

# Ayase River Area

## Bird Sanctuary A-1

The right-hand shore of the Ayase River to the east of the Shinden Housing Complex is a sanctuary for wild birds. It is home to a Plaza for Friendship with Birds, with about 40 species of trees that wild birds like. Around the plaza, you can observe spot-billed ducks, little egrets, Eurasian collared ducks, black-backed wagtails, and other wild birds and beautiful butterflies.

## Kuwai-ta Field A-2

A Soka specialty, full-scale cultivation of arrowheads began in the early Meiji period, and they are still cultivated to this day, mainly in the Shinden district. Planting is in late June, and they are harvested and shipped from late November to February.

## Along the Ayase River A-1~3

Passing through the city center south to north, the Ayase River is a clear river where finches lived until the mid-1960s. The recent regeneration project, rivers and riverbanks have been beautifully restored, and the watershed has become a place for people to explore. The Ayase Riverside from Shinden Station to the Bird Sanctuary is a place where cherry trees are in bloom to provide a scenic spot for viewing cherry blossoms.

## Asahi-jinja Shrine A-3

It is unclear when this shrine was founded. It is also known as the Hikawaga Shrine. The shrine dates back to the middle of the Edo period. The shrine houses Sanga (Sanga means mathematical puzzles or solutions described on wooden tablets), which have been designated by the city as cultural assets, along with Chidami stones placed at the entrance of the path to the shrine and numerous other stone structures. Snakes made of straw are placed on the torii gate, and these snakes are renewed (called "snake twisting") every October.

# Kakinoki Soka Park Area

From the east exit of Shinden Station on the Tobu Skytree Line, take the Tobu Bus "Shin 01". After a 12-minute ride, get off at Soka Koen. From the east exit of the Dokkyodaigakumae Soka-Matsubara Station, take the Paripori-kun Bus. After a 14-minute ride, get off at Soka Koen.

## Tozen-in Temple A-5

This is the city's oldest temple, reportedly established by the Buddhist monk Johan in the Muromachi period (around 1500). The main gate, a city-designated cultural asset, is said to have been erected in 1782. Yakushido, on the left-hand side of the main gate, enshrines an image of Yakushi Nyora (the Buddha of Healing), which is reported to have been sculpted by Kushi, a Buddhist monk who ate only tree fruit and grass.

## Soka Park A-5

The extensive Park, with a total area of 17.8 ha, includes a forest of the four seasons, featuring waterfalls and little streams, a public forest, walking trail, a multi purpose ground tennis courts, a scenic pond that attracts wild birds and water birds, and other facilities. The Park is home to about 300 species, and 25,000 trees and plants, providing a treasure of nature where you can observe wild birds and insects. The row of cherry trees along the Hachijo canal to the west of the Park is the city's main spot for cherry trees. It is also the venue for a public fire works event that attracts numerous visitors every summer.

## Nyotai-jinja Shrine A-5

This shrine is reported to have been built oriented toward the north in the direction of Mount Tsukuba by the Toyoda clan. Formerly the lords of TOYODA Castle in Shimosa Province, the clan venerated the Nyotaijinja shrine on Mount Tsukuba, and they chose Kakinoki as their next permanent residence after their castle fell. In October every year, Shinto music and dancing is dedicated to the deity of the shrine. The shrine also features the literary monument of local author TOYODA Saburo.



**Walking course**

Shinden Station  
Ayase River  
Healthy Road  
Asahi-jinja Shrine  
Tenmangu Shrine  
Bird sanctuary  
(Round trip course)

Single Round  
About 7 km  
About 3 hours

**WALKING ADVICE**

If you feel tired, take a rest, and do not strain yourself.



**Walking course**

Soka IC  
Ayase River  
Healthy Road  
Asahi-jinja Shrine  
Tenmangu Shrine  
Bird sanctuary  
(Round trip course)

Single Round  
About 7 km  
About 3 hours

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**Walking course**

Soka Park  
Nyotai-jinja Shrine  
Otodana-kashi  
Shimotsuna Road  
Tozen-in Temple  
Soka Park

Single Round  
About 5 km  
About 2 hours

**WALKING ADVICE**

Wear a cap or hat and be careful about heatstroke.



**Walking course**

Matsue-shinbashi Bridge  
Inari-gochome  
Midori Bridge  
Inari Bridge  
Inari Park  
Inari Higashi Park  
Inari Nishi Park  
Inari Shimone Park  
Inari Minami Park  
Inari-sanchome

Single Round  
About 5 km  
About 2 hours

**WALKING ADVICE**

Wear a cap or hat and be careful about heatstroke.

# Yatsuka Area

## The Ten Bridges over the Tatsui River C-D-2

The Tatsui River was excavated over a period of six years from 1981. The bridges over the river were built not only for crossing but also for viewing, "interacting with people," and "being proud." The bridges are thus designed with originality that harmonizes with the history of the community and the nature of the surroundings. Six of these bridges received awards in the bridge category of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.

## Sengen-jinja Shrine D-3

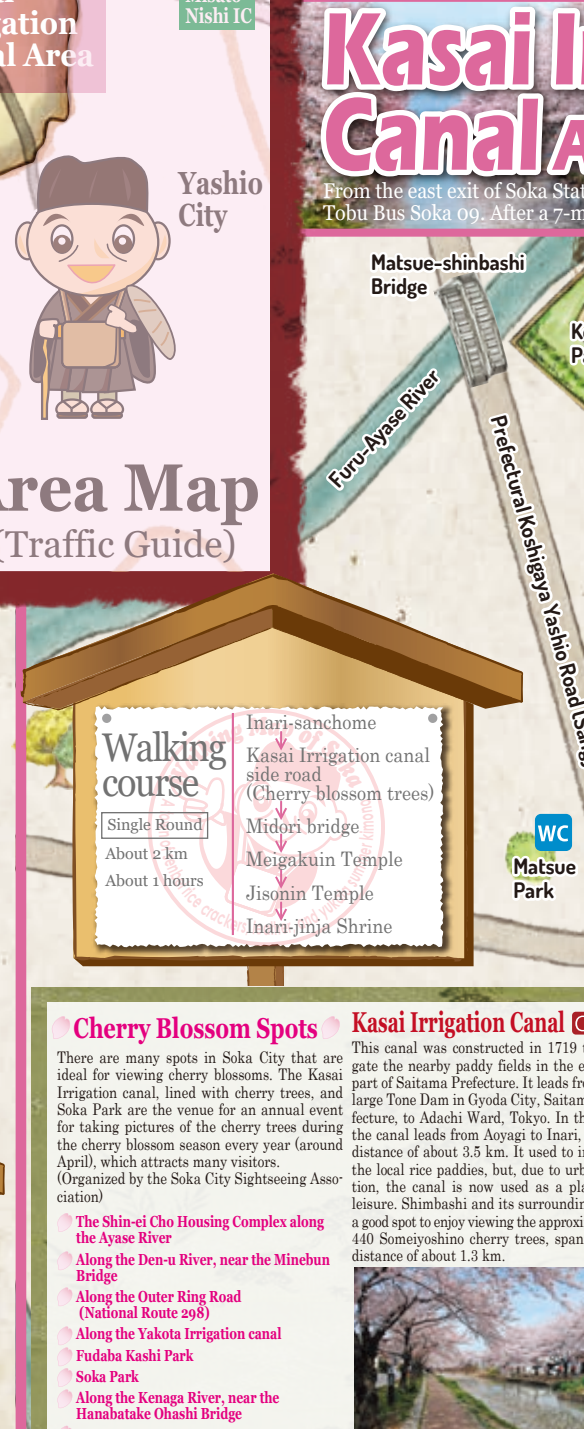
This shrine has been venerated by many people for its enshrinement of Mt. Fuji since the Edo period. It is officially named the Fuji Sengenjinja Shrine. The current sanctuary was rebuilt in 1842 and has been designated by the city as a cultural asset. Five and main festivals are conducted on the first Saturday and Sunday in July every year.

## Mujinanomori-ato D-1

There were many large trees on the extensive premises of an old house in Nissatocho, which is said to have once been the home of badgers, so the villagers called the place "the badgers' forest." There is still a large tree at the remains of the mansion where the badgers used to live.

## Kenaga-jinja Shrine D-1

Although it is unclear when it was constructed, this is a rare shrine in that it enshrines "a woman's hair" as an object of worship. Because there is a record saying that it was refurbished on September 25, 1725, the shrine is presumed to have been founded about 300 years ago. Tradition has it that this shrine was built on the ruins of the mansion of a rich villager, while the hair used to be that of his daughter. (Another theory holds that it was the hair of the younger sister of the deity Susanoo/Mikoto.) The torii gateway to the entrance of the shrine was relocated from the Edo mansion of the Mito Tokugawa clan.

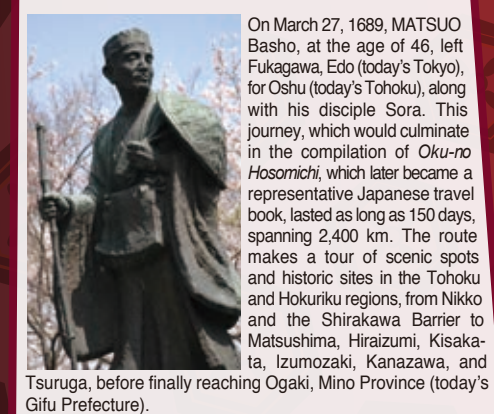


National Scenic Beauty  
"Scenic Area of Oku-no  
Hosomichi Soka Matsubara"

# Soka Walking Map

A town of senbei rice crackers, leather, and yukata summer kimono

Welcome to Soka



On March 27, 1689, MATSUO Basho, at the age of 46, left Fukagawa, Edo (today's Tokyo), for Oshu (today's Tohoku), along with his disciple Sora. This journey, which would culminate in the compilation of *Oku-no Hosomichi*, which later became a representative Japanese travel book, lasted as long as 150 days, spanning 2,400 km. The route makes a tour of scenic spots and historic sites in the Tohoku and Hokuriku regions, from Nikko and the Shirakawa Barrier to Matsushima, Hirazumi, Kisakata, Izumozaki, Kanazawa, and Gifu Prefecture.

"Days and weeks are like hundreds of people passing by, while years passing by are like travelers as well. Those who float away their lives on boats and grow old leading horses by the bit spend their days and months in travel and regard their journey paths as their dwellings." Having left Fukagawa, Basho went by boat to Senju-shuku, where he said goodbye to those seeing him off and started walking. "Hoping that I would return there alive, counting on my unreliable fate. I finally arrived at an inn in a town called Soka that evening." Thus, while suffering from the burden of the heavy load on his shoulders, Basho walked 8.8 km, reaching Soka, the second stopover station on the Nikko Highway. The journey described in *Oku-no Hosomichi* would then extend from Soka to Tohoku.

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