What’s Higashi-Shinshu “NAKASENDO”?  

West to East

1. **WADA-juku — KARUIZAWA-juku**

The Nakasendo Trail
About 400 years ago was the Edo Period in Japan.
In 1604 (Keicho 9), the Edo-Shogunate designated the five post stations starting from Nihonbashi, Edo (now Tokyo). The five routes are Tokaido, Nikko Kaido, Oshu Kaido, Koshu Kaido, and Nakasendo. The Nakasendo was the route from Nihonbashi to Kusatsu, Shiga.
Known as a smooth route, it was also called the Hime-Kaido, which means the road for the princesses. Since it passes through the interior of Japan, you can enjoy beautiful mountains.

**The Nakasendo passing through the east of Nagano prefecture**
The route from Kusatsu to Nagano town is called “The Higashi-Shinshu Nakasendo”. Nagano prefecture has many mountains and is blessed with beautiful nature. There were eleven Shukuba in this section of Nakasendo. Kusazawa, Kutsubaku, Olivakai, Oshu, Tanakadara, Shisando, Yawara, Misochiu, Ashita, Nagakubo, and Wada.
The west side of Higashi-Shinshu Nakasendo goes up through the Wada Pass, which is the hardest pass to go through in Nakasendo, while the steep Usui Pass lies on the east side. This area is a basin with challenging passes at both ends. You can enjoy the view of vast rice fields, the Chikuma, Chinozawa River, which is the longest north-south river in Japan, and an active volcano Mt. Aso, in the north.

**WADA-juku**
Coming from Edo, the Wada-juku locates just in front of the Wada Pass (an elevation of approximately 1600m). Many travelers stayed there, preparing for going over the challenging pass, or resting after finishing the hardest part of their journey.

**NAGAKUBO-juku**
The Nagakubo-juku was a relatively large Shukuba in the Nakasendo. You can enjoy the old-world flavor of the town.

**ASHITA-shuku**
The Kasatori Pass famous for its pine avenue is in the Ashita-shuku. It is one of the oldest Shukubas in Higashi-Shinshu.

2. **ASHTA-shuku**

ASHITA-shuku
26th post station, Ashita-shuku

**Shukuba**
The post station (shukuba) was where travelers and horses could rest. Many as accommodation facilities were gathered in the shukuba town, and flourished as a center of information and trading.

**NAGAKUBO-juku**
This is characterized a L-shaped inn-cape will tell you Shukuba’s history of evolution.

**The Nakasendo**
Mainly traveled gathered near the beginning of Wada Pass, the hardest pass to go over in Nakasendo, which was also a route for the daimyo’s procession.

**MOCHIZUKI-juku**
The Mochizuki-juku was named after the full moon. This was also a well-known area for raising horses. The name Mochizuki is related to the event where a horse was decorated with the Shogun on a night in August with a full moon. Also, Mochizuki was often sung about in waka poems.

WADA-juku
35th post station, Wada-juku

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**MOTAI-ainoshuku**
The Motai-ainoshuku is between the Ashita-shuku and the Mochizuki-juku. Aino-shuku means a rest station created between post stations. It is a small-scale station and travelers could not pass the night there. The irrigation canal can still be seen in the old town.

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Higashi-Shinshu “NAKASENDO” Guide Map

Higashi-Shinshu Nakasendo Council
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Nakasendo Tourist Federation
TEL:0267-42-5538

Karuizawa Tourist Federation
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YAWATA-juku
The Yawata-juku was originally a place for Imperial Princess Kanzanmyo to stay. Only the front gate is left now.

IWAMURADA-juku
It evolved as a strategically important post in this mountain area because of its unusually flat land. You can see the old site in places.

OTAI-juku
It was a quiet shukuba next to the vibrant neighborhoods of IWAMURADA-juku and OHWAKE-juku. As women preferred this quiet post town, it was sometimes called Hime-no-juku, which means a post town for princesses.

KUSUKAKE-juku
The Otsasa Kaido that leads to Kutsuizumi or Suzuka started from here. A massive fire burned down most of the town; the town was renamed Naka-karuzawa.

KARUIZAWA-juku
Karuizawa-juku was on the border for entering the Shihonai region for travelers who came from Edo. It was the furthest east of the Nakasendo post stations.

Shidarezakura of Ichiru-Zuka
Going downhill from Ohwa-juku, you’ll see the weeping cherry trees of Ichiru-Zuka. Tinted flowers will bloom in the spring. Looking at the old cherry trees with Mt. Asama behind them, you’ll feel the history of the post stations.

Kumano Kotai Jinja
It is one of the three major Kumano shrines. There are two ships in its precinct, which is rare throughout Japan.

Guide Map
1. SFGFDUVSF (VONBQ JUS) is one of the most famous sightseeing spots in Japan.