

Around Dogo Onsen Spa

History of Dogo Onsen Spa

Dogo Onsen Spa is proud of its 3,000-year history as the oldest spa in Japan. It was called the hot spring of Iyo and the hot spring of Nikitatsu in ancient times. Since 645 it has been called Dogo Onsen Spa. There is an interesting legend in which a white heron suffering from wounds to its legs found a hot spring gushing out from the rocks. When it soaked its legs in the hot spring, its wounds were completely cured, and it flew away in good spirits. Local people who saw this were mystified and tried taking a bath themselves. They found that the water refreshed them and helped them to recover from their fatigue, while sick people were completely cured within moments. This is how people started to use the hot spring.

Dōgo Onsen Honkan began its conservation & repair works on Jan. 15, 2019. The 2nd & 3rd floors are closed, but Kami-no-Yu on the 1st floor is available.



Shinro-kaku
Important cultural property



14 Dogo Onsen Spa Main Building

About 5 minutes on foot from Iyotetsu Dogo Onsen Station or about 8.5 km from Matsuyama IC.

This is an old-fashioned and distinctive wooden three-storied public bathhouse. It has two types of hot spring; the larger Kaminoyu hot spring and the smaller Tama hot spring, and also five bath rooms. In the Shinro-kaku on the top floor, a clock drum is hung from the ceiling. The sound of this drum was selected by Japanese people as one of the top 100 soundscapes that they want to preserve. The clock rings at 6:00 in the morning, at noon and at 6:00 in the evening.

[Yushinden]

This is a special bath exclusively built for the members of the Imperial Family in 1899. It consists of the entrance room, the attendants' room and the throne room, and next to it there is a secret room for security personnel. It is not possible for you to use this bath, but when on a guided tour (for a fee), the attendant will explain about it.



15 Matsuyama City Shiki Memorial Museum

About 4 minutes on foot from Iyotetsu Dogo Onsen Station or about 8 km from Matsuyama IC.

This literary museum comprehensively surveys literary works by Soseki Natsume and other writers who hailed from Matsuyama. The main exhibits of the museum center on Shiki Masaoka, who is known as the pioneer of modern haiku poems.

16 Dogo Koen Park (Yuzukijo site)

Very near the intra-city streetcar "Dogo Koenmae Station" or about 8 km from Matsuyama IC.

Since the park was established in 1886, it has been the major cherry blossom viewing spot in the city. It is also used for recreation and relaxation by both local citizens and tourists. Based on an archaeological study of the site, the old samurai residence has been restored, and articles that were unearthed are on exhibit. In this park you can learn about history while taking an enjoyable walk.



17 Dogo Hojyoen (Asiyu)

This hot spring has the same source as the one in the Dogo Onsen Main Building. Soothe your tired feet by soaking them in a warm spa.



18 Botchan gizmo clock

Characters from the Botchan novel appear to the tune of a lively melody.



35 Ishiteji Temple (No. 51 holy temple)

About 15 minutes by bus from JR Matsuyama Station or about 12.7 km from Matsuyama IC. The Nio-mon Gate, designated as a national treasure, is said to be one of the best historic two-storied gates in Japan. It has a roof with eaves below the gables and overlapping layers of real tiles. The Kongorikishi statue enshrined inside is said to have been made by the Unkei school of sculptors.



20 Yu Jinja

About 5 minutes on foot from the intra-city streetcar's "Dogo Onsen Station."

Yu Jinja or Hot Spring Shrine enshrines Ohkuninonushi no Mikoto and Sukunahikona no Mikoto as the guardian gods of Dogo Onsen Spa.



19 Seki Museum

About five minutes on foot from Iyotetsu Dogo Onsen Station or about 9 km from Matsuyama IC.

This museum displays Western and Japanese paintings by modern artists. These include exhibitions by Kiyoteru Kuroda and Ryohei Koiso, and works by Rodin.



21 Isaniwa Shrine

About 15 minutes on foot from Iyotetsu Dogo Onsen Station or 8.5 km from Matsuyama IC.

It is said that the third generation lord of the Matsuyama domain built this shrine in appreciation for achieving his long-cherished desire to win the horseback archery competition held at the Edo Castle. The main hall has been designated as an important national treasure as it is one of three remaining shrines built in the Hachiman style. The others are Usa and Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrines.



22 Dogo Shopping Street (Dogo Fashionable Street)

Manners

- **Accommodation** --- In Japanese style hotels, it is not rude to walk along hallways, to go to the bath or to have dinner wearing just your yukata and/or zori slippers. In Western style hotels, do not walk around outside your room wearing a yukata and zori, but in hotels with hot spring facilities, it is OK. Please ask the staff at your hotel if you are unsure.
- **When taking a bath** --- One person should use only one basket or one locker in the locker room. In a big common tub, tie up your hair if it is long (e.g. with a rubber band), so that your hair does not go into the water. Before entering the bathtub, be sure to clean yourself with warm water. Do not go into the bathtub wearing your bath towel or swimming suit. Do not dip your towel into the bathtub, as it is unhygienic. Before you return to the locker room, be sure to dry yourself properly.
- **Tippling** --- In Japan, you pay tips in the form of service charge, which is included in your hotel bill. It is not necessary to give a tip to a room maid or a waiter.