



**We introduce geotourism based on three themes to comprehensively show the attractions of Aso Geopark**



**Memories of eruptions engraved in the grand caldera**

The world-class largest caldera is the symbol of Aso Geopark. Unique land features and strata have been formed by considerable volcanic activities over the past 270,000 years and by a great eruption that occurred 90,000 years ago. Visitors will learn about such geographical information as well as influences of the eruption on various places in Japan through geosites.

**Nakadake Crater: Feeling the breath of the earth**

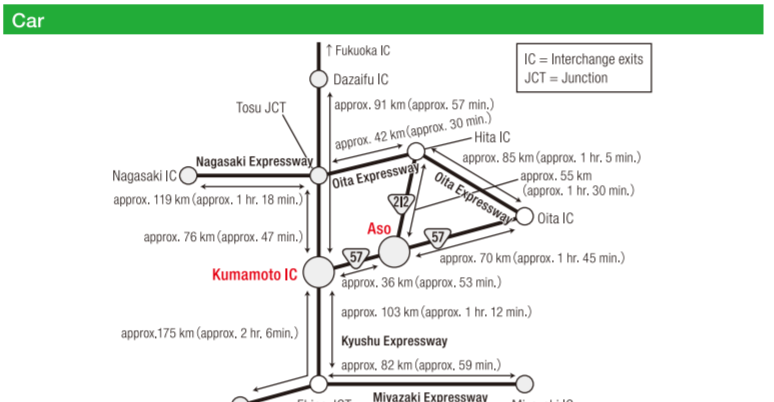
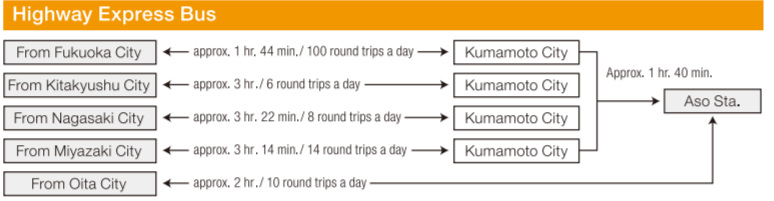
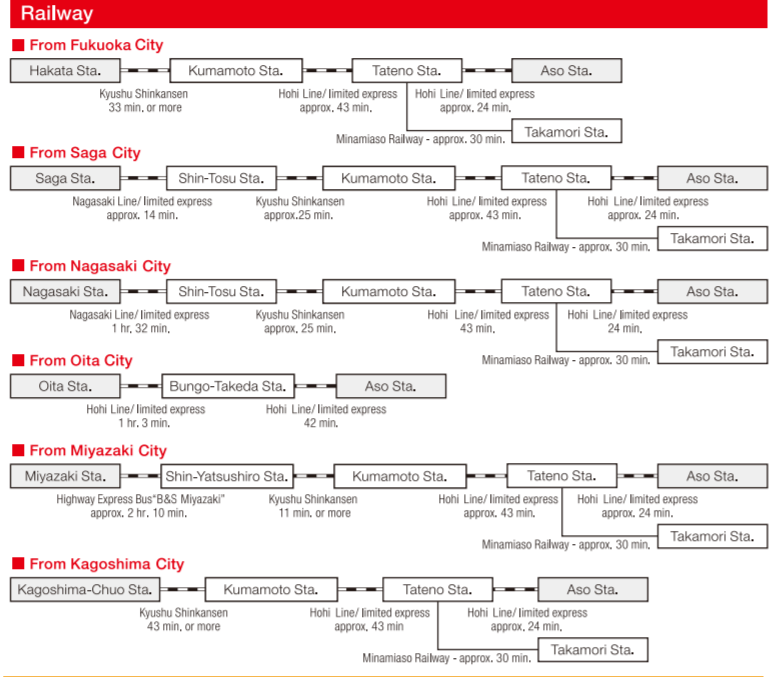
Among the volcanic clusters in the caldera, Nakadake Crater is highlighted because of its repeated and substantial volcanic activities from prehistoric times until the present. We will show you the unique landscape and ecology around Nakadake Crater, and the lives of people who live in symbiosis with the active volcano.

**Blessings of the volcanic mountain and people's lives**

People who live side by side with a volcano have explored ways to live in harmony with nature in awe of the volcano, and developed their own culture and lifestyle. And nature has brought them abundant blessings like spring water and hot springs which are commonly found in volcanic regions.



Access to Aso Geopark from each prefecture in Kyushu, Japan



**Aso Geopark Promotion Council** Kumamoto Prefecture, Aso City, Minami-Oguni Town, Oguni Town, Ubuyama Village, Takamori Town, Minami-Aso Village, Nishihara Village, Yamato Town, Aso Eco Tourism Association, National Aso Youth Friendship Center, Aso Den-en Kankou Eco Museum Office, Aso Museum, Minami Plateau Yousuigi Recreation and Rest Center, Aso Nature Guide Association, Aso Tanihito Eco Museum, Aso Park Volunteers Association, Aso City Tourism Association, Minami-Oguni Town Tourism Association, Oguni Tourism Association, Ubuyama Village Tourism Association, Takamori Town Tourism Association, Minami-Aso Village Tourism Association, Yamato Town Tourism Association, Aso Volcano Museum, Kumamoto University, Aso Volcanological Laboratory/Institute for Geothermal Science Graduate School of Science Kyoto University, Kumamoto Geosciences Association, Kumamoto Geotechnical Consultants Association, Aso Nature Conservation Group, Natural Parks Foundation Aso Branch, Aso Green Stock Foundation, Aso Design Center Foundation, Aso Junior Chamber of Commerce, Kumamoto 21, Japan Limonite Co., Ltd.

**Aso Geopark Promotion Council**  
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**Aso Geopark** search 平成24年度環境省地域コーディネーター活用事業

**ASO GeoPARK**

**Geotourism Course map**

Tracing the History of the World-class Caldera and its Impact

**阿蘇は、生きています。**

**ASO is alive!**

A journey across time and space, experiencing the land of Aso and the lives of those who dwell in the shadow of the volcano.



**The Land of Aso Volcano and the Lives of Its People**

The Aso Caldera is situated in central Kyushu, Japan. It is one of the largest calderas in the world, covering a total area of 350 km<sup>2</sup> and measuring 18 km east-west and 25 km north-south in width. In the caldera are the five peaks of Mt. Aso: Mt. Takadake, Mt. Nekodake, Mt. Kijimadake, Mt. Eboshidake, and the still-fuming Mt. Nakadake. There also lie volcanic clusters consisting of various mountains. A plain spreads at the foot of the mountain range from north to south. Surrounding the plain and volcanic clusters, the outer rims form a gently-sloping pyroclastic plateau. This unique geography is formed by the Aso volcano, which has displayed repeated volcanic activities since approximately 270,000 years ago. The major theme of Aso Geopark is to provide visitors with information about the geological history of the Aso volcano and its relation to the lives of people: how they have enjoyed the bounties of the earth, engaged in their livelihood, and developed a unique culture and landscape.



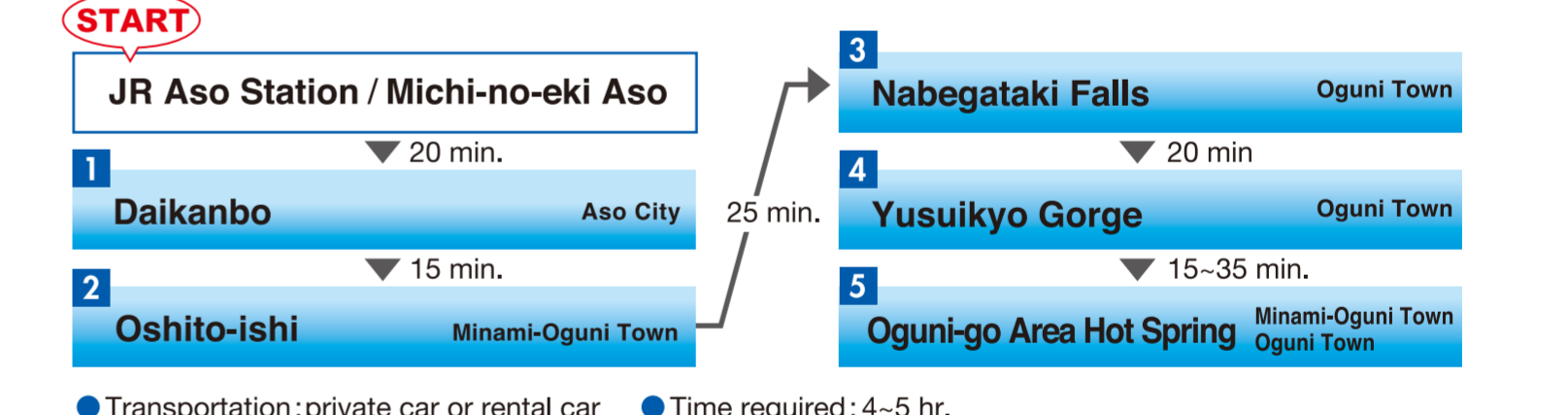
Stromboli Phenomenon

**What is the "Geopark" ?**

By observing the earth and nature scientifically, we define a place of scientific importance as a geopark, where many valuable and beautiful natural heritages exist such as strata, rocks, topography, volcano, and faults. A geopark values conservation and utilization of geological heritages. It is a place for people to become familiar with "geo" (the earth), learn about its history and mechanisms, and think about its relation to ecology as well as human life through natural heritages including the culture of the people in the area. Geoparks are promoted around the world by the Global Geoparks Network (GGN), which was established in 2004 and is supported by UNESCO.

**Tracing the History of the world-class Caldera and its Impact**

The Aso caldera is believed to have been formed by the great eruption about 90,000 years ago. About 50,000 people live inside the caldera and have developed the unique culture of Aso. This course is designed to experience Aso by enjoying its beautiful caldera land features and landscape created by the volcano and people.



**1 Daikanbo (Aso City)**

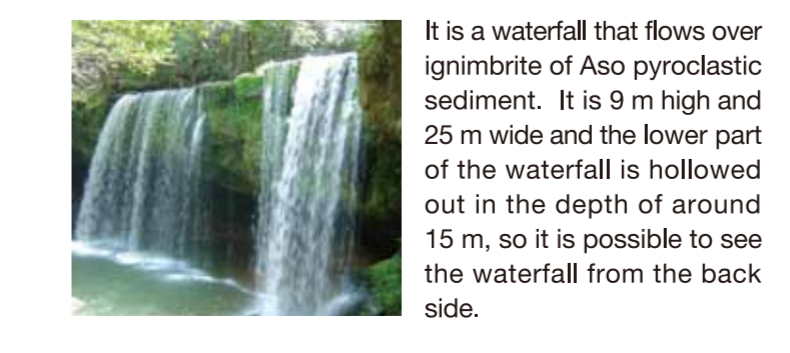


A geosite where you can enjoy a panoramic view of the five Aso peaks and the caldera. One can appreciate the scale of the eruption which formed the caldera by observing the geographical features visible from this site.

**2 Oshito-ishi (Minami-Oguni Town)**

A group of andesite megaliths located on a hill 845 m above sea level. The biggest stone has a pyramid shape with a height of 5.5 m and circumference of 15.3 m. The stones have been long worshipped by local people as "Iwakura" or holy rocks. This place offers a grandstand view of the grassland on the pyroclastic plateau of the north outer rim.

**3 Nabegataki Falls (Oguni Town)**



It is a waterfall that flows over ignimbrite of Aso pyroclastic sediment. It is 9 m high and 25 m wide and the lower part of the waterfall is hollowed out in the depth of around 15 m, so it is possible to see the waterfall from the back side.

**4 Yusuikyo Gorge (Oguni Town)**



A rock riverbed found in a small river in the northern caldera. It is formed by ignimbrite of Aso pyroclastic sediment. The normal water depth is around 50 cm, making it a popular destination for summer holidays.

**5 Oguni-go Area Hot Spring (Minami-Oguni Town · Oguni Town)**

- Kurokawa Hot Spring (Minami-Oguni Town)**  
Started as hot spring resort for recuperation in 1961, Kurokawa Hot Spring has become famous nationwide. Its thermal source is considered to be the Kuju volcanic system.
- Waiba Hot Spring (Oguni Town)**  
It refers to a group of hot springs which includes Hagenoyu, Takenoyu, Asozuru, Jigokudani, and Yamakawa Hot Springs. These hot springs are located on the west foot of the Kuju volcano, and are influenced by it.
- Tsuetate Hot Spring (Oguni Town)**  
The hot spring wells up along Tsuetate River, whose thermal source is the Kuju volcanic system. It is traditionally said that Kobo-Daishi Kukai was impressed by the efficacy of the hot spring during his journey in the beginning of the Heian Era.

**Legend**

- 案内所 Information
- 博物館/美術館 Museum
- 温泉 Hot Spring
- ゴルフ場 Golf Course
- レンタカー/バス/タクシーのほし Bus / Car Rental
- ロープウェイ Ropeway
- 駐車場 Parking
- レンタル自転車/電動アシスト付き自転車 Electric Bicycle Rental
- 郵便局 Post Office
- レンタカー Car Rental
- キャンプ場 Camp Site
- レストラン Restaurant
- 水源地 Waterfall
- 史跡 Historic Site
- 公園 Park
- JR 豊肥本線 JR Hoho Main Line
- 南阿蘇鉄道 Minami Aso Railway Line
- ジオパークコース Geotourism Course

**For local products and tourism information in Oguni Town**

**Michi-no-eki Oguni "Yu Station"**

A two-storied roadside station fully covered with glass walls. There are shops of local specialties on the first floor and a gallery and information center of Oguni Town on the second floor.

[TEL] 0967-46-4111

**An array of local specialties of Minami-Oguni Town**

**Bussan-kan (Local Product Center) "Kiyora Casa"**

The building is characterized by the pyramid shaped structure. It boasts an array of local products including agricultural products such as vegetables, mountain vegetables, and puddings made from Jersey cow milk.

[TEL] 0967-42-1213

