National highway and walking path
become a mystical corridor

Oirase Open-Air Museum of Natural History

Limited-time traffic restriction period

2026
9/7 mon ▶ 9/13 sun

Oirase Gorge

When you stop, you can see

Step inside nature's art gallery,where the forest and stream are the masterpieces.

HP

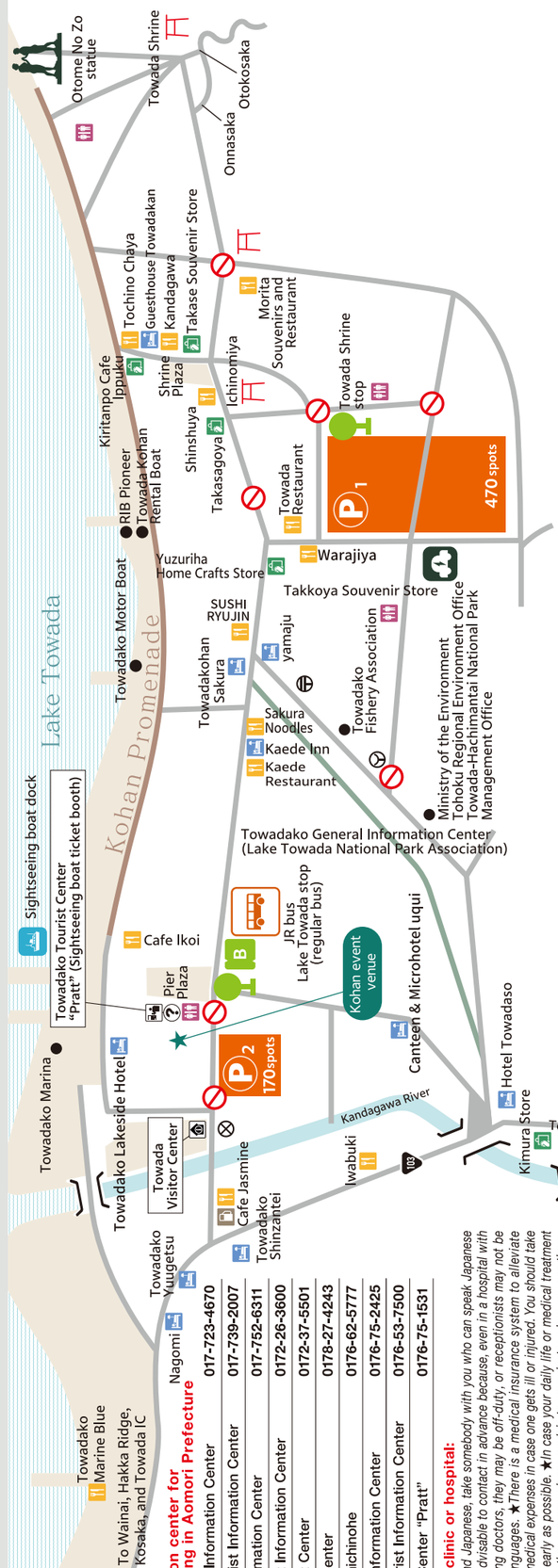
Organized by:Oirase Towada Utilization Council and Oirasekeiryu Eco Tourism Project Committe

Lake Towada/Oirase Gorge

Area Guide







Hotel/Ryokan/Inn · Restaurant/Cafe · Souvenir store · Sightseeing boat dock · Washroom · Gas station · Paid parking · Roadside station · Shuttle bus stop · Shuttle bus ticket office · Event venue · EV high-speed charging station · Police station · Post office · Fire station

"i" Tourist Information

Tourist information center for foreigners traveling in Aomori Prefecture

Aomori City Tourist Information Center	017-723-4670
Aomori Airport Tourist Information Center	017-739-2007
Hirosaki City Tourist Information Center	017-752-6311
Hirosaki City Tourist Information Center	0172-26-3600
Hirosaki City Tourist Center	0172-37-5501
Hachinohe Tourist Center	0178-27-4243
Roadside Station Shichinohe	0176-62-5777
Towadako Tourist Information Center	0176-75-2425
Misawa Airport Tourist Information Center	0176-53-7500
Towadako Tourist Center "Pratt"	0176-75-1531

When you go to a clinic or hospital:

★*If you do not understand Japanese, take somebody with you who can speak Japanese whenever possible. It is advisable to contact in advance because, even in a hospital with foreign-language-speaking doctors, they may be off-duty, or receptionists may not be able to speak foreign languages.* ★*There is a medical insurance system to alleviate patients' burdens to pay medical expenses in case one gets ill or injured. You should take the medical insurance as early as possible.* ★*In case your daily life or medical treatment is limited for religious or other reasons, please explain to your doctor when you see them.*

The following are necessary when receiving medical care:

(1) Insurance card, (2) cash (only cash accepted to pay for medical care), (3) passport, and (4) note of your address, phone number, etc.

It is recommended that you bring a card that describes your address, phone number, and the like so that unnecessary difficulties will be eliminated at the time of reception. It is also recommended that you bring a note of your prominent symptoms so that it will help your doctor give a diagnosis, and help your doctor's fee to be decided at the counter.

Medical facilities in Aomori with multilingual support
JNTO medical care guide
https://www.jnto.go.jp/emergency/eng/mi_guide.html

History of Lake Towada and the Oirase Gorge

Lake Towada is a mountain-top lake located near the northern end of the Ou Mountains, a mountain range in Japan. The Towada Volcano, which became active 200,000 years ago, formed a rectangular caldera around 16,000 years ago, and water filled the caldera to create what we know today as Lake Towada. Part of the lake then ruptured and the water flooding out of it created the Oirase canyon. Oirase River is the only river flowing into the canyon. The river stretches for about 70 km on its journey to the Pacific Ocean, and the 14 km section from the Nenokuchi river outlet (400 m above sea level) to Yakeyama (200 m above sea level), the confluence point with the Tsuta River flowing from the Hakkoda Mountains, is known as the Oirase Gorge.





Makado Rock

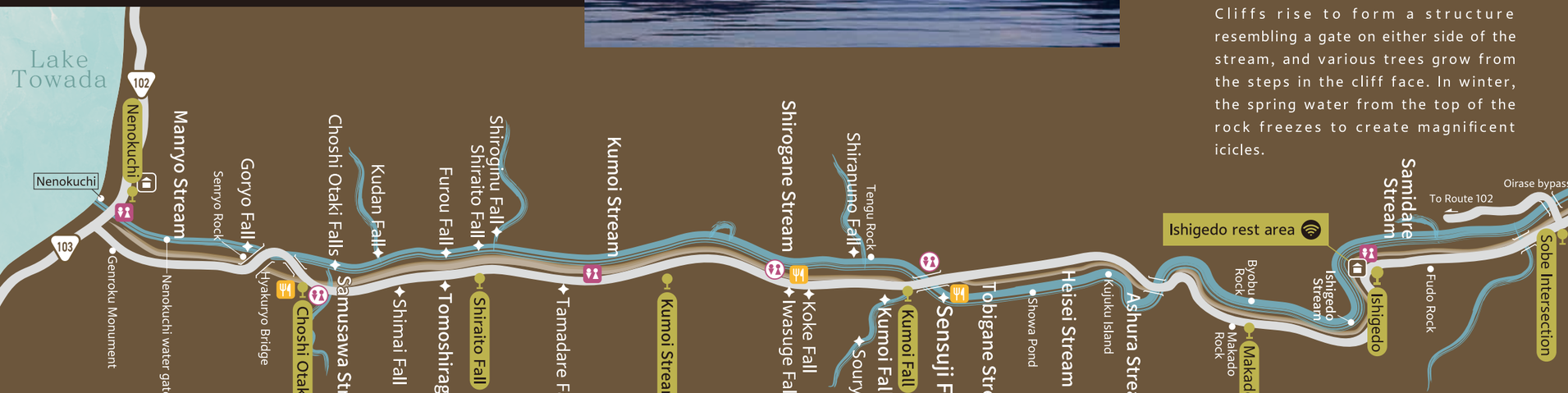
Cliffs rise to form a structure resembling a gate on either side of the stream, and various trees grow from the steps in the cliff face. In winter, the spring water from the top of the rock freezes to create magnificent icicles.

Oirase Open-Air Museum of Natural History Viewing Map

奥入瀬自然博物館観賞マップ

Road | Stream | Walkway | Shuttle bus stop
Rest stop | Parking lot | Washroom | Wi-Fi spot
Temporary washrooms (only when access is restricted to private vehicles)
Food and Drink/Rest Area

*Mobile service is poor in the Oirase Gorge area.



Choshi Otaki Falls

The only waterfall in the main Oirase Stream, Choshi Otaki measures 7 meters tall and about 20 meters wide. It is also called the "fish-stopping falls" because the fish swimming up from the Pacific cannot make it past this point.



Oirase Gorge selected as an important moss forest

One unique thing about Oirase is that the forests, composed mostly of deciduous broad-leaved trees, create a natural moss garden, with moss growing everywhere the eye can see. Surveys have identified nearly 300 species of moss (bryophytes). The numerous waterfalls and streams, and the lingering sea mist from the Pacific Ocean, make the valley extremely humid and a treasure trove of not only mosses, but also ferns, lichens, fungi, deformable fungi, and other peculiar plants.





Oirase bypass

A bypass is currently under construction to preserve the environment and relieve traffic congestion. When the bypass is completed, traffic restrictions will be imposed on the Oirase Gorge section of the national highway. When the Oirase Open-Air Museum is open, the road will be used in a social experiment for visitors to experience the Oirase of the future. Historically, the opening of roads in scenic Oirase has opened various doors to many people. It is therefore a very important theme to think about how roads are to be used while preserving the beautiful natural surroundings.



Walking time

Nenokuchi — 1.5km 30min — Choshi Otaki Falls — 1.1km 25min — Shiraito Fall — 1.6km 35min — Kumoi Stream — 1.8km 35min — Kumoi Fall — 1.5km 35min — Makado Rock — 1.3km 25min — Ishigedo — 1.8km 35min — Sobe Intersection — 1.8km 35min — Ose — 0.7km 15min — Shimeikei Valley — 1.0km 20min — Oirase Field Museum Gate

Walking time