

Day 2 Shinchaya → Magome post-town → O-tsumago → Tsumago post-town

Distance and elevation

Total walking distance approximately 10km/6.2mi

Distance: 9.85km
 Elevation at departure: 504m
 Elevation at arrival: 427m
 Highest point: 801m
 Lowest point: 421m
 Cumulative ascent: 332m
 Cumulative descent: 407m

Overview

Walking course options

RECOMMENDED WALKING COURSE:

Today, you will first be walking to Magome post-town, birthplace of Shimazaki Toson, Japan's first modern novelist and author of *Before the Dawn*. Leaving the town, we follow the way up the appropriately named Magome Pass before meandering slowly downhill through the woods and past a pair of historic waterfalls. Soon you will reach your accommodation, Maruya Inn, in the small hamlet of O-tsumago. About 1.5 on, you will reach Tsumago post town itself.

Tsumago is the best preserved and arguably the most attractive of all the post-towns. The inhabitants take great pride in their town and have banished telephone poles, electric lines and vending machines from the main street. After visiting a former high class inn, once reserved only for the top samurai, and an attached museum, either return to your inn or take a taxi (which you would have arranged previously with Maruya's innkeeper) to "onsen" thermal hot springs, followed by dinner at the inn.

RELAXED ROUTE:

Walk through Magome post-town, then up and over the Magome pass to your inn (Maruya) in O-tsumago and relax. Instead of walking through Tsumago post-town in the afternoon, you can save it for tomorrow and have more time to either kick up your feet at the inn or bask in onsen hot springs before dinner.



NOT FEELING WELL/NEED A BREAK:

If tired or not feeling well today, you can skip Magome post town in the morning and take the taxi with your luggage directly to Maruya Inn in O-tsumago. If feeling better while there, it is an easy, relatively flat 1.5km walk into Tsumago to explore the old post-town. Be sure to call our staff if this is the case, and we can negotiate your early arrival at the inn.

Recommended Course Schedule

Itinerary Summary

8:00am	Breakfast (Shinchaya)
9:00	Depart Shinchaya
10:00	Arrive Magome post-town (BUY PICNIC LUNCH)
11:00	Leave Magome post-town
12:00	Reach the top of the Magome Pass
12:20-13:15	Have a PICNIC LUNCH, followed by tea at the Ichikoku teahouse
14:00-14:15	Visit the Odaki and Medaki waterfalls
15:00	Arrive at MARUYA INN. Arrange dinner and taxi pick-up time/place here (if going to "onsen" thermal hot springs)
15:15	Leave Maruya Inn and walk 1.5km to Tsumago post town
15:45	Walk straight through town to the OKUYA WAKIHONJIN & LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM
16:30-16:45	If going to onsen, leave museum and walk back to TAXI PICK-UP point. (If foregoing "onsen" hot springs, walk directly back to Maruya Inn by dinner time.)
17:00	Meet TAXI
17:15	ARRIVE "ONSEN" thermal hot springs bath
18:15	LEAVE "ONSEN" thermal hot springs bath
18:30	Dinner at Maruya Inn

Day 2 Walking Directions from Shinchaya Inn

Good Morning! "Ohayo Gozaimasu!"



After an 8:00am breakfast, be ready to LEAVE Shinchaya by 9:00am.

BE SURE TO PAY MRS ANDO FOR ANY DRINKS飲み物代 YOU MAY HAVE HAD THE NIGHT BEFORE

00 / Waving goodbye

Turn LEFT out of Shinchaya to continue along the Nakasendo.

FROM HERE, IT IS 2KM, INTO THE POST-TOWN OF MAGOME.

01 / See the shrine

2a You will see a "torii"鳥居 Shinto gate, designating a Suwa branch shrine, on your right.

1.2km

Continue straight on to Magome post-town. The way will start to rise here, and on a clear day, you should have a good view of Mt. Ena on your right.

800m

*Magome Post Town*馬籠宿

"80 ri (314km) to Edo (Tokyo)" 江戸に八十里
"52 ri (204km) to the Capital (Kyoto)" 京に五十二里

Magome is the first of three post-towns that you will visit on this trip that are well-known for trying to retain the original feel of the Nakasendo. Although completely destroyed by fire in 1895, the rebuilding of Magome followed traditional lines, and it has succeeded in preserving some of its former Edo-period charm. Formerly a remote and rather

01 / Shimazaki Toson

obscure post-town, this image has been changed due to the writings of Shimazaki Toson, Magome's most famous son. His novel "Before the Dawn" is a semi-biographical account of Toson's father when he was in charge of the Honjin inn and was a "tonya" headman of the town at the time of the Meiji Restoration (end of the 19th Century). Still widely read today, Toson's novel now attracts tens of thousands of literary pilgrims to Magome each year.



03 / More on
Magome

2b When you arrive in Magome, you may notice coach buses dropping off tourists at the souvenir shops clustered at the bottom of the hill. The two shops on either side primarily sell “omiyage”お土産 (local, souvenir foods and other gifts) and there is a public TOILET 50m to your left.

Magome town, itself, stretches up the steep hill ahead, which is now closed to modern traffic. Taking this path at a fast clip, you can reach the top in about 15 minutes, but we recommend spending at least an hour to explore the slope, buy lunch, and have a break at a cafe. Continue STRAIGHT up the slope.

600m



Buy a picnic lunch in Magome:

04 / Magome
food details

Unless planning to eat an early lunch in Magome post-town, you will need to buy food for a PICNIC LUNCH here before continuing up the Magome Pass (another 3km from the town). Options include a convenience store, local vendors of local goods, or our recommendation, Café Kappe's sandwiches and "o-yaki" grilled buns available to go.

05 / Café
Kappe

CAFÉ KAPPE 喫茶かっぺ

Though there are a number of options for a rest in Magome, we recommend the Café Kappe かっぺ for its congenial staff, good food/drinks(coffee!), and a great view of the mountains surrounding Magome. The café is near the top/end of the town hill and on the right (before crossing the next big crossroad).



06 / Leaving
Magome

2c After exploring the town, continue UP and out of Magome, past the “kosatsuba” edict boards, then RIGHT to an open viewing area. Walk flat along the gravel, or follow the true Nakasendo (cobblestone) path up and over. Both routes will arrive at the same point.

150m

2d Follow the STONE STAIRS up and take care going down the (often slippery) cobblestones on the other side. CROSS the road at a zebra crossing (after the bear bell) and turn LEFT on the opposite sidewalk.

150m

07 / Photo

2e The path will veer off to the RIGHT, marked with a sign for the old Nakasendo way 旧中山道.

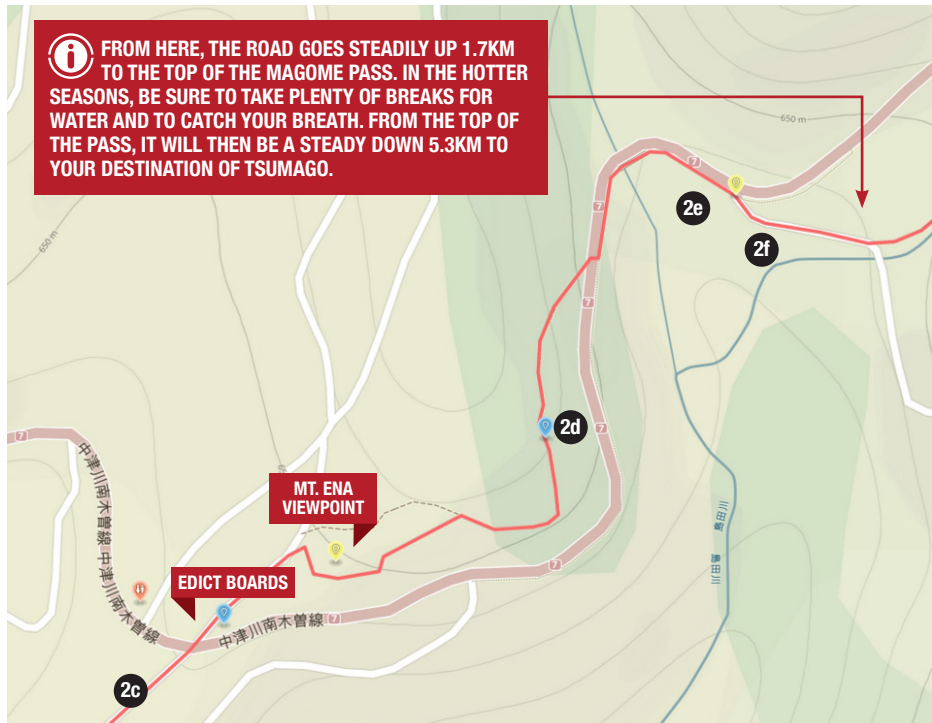
150m

08 / Photo

2f Follow the path through bamboo grass-lined forest. STAY LEFT where the way forks. CROSS the larger asphalt road and there will be a rest area on your left with a waterwheel and traditional, stone-lined roof (this architectural feature commonly used to prevent typhoon and snowstorm damage).

350m

09 / Sights
along the path



10 / Photo

2f Continue up from the waterwheel rest area. Follow the curve of the asphalt road up and cross it right at the zebra crossing. The way here changes to red and white rock-speckled asphalt.

300m

11 / Photo

A large tree on the left marks a public TOILET. This is also a good spot for a snack break and to fill your water bottle.

300m

12 / Touge
porter hamlet

2g From the restroom stop, continue up through the old porter village of “Touge”峠 or “Mountain Pass.”

550m

13 / Photo

2h You will reach the main road near the top of the Magome Pass. TURN LEFT here.

14 / Magome
Pass

2i Reach the TOP of the MAGOME PASS, your highest point of the day (801 m).

150m

★**Head DOWN** the FOREST TRAIL to the right of the “801 m” elevation sign.



15 / More on ICHIKOKU-TOCHI "Tateba" Teahouse

900m

2j Reach the "Ichikoku-tochi no Tateba" rest stop 一石枋の立て場, an old teahouse, now run by locals who provide tea, sweets and information (and occasional songs) for the hikers passing by. The Ichikoku teahouse dates back to the mid-Edo period and is over 300 years old. The structure retains the same architectural style and atmosphere that samurai and wayward travellers would have once encountered along the path.

PICNIC LUNCH

Have lunch here at Ichikoku, preferably outside at the covered rest area just past the teahouse. If weather (cold or rain) are a problem, you may be able to negotiate eating inside the teahouse itself. After lunch, be sure to have a spot of green tea and chat with the volunteers inside. There are also English pamphlets available about the Kiso valley. If inclined, there is a bamboo "donation box" on the center of the table to show your appreciation for the tea, though this is certainly not required.

i TOILETS ARE AVAILABLE OUTSIDE THE TEAHOUSE. AFTER LUNCH AND TEA, YOU CAN USUALLY LEAVE GARBAGE IN ONE OF THE BINS NEAR THE COVERED REST AREA.

