

精神 OUR SOUL

The snow-nurtured Spirit of Community.  
Tokamachi's culture blossoms from winter.

Living through long snowy winters has rooted patience, cooperation, and gentle creativity in this land. The aesthetic sensibility and spirit born from daily life with snow permeate every corner of the industry, food culture, and traditional events here.



# Tokamachi TRIP

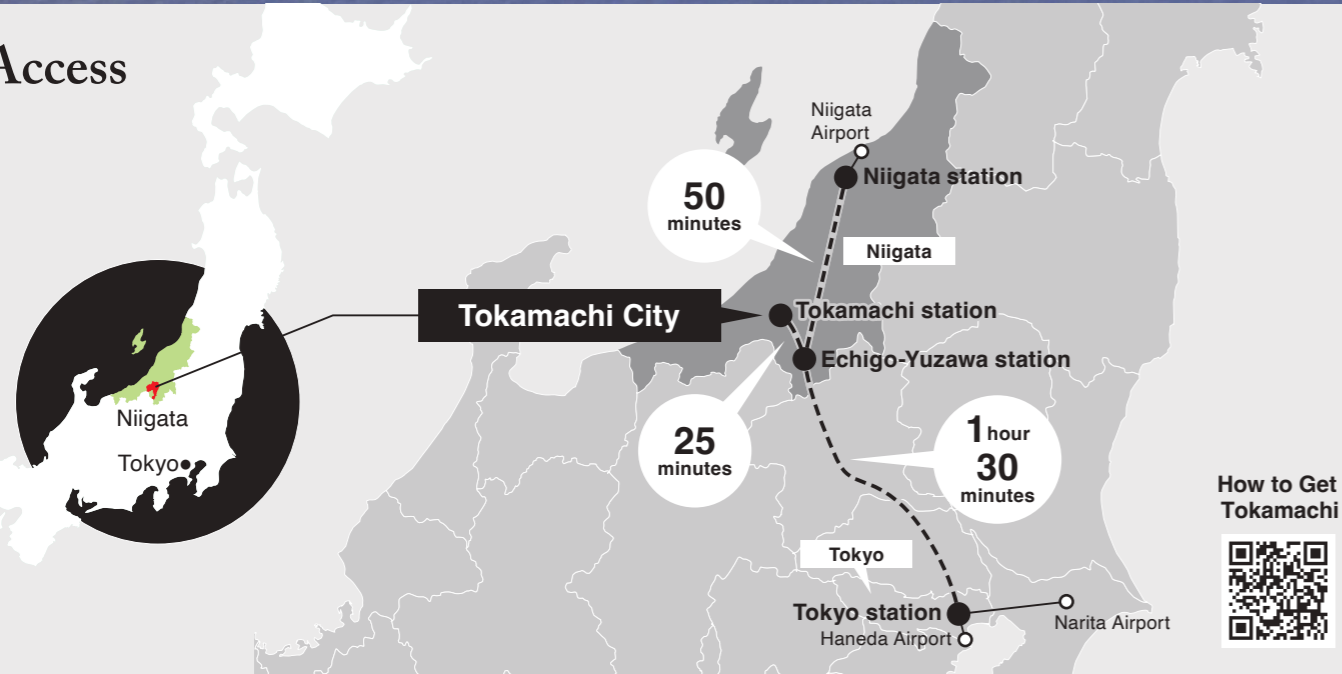
A Place connected to nature, people, and creativity.

日本遺産 究極の雪国 とおかまち  
スノクリッチ・ストーリーズ



Snow Rich.  
Tokamachi!

## Access



Tourism inquiries



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Kiyotsu Gorge Tunnel (MAD Architects, "Tunnel of Light")

\*The information in this guidebook is current as of February 2026. It is subject to change, so please check in advance before visiting.

\*Cover photo: Ma Yansong / MAD Architects, "Tunnel of Light"

## Tokamachi City, Niigata Prefecture Tourist Guide Book

雪 MONS



**Tōkamachi Snow Festival**

A major seasonal event that brightens up Tōkamachi's mid-winter, featuring welcoming festival venues dotted throughout the city and unique snow artworks hand crafted by groups of local residents.

**Snow Weaves Tales, The White Thread Connecting Life and Art**

Snow in Tōkamachi is more than just a natural phenomenon, it's the heart of its cultural traditions, and the "Tōkamachi Snow Festival," nurtured through the years by the hands of local citizens, is its proudest symbol. The intricate snow sculptures are an ephemeral testament to the craftsmanship and creativity of its people, that have learnt not only to endure snow but also to celebrate it.



**Honyarado**

Honyarado is a traditional snow hut where you can enjoy unique Snow Country experiences, such as roasting rice cakes and sipping warm amazake; a cozy place to create new memories with friends.

日本食 GASTRONOMY

**The Wisdom of Preservation Taught by Snow. Flavours That Connect Seasons and Lives.**

A Snow Country's food culture born from preservation techniques to live through long winters and a spirit of cherishing ingredients to the very end. Within it lies a philosophy of "connecting life to the next season", harbouring a story that transcends mere culinary delight.



**Hegi soba**

Hegi Soba is a beloved local specialty that reflects Tōkamachi's deep textile heritage. Its distinctive feature is the use of funori seaweed in its preparation, which gives these buckwheat noodles their signature smooth texture. Tempura, made with seasonal ingredients sourced locally, pairs perfectly with the noodles and enhances their delicate flavour. We invite you to savour this signature taste of Tōkamachi.



**Sansai Wild Mountain Vegetables**

As the snow melts and Spring arrives, a variety of wild mountain vegetables such as fukinoto, udo, zenmai, and kogome begin to emerge. These seasonal delicacies can be enjoyed fresh, or used in dishes like tempura and simmered dishes, offering a true taste of the region's natural bounty.



**Unuma Koshihikari rice from Tōkamachi**

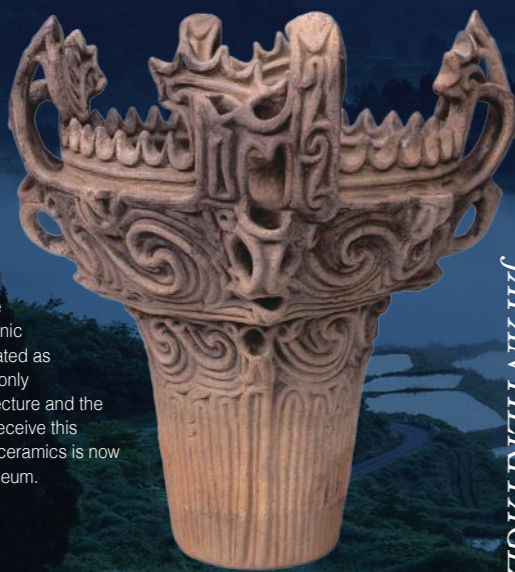
Cultivated in mineral-rich snowmelt water and shaped by the unique temperature variations between day and night, this rice offers a delightfully firm texture and a sweet, rich taste that is unforgettable once you've tried it.



**National Treasure Flame-style pottery**

In 1999, artifacts unearthed in the Sasayama area, including the iconic Flame-style pottery, were designated as National Treasures. They are the only National Treasure in Niigata Prefecture and the first Jōmon earthenware ever to receive this recognition. This collection of 57 ceramics is now stored in our Tōkamachi City Museum.

Tōkamachi City Museum Collection



日本遺産 JAPAN HERITAGE

**SNOW RICH HERITAGE**

Tōkamachi has been shaped by heavy snowfalls, which have given rise to unique traditions in clothing, cuisine, architecture, festivals, and aesthetics. In this region, inhabited since the mid-Jōmon period, the changing seasons bring new discoveries every time you visit.



**Tōkamachi kimono**

Tōkamachi City has a long history as a centre of kimono production, especially known for its Akashi Chijimi fabric. Today, the city continues to preserve and pass on this cultural tradition through festivals, factory tours, and other hands-on experiences.



**Architecture: Former Murōka House**

Once a private residence, this building now houses the Matsudai History Museum, offering visitors a chance to step inside the warm, authentic world of a traditional Snow Country farmhouse.

温泉

MATSUNOYAMA ONSEN

**A Hot Spring sourced from a 12 million years old Sea, The Healing Warmth That Fuels Snow Country Life.**

Known as one of Japan's Three Great Curative Springs, Matsunoyama Onsen hot waters contain ancient seawater with remarkable salinity and high temperatures. This powerful combination of qualities makes it also renowned as the "Beauty Bath", a gift from Nature that has long soothed the harshness of the Snow Country.



**Snow viewing hot spring**

Enjoying a hot bath while contemplating the utterly charming snow-covered landscape is a pure winter treat. The spring water warms you at your very core, enabling you to relax to your heart's content.



**Groom Tossing and Ash Smearing**

As a local tradition, every year people of the village gather together to celebrate the Koshōgatsu, the *little new year*, in mid-January. During these celebrations a newlywed groom is tossed and thrown into deep snow, after that all the villagers round up around a bonfire whose ashes mixed with snow are then smeared on each other's faces, as a blessing for health and safety.

**ECHIGO-TSUMARI ART FIELD**

里山 The entire Satoyama landscape itself is an art museum. Art That Reveals a Region's Soul and paves its path to the future.

Set in a Satoyama landscape, where the changing seasons weave their rich tapestry, this international art festival invites you to discover this region. The artworks created by artists from around the world serve as more than mere objects of appreciation; they function as landmarks on a journey through this vast countryside, offering insights into the region's challenges and opportunities.



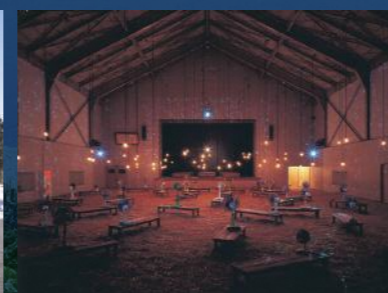
Leandro Erlich, "Palimpsest: pond of sky", Photo by Kioku Keizo



Utsumi Akiko, "House of Light", Photo by Nakamura Osamu



James Turrell, "House of Light", Photo by Nakamura Osamu



Christian Boltanski+Jean Kalman, "The Last Class", Photo by T.Kuratani



Kusama Yayoi, "Tsumari in Bloom"