

One day Cycling Tour in Okutama, Tokyo

Yanagisawa Pass Downhill Long Ride Course



Story

About 30 percent of the Japanese population lives in Tokyo, the country's capital. The forested Chichibu-Tama-Kai National Park is the source of water for most of its residents and has been carefully managed for over a century. The park extends 30.9 kilometers east to west and 19.5 kilometers north to south, covering an area of 25,000 hectares that stretches from Okutama in Tokyo to the villages of Kosuge and Tabayama and the city of Koshu in Yamanashi Prefecture. At an altitude of 1,472 meters (4,830 feet), Yanagisawa Pass is surrounded by forest that acts as a Tokyo water source. From the pass to Lake Okutama, a reservoir built to provide water to the capital, the importance that has been placed on preserving the nature here is clearly evident. The trail, known as Okutama Mukashi Michi, was once an important trade route that connected Edo (today's Chiyoda Ward and its surrounding districts) with Koshu (today a city in Yamanashi Prefecture). Enjoy cycling along the old Ome Highway, a place rich in nature where echoes of the past can still be heard.

Highlights

- Relish the scenery, whatever the season, from Yanagisawa Pass Chaya, a café known for its spectacular Mt. Fuji views.
- Enjoy cycling through lush nature on a day trip to the outer reaches of Tokyo.

Location: Okutama (Tokyo), Koshu (Yamanashi)



Main Activity: Cycling
Difficulty: 3
Tour Period: April – November
Pax: Minimum 2, Maximum 6

Itinerary

Day 1 - Cycling from Yanagisawa Pass Chaya (Koshu, Yamanashi Prefecture) to Okutama Station (Okutama, Tokyo)

Meet at 10:30 at Trekking, a bicycle rental store about one minute from Okutama Station on the JR Ome Line. Your English-speaking cycling guide will explain how to choose the right-sized bicycle and provide an outline of the tour. Next, travel about one hour by private vehicle to Yanagisawa Pass Chaya in Koshu, Yamanashi Prefecture. After some stretching, begin the cycle ride.

Yanagisawa Pass Chaya is located in Chichibu-Tama-Kai National Park at an altitude of 1,472 meters (4,830 feet). It is the starting point for climbing Mt. Suzukura, Mt. Kurakake, Mt. Daibosatsurei, Mt. Kurokawa and Mt. Keikan. The surrounding forests are the source of Tokyo's tap water. Yanagisawa Pass is famous for its natural spring water so be sure to try some. On clear days there are superb views of Mt. Fuji, while the scenery can be enjoyed throughout the year. In spring the forests are bright with new leaves, in April there is peach blossom, and toward the end of the year there are the fabulous colors of autumn.

It takes about two hours by bike to reach Lake Okutama, known as Tokyo's "water jug." Lake Okutama, which straddles Okutama in Tokyo and Tabayama and Kosuge in Yamanashi Prefecture, is Japan's largest artificial lake. Enjoy a light lunch at a lakeside restaurant and recharge your batteries for the second half of the cycle ride. Take a short break and walk across Mugiyama Floating Bridge, a pontoon bridge on the lake.

The second half of the cycle ride begins at 15:00 along a route steeped in history. When Edo Castle was being rebuilt at the beginning of the Edo period (1603 to 1867), this road was used for horses carrying lime from Nariki and Osoki. The road goes down and down and down. On the way, stop by Shirahige Shrine, known for its powerful spiritual energy, to see the miraculous reverse fault, a geological phenomenon. Now a designated natural monument, Shirahige Oiwa was formed about about 60 million years ago.

The ride ends back at the Trekking bike store around 17:00. Thank the guide and return your bike to the bike shop.

Lunch

- Japanese cuisine at a local restaurant.

Activity:	Cycling Distance: 42 km (26 miles) / Travel time: 4-5 hours / Elevation gain: 1,100 m (3,610 ft)
Difficulty:	3

Reference Price

JPY 32,500 per person

What's included

- Lunch
- Entrance fees (as stated in itinerary)
- British cycling guide
- Bicycle rental
- Bike helmet
- Transportation to Yanagisawa Pass Chaya
- 1 bottle of mineral water (500 ml)

What to bring

- Comfortable wear and sports shoes (Please note that you cannot ride in sandals, high heels or long skirts.)
- Insurance card and ID (such as driver's license, insurance card, student ID card, passport, alien registration card)
- Backpack for carrying belongings (Please note that most bicycles do not come with baskets for bags, etc.)
- Rain gear (Mountain weather is very changeable. Please bring rainwear that allows you to use both hands for cycling.)

Tour Operator / Contact

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