slow” cow out to leave. (Of somewhat bizzare note, the cow is often represented by an eggplant and the horse by a cucumber in the entranceway.) Kazan also supposedly ate his lunch nearby here with impromptu chopsticks made of broken-off thatch reed, giving it the name Hashiori (“broken-off chopstick”) Pass. The red-tinged “reed juice” dripping from the fresh stems caused Kazan to ask “Is this blood or is this dew?” Incidentally, the name of nearby Chikatsuyu village is derived from this question: chi (“blood”) ka tsuyu (“or dew”).

/ More on
Gyubadoji

/ More on
Emperor
Kazan

200m

• Return to the trail (from the Gyubadoji statue, right at the signs) and head down. Soon come to a sheltered rest area on your right. You should have a nice view of Chikatsuyu village ahead.

/ Photo



THE COBBLESTONE PATH DOWN FROM HERE, THOUGH SHORT, CAN ALSO BE TREACHEROUS IN DAMP CONDITIONS. AIM FOR CRACKS AND THE SIDES OF THE TRAIL AND TAKE CARE!

50m

• At the end of the cobblestone stairs, follow the road left/straight. Soon reach a forest path leading off the road and down to the right.

/ Photo

50m

• At the end of the forest path, follow the asphalt road left 50m to the bridge, then right across it. ★You are passing over the Hikigawa River 日置川, which starts here and extends to the Pacific.

/ Photo

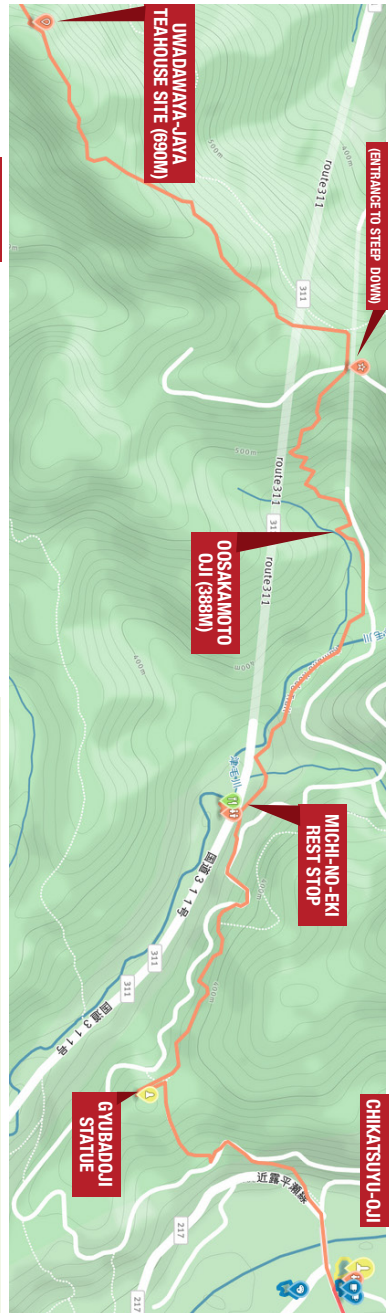
150m

• You have reached **Chikatsuyu Village**. After crossing the bridge, **Chikatsuyu-oji** is on your immediate left.



Chikatsuyu-oji 近露王子

Chikatsuyu has one of the older oji, first mentioned in Fujiwara Tamefusa's travel records from 1081, then again in Fujiwara Teika's travelogue (as the site of something of a "poetry slam") in 1201. Like Takijiri-oji, Chikatsuyu-oji is situated close to a "purifying" river (the Hikigawa) and as such was the popular site of ablution rituals. Hundreds of pilgrims once visited daily to partake in these purification rituals, spending the night here to rest before travelling on to Hongu Taisha Grand Shrine the next day. A subsidiary shrine also once existed here, but it was dismantled under the Meiji Restoration's imperial decree to consolidate the Shinto shrine system (and remove any outlying local traditions that might "sully" it with any Buddhist or other philosophical influence). The large stone here is interesting in that it was erected in 1934 by the founder of Oomoto-kyo, Deguchi Onisaburo. A "new" religion with Shinto roots that gained considerable influence in the early 20th Century, Oomoto-kyo was the target of a major government crackdown in 1935. This led the Chikatsuyu's village mayor to quickly erase the name of the donor etched on the back of the rock.



Chikatsuyu Village



•Chikatsuyu is a good spot to re-stock on supplies, relax with a tea/coffee (or foot bath), and/or visit the local art museum. Relax here if you are confident in your time, or continue on to your inn.

The Nonogase name

You may notice that the name “Nonogase” rings out here. The history of the Nonogase family in Chikatsuyu goes back to 1229, when they were appointed regents of the village by imperial decree. Signs up the road point to Nonogase cemetery, which has notably ancient (Kamakura era, 1185-1333) gravestones and can be visited on your way out if you wish. However, the name Banka Nonogase (1889-1964) is most well-known in modern times. Banka was



born in Chikatsuyu, then moved to Osaka and become one of the leading influences in the *nihonga* (Japanese-style painting) movement of the early 1900s. His home has been converted in to Cafe

Kameya and “Chikatsuyu Experience Center” and is also just up the road (200m) on your way. The ambience is worth a visit if you have the time. Banka’s works are also on display at the nearby Kumano Kodo Nakahechi Art Museum.

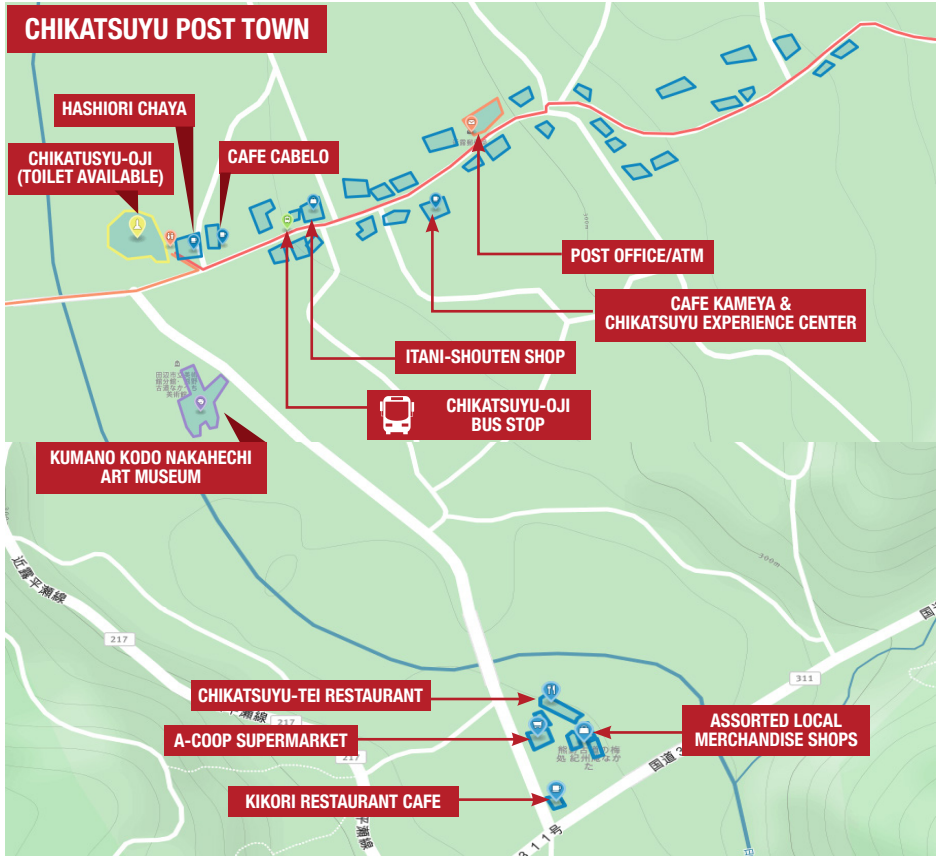
More to Do in Chikatsuyu (see map on next page):

•**Food & Drink**• For the peckish, you may stop at the **Hashiori Chaya** next to the oji for a small snack or light lunch. The coffee here is also decent, though you may favor **Cafe Cabelo’s** hand-roasted blend next door. You may have also noticed the foot bath here, bubbling up from a local hot spring. This is a good spot for the weary to rest sore feet.

Other options for food include the **A-Coop Supermarket**, **Chikatsuyu-tei** restaurant or **Kikori** restaurant cafe. All are located approximately 600m south of the oji, along with collection of local *omiyage* souvenir shops.

To stay on your route, you may also decide to small-scale shop for snacks, fruit, alcohol and other drinks at the **Itani-Shouten** shop. This will be your last chance for decent snack access before tomorrow’s walk. Nearby coffee/tea at **Cafe Kameya** is also a good option along your route.

•**Art Museum**• The Kumano Kodo Nakahechi Art Museum is open 10am-4:30pm (closed Mondays and New Years) and costs 210 yen to enter. It features temporary exhibits by modern artists and houses the works of Banka Nonogase and Watarase Ryouen.



BUS OPTION

★IF TIRED OUT, YOU MAY TAKE A BUS FROM CHIKATSUYU-OJI BUS STOP ON TO “NONAKA NO IPPO-SUGI” 野中の一杉, NEARER YOUR ACCOMMODATION.



CATCH THE 12:50, 13:50, 16:05, OR 17:43 BUS. SEE THE FINAL WALKING MAP FOR THIS DAY.

SELF-GUIDED

WALK JAPAN

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