Uncovering the passionate
beat of Koriyama's people.

Koriyama City
Guidebook

THE KORIYAMA BEAT



Passion pulsing
in Koriyama.
Resonance that is
born only
in Koriyama.

【For inquiries about sightseeing and accommodations in Koriyama, click her】

[Koriyama Tourist Information Center] ★ Foreigncustomers are also welcome
ACCESS：195 Hiuchida, Koriyama, Fukushima
(2nd floor of JR Koriyama Station, about 30 meters from the central exit of the Shinkansen ticket gate)
OPEN：10:00～20:00(Open all year round round)　TEL：+81-24-924-0012

【Issued by】
Koriyama City Tourism Division
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Discover
Koriyama's BEAT.

A passion that pulses in Koriyama.

A resonance born from only Koriyama.

With love for this land,

A new "sound of life,"

Played by those deeply rooted in its soil.

Go on a journey, to find the origin of that sound.

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INTERVIEW 01

Ako Yamamoto, Mitsuki Katayama

D&DEPARTMENT FUKUSHIMA
by KORIYAMA CITY

A place where you can see authentic items
decorated by designers
at the gateway to Tohoku travel

First store & gallery in Tohoku, adjacent to the tourist information center

In June 2023, "D&DEPARTMENT FUKUSHIMA by KORIYAMA CITY" (hereinafter “D&D Fukushima”), a store with a gallery space, opened in the Koriyama Tourist Information Center located inside Koriyama Station. The products sold at the store are long-life designs that are not influenced by trends and will continue to be loved by the world. The shop features products from the Tohoku region and all over Japan, with a focus on products from Fukushima, which are rooted in the local community and reflect the creator's passion and commitment to their craft.

One of the features of D&D Fukushima is its ability to propose new travel styles in cooperation with tourist information centers. “For example, if you find a product you are interested in at the store, we can recommend a trip to visit the place of production or the maker. We want to be a place that gives customers a chance to know about Tohoku,” says the store manager and designer, Ako Yamamoto.

“D&DEPARTMENT PROJECT” is a project that discovers designs loved by the local community and disseminates them throughout Japan through sales, restaurants, publications, and tourism. This project is the background of D&D Fukushima opening at Koriyama station. The company is expanding to have one location in each of the 47 prefectures. The opening in Koriyama, Fukushima, is the first in Tohoku, and the first in a train station.

Many of the staff at D&D Fukushima are designers. From the placement of products, to the displays, to the maps for distribution, we utilize the perspectives and skills of designers. In the gallery space, the lifestyle of Fukushima is introduced by replacing all items every three months, including exhibits that introduce the region, places, culture, and activities surrounding the objects. “We are planning to hold workshops and study sessions where visitors can learn about the history and culture of Fukushima. We also plan to organize sake brewery tours starting from D&D Fukushima, making it a place for exchange.”





Attention is paid to every detail of the exhibit arrangement, showcasing the lifestyle of Tohoku.

Mitsuki Katayama says she tries to create a layout that allows visitors to envision people’s daily lives. “I put dusting tools and socks near the clothing area. I put a cutting board near the dishes," she says, “so that the customers can imagine the rhythm of their lives.”

To learn about the feelings and commitment to the products. Katayama went to meet the makers and created handwritten pop-ups introducing their stories. “Within the same Aizu Hongo ware, if the raw material is powdered stone, it is porcelain; if the raw material is clay, it is ceramics, and each artist has a different style. Every day, I try to convey the creator's passion to the customers by utilizing the perspective of graphic design," she says. Katayama's goal is to meet the makers of all the products in the store.

“As the gateway to Fukushima and Tohoku tourism, we hope people will feel free to stop by and say ‘I'm off’ at the beginning of their trip and ‘I'm home’ at the end of their trip.” With this hope, the duo continues to convey the charms of Tohoku.

D&DEPARTMENT-
FUKUSHIMA
by KORIYAMA CITY
195 Hiuchita, Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Cafe

Blue Bird apartment.

“I enjoy their original coffee and love their interior selections.”

https://bluba.jp/



Music

COCOBEAT RECORDS

“It's a store that specializes in analog records. It's fun just to look around the store.”

https://www.cocobeat-records.com/



INTERVIEW 02

Sadahiro Hoshi, Kie Hoshi

at home

Making life in Koriyama
More enjoyable and enriching
Through household goods

The store where our commitment, Leads to wonderful encounters

Sadahiro and Kie Hoshi run "at home," a household goods store with three locations in Koriyama City. Following their marriage, Sadahiro changed his family's pottery business to a general merchandise store. Sadahiro says, "We try to choose products that people in the community will like. Let's value our own "likes." And we want our store to be a place for those leading busy lives that visit to meet wonderful people." The couple values these two principles for their store.

Kie selects products, spanning from food to clothing, stationery, and daily essentials, with a keen focus on materials and manufacturing techniques by using "what interests me first" as a filter.
"If I just stock what sells, it doesn't interest me. I make selections by finding a balance between what I need to focus on, such as avoiding artificial colors and offering products that I genuinely find delicious," says Kie. Sadahiro shares his thoughts, "While 100-yen stores offer cost-effective options, as a dedicated professional in the general merchandise industry, my aim is to present products that people would desire to have, even if it means paying a bit more."

The Hiwada store, the third of the three stores in the city, incorporates experimentation. The large store combines select stores featuring items Kie likes, a florist, an event corner, and more but at the corner of the large store, there is a café space that is being used as a trial venue for café owners who do not have their own shops. There are also many cafés here that have become independent ventures, originally stemming from this location. "While this store reflects our passions, we also aim for it to be a space where people from all walks of life can find a chance to do what they love," says Kie.





Sharing "what makes me happy", With everyone

We are also expanding our activities into "placemaking" that transcends the boundaries of general merchandise stores. This involves hosting various events, including the "Handicraft Exhibition," where we showcase and sell handmade works from around Japan through approximately 160 participating groups, and the "Sweets Festival," "Bread Festival," and "Ice Cream Festival," where we bring together the best products from inside and outside of the prefecture. During the major Golden Week event "Wakuwaku Festival," the Hiwada store parking lot and a nearby park are rented out to host a handmade market and marché, where artists and customers can deepen exchanges. "For me, events are just like the general merchandise in the store. I find immense joy in seeing many great products and brands all in one place, so the concept is to bring them all together in one cohesive experience. I want to share the feeling of 'I would be happy to have such an event,' so I am dedicated to keep sending out enjoyable experiences," says Kie.

Sadahiro hopes to plan store development and events in the future, while harnessing the unique expertise of his staff. "With a diverse team, we can come up with fresh ideas. This store can be a place that can offer even more fulfilling time to people from different age groups and lifestyles," says Sadahiro. While upholding the worldview of at home, Sadahiro will continue to expand the store's horizons.

The store for household goods, "at home".
90-1 Maeda,
Hiwada-machi, Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Bar

Bar&Café Herbalist

"They specialize in crafting cocktails with creative combinations - always a hit no matter the time of day"

https://www.instagram.com/kazu_mixologist/



Grocery store

Natural Foods Tomiya

"This store offers over 3,000 additive-free and natural products consistently in stock."

http://www.tomiya-kura.co.jp/



INTERVIEW 03

Viticulturist and Vintner　　Jardin du lac

Akihiro Ebana, Junpei Koyama

Fukushima Ouse Winery

We don't add anything extra;
we create the one and only wine
that can only be made here

Taking advantage of the wide range of climate zones To grapes that show the individuality of Koriyama

Fukushima Ouse Winery, located in Ouse in the western part of Koriyama, was established to promote the Sixth Industrialization (developing of agriculture combined with processing and servicing) of fruit farming in the city and prefecture. “Vin de Ollage,” which uses grapes produced by 13 cooperating farmers in the city and grapes from contract farmers in the prefecture, has improved its brewing techniques year by year, and in recent years has won numerous awards at domestic wine fairs.

One of the cooperating farmers, Junpei Koyama, is a rice farmer turned wine grape grower in Konan. Akihiro Ebana is in charge of wine preparation policy decisions, fermentation, and barrel aging at Fukushima Ouse Winery. The two met at this winery and hit it off, saying that they would refine their winemaking techniques and grape cultivation methods and promote Koriyama wine, which is still not very well-known.

Ebana, who is also the head grape grower for the winery, grows grapes himself while helping contract farmers grow grapes. “Koriyama is largely divided into three areas: the east, the west, and Konan. The wide range of climatic zones is attractive, and the flavor of the grapes varies greatly. For example, the cool climate of Konan is ideal for white wine. The vines are still young, having only been in cultivation for seven years, but we hope that their youthfulness can be perceived as a positive thing,” says Ebana.

The two emphasize the importance of "human hands-on" care. For example, they aim to use less than half the amount of chemical pesticides as usual, and do not use herbicides. Grapes grown carefully in this way are said to produce wines with a delicious flavor that clearly expresses the aroma and power of the fruit, as well as the climatic conditions. “Wine is an 'aesthetic of subtraction’. If the potential of the grapes is high, there is no need to do unnecessary work or additives in winemaking," Ebana says proudly.





Aiming to create a wine-producing region by inviting comrades who want to promote the town through wine

Koyama is also making efforts to create fans in the hope that through viticulture, he can help people get to know wine. He has launched the “Starting with Grapes project” with Koyama as its representative to promote the appeal of wine through wine pairing tours with local foods, harvesting and pruning in the vineyard, and other farm work so that people will continue to be involved in the project. He is also working to increase the number of his own fans and wine drinkers.

Koyama has been calling out from time to time on his socials for people to help him in the vineyard, and his circle of friends who come to Konan repeatedly is expanding. His goal is to increase the population of wine in Koriyama.

Eventually, Koyama and Ebana would like to create their own wine brand. “We hope more grapes will be grown in various parts of the city so that we can express the diversity of the climate,” they say. The two envision a future in which Koriyama wine will develop into a regional industry.

jardin du lac
50-3 Fukura-nakamachi,
Konan-machi, Koriyama
Fukushima Ouse Winery
2 Goushigoushi, Tadano,
Ouse-machi, Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Confectionary/Sweets shop

mogumogu

“A confectionery studio in a renovated private home. The simple and gentle taste is addictive.”

https://mogumogu.hp.peraichi.com/konan/



Bar

Wine Stand “Runa Den”

“A wide selection of domestic and international wines, including some rare brands”

https://www.instagram.com/runa_den/



INTERVIEW 04

Hikoji Mingei　Hashimoto Hiroji Mingei　Honke Daikokuya

Daisuke Hashimoto, Masaji Hashimoto, Shoichi Hashimoto

Takashiba Deko Yashiki

Preserving local culture
Passing skills of the past to the present
Our craftsmen

Evolving with the times, Creating unprecedented deko

In the Takashiba district of Nishita in the eastern part of Koriyama, there is a community of four hariko (papier-mâché) workshops, known as "Deko Yashiki." These workshops specialize in crafting "deko," papier-mâché dolls created by stretching Japanese paper over wooden forms, then allowing the paper to dry before molding and painting. Deko dolls have a rich history as symbols of good luck and protection. They come in various forms, including the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac, the seven gods of good fortune, and daruma dolls. Notably, the vibrant "Koshitakatora" and "Miharukoma" have been used for New Year's stamps.

For over 300 years, this district has remained a serene artisan town, producing traditional folk crafts. The allure of the rustic and colorful village has also drawn many tourists.

Daisuke Hashimoto, the 11th generation of Hikoji Mingei, is one of the craftsmen who honestly upholds the tradition. Daisuke places a strong emphasis on creating a cute but simple look in the eyes. Continuously, he is always working on his brushes, adhering to his predecessor's wisdom, "Always strive to make better products than before, so that they will be cherished and treasured."

Shoichi Hashimoto, the 21st generation of Honke Daikokuya, creates wooden patterns from scratch and creates innovative papier-mâché. With a team, Shoichi ventured into crafting life-sized polar bear papier-mâché, aimed at showcasing Japanese craftsmanship to the global stage, where his contributions garnered international recognition. Shoichi says, "People around me are now embracing the challenge of making new papier-mâché, and my ideas for concepts are continuing to expand."

Masaji Hashimoto, the 18th generation of Folk Crafter Koji Hashimoto Mingei, collaborated with his predecessor, Hiroji, to craft papier-mâché items inspired by Kabuki and dance motifs, including masks for dance performances. In addition to Shoji's roles in production and customer service, Shoji sometimes performs a dance inherited from Hiroji, a master of the "Hyottoko Dance" passed down in the Takashiba area, so that visitors to the store can experience the culture.





Wanting papier-mâché culture to take root in Koriyama New challenges for our craftsmen

The new brand "Koriyama KARAPPO" has launched under the concept of "emptying ourselves to become aware and welcome each new day." Their product line features wearable papier-mâché items, such as brooches adorned with Hyottoko and Okame designs, along with the current production of masks for both wearing and decoration. Koji emphasizes, "I can't practice my ancestral papier-mâché craft if my spirit is still 'mine,' so I dance with my mask and mouth to make myself 'empty (karappo)' to connect with my ancestors." The brand name and concept were inspired by Koji's words. "We hope that Koriyama KARAPPO will blend into the lives of the people of Koriyama and take root in the community as a new culture, just as there is a culture that has taken root in this area." The brand is imbued with the wishes of these craftsmen.

For prospective visitors to Deko Yashiki, the characteristics of the store are explained as, "Deko may look the same, but there are differences in the molds, the way the colors are applied, and the craftsmen's attention to detail, so no two pieces from any store are the same. Each store offers different experiences, such as observing the production process, painting, and meeting the craftsmen. We hope that visitors will enjoy visiting our four stores and discover the differences between them."

A culture perpetuated through generations and a culture beginning to emerge. The combination of the two is spreading the allure of deko across the country.

Takashiba Deko Yashiki
Tourist Association
169 Tateno, Takashiba,
Nishita-machi, Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Shrine

Takayashiki Inari Shrine

"A beautiful spot with a series of vermilion torii gates. The panoramic view of the city center here is great"

https://www.takayashikiinarijinjya.info/



Natural Sightseeing Spots

Kashima Grand Shrine Pegmatite

"An area where subterranean rock veins emerge at the Earth's surface, designated as a national natural monument"

https://kashimadaijingu.jp/pegmatite



INTERVIEW 05

Takashi Miyamoto

Kaiseizan Grand Shrine

A handmade music festival held
by the chief priest to bring excitement
to the festival

Shrines continue to provide joy to citizens as centers of community activity

Kaiseiyama Grand Shrine, located in the center of Koriyama, is a historic shrine built in 1876 as a spiritual center for people involved in the development of Asaka. It was also the site of the ceremonial groundbreaking and water-entrance ceremonies for the "Asaka Sosui", a major national project to build a 130-km waterway from Inawashiro Lake to Koriyama.

Takashi Miyamoto, the chief priest, has loved rock music since he was a high school student. During his previous career as a high school teacher, he was an advisor to the marching band club, which competed in a national competition. His life has always been accompanied by music, as he was actively involved in the activities of the ensemble and chorus clubs of local elementary schools.

Miyamoto launched the "Koriyama Canal International Music Festival" in 2023. He invites performers who are from Fukushima and active in Japan and abroad to hold concerts throughout the year at halls in Koriyama and in the precincts of temples and shrines. “The precincts of shrines actually have good acoustics, making them ideal for small ensemble performances. We use the grounds of shrines as venues for our concerts so that people can experience the wonder of live instrumental music right before their eyes. We are confident that the program of the music festival will satisfy not only music lovers but also a wide variety of people, as we will fuse classical music with a wide range of genres, including classical concerts, jazz, rock, recitation performances, and dance,” he says.

The impetus for launching the music festival came when the fireworks display that used to be held at Kaiseizan Park was cancelled due to safety concerns. Instead of fireworks, Miyamoto decided to do something that would bring joy to the local residents and organized a number of musical events at the shrine, including an elementary school choral festival and an outdoor live concert featuring rock singers.

However, after the earthquake and nuclear accident in 2011, all kinds of events were canceled. The year after the earthquake, the number of sightseeing buses that used to visit the shrine in large numbers dropped to zero, and Koriyama's agricultural products were no longer sold due to harmful rumors. Miyamoto worked diligently as a sponsor and committee member of various music festivals in the prefecture in order to make Koriyama lively again with music. He gathered volunteers and, utilizing his own personal connections, and launched the "Koriyama Canal International Music Festival".





Bring the Music Capital Koriyama, a Musical Landmark The Role of Shrines for this

“My reason for taking action is not only for the sake of the shrine, but also for the sake of my hometown, Koriyama,” he said. He wants to revitalize Koriyama by bringing people together to enjoy music, sightseeing, dining, and shopping. “The shrine is a good location for people to gather. During the day we sell local produce at the marché on the premises, and at night we offer drinks and snacks, and have a jazz band perform on the shrine grounds. It's a way to spend time that you can only experience at this shrine,” he says, looking ahead to the future of the Kaiseizan Grand Shrine. “I don't know if we will be able to continue the music festival in the future, but first I will try to do what I can during my time. After that, I will leave it to the next generation. I will do what I can here now to preserve the culture of the shrine as a place for people to gather,” says Miyamoto, who continues to bring music to Koriyama today.

Kaiseizan Grand Shrine
3-1-38 Kaisei, Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Japanese sweets shop

Kaisei Kashiwaya

“There is a demonstration of handmade thin-skinned buns, and the freshly made buns are exceptional.”

https://www.usukawa.co.jp/shop/kaisei/



Japanese sweets shop

Yanagiya Confectionery

“Yanagiya is a Japanese confectionery store that focuses on using only the finest ingredients. Their winter-only kaitenyaki are exquisite.”

http://tadafuku.com/shop/yanagiya/



INTERVIEW 06

real local Koriyama member

real local Koriyama

Local Media
Connecting People and
Cities in the Real World

Articles that can only be written by students who honestly express what they feel

"real local Koriyama" is a web media that provides local information about Koriyama. "Blue Bird", a general incorporated association that manages the Blue Bird apartment complex in the city, launched it in 2020 and serves as its secretariat. Students from the Koriyama area work as writers to interview businesses and organizations active in the community. They publish articles that convey the personalities of these people. The students themselves search for interview sites and make proposals at monthly meetings. Adults, including design company staff, local architects, city hall staff, and editors, also join the editorial team to support the students.

Seigo Nagami, a native of Sendai, Miyagi, lived in Fukushima when he went to college and became interested in the city of Koriyama when he joined the local firefighting team. "If I think someone's ideas are interesting, I immediately make an appointment for an interview with them," he says. "I try to capture the person's thoughts in detail and put them into words, so that I can write articles that only I can write."

Yuka Saito, who says she was never good at interacting with people, says, "I was surprised to find so many enthusiastic and warm people in my hometown". She says that she chooses the places she interviews based on whether or not she is attracted to or moved by them.

Rena Shimizu, who was interested in local activities, read an article of real local and joined the program, saying that she wanted to send out information as well. She walked around Koriyama, located between her home and university, from a perspective similar to that of a tourist, and communicated her ideas to the public. "I want people to feel the same atmosphere and charm that I felt at the places I visited," she says.





Events that will be close to the community as the media of the future

In an effort to create a real connection between the news and the readers, we have also started new initiatives such as planning events and workshops for the community together with the news sources. In spring, we hosted the "Shimizudai Tsukushi Festival" on the approach to the Asakakunitsuko Shrine. The name of the event, "Tsukushi" (field horsetail, 土筆, the first kanji meaning 'soil', and the second kanji meaning 'brush'), represents the activities that have been carried out to deepen the appeal of the region (the soil) and transmit it through the media (the brush).

The people introduced in real local Koriyama will open booths for food and drink, workshops, fairs, and live performances, giving visitors a firsthand look at the personalities of the store owners and the atmosphere of each store, which could not be conveyed through the articles on the website alone. "The shrine, which had temporarily lost its liveliness due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is now the starting point of the town and is once again connecting people to the town," said the organizer, who is also attempting to print and distribute a walking map of the town. The map, which includes information not found on the website and student recommendations, has been improved year by year, and the area has been expanded. "Many scenes of the city that are taken for granted by people who live here are new to us students. We hope that this map will be an opportunity for both tourists and local residents to discover new charms of Koriyama."

After graduation, the members say with a smile, "we would like to continue to be involved casually with real local Koriyama and give back to the town". We love and are proud of the city of Koriyama. The tables at the editorial meeting were overflowing with warm ideas that conveyed this sentiment.

Bluebird Association, Inc.
1-8-15 Shimizudai,
Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Bakery

Otomo Bakery

"Otomo Bakery is a bakery beloved by citizens for many years. They also have Koriyama's specialty, 'Cream Boxes'."

https://www.panportal.jp/ootomopan/



Department Store

Usui Department Store

"A long-established department store that continues to be loved by men and women of all ages and is a place of relaxation."

https://www.usui-dept.co.jp/



INTERVIEW 07

Yasuhiko Niida, Maki Niida

Niida Honke

Established over 300 years ago
Aimed at being an alcohol (sake) brewery
Based around being self-sufficient

A brewery preserving the paddies and water Regenerative organic farming makes for rich soil

If you leave the Koriyama city center and take National Highway 49 southeast, you will enter the town of Tamura, with paddy fields rich in greenery expanding before you. Here in Tamura, Kanezawa, Niida Honke has been brewing Japanese sake alcohol for over 300 years.

They are known under the brand names of Niida Shizenshu and Odayaka. In the 1960's, they were the first in the country to adhere to cultivating natural rice for the sake, with no use of pesticides or chemical fertilizers. In 2011, they were the first to move to using only natural rice as ingredients. The water used in the distillery is pure, fresh water from when the rice is washed to when the tanks are washed, and the sake is made purely from water and rice. Furthermore, since the technique takes a great amount of time and labor, many distilleries do not use this process anymore, but they still employ the traditional Kimoto technique, which was a mainstay in the Edo and Meiji periods, that relies on natural processes to cultivate lactic bacteria all the way until it turns into lactic acid for Japanese sake. The Niida Honke has been bestowed with the title of the brewery that preserves Japan's paddies. At their rice fields near the brewery, only what is needed of the rice straw, rice husks, paddy grass and other things are taken and returned for cultivation of the soil, and other fertilizers are never used, for natural cultivation. "Using this method, there is no excess in what is done for cultivation of the soil, and we make certain that there is no loss to the rice fields. We think of the world as a place that we are borrowing to live in, and in that same line of thinking, the rice fields are also only something we are borrowing. We don't want to waste the land during our time here, we actually want to nurture it, little by little, so that in our children and grandchildren's time, it will be in an even healthier state. Our thought process is that in the future, we want to return what is borrowed, without any burden or damage added to it." is what Yasuhiko, the brewer, states. That kind of thinking resonates with the worldwide outdoor brand Patagonia, with which they are enacting a collaboration. Patagonia is promoting regenerative organic farming methods, in which Niida collaborates as a member in a main capacity, and the Niida Honke's Yamamori sake is sold in Patagonia's shop.





While borrowing the forces of nature Aim for a self-sufficient brewery

Use what we have now and cover what you need by yourself as much as you can is our aim "to become a self-sufficient brewery".

"Since we also have a plum field, we also make umeshu (plum wine) and umeboshi (picked plums). "For the sugar content, we use amazake, which is made by naturally converting the starches from our own cultivated koji into sugars." Recently we have also started raising Japanese honey bees, and are testing out producing honey. Furthermore, we are felling the cedar trees planted during my grandfather's era and handcrafting wooden buckets, which we then use for traditional brewing. Regarding "Niida Shizenshu", we are using the natural lactic bacteria and yeast fungus that inhabits the warehouse in our brewing."





From one person to many, Sending out our thoughts

The events started after the Great East Japan Earthquake, “To get to know the real Fukushima, we want as many people as possible to visit Fukushima,” and are now held once a month as “Niida no Hi” and “Tambo no Gakko”. Furthermore, the yearly “Appreciation Festival” has grown, with more than 1000 people from outside the prefecture coming to participate. Maki says that she wants young people to visit, and through the event get to know the warehouse and share it with them. “More than having a brilliant scent and flavor, the sake we make is simple. As much as possible, we want to avoid making something artificial, and place importance in the condition of the rice and yeast that we use at that time to make something naturally good. If people can understand that quality, and look forward to what we produce year after year, I would be very happy. From that, our fans can grow, and therefore if one more organic paddy field can be realized, and from that many living things can flourish, the area, and therefore the world can become a better place as a result of that. We want you to feel that from selecting the Niida Honke’s sake, you yourself are protecting the rice paddies, and making Japan a better place. We want to convey that to anyone who visits our brewery.”



Through brewing sake, What we need to build for the future

Since the mission that Niida Honke takes on is, through brewing sake, inheriting the environment and culinary culture, what kind of town is Tamura, where that takes place?

“Tamura’s rich forests and water, and therefore paddy fields, have been supporting the Niida family for over 300 years. Tamura town is therefore literally the “Paddy Town”. Should it be perceived as an area filled only with rice paddies and mountains, or should it be seen as a wonderful town supported by healthy paddy fields and mountains? It could be that as of late, people are starting to appreciate this more than ever. From here on, I think that in terms of either tourism or living, the state of the environment will be the most important thing. I think that the Niida Honke continuing to exist in this area and continuing to brew sake is a good thing for the land. In the area we want the brewery to spoken of in a manner such as “The Niida Honke is here, so nature prospers and things proceed happily with no reckless developments or anything of the like” and have pride that we are helping protect the nature around Tamura in a way.”

Niida’s dream is to have all paddy fields in the area of Tamuramachi Kanezawa become all-natural paddy fields. “I want all the fields to be organic, make the environment of the planet better, and hand that off to the children for their future. I think that what we need to build for the future is a better state to connect to the future, and that’s what we will do threw brewing sake.”

Niida Honke
139 Takayashiki,
Kanezawa, Tamura-machi,
Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Butcher

Yazawa Ham

“Since I like the Maeda pork here, I also have it served at the Tambo no Gakko meals.”

305-1 Kimura-Nakahasama,
Nishita-machi, Koriyama



Japanese restaurant

Marushin

“A famous shop where people come from far and wide for the Japanese cuisine. Japanese sake is also available in a wide variety.”

15-4 Shinmei-cho, Koriyama











THE KORIYAMA BEAT

Passion pulsing in Koriyama.
Resonance that is born only in Koriyama.

























INTERVIEW 08

Yuki Wada

Whole Earth Nature School Fukushima

Here, wishes come true
Face and experience
Your true self

Doing nothing, Proposes the best opportunities

In his late twenties, Yuki Wada ventured to the town of Konan on his own and established the "Whole Earth Nature School Fukushima." Situated amidst the beauty of Konan and the shores of Lake Inawashiro, this school offers an immersive experience that connects people with nature. Despite initially pursuing an education degree at university, Wada chose to become a communicator of the wisdom of the natural world over that of a traditional school teacher. "I came to understand that for a more enriching life, we must harness our human potential and the capacity to shape our own destinies with our own hands. These are attributes that cannot be acquired through formal education alone. From my many experiences abroad, I realized that nature is the true nurturer of our inner essence."

Having acquired experience at the Whole Earth Nature School in Shizuoka, he made a U-turn after the Great East Japan Earthquake. His choice of Konan as the school's location stemmed from the area's exceptional natural setting. He explains, "Thanks to the four seasons, this town teems with a wide diversity of living creatures."

In contrast to the "dynamic" town of Inawashiro, known for its thriving water activities, the "Quiet Konan Experience" was launched in Konan. The program, guided by the theme of "Daring to create an absence," is held at the Aomatsuhama Lake, where the waves are calm and participants can spend their time as they see fit, with options like kayaks, bonfires, hammocks, tent saunas, and more. "We ask participants to spend time in nature to 'feel' how their hearts move by confronting themselves with nature.

People's feelings, like nature, are dynamic and can change from one moment to the next. What you want to do may change between the time of your reservation and the time you arrive at the destination. Here, we invite every individual the freedom to select an experience that resonates with their feelings on that specific day and at that moment. So, there is also the option of even doing nothing," says Wada. Participants found the program fulfilling, and its high repeat rate has led to plans for a guided tour.





Strengthening local ties, Creating additional value

"Many locals in the area claim that 'Konan lacks attractions.' While it's true that we may not have extensive tourist facilities, I genuinely believe that this theme of 'creating an absence' can lead into something extraordinary," Wada talks about the value of 'stopping time' that can be appreciated all the more so because it's in Konan. "When we are busy in our daily lives, we often leave our thoughts and hearts behind. Here, however, we can be in the midst of nature and turn our antennae to our inner nature (heart). Such moments are indeed a precious experience and meaningful experience for participants."

Wada's goal for the future is to establish an environment in which individuals of all ages, including those with disabilities, can connect with nature in Konan. To achieve this goal, Wada is actively involved in building ties and collaborations with local businesses and schools. As a result of his efforts, there are plans to introduce new relaxation destinations, such as lodging facilities and cafes, in Konan. "I want to create values that will make people want to visit this area again and again, while further enhancing the experiences and places that enrich the spirits of visitors." Wada is constantly striving to create opportunities for visitors to experience the quiet richness of Konan.

Whole Earth Nature School
8386-7 Kamikawara,
Fukura, Konan-machi,
Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Onsen, hot spring

Bandai Atami Onsen Public Hot Spring "Reisen" Motoyu

"This is a 100-year-old hot spring establishment. Early morning access from 6:00 a.m. is available."

https://www.bandaiatami.or.jp/day-stay/motoyu/



Shrine

Okitsushima Shrine

"The shrine is situated within a pristine forest. The surrounding woods are designated as a natural monument by the prefecture."

https://okitushima.com/



INTERVIEW 09

Daisuke Hasegawa

BANKS

Communicating the splendor
of local resources
through home building

Sticking with domestic timber without compromise. Building houses that can be lived in for 100 years.

BANKS Inc. is a construction company specializing in wooden houses located in downtown Koriyama. Jun Katayama and Daisuke Hasegawa, who were formerly colleagues at a housing construction company, established the company with the goal of providing “houses that will last 100 years.”They said, "There are few construction companies that offer furniture that should go together with the house.” They wanted to build their own ideal house where they could manage the house, furniture, and garden as a total package.

BANKS is committed to using only domestic lumber to construct its homes. The forests in Fukushima produce high-quality lumber with beautiful grain,” The trees grown in Fukushima are ideally suited to the climate and environment of Fukushima. We hope to showcase the benefits of local production for local consumption so that others will focus more on lumber produced in the prefecture in the future," says Hasegawa.

This commitment extends to bedding as well. “In Europe, passing on bedding to the next generation is seen as valuable. In the same way, we propose the best bedding that can be passed on to the next generation at the time our customers buy their homes. BANKS also developed the bed frame and mattress to match the futon, which is made from natural materials and has excellent humidity control properties.

The bed frame is made of paulownia wood, a precious wood from Fukushima, and the mattress is made of horsehair, the finest material available. Currently, we use European horsehair mattresses, but we are also in the process of producing and developing mattresses using horsehair grown in Aizu," he says.







Planning to create opportunities to preserve craftsmanship for the future.

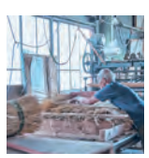
There are other activities that make use of local resources. After receiving a request from a local sake brewery to produce large wooden buckets, Hasegawa launched the “Fukushima Kioke Project” to revive one of the few remaining wooden bucket craftsmen in Japan in Fukushima. The participants agreed with Mr. Hasegawa's wish to "preserve the wooden buckets that have supported Japan's fermented food culture by making sake, miso, soy sauce, and other products for future generations," and through their training, two new wooden bucket craftsmen were born in Fukushima. They produce wooden buckets of various sizes for various purposes in response to requests from inside and outside the prefecture. Miso-making workshops and cooking classes in cooperation with local malt makers are also held regularly.For maturing miso, we use wooden vats made of "Tokimeki," a brand of Japanese cedar produced in Koriyama. Local micro-organisms live in the wood, making it compatible with local fermented foods.

For builders, BANKS offers tree felling tours and tatami store tours. “Tatami mats from ‘Imagawa Tatami’ mat store in Koriyama are also recommended for the houses BANKS builds. The tatami craftsman here is one of the few masters in Japan who can sew tatami mats by hand. We want many people to see their careful, artistic, beautiful handiwork and dedication to their craftsmanship.”

Using local resources and highlighting their advantages anew. Hasegawa's vision has resulted in houses that are friendly to both people and the environment, with designs to lead us into the future.

BANKS
1-6-22 Shimizudai,
Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Tatami mat store

Imagawa Tatami Mat Shop

“One of Japan's few hand-sewn tatami craftsmen who also deliver tatami mats to the national treasure Zuiganji Temple.”

https://lavida.work/about/blog/?p=4451



Outdoors shop

LOGGERS Gear Supply

“An outdoor goods store with a café using the concept of “forestry x camping.”

https://loggers.stores.jp/



INTERVIEW 10

Masayuki Yaginuma, Hirohito Yaginuma

Horaiya Honten

Let’ s spread the culture of fermented food nurtured by abundant water both at home and abroad

Always making new changes while preserving traditional manufacturing methods

Founded in 1906 as a malt shop, Horaiya Honten produces and sells amazake, miso, and other fermented foods made with domestically produced rice and soybeans utilizing the production methods handed down for over 100 years.

While respecting tradition, the brothers who bring a new style to the company are Masayuki Yaginuma, the younger brother who is the managing director and factory manager, and Hirohito Yaginuma, the fourth-generation representative director and older brother. Masayuki explains the beginning of Koriyama's fermented food culture: “Thanks to the Asaka Sosui, we are rich in fermented food. Koriyama was a large rice paddy field area because of the abundant water supply thanks to the Asaka Sosui. There have always been many malt shops in the area, and the culture of fermented foods, such as making miso, amazake (sweet sake), and doburoku (unrefined sake) at home, took root. Horaiya started as a malt shop.”

Our predecessors developed a series of revolutionary products to meet the needs of the times. The company surprised the industry with its instant miso soup in a raw miso paste type, the source of asazuke pickles, and especially amazake in plastic drink bottles that can be stored at room temperature.

They’ve been handed down the lesson to “always keep changing”. As one means of increasing the number of uses of fermented foods in the world, Masayuki focuses on joint development with companies in Fukushima. The malt beverage "MOKO," which contains peach juice, was commercialized after holding several events where famous soccer players got to taste them. Other products include “Rise Cacao,” a fermented beverage combining amazake and cacao developed with a local coffee shop, and “Amazake yogurt” developed with a dairy manufacturer in Fukushima.

Hirohito, who is expanding overseas sales channels, employs a full-time staff and actively participates in overseas exhibitions. In recent years, demand from overseas has rapidly increased, and a factor in this is the acquisition of “kosher” certification, which certifies the safety of food products. In Israel, where there are many Jewish people with strict dietary restrictions, Houraiya's products are welcomed. “We want to spread the goodness of Fukushima's fermented foods more and more overseas,” says Hirohito.





Opportunities to learn through experience Contributing to the community as a local company

While expanding overseas, we are also focusing on hands-on projects in local communities. Factory tours are particularly popular, with the number of elementary school students visiting the factory alone reaching approximately 7,500 in three years. Other events include workshops where miso is prepared and aged in wooden vats made in Koriyama by a local construction company, delivery lectures on fermented foods, and cooking classes with a professional basketball team. The company offers a variety of opportunities for local residents to try fermented foods, hop that “people will learn about the wonder of fermented foods through factory tours and lectures, and be impressed by the food they eat at workshops and cooking classes”.

Horaiya continues to take on new challenges, such as utilizing malt as a sweetener and seeking ways to arrange amazake in a Western style. The duo always enjoys change, saying, "Lifestyles and eating styles will continue to change, but we want to propose delicious products that can support everyone's health at the table, no matter the era.”

Horaiya Honten
54-2 Kanaya Kawakubo,
Tamura-machi, Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Cafe

Fukuei Coffee

“A specialty coffee shop. The roasting technique is ranked 2nd in the country.”

http://www.fukuei-coffee.jp/



Izakaya, Japanese-style bar

Izakaya Yasubey

“The staff is passionate about growing their own vegetables. An izakaya where local products from Koriyama are plentiful.”

https://www.instagram.com/izakaya.yasubey.koriyama/



INTERVIEW 12

Tetsuzo Yamaguchii

Asaka Distillery, Sasanokawa Shuzo

Reconnecting with the history of whiskey
that has been handed down
since his grandfather's time

A distillery that attracts the world's attention; where wind and water brew good sake

"The Asaka Distillery", the oldest whiskey distillery in Tohoku, is located on the premises of the "Sasanokawa Shuzo", a sake brewery that has been in Koriyama since 1765. Tetsuzo Yamaguchi, the 10th head of the company, is the third generation in the whiskey business that began with his grandfather. The distillery is attracting worldwide attention for its main products, such as the "Yamazakura" series of blended whiskeys and the "Asaka" series of single malt whiskeys, and has produced whiskeys that have won the world's highest awards at international whisky competitions.

The characteristics of the whisky from the Asaka Distillery are related to the wind and water of Koriyama. "In this distillery, the whisky is aged in barrels at a high rate. The distillery is located in Koriyama, where there is a strong wind called "Bandai Oroshi," which blows down from Mt. Bandai. My great-grandfather was involved in the 'Asaka Sosui,' a national project in the Meiji era that drew a single waterway from Lake Inawashiro to Koriyama, and we are grateful to our predecessors for providing us with water that is essential for sake brewing," says Yamaguchi.





Driven by the passion of our fans, we continue to make our products in the traditional way

The beginning of our whiskey business dates back to 1946, after the end of the war. The company came up with the idea of producing whiskey for the American soldiers of the Occupation Forces instead of sake, which could no longer be produced due to the difficulty of procuring rice for sake due to the food shortage. The company's signature product, "Cherry Whiskey," became nationally known in the 1980s as "Cherry in the North, Toa in the East, and Mars in the West."

However, the whiskey industry subsequently entered a period of stagnation; an industry winter. Sasanokawa Shuzo also stopped producing whiskey and had a large inventory, but "Thankfully, there were people who said, 'Cherry is the only way to go,' and we sold a small amount," Yamaguchi recalls.

In 2015, when the industry was once again booming, Yamaguchi decided to restart whiskey as a project to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Sasanokawa Shuzo. He decided to renovate the old sake brewery and install new equipment, including pot stills (distillers). "The design is crucial because the shape of the pot still changes the flavor of the whiskey. If you ask whether it is thick or thin, it is thick; if you ask whether it is heavy or light, it is heavy. We asked them to design and manufacture the pot still with this kind of robust flavor in mind. That's more characteristic of whiskey," said Yamaguchi. The first single malt whiskey from Asaka Distillery, "Asaka, The First," which was born in 2019, turned out to be almost exactly as we imagined.

"Whiskey is a drink that can be completed in as little as three years and as long as 30 years. Depending on the type of cask in which it is aged and the length of time to age, the aroma and flavor will be completely different. Whenever I make a new whiskey, the more I have a network of fans who send out information about it on social media and blogs, the more the fans are captivated by the endless appeal of whiskey. So, I will continue to make and store good whiskey. I just continue to do exactly what I was once taught by Hido (Ichiro Hido, who was the president of Toa Brewery in Saitama), who is passionate about whiskey and how to make it," Yamaguchi says.

Asaka Distillery
(Sasanokawa Shuzo)
1-178 Sasagawa, Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Park

Hayama Waterfall, Hayama Park

"This waterfall is an artificial waterfall commemorating the Asaka Sosui Project. It is designated as a national tangible cultural property"

https://www.kanko-koriyama.gr.jp/asaka-sosui/cultural/cultural29.html



Museum

Asaka Historical Museum (closed for repairs)

"ThThe museum was built in a former junior high school building. It is designated as a National Important Cultural Property."

https://anrekihaku.or.jp/



INTERVIEW 12

Open Factory KORIYAMA Executive Committee Chairman

Takumi Watanabe

President and Representative Director, Hinode Koki Co.

Making someone smile
Showing how cool
the manufacturing industry is

Passing on great technology to future generations
Letting people know the value of factories

In the eastern part of Koriyama lies a central industrial park, home to a cluster of small factories. In the fall of 2022, ten factories, mainly manufacturing firms within the complex, came together to organize the first "OPEN FACTORY KORIYAMA," an event to provide visitors with "factory tours" and "manufacturing experiences" not typically accessible to the public. In addition to booths, tool displays, and workshops at the main gymnasium, each factory welcomed visitors for tours and other activities. The event drew a significant turnout, including local residents and children.

Takumi Watanabe, the chairperson of the executive committee, also serves as the President of Hinode Koki Corporation, a company specializing in metalworking. Speaking about his vision, he shares, "We want to dispel the negative image of factory work, which is often perceived as unexciting, and to show the younger generation that manufacturing can be both enjoyable and cool. Furthermore, we want to foster stronger connections among craftsmen within the community and between different companies, with the goal of preserving the unique skills that each company possesses for future generations."

The first turning point occurred when Watanabe took part in the "Koriyama Tech Boot Camp," a project aimed at creating products using in-house technology, in which he developed a comb for men. "I had just been transferred from an external company, and at the time, I held the belief that factory work was boring and unrefined. However, after observing the metalworkers in our company craft combs with such expertise and enthusiasm, I came to the realization that 'a factory with the ability to create anything is truly remarkable,' which transformed my belief."

The second turning point occurred when Watanabe attended the "Factory Festival" in the Tsubame-Sanjo region of Niigata. Impressed by the way the craftsmanship was presented, the way the venue was created, and the expressions on the faces of the participants, Watanabe thought, "We should do this in Koriyama too!" This motivation led Watanabe to establish an executive committee with fellow presidents of companies from the same industrial park specializing in manufacturing steel structures and metal cutting and polishing. "Many of the presidents are in their 30s and 40s, and they are an exceptional group of individuals with whom I can share my concerns as a successor. I was confident that we could create something interesting together."





Expanding scope by involving the community
Toward "Manufacturing Town" Koriyama

During the first event, when Watanabe saw children's eyes light up with excitement at the venue saying "Wow!!," he felt a profound sense that "our work was bringing smiles to people's faces." The Open Factory will continue to expand its possibilities, not only by holding events, but also by allowing visitors to see the daily operations of the factory, embark on technology-focused tours, and even craft souvenirs for tourists. Speaking about his dream, he shares, "I think it would be great if, over the next five or ten years, elementary school students who used to be visitors to the Open Factory could join the participating companies in making the event more exciting. There are many food processors and farmers in Koriyama, so we would like to work together with people from various industries to make Koriyama's industrial landscape more attractive."

Open Factory
KORIYAMA Executive
Committee

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Bar

BARKURAKU

"This is a bar I often go to with members. Their cheese risotto is amazing"

https://tabelog.com/fukushima/A0702/A070201/7000240/



Barbershop

ChopLuck BARBERSHOP

"This store provides stylish hairstyles for adults. I have complete confidence in them"

http://www.chopluckbarbershop.com/



INTERVIEW 13

Atotsugi (successor) of the Town Member Fushimiya Glass Store Representative

Taisuke Mihoya

Atotsugi of the Town / Fushimiya Glass Store

Make good use of the past
Discover wonders again
The town people can gather

Everyone is an" Atotsugi of the Town"
Make the town good to live in by ourselves

Upon leaving the west exit of Koriyama Station and walking a few minutes south, the Motomachi shopping district comes into view. It was once a street lined with stores overflowing with liveliness. In order to bring the charm and worth of that shopping district back to the eyes of the people, we formed an organization that moves everyone to inherit this "town" together. With the idea of spanning across different generations and bringing the town together, we came up with the "Atotsugi of the Town" name. We formed the group with inhabitants of Motomachi and 11 people with interests in it. Members participating have various thoughts on the matter, such as "In this midst of this town quickly changing over the decades, we want to make it so that the town makes the most of what it has now", "I moved here 3 years ago, but, with our own hands, we want to be able to make a town that is even better to live in".

Based around "nokado Motomachi", making use of old stores in the area, we want to hold meetings once a week and discuss what can be done in our own regional way. Hold an "Open Day" once a month as a way of opening up nokado as a community space. Other than that, making changes to the map as we notice things whilst walking through the town, we talk to residents retaining vacant housing, and proceed with research of the shopping district. In May of 2023, we held an event based on the topic of "Atotsugi of the Town - Prologue" in nokado Motomachi. Things related to Motomachi, such as old pictures, maps, tools, and other gathered materials were displayed. Thanks to the cooperation of residents who felt sympathy for us, more people than initially expected turned out. "That is how it was back then" was one thing heard as both the elder and the youth were brought together by blooming conversation. Representative Taisuke Mihotani responded by telling everyone that this kind of scene is what we want to cherish.





For the things inherited over many years
We want to make sure that they are kept as a sustainable shape

Mihoya is the fourth in the family line of the Fushimiya Glass Store, which was established in 1914. With the concept of "Making the most of what we have now", they deal in buying and selling old glass products and furniture, as well as remaking glass products from the Showa era in a stained-glass style. Regarding inheriting the business of selling glass made for architectural purposes, he always had doubts about breaking down and recycling old materials to make them new again. One day, he started to think of taking apart old things and putting them back to use as an eco-solution. With that in mind, he re-decorated the store and displays, making the most of old things, and discovered a whole new group of customers.

Old glass materials and their quality represent "living", and bring forth memories and stories with them. Mihoya says "In the event of putting something back into use while expressing the thoughts of those who have held that item up until now, I am trying to make a new product which brings its own new wonder with it".

Can we make it so that things we inherit that have already had a long life can take the form of something that can continue to live on? Both Mihoya's job and our Atotsugi of the Town activities share the same aim. It is said by our members that the Fushimiya Glass Store itself is a symbol representing activities. "First of all, if stepping into the Fushimiya Glass Store can be your first step in coming into contact with the splendor and wonder of the past, and set you on the path of having an interest in our town, that would make us very happy."

Fushimiya Glass Store
1-6-9 Motomachi,
Koriyama

Fushimiya Glass Store

Atotsugi of the Town

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Japanese sweets shop

Hirataya

"An award-winning Japanese Sweets store. The mochi used to make dango and the sweet bean paste are really delicious."

14-17 Ikenodai, Koriyama



Cafe

Café BON

"A café with the atmosphere of Showa era Japan floating through it. The curry spaghetti is particularly delicious and I stop by to eat it."

26−17, Domae-machi, Koriyama



INTERVIEW 14

Yoshihiro Shiga

Asakanogama (Asakano Kiln Works)

In the new base at Koriyama,
Creating artisanries
which has not been seen before

New pottery works from the soil of Koriyama Establishing a style through trial and error

In Namie, the 16th generation potter Yoshihiro Shiga continues on the family business, creating Oborisoma ware. Leading from the events of the Great Tohoku Earthquake, he thought to “Create new works where they do not have Obori or Soma ware”, and thenceforth relocated to Koriyama. Shiga, who opened a workshop in the heart of Koriyama, formerly famous for its tile works, and began working with its clay. The earth used for Oborisoma was always fine-grained clay, but the clay found in Koriyama is rough earth high in iron. After expelling sand, clay made into pottery takes on a burnt brown color, and rough texture. “Since we cannot use a faint colored glaze on top of the deep hue, we use craftsmanship to dig into the surface and add decorative effects to make the work attractive.” This pottery made by finding a style through trial and error has been bestowed with the “Asakanoyaki” name, with the workshop being named “Asakanogama”, after the area in which they are made.

Shiga has thought of many more things that he would like to do since opening Asakanogama about 9 years ago. One of those is “Create a new genre of craftworks”. The first of those is a combination beer tumbler made by combining the method of Aizu lacquerware, using Fuki-urushi, or wipe-lacquering, and Asanoyaki. This work received the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Award at the Nippon Omiyage Award ceremony, held by the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. “This work was made possible by coming to Koriyama. I felt that there was quite a distance between Namie and Aizu, but since coming to Koriyama, I have started to feel that they are a lot closer than I previously thought. It's also made it much easier to meet with the Aizu lacquerware craftsmen.

Other than that, a double-structured tumbler, which rings like a bell when it sways (referred to as a bell-like tumbler), and using Oborisoma kiln methods, a beer tumbler dedicated to Taiwanese beer, are some of the challenges he has taken on. “The mission of a pottery shop is to create something that mass-manufacturers cannot replicate, with careful and delicate handwork to create a new value in the product.”





With acclaim from overseas, Bringing craftworks to a new level

While continuously making new innovative works, Shiga is proactively putting on displays at events overseas. “I have been contacted by overseas buyers, leading to business discussions ending up with my goods available on e-commerce sites selling luxury goods tailored for men. I have been contacted by numerous teahouses and museums in America, gaining awareness not available only from Japan.” Shiga says this, not satisfied with the current situation and always in the mindset of continuing to take on challenges.

“We live in a time where you can buy anything on the internet, but I still want customers to come visit the store. I have always thought that way. I want to talk about the works, and if they have the time, I even want them to be able to touch Koriyama clay with their own hands. Through each and every handmade work, even if they are of the same series, they differ slightly due to color and form. While taking in the texture of them, the weight and the feeling of how it fits into your hands, I want customers to pick out the one which stands out to them.” Through his works, Shiga continues to convey “making things which embody the feel of the area”, which craftsmen hold dear to their hearts.

Asakanogama
1-12 Nakano,
Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Grocery store

AMEKAZE West

“Local Food Shop. ‘Asakanoyaki’ works also are available here.”

https://amekaze.net/storelist



Restaurant

Arigato Italian Cuisine

“With the concept of the comfort of home, a restaurant that places great importance in the seasons.”

https://nouka-italian.com/



INTERVIEW 15

Shikisai Ichiriki　　Hotel Hananoyou

Kentaro Oguchi, Toyoomi Kanno

Bandai Atami Onsen

We want to convey the value
of the hot spring culture
that exists here without embellishment

Onsen to heal both mind and skin, the starting point for your Tohoku trip

Bandai Atami Onsen, a famous hot spring in Koriyama, the gateway to the Tohoku region, has a history of 800 years. When we asked Kentaro Oguchi of Shikisai Ichiriki and Toyoomi Kanno of Hotel Hananoyu about the characteristics of this hot spring, both of whom welcome many tourists every day, they replied, "The quality of the water is excellent. It has been called the 'hot spring for beautiful skin' for many years. It is alkaline, with a pH of 9.1, which is equivalent to that of soap, so it easily removes dirt from the skin and makes it smooth." Oguchi is proud of the fact that "even onsen experts, who know all the hot springs in Japan, say that the water is so rare that you don't need to moisturize your skin after bathing." In the Touji culture (hot-spring cure), it is said that it is good to first bathe in acidic hot spring water with strong sterilizing and antibacterial properties to heal wounds, and then bathe in alkaline hot spring water with less irritation to condition the skin. "The hot water of Bandai Atami Onsen is the finishing touch, so to speak. It is a hot spring that heals both body and soul," they said.

Another feature of this hot spring resort is that many people stay here for consecutive nights. The reason for this is its location. Both the Tohoku Expressway and Ban-Etsu Expressway are nearby, and there is a JR station, so you can go to many places from here. "This convenience makes it a hot spring resort suitable for long-term stays," says Oguchi. "It is close to both the Kanto area and the center of Koriyama, surrounded by lush greenery and you can hear the sound of seasonal breezes. It's a place with a traditional charm, so customers can really relax" says Kanno. The amazing environment is the reason this place has so many fans.





Cherish hot spring culture as it is

What the two would like to emphasize in the future is "onsen culture". Oguchi says he hopes that the townscape and the life of the hot spring resort itself will be of value and become the best part of the trip. "There are stores in front of the station with historic names, and the long-established restaurants that dot the area are really good," he says. This may be because the tap water of Atami, taken from the local Fukazawa River, is called 'Fukazawa no Meisui' (famous water of Fukazawa), and the water is delicious here.

Kanno says that the interaction with the local people is also an attraction. "When people come to take a bath and leave, they say, 'it was another nice bath today,' or 'thank you for the bath. Many people give us such words of appreciation for our labor, and everyone is proud of this hot spring. We have good customers, and we can be a good inn. I want people to experience that kind of atmosphere that flows through this hot spring resort."

The two also hope to spread the enjoyment of traditional Japanese inns to a wider range of people. "Ryokans are also places to spend time with others; they are not only about the hot springs and meals, but also casually walking around the inn, browsing the local products at the store, relaxing in the lobby while taking in the scenery, and chatting with those who are there with you. "I want people to experience the beauty of inns more deeply," said Sugano, to which Oguchi nodded in agreement.

"How can we increase the enjoyment of travelers?" The two of them will warmly nurture you during your time at Bandai Atami Onsen, a one-of-a-kind experience.

Bandai Atami Onsen
Tourist Association
4-406 Atami,
Atami-machi, Koriyama

MY FAVORITE KORIYAMA



Natural Sightseeing Spots

Choshigataki Waterfall

"The 48-meter-high Choshigataki Waterfall, named for its shape that resembles a sake bottle, is one of the most famous waterfalls in Japan."

https://www.kanko-koriyama.gr.jp/tourism/detail2-4-253.html



Street (downtown)

Jinya

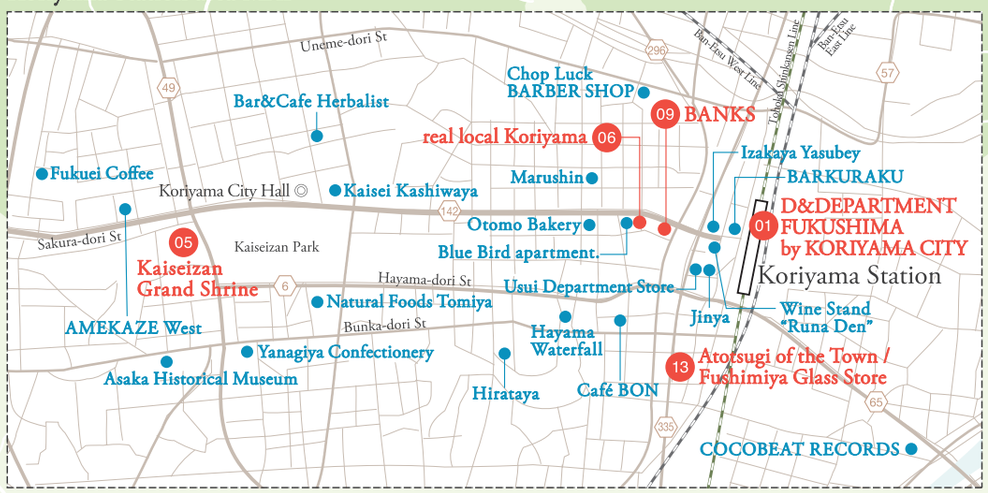
"One of the drinking areas in front of Koriyama Station, this is a historic downtown area dating back to the Edo period."

1 Ekimae, Koriyama

KORIYAMA MAP

Choshigataki Waterfall
Ishimushiro Trailhead
Bonari Green Line
Bandai Atami Onsen Public Hot Spring "Reisen" Motoyu
Ban-etsu Expwy
Bandaiatami IC
Nakayamajuku Sta.
Joko sta.
Hotel Hananoyu
Shikisai Ichiriki
Bandai-Atami Sta.
Gohyakugawa PA
Motomiya IC
Abukuma River
Tohoku Line
Tohoku Shinkansen Line
Kashima Grand Shrine Pegmatite
Deko Yashiki
Koriyama JCT
Okitsushima Shrine
Kikuta sta.
Tohoku Expwy
at home Hiwada Store
Hiwada sta.
Yazawa Ham
Koriyama-higashi IC
Imagawa Tatami Mat Shop
Koriyama IC
Ban-Etsu West Line
Koriyama-Tomita sta.
Miharu PA
Ban-Etsu East Line
Mōgi sta.
Takayashiki Inari Shrine
Koriyama City Hall
Koriyama Station
Koriyama-chuo Smart IC
Asakanogama (Asakano Kiln Works)
Fukushima Ouse Winery
Whole Earth Nature School Fukushima
mogumogu
(Soba Road)
Horaiya Honten
Hinode Koki Co. (Open Factory KORIYAMA)
Koriyama-minami IC
Arigato Italian Cuisine
LOGGERS Gear Supply
Asaka Distillery (Sasanokawa Shuzo)
Asaka PA
Asakanagamori sta.
Niida Honke
Iwaki-Moriyama sta.
Yatagawa sta.
Sukagawa sta.
Sukagawa IC
Suigun Line
Lake Inawashiro

Koriyama Station area MAP



ACCESS

Access to Koriyama

by Shinkansen

Sendai	about 40 min.	Koriyama Sta.
Tokyo	about 1 h 20 min.	

by Train

Sendai	about 1 h 30 min.	Transfer Fukushima	about 50 min.	Koriyama Sta.
Iwaki	about 1 h 50 min.			
Aizuwakamatsu	about 1 h 5 min.			

by Car

Urawa IC	about 2 h 15 min.	Koriyama IC
Sendai-minami IC	about 1 h 30 min.	
Niigata-Chuo IC	about 2 h.	
Iwaki ChuoIC	about 1 h.	

