

## Q-10 Toyonokuni History Road

Kitakyushu, Kanda, Yukuhashi, Miyako, Chikujo, Buzen, Yoshitomi, Koge (Fukuoka Pref.), and Nakatsu, Usa (Oita Pref.)— **A ancient Country, Nakatsu Kaido (old road in Edo era), Usa Shrine (large-scale national shrine)** —

As shown on the map, the area of scenic byways of "Toyonokuni History Road" is given by five cities and five towns facing the Suonada Sea, located at the throat of the Kyushu region.

**(Scenic Resources).** This area was governed as an ancient province, Buzen-Koku. The main route is Nakatsu Kaido Road, which is almost parallel to National Route 10, of which starting point is the Tokiwa Bashi bridge across the Murasaki River in Kitakyushu City, and the end point is Nakatsu City. The envoy's road to Usa Shrine and the historical road to Dazai-Fu (Dazaifu City) can be added. In addition, the mountain road was a shuttle road to the Hita magistrate's office in the Kyushu region, which was under the direct control of the Shogunate in the Edo period (17th to 19th centuries).

Many places on this route are associated with a lot of important historical events in Japan, the contents of which are listed in the right table. Historic facilities and events on these roads are major scenic resources in the area.

**(Access).** Kitakyushu Airport and Kokura Station on the Sanyou Shinkansen are the main access points to this scenic spot. If

visiting by car, please use Kyushu Expressway and Higashi-Kyushu Expressway. On the other hand, the Nippou Main Line of JR Kyushu is also available.

### (1) Castle Town in Kokura-Kita Ward.

The most important scenic spot in this area is Kokura Castle on the west side of the Murasaki River, which was originally built in the early 16th century. After the Hosokawa Clan moved to Kumamoto, the Ogasawara Clan inherited it. The castle was frequently exposed to fire, but was rebuilt every time. The present

Historic important happenings in Nakatsu Kaido Road

Era	7th Tumulus	8th Asuka,Nara	12th Heian	17th Sengoku	19th Edo	AD Meiji~
CASE	(3)Ishizuka T. (3)Goshoyma T. etc.	(4)Buzen Kokufu (8)Usa Shrine	(2)Oracle Case (8)Komo Shrine	(6)Gogan Temple	(1)Kokura Castle (6)Nakatsu Castle (6)Aono Domon(Tunnel) → (5)Kubote Mt.	(6)Yukiti Fukuzawa (7)Yabakei Bridge



(1) Tower Castle (Tenshukaku) of Kokura Castle.



(1) Current Tokiwa Bashi Bridge crossing the Murasaki River



castle tower was rebuilt in 1959 after World War II. The architectural style is characterized by no eaves between the 4th and 5th floors and high stone walls.

The eastern side of the Murasaki River is a merchant town. District names are called fish shop, rice dealer, blacksmith, etc., and names based on their occupations are used. Also, the grocery market called "Tanga-ichiba" in the arcade street is crowded with citizens every day. In addition to the usual food, special ingredients such as bamboo shoots and eccentric local dishes are lined up in a stack.

### (2) Adachisan Area of "Myoken-gu Shrine".





(2) Wakeno Kiyomaro in 10 yen-note used in the period to Showa from Meiji.



(2) Myouken-Gu Temple (Kitakyushu City)



(3) Ishizukayama Tumulus (Kanda City)



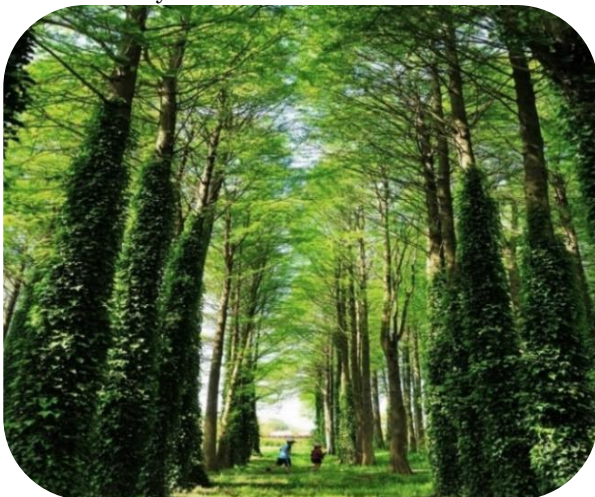
(4) Kokubun-Ji (temple) and its three-storied pagoda (Miyako City, Fukuoka Pref.)



(5) Kubote Mt. (Buzen City)

In 769, the incident of fake oracle occurred at Usa-Hachiman Shrine, and the administration was shaken. Wakeno Kiyomaro (nobleman) was dispatched to the Usa-Hachiman Shrine as a messenger of the emperor. And he received the true message of God: "The throne must be inherited by the blood relationship of the emperor". This message prevented the Buddhist monk, Dokyo, from ambition on the throne.

Kiyomaro saved the big crisis of Japan. However, he was exiled to Kagoshima for revenge, and at that time he hurt his leg. It is said that wild boars saved him and healed the wound at the hot spring in Mount Adachi. In the sense of thanking this, "MyokenGu Shrine" was built at the foot of Mount Adachi in 770. You can look back on the history of Japan by visiting MyokenGu, but at the same time, if you look at the present landscape of Kitakyushu, you can see the connection between ancient and modern times. If you follow the Nakatsu Kaido with such thought,



(4) Path of Metasequoia (Chikuijo Town, Fukuoka Pref.)

it will be a clue to know the Emperor system and the feelings of Japanese about it.

### (3) Large-scale Tumulus in Kanda Town

**Kanda Town**, which is adjacent to Kitakyushu City, has developed as an industrial city, but important ancient mounted tombs (Kofun) built in the 3rd to 7th centuries were remained.

One of them is the Ishizukayama Tumulus in the 4th century (nationally designated historic site), which is estimated to be 120m long and 10m high at the rear. It is located adjacent to the current city hall, and it is an old burial mound of the largest keyhole tomb in Kyushu. A bronze mirror with a triangle edge decorated with god and animal, national important cultural property, was found in an old tomb and dedicated to the nearby Uhara Shrine.

The Goshoyama mound near Ishizukayama was built in the late 5th century. The length of mound is about 120m long, and harnesses and mirrors have been found that show interchanges with mainland China.

In fact, many ancient mounted tombs can be seen in the area from Kanda Town to Usa City. From those ruins, it is clear that many powerful clans lived in this area during the 3rd to the 7th centuries.

### (4) Ruins of "Buzen-Kokufu" in Miyako Town

This area was the state capital (Kokufu) of the ancient Buzen-Koku (state) that existed from the 8th century to 10th century. In the west place of about 2km from Miyako-Toyotsu IC on East Kyushu Expressway, the trace of "Kokufu" was found. The scale is estimated to be 650m×490m, and it is constructed as an archeological park of Buzen-Kokufu.

In addition, there are the ruins of Sosha Shrine, where the deities are collected at local shrines, and Kokubun-ji Temple. In



short, there is a park with the theme of the ruins of the ancient provincial capital in BuzenKoku, and you may understand the framework of regional management in the 8th century.

Going further south, you reach Chikujyo Town. Here, you can stroll "Metaseno-mori Forest" surrounded by trees (see photo (4)).

#### (5) Kubote Mt. Area for Faith

Mount Kubote (782m) is located on the border between Buzen City and Chikuzen Town. Until the Meiji era, mountain religion of abstinence and discipline were active there. Many caves that became bases of faith have remain and is designated as a National Treasures. In addition, the village on the foot of the mountain is an important cultural landscape of the rural landscape.

On the other hand, if you drive by car along Prefectural Road 32, you reach the summit of the mountain, and enjoy the magnificent panorama of the sea and mountains.

#### (6) Nakatsu Town (Oita Pref.)

Three main scenic spots in Nakatsu City are Gouganji Temple, Nakatsu Castle, and the former residence of Fukuzawa Yukichi.

Kuroda became the lord of Nakatsu domain from Himeji, and invited the former lord, Utsunomiya, to Nakatsu Castle and killed him. Utsunomiya subordinates fled from Nakatsu Castle and fought at Gouganji Temple, but were killed. The white walls of the temple were repainted to remove the bloodstains of those times. However, no matter how many times it was repainted, the blood of the killed people did not ooze out and disappear. That is why the wall was last painted red, and since then the temple has been called Akakabe Dera (red wall temple). This is a tragic event in the end of the 16th century.

Nakatsu Castle is located on the bank side of the Nakatsu River, 500 meters from Gouganji. It took a long time to build the castle due to the change of lords, but it was completed in 1612. Okudaira became the new castle owner in 1717, and the castle town flourished, but it was burned down in the Meiji era. And after the



(6) Former house and portrait of Yukichi Fukuzawa (Nakatsu City, Oita)



(7) Yabakei Bashi (Bridge) on Yamakuni River, Nakatsu City.

Second World War, the current castle tower was rebuilt with donations from citizens and other sources.

Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835 - 1901) was a samurai of the Nakatsu domain, but became an educator in the Meiji era and established Keio University. That is why he is the most respected in Japan, and the current 10,000 yen bill has a portrait in it. As shown in photo (6), his boyhood residence remains in Nakatsu City and is open to visitors.

#### (7) Yabakei Rocky Area

Heading to Hita City via National Route 212, you reach Hon-yabakei Valley in Nakatsu City, surrounded by deep valleys. There is a huge rock just behind the road and colorful autumn leaves in the fall, offering a beautiful mix of the two. Please enjoy the tour slowly.

Photo (7) on page 4 shows the scenery along the Yamakuni River. A stone bridge with eight arches was built in 1923. Meanwhile, in the 18th century, a monk dug an unlined tunnel by chisel and hammer along the river to eliminate dangerous traffic. This is called "Aono-Dōmon (tunnel)" and is said to be the origin of Japan's toll roads.



South Tower Gate  
Jyōgu (Building upon the Highest Ground)



Covered Wooden Bridge "Kure-Bashi"  
(8) Usa Jingu Shrine (Usa City, Oita)





(6) Nakatsu Castle (Nakatsu City, Oita)



(6) Gogan-Ji (Red wall Temple) (Nakatsu City, Oita)



(7) Kyoushuu-Ho (ridge) in Yaba-Kei (Valley).



(7) Utagawa Hiroshige's Painting



(7) Ao-no Doumon (tunnel) (Dedicated monk dug in Edo era. tunnel with chisel and hammer in the Edo period)

Another not to miss is Rakan-Ji Temple. It is located in the Honyabakei area, following prefectural road 500. "Rakan" (Arhat) means a religious person who deserves respect, and Rakan-Ji Temple is a temple established to worship such people. There are many Rakan temples throughout Japan, but the headquarter is in the Honyabakei District, which is an important cultural asset of Japan.

### (8) Shrines of Usa and Como

If you return from the Honyabakei district to National Route 10, you can go to the downtown areas of Nakatsu City and Usa City. In these areas, there are two important shrines for the Japanese: Usa Shrine and Komo Shrine. (See photo (8)).

Usa Shrine in Usa City was originally founded in 725, and its main deity is Hachiman God (God of War, Emperor Ojin). This is the headquarter shrine of over 40,600 affiliated shrines.

The imperial family worships Usa Shrine as a mausoleum of the ancestors, and the people pray as a god who protect the country. The main hall is a beautiful building (national important cultural property) in a vast forest. The architectural style is called "Hachiman-zukuri (making)", which connects two buildings.

In Nakatsu City, there is Komo-jingu Shrine is closely related to Usa Shrine, and founded in 848. The shrine gate with the deck was rebuilt in the 17th

century, but the two-story gate is rare and an important cultural asset of the country.

Toyonokuni's historical landscape route has many ancient historical heritages that help to lean the process of rural development, and faith. Therefore, visiting this scenic route will allow you to enjoy the many historic stages of over 1300 years from both a national and rural perspective.

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(7) Main Hall and 500 Rakan at Murodo cave of Rakan-Ji Temple (Honyabakei-Machi, Nakatsu City)



(8) Komo Shrine and its gorgeous Tower Gate (Nakatsu City, Oita)

