

角館

かくのだて

Kakunodate, city of cherry blossoms, samurai houses and the beautiful scenery of Japan

Kakunodate Sightseeing Guide



Hinokinai Riverside Cherry Blossoms

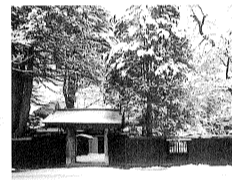


Samurai Houses

武家屋敷



The Ishiguro Samurai House (Bukeyashiki), Aoyagi Samurai House, Iwahashi Samurai House, Matsumoto Samurai House, Kawarada Samurai House and Odano Samurai House are open to the public. Bukeyashiki-street is designated as a preservation district for nationally important historic buildings.



Changing Seasons

彩る四季



桜 Cherry Blossoms

Cherry Blossom Festival (late April to early May)

Kakunodate is renowned throughout Japan for the beauty of its cherry blossoms. The trees form a 2 km-long tunnel of flowers along the banks of the Hinokinai River flowing through the center of the town, and the over 400 weeping cherry trees blossom in the samurai district are magnificent.



祭り Festivals

Kakunodate, with its 200 storehouses and large number of samurai houses and traditional gates, walls and buildings, has an air of Japanese culture and history. The 350-year-old Autumn Festival is held every year from 7 to 9 September. 18 brightly colored floats parade through the streets while dancers perform beautifully to the accompaniment of lively music. In the summer, the Sasara Dance Festival is held, and in February, the Hiburi Kamakura takes place.



Autumn Festival



Sasara



Hiburi Kamakura

Shinmeisha Shrine

Long regarded as the pre-eminent shrine of the area, its annual festival is held on 7 and 8 September.

Yakushido

This is the oldest local temple. The parade float for the Autumn Festival is used to arrive in this temple at the last.

Tenneiji Temple

This is the family temple of the Ashina Clan, who built the present town of Kakunodate but were overthrown after three generations.



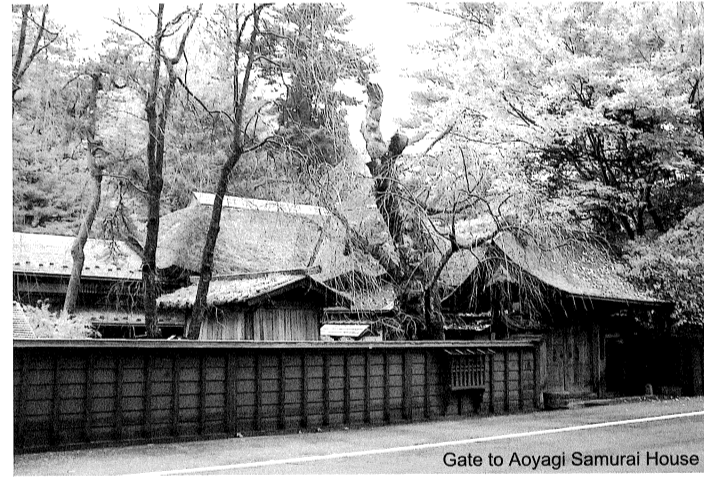
Shinmeisha Shrine



Tenneiji Temple



Yakushido



Gate to Aoyagi Samurai House

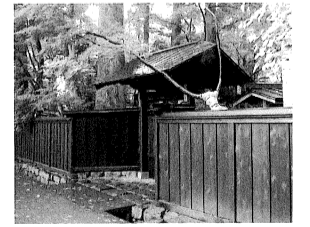


Gate to Ishiguro Samurai House

The beauty of the Kakunodate samurai district changes with the seasons. When the cherry blossom season is over, the tree colors change from the fresh green of spring to the lush green of summer, then to the brilliant reds and yellows of autumn, standing out against the black fences of the old town, until finally everything is blanketed in winter snow.

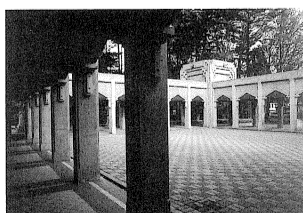
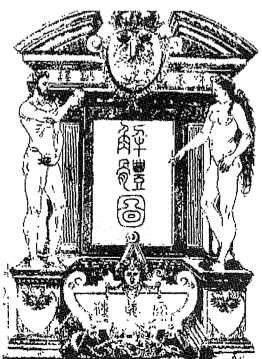


Gate to Kawarada Samurai House

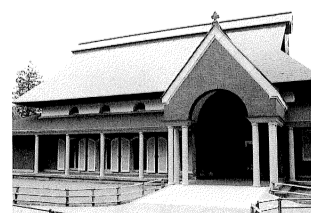


Gate to Odano Samurai House

Museums



Since the Edo period Kakunodate has produced numerous cultural figures. One such figure was Naotake Odano who drew the pictures in "Kaitai Shinsho", the first anatomy book in Japan, and is famed as a pioneer of western painting in Japan. Kakunodate also boasts a large number of municipal and private museums, including the Hirafuku Memorial Art Museum (top), which houses works by the Japanese-style painter, Suian Hirafuku, and his son Hyakusui, and Shinchosa Memorial Literature Museum (top right).



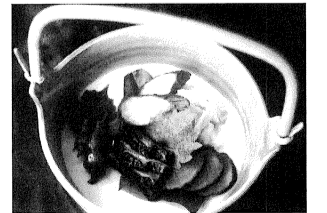
Kaba Crafts

This traditional handicraft, using the bark of mountain cherry trees, is an art seen only in this area of Japan. The Kaba Craft Heritage Center exhibits reference materials on kaba craft. Kaba crafts are sold in the town's souvenir shops.



Shiraiwa-yaki Ware

Each kiln produces works that are unique and rich in variety. They make ideal presents.



Local Foods

Kakunodate's restaurants pride themselves on their distinctive cuisine. Enjoy each distinctive flavor. Local products include pickles, natto (fermented soybeans), and baked morokoshi (confectionery made from azuki beans).