

# Enjoy Your Relaxing Time Hida Furukawa Visitor Guide



## ■ Setogawa Canal ■

The "Setogawa Canal" was made by taking water from the moat of Masushima Castle in order to develop a new field about 400 years ago.

In old days, the Setogawa was a clean canal that could be used to wash vegetables. However it was seriously polluted with trash and litter during the period of high economic growth. Therefore, we have released carp since 1968 with expectations for keeping clean water again. The carp are only here from early April to November and they move to a pond in winter season.

## ■ The History of Hida Furukawa ■

Nagachika Kanamori ruled Hida region in the age of provincial wars. Arisige Kanamori (2nd generation) built the "Masushima Castle" which was the only flat castle in the Hida region and made a castle town here in Hida Furukawa in 1589. We still have the key historical feature of this townscape.



## ■ Master Craftsmen (Hida no Takumi) ■



It is said that craftsmen from Hida went off to the capital and took an active part in the construction of shrine and temples during the Nara period (ad 710-784 in Japanese history). they were called "Hida no Takumi" for their outstanding skill. The tradition and technique have been carried on to the present day. In the central district of Hida Furukawa, there are many houses with "cloud" carvings decorated on their black eaves. This is a symbol of Furukawa craftsmens pride of work, and each craftsman has their own design. You can see about 170 kinds of "cloud patterns" here.

## ■ Preservation of the Townscape ■

The central Furukawa district has lots of traditional townhouses standing in a row. When people renovate or rebuild their houses, those are spontaneously designed to harmonize with townscape. The high consciousness of residents and a technique of skillful carpenters maintain the beautiful scenery. Therefore, the Scenery Design Award was established in 1985 by the tourist association to honor the buildings which contribute to keep our traditional townscape.



## ■ Sake Brewery and Sakabayashi ■



There are two Sake breweries in Hida Furukawa and each brew high quality Sake. "Sakabayashi," leaves of Japanese cedar bundled in a ball, are hung under eaves of Sake breweries' front door and changed to new ones after new Sake is brewed in late November every year.

## ■ Kigake Japanese Traditional Candle ■



Junji Mishima makes the Kigake (pure) Japanese traditional candles. He is the 7th generation owner of Mishima Japanese candle shop. All the ingredients are natural plants and all the processes are handmade. There are less than 10 shops which produce Japanese candles by hand in Japan.

## ■ Furukawa Festival - Okoshi Daiko (April 19th) ■



The Furukawa Festival which heralds the arrival of spring to Hida Furukawa is an annual celebration of Ketawakamiya Shrine. There are two highlights of Furukawa Festival. One of them is "Okoshi-daiko (rousing drum)" which is performed on the night of April 19th. Okoshi-daiko, the big Japanese drum structure, is carried through the streets by hundreds of half-naked men.

During the Okoshi-daiko parade, the 12 neighborhood groups of men follow the main drum with their small drums called Tsuke-daiko (attaching drum) : binding a small drum on the center of a stout pole. They become very aggressive and charge upon the main drum, since the position directly behind the drum structure is highly esteemed. Okoshi-daiko represents the DYNAMIC aspect of Furukawa Festival which is known as one of the most eccentric festivals in Japan.

## ■ Furukawa Festival-Yatai (Festival Floats) Parade (April 20th) ■



The parade of 9 Yatai festival floats is another highlights and a TRANQUIL aspect of the Furukawa Festival. The 2 Yatai groups, Kirintai and Seiryutai, give the Wooden Marionettes (Karakuri or Deku) performances from the



upper levels of their Yatai. Byakkodai give the Children's Kabuki performance on the stage which is installed on the middle level of the Yatai. You can see many legacies of craftsmanship on the floats such as wood carving and metal engraving, glassworks and Japanese lacquer work. If you would like to know more about the Furukawa Festival, please visit the Hida Furukawa Festival Exhibition Hall.

## ■ Yatai-gura (Festival Float Storehouses) ■

Yatai groups called "Taigumi," the owners of the floats, put them into "Yatai-gura" (Festival Float Storehouses), and the emblems of floats are on the Yatai-gura doors.

There are 10 float storehouses in the central district of Hida Furukawa. The floats are very delicate, so they are stored in a humidity-controlled and fire-proof clay-walled storehouse in order to keep them in good condition and prevent them from being damaged by fire.



## ■ Santera Mairi (A Visit to 3 Temples Event) (January 15th) ■

Santera Mairi (a visit to 3 temples event) is held annually on January 15th, and originally commemorates Shinran Shonin, who founded the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist path. Nowadays, Santera Mairi is a winter event to wish for a good relationship. Snow candle statues over 6 feet tall stand in a row on the main street and many Japanese candles are lined up along the Seto-gawa canal. These candles make a romantic atmosphere. Many visitors rent a kimono and walk around the 3 temples for a memorable evening.



Enkouji Temple



Honkouji Temple



Shinshuji Temple

## ■ Access from the HIDA KIYOMI Interchange (I.C.) ■





