

# What's Higashi-Shinshu "NAKASENDO"?

## 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 routes 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.



- Higashi-Shinshu Nakasendo Council  
TEL:0267-42-2491  
[http://www.higashi-sinshu\\_nakasendo.com/](http://www.higashi-sinshu_nakasendo.com/)
- Nakasendo Tourist Federation  
TEL:0267-42-5538
- Karuizawa Tourist Federation  
TEL:0267-42-5538

1 West to East

### Shukuba

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

### "The Nakasendo passing through the east of Nagano prefecture"

The route from Karuizawa town to Nagawa town is called "the Higashi-Shinshu Nakasendo". Nagano prefecture has many mountains and is blessed with beautiful nature. There were eleven Shukubas in this section of Nakasendo; Karuizawa, Kutsukake, Oiwake, Otai, Iwamura, Shionada, Yawata, Mochizuki, 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 (Shinano) River, which is the longest north-south river in Japan, and an active volcano, Mt. Asama, in the north.

### "WADA-juku"

Coming from Edo, the Wada-juku locates just in front of the Wada Pass (at 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.

## 長久保宿

## NAGAKUBO-juku

27th post station, Nagakubo-juku

### NAGAKUBO-juku

The characteristic L-shaped streetscape will tell you Shukuba's history of evolution.

2 West to East

### "Tsuchiya Residence, Ashita-shuku Honjin"

Tsuchiya family was committed to opening the Ashita-shuku. For generations, the family served as the Honjin of Ashita-shuku. The name plate for each daimyo is still preserved.

## 芦田宿

## ASHITA-shuku

26th post station, Ashita-shuku

## 茂田井間の宿

## MOTAI-ainoshuku

### MOTAI-ainoshuku

It was a well known rice-producing region. If you like to visit sake breweries, Takeshige-Honke and Osawa breweries are here.

## 望月宿

## MOCHIZUKI-juku

25th post station, Mochizuki-juku

### Mochizuki Folk Heritage Museum

The museum is built at the site of Honjin, using old beams of houses from Edo-era.

## 和田宿 WADA-juku

28th post station, Wada-juku

### WADA-juku

Many travelers 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.



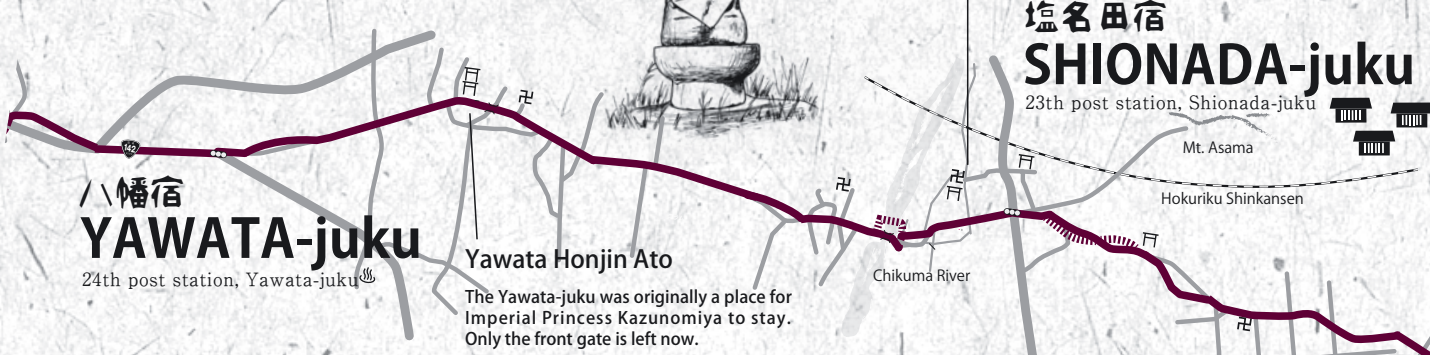
### 12 Shukuba commemorative stamps

Each Shukuba has a unique stamp that represents its own characteristics. You can collect twelve Shukuba stamps.





# 3 West to East



**"YAWATA-juku"**  
The Chikuma River runs through two shukubas. One of them is Yawata-juku. Yawata-juku was an important post station when the Chikuma River, which often floods, was swollen. Yawata Shrine, with its gate from over 300 years ago, is here. The rice fields of this region produce a rice brand called Gorobei-Mai, which is often selected by high class Japanese restaurants.

**八幡宿 YAWATA-juku**  
24th post station, Yawata-juku  
**Yawata Honjin Ato**  
The Yawata-juku was originally a place for Imperial Princess Kazunomiya to stay. Only the front gate is left now.

Chikuma River.  
Old stone used for connecting the boat is still here. As well as Yawata-juku, many people stayed here when the river was swollen. On the street, you can still see the old trade names of shops hanging.

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

**"SHIONADA-juku"**  
The Shionada-juku is on the east bank of the

**塩名田宿 SHIONADA-juku**  
23th post station, Shionada-juku  
It was the only post station in Nakasendo where the Chikuma River could be crossed. This ferry town flourished as a key junction for river transportation.

of Iwamurada-juku and Oiwake-juku. As women preferred this quiet post station, it was sometimes called Hime-no-juku, which means a post station for princesses.

**"OIWAKE-juku"**  
It was a crossroad of the Hokkoku Kaido and Nakasendo. Many travelers passed this crossroad called Oiwake. A song called Oiwake-bushi was written here. The packhorse drivers and travelers brought the song back to their home towns and the song became popular.



**岩村田宿 IWAMURADA-juku**  
22nd post station, Iwamurada-juku

**"KUTSUKAKE-juku"**  
The Osasa Kaido that leads to Kusatsu or Suzaka started from here. A massive fire burned down most of the town; the town was renamed Naka-karuizawa.

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

**Shidarezakura of Ichiri Zuka**  
(weeping cherry trees) (milestone)  
Going downhill from Oiwake-juku, you'll see the weeping cherry trees of Ichiri 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.

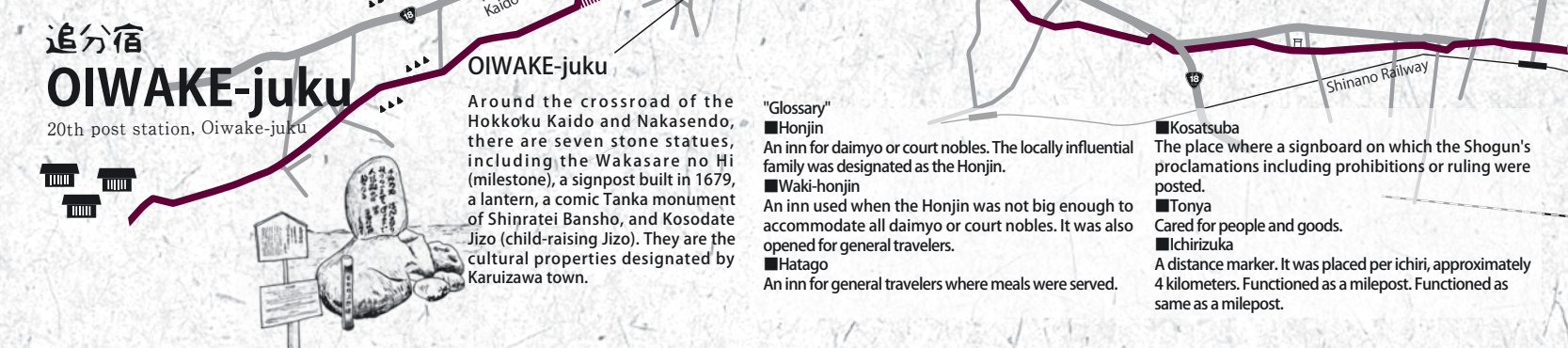
**Ryuunji Temple**  
Shingen Takeda died of disease in 1573 in Ina-Komaba. The mourning for him was concealed for three years. However, it is said that Hokko-Zenji, a Zen Buddhist master, secretly buried his remains at Ryuunji temple.  
stations.  
Since the Usui Pass was steep, many travelers stayed in the Karuizawa-juku. Now, this place is called "Old Karuizawa Ginza", one of the most famous sightseeing spot in Japan.

**小田井宿 OTAI-juku**  
21st post station, Otai-juku



**Kumano Kotai Jinja**  
It is one of the three major Kumano shrines. There are two shrines in its precinct, which is rare throughout Japan. Located in two prefectures, the shrine is named Kumano Kotai Jinja for the Nagano prefecture side and Kumano Jinja for the Gunma prefecture side. The must-see is the mountain and the town view seen from the Miharashi Dai (a lookout platform). The platform was once called sunset point by the missionaries who had the cottages there.

# 4 West to East



**追分宿 OIWAKE-juku**  
20th post station, Oiwake-juku

**OIWAKE-juku**  
Around the crossroad of the Hokkoku Kaido and Nakasendo, there are seven stone statues, including the Wakasare no Hi (milestone), a signpost built in 1679, a lantern, a comic Tanka monument of Shinratei Bansho, and Kosodate Jizo (child-raising Jizo). They are the cultural properties designated by Karuizawa town.

**"Glossary"**  
■Honjin  
An inn for daimyo or court nobles. The locally influential family was designated as the Honjin.  
■Waki-honjin  
An inn used when the Honjin was not big enough to accommodate all daimyo or court nobles. It was also opened for general travelers.  
■Hatago  
An inn for general travelers where meals were served.

■Kosatsuba  
The place where a signboard on which the Shogun's proclamations including prohibitions or ruling were posted.  
■Tonya  
Cared for people and goods.  
■Ichirizuka  
A distance marker. It was placed per ichiri, approximately 4 kilometers. Functioned as a milepost. Functioned as same as a milepost.

**沓掛宿 KUTSUKAKE-juku**  
19th post station, Kutsukake-juku

**KUTSUKAKE-juku**  
It was the street along the east of Yukawa. When coming from Edo, travelers continued to see Mt. Asama on their right. When they started walking on this street, Mt. Asama appeared on their left, which was a topic of conversation among travelers at that time.

**軽井沢宿 KARUIZAWA-juku**  
18th post station, Karuizawa-juku

