

●●● Model Course 7 ●●●

Shino-toge Pass to Nakatsugawa and Kokawa-dera Temple

[Katsuragi Sutra Mound #6 (Shino-toge Pass)]

A journey from the sixth sutra mound in the mountains to Nakatsugawa, an important site in Shugendo, and then to Kokawa-dera Temple

The sixth sutra mound is located on Shino-toge Pass. The sutra mound at Matsu-toge Pass was believed by worshippers to be the site of the sixth sutra mound until its actual site was discovered atop Shino-toge Pass in 1989. The sub-route from Sakura-ike Pond to Kumano-jinja Shrine follows a road that is nearly abandoned, **so this course is for advanced hikers only.**

Heading south from the Jinzu Bus Stop, find the signpost for Katsuragi Shugen and enter the forest road that shoots off to the left. After hiking up the forest road for a while, you will come to Shino-toge Pass. A stone monument with the inscription "Sutra Mound" is located beyond the left embankment of the pass at the three-way junction. Continue straight down the pass and you will find Matsu-toge Pass in the woods on your left. The road splits past this point, but if you continue straight down, you will come to Sakura-ike Pond. Descend further, turn left in front of the Kokawa West Athletic Field, and continue parallel to the Keinawa Expressway. At the intersection with a monument engraved with the words "Site of the Hinoki-shuku," in the southwest corner, turn left and go north. You will come upon a fork in the road, but there is a sign showing the way to the Gyoja-do hall and Kumano-jinja Shrine. Pass through the settlement and follow the branching valley to the Nakatsugawa Gyoja-do hall. Ascend the old steep stone steps, and you will come upon a Goma burning pit and a temple hall. This is an important site for Katsuragi Shugen, and is also where the monks of Shogo-in Temple perform the Katsuragi Kanjo initiation ritual. Beyond the Gyoja-do hall is Kumano-jinja Shrine. This area is called Zenki-dani Valley.

Go back the way you came, and continue straight past the site of the monument of Hinoki-shuku you passed earlier. When you see the great gate of Kokawa-dera Temple in front of you, turn left. There is another Gyoja-do hall in the hills to the left of the main hall.

Kokawa Station is located directly south of the temple's great gate.

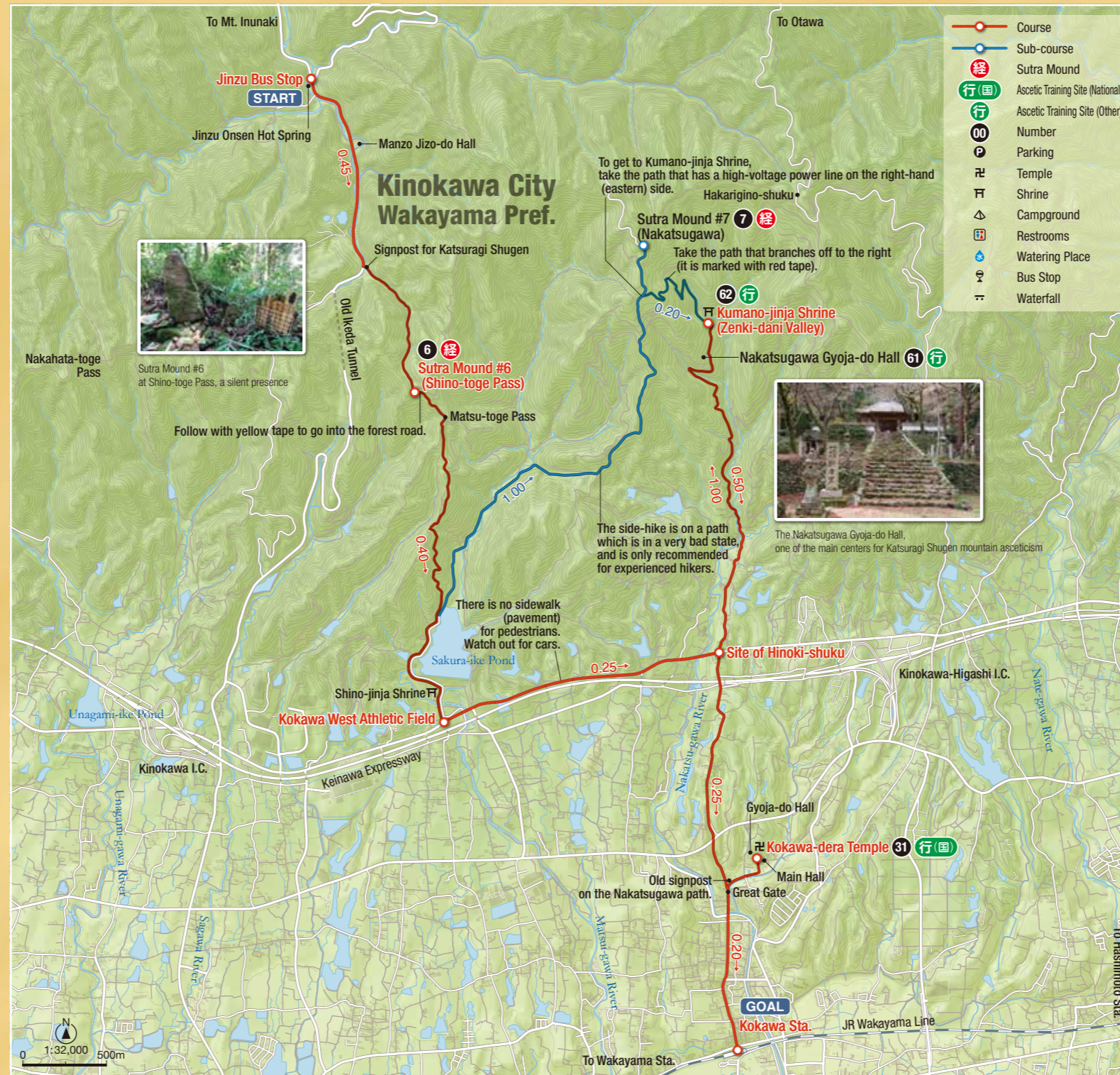
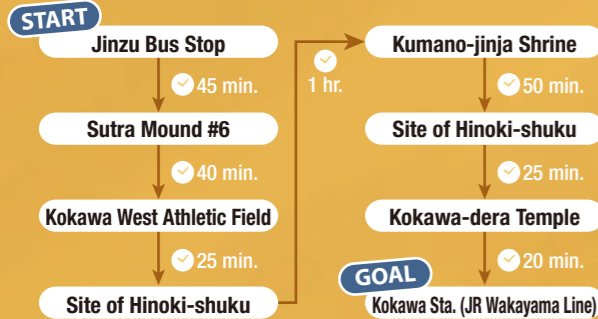
Walking Distance ◆ Approx. 14 km

Fitness Level ★★☆☆

Walking Time ◆ 4 hours 25 minutes

Skill Level ★★☆☆

Course Times



Course Information



Sutra Mound #6 is located behind the left embankment of Shino-toge Pass



Site of Hinoki-shuku, one of the ascetic training sites of Katsuragi Shugen

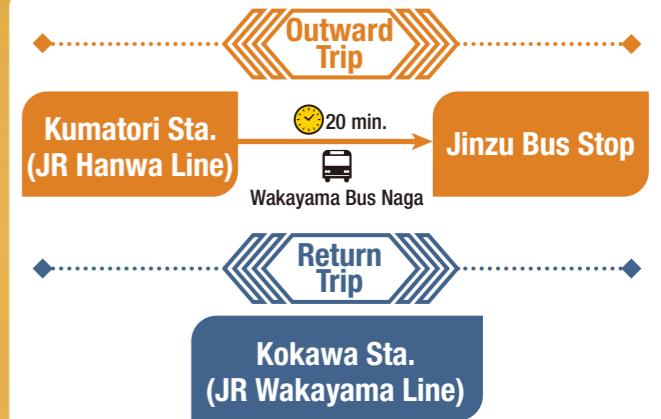


Kumano-jinja Shrine in Nakatsugawa's Zenki-dani Valley



The majestic main hall of Kokawa-dera Temple

Access



Advice

While there are some unpaved sections, this course mainly involves walking on paved roads, so sturdy walking shoes will suffice. Although admission to the grounds of Kokawa-dera Temple is free of charge, there is a fee to view the inner sanctuary of the main hall. There is also about one outbound bus per hour.

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

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