



**Sightseeing  
itineraries in  
Sado Island  
(Niigata Prefecture)**

---

## Standard Itinerary

~ 3 days / 2 nights in Sado Island

### Day 1

12:00	Arrive at Ryotsu Port
13:00~14:30	Historic site of the gold mine
15:00~15:30	Kitazawa flotation plant
15:30~16:30	Kyomachi-dori (Aikawa)

#### Our recommended programme

17:30~21:30	Sado festive dish cooking and Oni-Daiko experience
-------------	--

### Day 2

#### Our recommended programme

9:00~14:00	Iwakubi rice terrace fields
15:00~16:30	Walk around Shukunegi and wooden tub boat ride

### Day 3

9:00~12:00	Kotoura cave by sea kayak
13:00	Arrive at Ryotsu Port



#### The historical sites of the Sado gold mines

Many of the cultures, arts and customs that remain on Sado today have their roots in the development of the gold mine. On this day, you will see the old tunnels, abandoned plants that were the largest in the East, and the streets of Aikawa, a town where miners used to live.

#### Spring festival in Sado

In April, spring festivals are held throughout Sado island. The local *Oni-Daiko* perform their *kadozuke* ceremony in about 40 villages. In Japanese folklore, the *Oni* (demons) are considered to be mischievous creatures of the netherworld; in Sado island, instead, the *Oni* have a positive connotation and are considered incarnations of the gods.

The *Oni-Daiko* performance calls on the gods to rid the houses of evil spirits and misfortune, and all the families who receive a visit are offered a lucky charm.

#### Agriculture in Sado

During the Edo period, full-scale gold and silver mine development began. People from all over Japan gathered to contribute to the mining activities. The sudden growth in population led to a higher demand for food supplies. This increased need gave impulse to the development of rice cultivation in various parts of the island, even in hilly areas originally considered unsuitable for agriculture. In June 2011, the entire island was recognized as Japan's first World Agricultural Heritage site for the harmonious coexistence of its eco-friendly agriculture with the nearly-extinct crested ibis, an endemic bird of Sado. The recognition also encompasses the beautiful scenery with its terraced rice.

#### Wooden houses in Shukunegi town

Shukunegi went through a prosperous 17th century thanks to gold mining in Sado, and developed as a port of call for the merchant shipping industry. Facing a small inlet, Shukunegi is characterised by rows of over 100 houses with wooden-plated walls made from ship planks.

#### Kotoura Caves – Japan's Blue Grotto

Located at the southernmost point of Sado Island, the Kotoura Caves feature a variety of formations. Among the caves, Ryuodo is the largest and was formed by the erosion of submerged lava. On sunny days, the cave shines bright blue like the famous blue cave in Capri, earning it the nickname "Sado's Blue Grotto". The cave has two entrances; the one facing the sea can be accessed by sea kayak, *taraibune* (wooden tub boat), or motorboat. This is one of the most popular scenic spots in Sado's beautiful seas.

## Active Itinerary

~ 4 days / 3 nights in Sado Island

### Day 1

12:00	Arrive at Ryotsu Port
13:00~14:30	Historic site of the gold mine
15:30~16:30	Walk around Kiomachi-dori (Aikawa)
20:00~21:00	Night illumination at Kitazawa flotation plant

### Day 2

9:00~14:00	Hiking on Mount Donden or Cycling around Lake Kamo
------------	--

#### Our recommended programme

17:30~21:30	Sado festive dish cooking and Oni-Daiko experience
-------------	--

### Day 3

#### Our recommended programme

9:00~14:00	Iwakubi rice terrace fields
15:00~16:30	Walk around Shukunegi and wooden tub boat ride

### Day 4

9:00~12:00	Kotoura Cave by Sea Kayak
13:00	Arrive at Ryotsu Port

#### The night illumination of the Kitazawa flotation plant

The majestic ruins of Kitazawa flotation plant are a symbol of the Sado gold mine. The mine was the most productive gold mine in Japan, which meant Sado Island supported the development of Japanese industry when the mine was flourishing. From April through January, this historic site will be lit up at night with an LED light display. Come and see these relics adorned with beautiful lights. Admission is free.  
**Apr. 22 2022 - Feb. 28 2023 - (APR-SEP 19:00~22:00 / OCT-FEB 17:00~22:00)**

#### Hiking at Mount Donden

Starting from Donden Highland Lodge, this circling route takes you to the view from Mount Shiritate and the mirror-like Donden Pond on the top of the mountain.

«Route»

**Length: 3.5 km - Ascent: 100m**

**Time required: 2.5 hours (including breaks)**

**Recommended season: May to November**

#### Cycling around Lake Kamo (21km)

"The area around Lake Kamo has a well-maintained cycling road with few ups and downs, and is very easy to ride along. Convenience stores and supermarkets are located close by in downtown Ryotsu, making it convenient to refuel with drinks and other necessities."

**Estimated time required: about 2.5 hours (running speed 15 km/h)**



# Sample Itinerary

## Golden route including Sado Island

8 days / 7 nights from Tokyo to Osaka

Day 1		Tokyo-Niigata-Sado		Day 4		Kanazawa		Day 7		Osaka	
9:00	Starting from Tokyo station. Take a bullet train to Niigata.	9:00~12:00	Sightseeing of Kanazawa - Kanazawa Castle and Park - Kenrokuen Park - Tea ceremony experience	9:00~12:00	Sightseeing of Nara - Todai-ji - Nara Park - Kasuga Taisha Shrine						
11:00	Arrive at Niigata Station.	14:00~17:00	Free time at Kanazawa - Higashi-chaya district	14:00~17:00	Sightseeing Osaka - Dotombori						
11:30	Jetfoil to Ryotsu Port										
12:30	Arrive at Ryotsu Port										
13:30~15:00	Historic site of the gold mine										
15:30~16:00	Kitazawa Flotation Plant										
16:00~17:00	Kyomachi-dori (Aikawa)										
Day 2		Sado		Day 5		Kanazawa-Shirakawa-go -Takayama-Nagoya		Day 8		Osaka	
9:00~14:00	Iwakubi rice terrace fields	9:00	Depart for Shirakawa-go by bus	9:00	Departure to the airport						
17:30~21:30	Sado festive dish cooking and Oni-Daiko experience	10:30~12:00	Sightseeing of Shirakawa-go - Wada-ke house	14:00~16:00	Sightseeing of Takayama - Takayama Jinya - Sanmachi-suji district						
		14:00~16:00	Sightseeing of Takayama - Takayama Jinya - Sanmachi-suji district	16:00	Depart for Nagoya by bus						
		16:00	Depart for Nagoya by bus	18:30	Arrive at hotel in Nagoya						
		18:30	Arrive at hotel in Nagoya								
Day 3		Sado-Naoetsu-Kanazawa		Day 6		Nagoya-Kyoto-Osaka					
8:30~10:00	Kotoura Cave by motorboat and wooden tub boat ride	9:00	Transfeh to Kyoto by bullet train	9:00	Sightseeing of Kyoto - Kinkakuji Temple - Ryoanji Temple - Nijo Castle						
10:25	Jetfoil from Kogi Port to Naoetsu Port	10:00~16:00	Sightseeing of Kyoto - Kinkakuji Temple - Ryoanji Temple - Nijo Castle	17:30	Arrive at Hotel in Osaka						
13:05	Arrive at Naoetsu Port										
14:15	Departure for Kanazawa by bus										
17:00	Arrive at hotel in Kanazawa										