

Mt. Tsukuba and Japanese Sake Brewery Course

Tsukuba International Congress Center 12:00 = Mt. Tsukuba 13:00-14:30 =
Japanese Sake Brewery 15:30-16:30 = Tsukuba Sta. 17:20

*Fee for Cable Car and Japanese Sake Brewery Tour and Sake Tasting are included.



Mt. Tsukuba

Located in Ibaraki Prefecture, Mt. Tsukuba is a twin-peaked mountain rich in history and beauty. Although hiking is one way to experience Mt. Tsukuba, an equally scenic way to enjoy its splendor is by taking a cable car ride up to its majestic peaks. Legend has it that a female deity was enshrined in the taller peak, and a male deity was enshrined in the other. Between the two peaks you'll find a number of food vendors and gift shops selling unique Japanese souvenirs. The top of Mt. Tsukuba offers a spectacular view of the Tokyo metropolis, including Tokyo Skytree and Mt. Fuji in the distance in a sunny day.

[It will take about 15 min. from the parking area to the cable car station. Wearing sneakers is recommend.](#)



Inaba Shuzo/Nishioka-Honten

During this tour we will visit one of the following sake breweries, give information about its facilities and history, and provide an opportunity to taste test different sake varieties.

Inaba Shuzo has been known as the traditional sake brewery, founded at the foot of Mt. Tsukuba, and the present brewer is the 13th generation. In 1867, the 6th generation brewer developed the masterpiece sake, "Minanogawa". The name is taken after the river that flows between peaks of Mt. Tsukuba. Since its inception, the sake has been served in the Tsukuba shrine as the sacred one.

Nishioka Honten has been also known as the traditional sake brewery with a history of more than 230 years. The brewery features the high-quality rice from the region and pure underwater that flows through granite rocks. The brewer has kept the tradition and also has challenged to improve the quality. Indeed, the sake, "Hananoi", has been our favorite.

Craft Hills Kasama and Kasama Inari Shrine Course

Tsukuba International Congress Center 12:00 = Craft Hills Kasama 13:00-14:30 =
Kasama Inari Shrine 15:15-16:00 = Tsukuba Sta. 17:20

*Fee for Hand Twist Experience is included. Admission fee for Kasama Inari Shrine is free.



Craft Hills Kasama

Kasama-yaki is a traditional style of pottery originating from the Kasama area of Ibaraki Prefecture. Once commonly used to make household ceramics, its tradition is now carried on by a few hundred artisans settled in the area. On this tour we'll try our hand at using the Kasama-yaki technique to create a one-of-a-kind, individual pieces. Following the tour, your souvenir pieces will be mailed to you after they are ready; this process generally takes a few months.

[For participants residing overseas, international delivery is included in the tour price. Please note that it is advised to wear clothes suitable for working with mud and clay, as there is a possibility they may get stained.](#)



Kasama Inari Shrine

Kasama Inari-jinja Shrine is one of the three major shrines in Japan dedicated to the god Inari. This popular shrine, which is said to be over 1,300 years old, welcomes over 3.5 million visitors a year, including many patrons who come to pay their respects to the Ukanomitama deity enshrined here. Ukanomitama is worshipped as the patron deity of good harvests, fortune and industry. The shrine also holds a number of festivals and events throughout the year.

Kashimajingu Shrine and Sappa Boat Course

Tsukuba International Congress Center 12:00 = Kashima Jingu Shrine 13:30-14:30 =
Sappa Boat 15:00-16:00 = Tsukuba Sta. 17:30

*Fee for Sappa Boat Ride is included. Admission fee for Kashima Jingu Shrine is free.



Kashimajingu Shrine

Dating back to approximately 660 B.C., Kashima-jingu Shrine is not only one of the most famous shrines in the Kanto region, but also the oldest. Dedicated to Takemikazuchi, a deity of war, the shrine has long attracted samurai and other martial artists to its gates. You'll even find one of Japan's National Treasures, a divine, long sword called Futsuno-mitama, housed and displayed on its grounds.

Sappa Boat

Sappa boats are small, traditional fishing boats. We'll take a river cruise through Itako's *Junikyo* (12 bridges), built over a network of canals used for transporting goods during the Edo Period. The canals are especially beautiful in June when colorful irises come into bloom along the banks. In this tour, a river cruise will be held with Sappa boats, traveling through the beautiful bridges in the old city.

Ushiku Buddha and Ushiku Winery Course

Tsukuba International Congress Center 12:00 = Ushiku Buddha 12:50-14:50 =
Ushiku Winery 15:20-16:20 = Tsukuba Sta. 17:20

*Admission fee for Ushiku Buddha with Shakyo fee, Winery Tour and Wine Tasting are included.



Ushiku Buddha

The Ushiku Buddha is not only the tallest Buddha statue in the world, but also one of the tallest statues ever built, standing at 120 meters tall. The statue is constructed of bronze, and houses multiple floors inside which are accessible by elevator. Besides staring out from the windows that serve as Buddha's eyes, guests can practice the ancient art of transcribing Buddhist sutras, called *shakyo*, or marvel at the sanctuary located on the third floor and filled with 3,400 smaller, golden Buddha statues. There is also a Japanese garden, animal park (including a monkey show), restaurant and shopping area to enjoy.



Ushiku Winery Chateau Kamiya

Denbei Kamiya founded Japan's first full-scale winery in 1903, based on knowledge gained about grape cultivation and winemaking from France. In addition to wine, it also produces a number of award-winning German-style craft beers. Additionally, there are dining facilities and souvenir shops offering other imported wines. Chateau Kamiya was designated as an important cultural property in 2008, after its grounds were recognized for industrial heritage in 2007. Participants could taste some varieties of wines and other liqueurs.

