

Mt. Iwahashi

[Katsuragi Sutra Mound #24 (Hiraishi-toge Pass)]
[Katsuragi Sutra Mound #25 (Koki-ji Temple Kogebata)]

Huge rocks are a highlight of a route adorned with fantastically shaped stones, which takes you to the top of Mt. Iwahashi

Numerous fantastically shaped rocks sit on the western slope of Mt. Iwahashi, which is used as ascetic training sites for practitioners of Katsuragi Shugen. Starting from the Hiraishi Bus Stop, head to the Mt. Iwahashi trailhead, which is located behind terraced rice fields. The trail becomes a steep climb after crossing the river. Keep going, and you will find the Jinmen-seki (human-faced) Rock by the side of the trail. The Nabekama-ishi (pots-and-kettles) Rock is located a bit higher up from there and slightly off the trail to the left. The next one, the Hokotate-ishi (standing spear) Rock soars off to the right of the trail. Continue hiking up the trail a little further, and the path to Tainai-kuguri (narrow sanctified) Cavern branches off to the right. Although it would mean descending quite a bit, you may want to visit this spot since it is one of the local ascetic training sites. Go back to the trail and proceed until the slope gets gentler, then you will reach Kumeno-iwahashi (stone bridge of Kume).

From Kumeno-iwahashi to Diamond Trail is a fairly short distance, and the summit of Mt. Iwahashi is only a few minutes away to the left. Continue descending northward until you reach Hiraishi-toge Pass, where the 24th sutra mound is located. From Hiraishi-toge Pass, descend westward. Take a right at the quasi-national park monument and head for Koki-ji Temple, where the 25th sutra mound is located. The sutra mound is behind the main hall of the temple, and is off limits to visitors, so offer a prayer in the direction of the hall. From Koki-ji Temple, take the trail on the side of the mountain to Iwafune-jinja Shrine. The huge rocks on the slope have deities enshrined in them.

For the way home, take the right trail outside the torii gate of the shrine to descend, then keep going down to the left once you reach the paved road. You will immediately find the signpost for the trail to the Hiraiwa Castle Ruins on your right. Take a look round the ruins near the trail, then follow the signposts to head for Chikatsu Asuka Fudoki-No-Oka Historical Park.

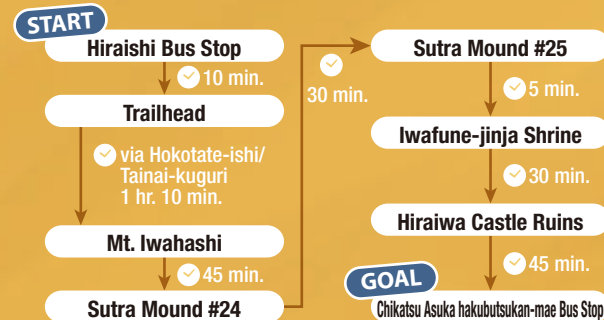
Walking Distance ◆ Approx. 9 km

Fitness Level ★★☆☆

Walking Time ◆ 3 hours 55 minutes

Skill Level ★★☆☆

Course Times



Course Information



A trail linking fantastically shaped rocks, with the Kumeno-iwahashi



Main hall of Koki-ji Temple. The sutra mound is off limits to visitors.

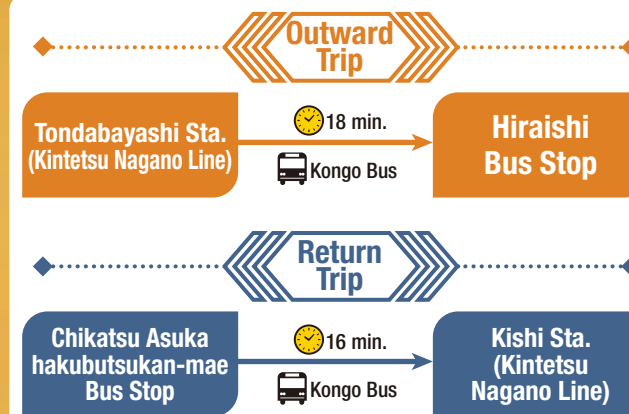


An open space at the summit of Mt. Iwahashi



Head for Chikatsu Asuka Fudoki-No-Oka Historical Park

Access



Advice

The route consists mostly of walking on mountain trails, so be sure to wear proper hiking footwear. Although signposts are plentiful, the path from Koki-ji Temple to Iwafune-jinja Shrine is an unmarked horizontal path on the side of the mountain, so be careful. If you can time it right, taking the bus back from the Hiraishi Bus Stop may be an option, but the service is extremely infrequent. Be sure to check the bus schedule for getting there as well.

*This course does not exactly follow the training paths used by mountain ascetics.

*Walking distance is the horizontal distance. Course times are reference times for walking at a typical pace, not including rests.