



Field Museum

Geo-Hiking



Onsen Meister Guide
original course

*Feel the Earth's energy
in Beppu !!!*



Please note the following:

- Some hot springs areas are exceedingly hot, and you could get burned. Please be careful as you walk.
- Please wear comfortable walking shoes, and be sure to bring water.
- In Beppu, most of the hot spring wells are located on private property. Please make sure that you receive permission before visiting

Beppu Onsen Geo-Museum is a virtual museum and is run by a non-profit organization. We have three pillars: the museum on the internet, field activities, and giving lectures on Beppu hot springs. 1) The internet museum provides information about Beppu hot springs which have been gained through wide-ranging researches in natural, medical, social, and cultural sciences. 2) As field activities, we offer many hiking courses, or what we call “geo-hiking”, visiting Beppu’s different hot spring areas. 3) We offer a lecture on hot spring related topics at Beppu City Public Hall every month. The topics include hot spring science, hot springs and health, Beppu’s geographical and geological features, and attractive features of Beppu hot springs.

We have made five hiking courses in English so that English speaking visitors to Beppu can have easier access to some geologically interesting places in the city.

The city area of Beppu lies on a fan which was formed by volcanic activities. The city’s gentle slope spreading from the eastern flank of Mt. Tsurumi, an active volcano, to Beppu Bay is about eight kilometers from north to south and five kilometers from east to west. In this small region, there are about 2,300 hot spring wells, making Beppu one of the largest hot spring areas in the world. In the north and in the south of the city, there are fault lines. Most of the hot spring wells are located along those fault lines, and there are four hot spring concentrations in the north and four in the south. The northern hot spring areas are Myoban, Kannawa, Shibaseki, and Kamegawa, and the southern hot spring areas are Horita, Kankaiji, Beppu, and Hamawaki.

Now the following courses in English are available: a)Kankaiji to Hamawaki course, b)Myoban to Kannawa course, c)Kannawa course, d)Kannawa to Kamegawa course, and e)Mt. Jissoji to Kannawa course.

Kankaiji to Hamawaki Course

Start: Suginoi Hotel

Finish: Asami Shrine



This course is about seven kilometers and takes about two and a half hours.

Stops:

Stop 1: Suginoi Hotel

Stop 2: Volcanic rocks altered by Geothermal activity

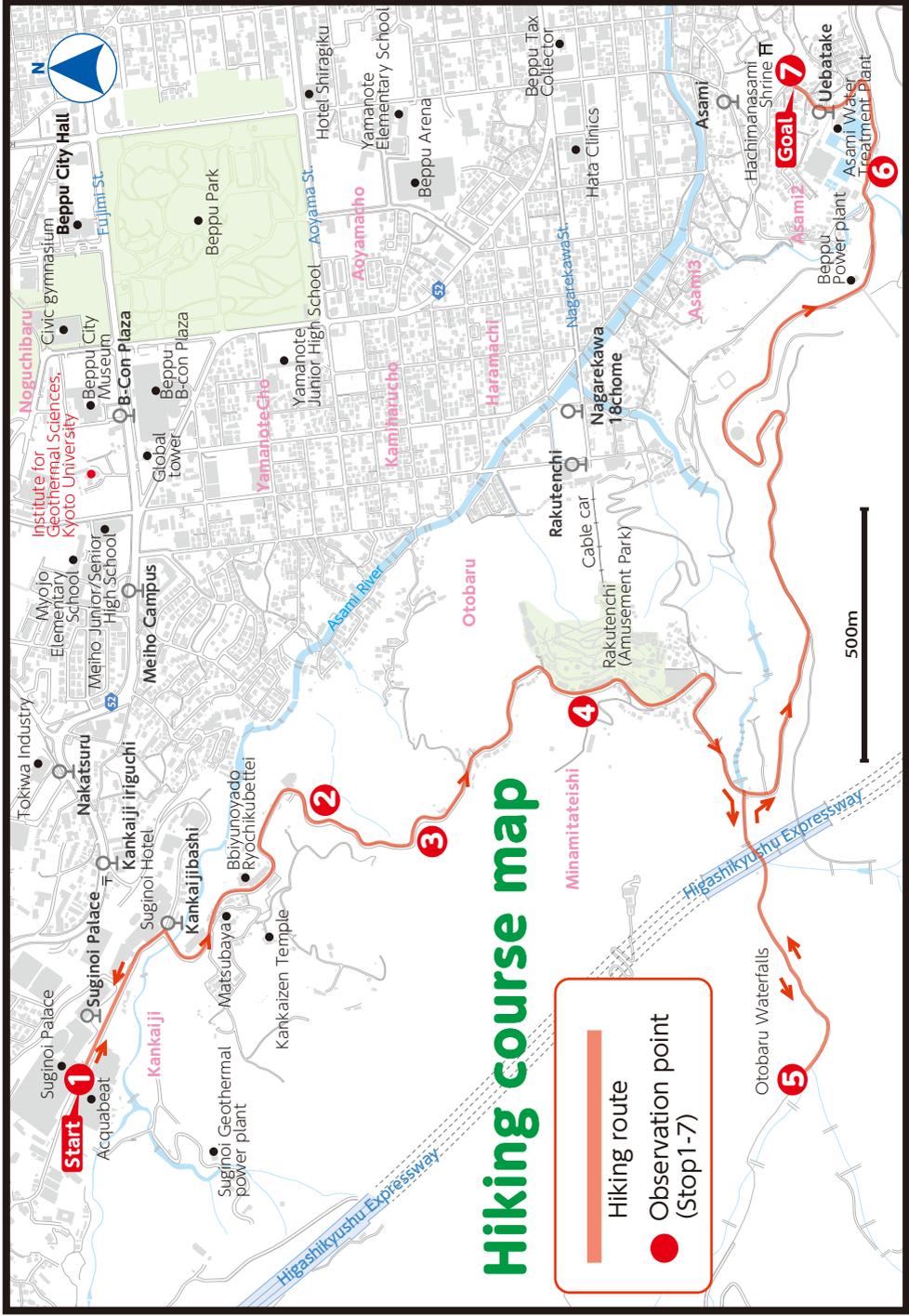
Stop 3: Hot spring pond well

Stop 4: Rakutenchi Amusement Park Parking Lot

Stop 5: Otobaru Waterfalls

Stop 6: Asami Water Purification Plant

Stop 7: Asami Shinto Shrine



Hiking course map

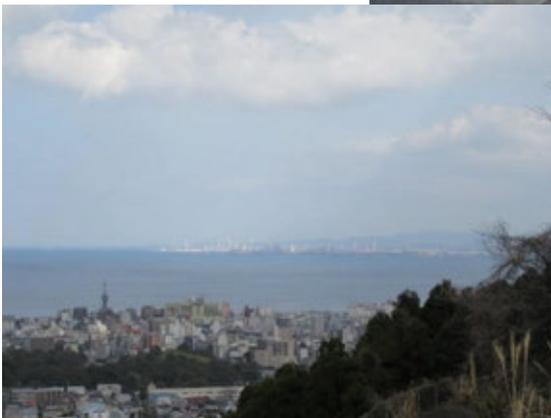
-  Hiking route
-  Observation point (Stop 1-7)

500m



Stop 1: Suginoi Hotel

To get here, you can use private vehicle or Suginoi Hotel shuttle bus from JR Beppu Station. (Look for purple bus at West Exit of the station)



Stop 2: Rock Altered by Geothermal activity

As you pass by the hotel buildings, you will see a bridge over the Asami River. Cross that bridge (Kankaiji Bridge) and walk along the gentle slope, and the city of Beppu will come into your view on the left. As you walk along the slope further, you will see rock exposed on the cliff on your right. That rock is called propylite. This type of rock is one of the oldest in Beppu. Propylite is andesite altered by coming into contact with hot spring water or hot water. Andesite is common in volcanic rocks in Beppu which were formed by activities of Mt. Yufu and Mt. Tsurumi.



Follow these signs and you will get to Rakutenchi Amusement Park.

Stop 3: Hot spring pond well



Hot spring pond well that you will see on the way.

Stop 4: Rakutenchi Amusement Park Parking Lot

As you walk along the mountain foot path, the city of Beppu will come into your view again. Located to the east of this scenic overlook is the parking lot of an amusement park called Rakutenchi. Near here, land formed by landslides and faults can be observed. A distant view of the alluvial fan spreading from the foot of Mt. Tsurumi will also be seen. Rocks near Rakutenchi are also propylite. Minerals such as gold and cinnabar were produced around here. There used to be a gold mine in this neighborhood. Rocks altered by coming into contact with hot water are widely distributed in Oita Prefecture, which used to produce the largest amount of gold in Japan. One of the largest gold mines which was called Taio Gold Mine was located in the western part of Oita Prefecture.



Rakutenchi Parking Lot

Stop 5: Otobaru Waterfalls

Walk along the road with Rakutenchi on your left. As you walk toward the west down the sloped road which runs parallel to a stream, you will come to a bridge. This bridge is called “Takimi-bashi,” which means “waterfalls viewing bridge.”

Don't cross the bridge but walk along the road on the left bank of the stream. That mountain road is very steep at the entrance, but it will soon become flat. As you go on further, the approximately 60-meter high Otobaru Waterfalls will come into view in front of you. Otobaru Waterfalls contain Otobaru lava which belongs to the Ojika-Amagoi-dake volcanic group. Otobaru lava consists of six 10-20 meter- thick lava plates and tuff breccia, which is a pyroclastic flow deposit. Water gushes out from the borders between the upper columnar joints and the lower impermeable horizontal lava plates.



Entrance to the Otobaru Waterfalls



Otobaru Waterfalls



Stop 6: Asami Water Purification Plant

Go along the same way back to “Takimi-bashi,” cross the bridge, and walk along the mountain side road toward the south, which leads to Hamawaki. Abundant water from Otobaru Waterfalls forms the Otobaru River. A dam was constructed at the upper reaches of this river in the early 20th century as a water supply reservoir when Beppu water service started.

Walk along the mountain side road for a while. You will see exposed Otobaru lava rock on the cliff on your right. After passing a large hairpin curve, an open view of the city will come into your view.





Here you will have a distant view of Asami Water Purification Plant. At the upper reaches of a stream on the right of the plant, there is a dam called “Ayugaeshi Dam.” This dam was constructed in 1949, and it used to be a water supply facility for the U.S. occupation force base which was stationed in Beppu between 1946 and 1956. Asami Water Purification Plant is the major purification plant in Beppu. Water is supplied to this plant from three rivers, the Oita River, the Otobaru River, and the Ayugaeshi River.

Stop 7: Asami Shinto Shrine

After passing by Asami Water Purification Plant, you will come to an intersection of three roads. If you go straight along the mountain side road, you will get to Hamawaki. The downward slope road on the left leads to Asami Shrine.



According to the history of this shrine, it was originally constructed in 1196 by Otomo Yoshinao. He was the first head of the Otomo clan who ruled the present Oita Prefecture. In the shrine compound, there is a forest of evergreen oaks, chinquapins and other trees. This forest is designated as a special preservation forest by Beppu City. One of the trees is a 1000 year old camphor, and it is designated as a natural monument by the prefectural government.

There is a spring in the shrine compound called Mantaro, which is named after a man in the shrine legend. It says that Mantaro, a man who loved his parents deeply, brought water from this spring to his father who was suffering from an incurable disease. When his father drank it, he was healed.



This building was made in 1927 as part of the former water purification plat and is a registered national treasure.



Asami Shrine Parking Lot



Café "Mantaro" in the shrine compound



Pond in the shrine compound



Cedar trees in the shrine compound

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