

# WAKAYAMA ITINERARY: 7 Best Things to Do & Places to Visit



Wakayama Prefecture is located on the southernmost part of Japan's Kii Peninsula. This corner of Honshu Island also snagged the 5th slot on the Lonely Planet's list of Best in Travel Top 10 Regions this year. Like Osaka, Kyoto, and Nara, it is also part of the Kansai Region. It takes about 40 minutes to reach its capital, Wakayama City, from Kansai International Airport and about an hour coming from Central Osaka.

Hailed as Japan's Spiritual Heartland, Wakayama is most known for its temples and shrines dotting the Kii Mountain range, bestowing it a World Heritage site status with a vast network of ancient pilgrimage routes. Its coastline, stretching almost 600 kilometers also provides scenic beach getaway experience and abundant supply of fish and seafood. Wakayama, nicknamed the The Fruit Kingdom, is also known for its fresh produce and food manufacturing industry such as the plum wine and the shoyu (soy sauce).

If you're seeking off-the-beaten-path destinations near Osaka, Wakayama might just be perfect for you. Here are seven places that you can visit in this quiet but underrated prefecture. I was able to visit most of these, but I also added some attractions that I failed to see but I'm sure will be worth your time.

## WHAT'S COVERED IN THIS GUIDE?

- Wakayama Marina City
- Yuasa Soy Sauce Factory Tour
- Nakano BC Sakagura Plum Wine Factory
- Kumano Kodo
- Wakayama Castle
- Koyasan
- Arida Fruit Picking Activity

## 1.Wakayama Marina City



Kuroshio Market

This is a resort complex with interesting attractions such as Kuroshio Market, Porto Europa, resort hotels, souvenir shops, and restaurants.

- **Kuroshio Ichiba Market**

The market is famous for its daily tuna filleting shows, which happen three times a day.

*Entrance Fee: FREE*

*Opening Hours: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM*

*Location: 1527 Kemi, Wakayama City, Wakayama*

- **Porto Europa**

This is a European port-inspired amusement park with various rides such as the roller coaster and the Ferris wheel.

*Entrance Fee: FREE*

*Opening Hours: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM*

*Location: 1527 Kemi, Wakayama City, Wakayama*

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## 2. Yuasa Soy Sauce Factory Tour



The port town of Yuasa is famous for its traditional way of brewing Japanese shoyu (soy sauce). Learn more about the process and appreciate the artisanal soy sauce. Some combine the traditional and modern way to come up with more quality products.

- **Kuyogura (Yuasa Soy Sauce Co. Ltd.)**

This company is the maker of the soy sauce product that won the Mondo Selection Gold Medal award.

*Entrance Fee: FREE*

*Opening Hours: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM*

*Location: 1466-1 Yuasa, Yuasa-cho, Arida-gun, Wakayama*

- **Kadocho**

Founded in 1841, this brewery contributes a large part in the history of Yuasa soy sauce brewing.

*Entrance Fee: FREE*

*Opening Hours: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM*

*Location: 7 Yuasa, Yuasa-cho, Arida-gun, Wakayama*

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## 3. Nakano BC Sakagura Plum Wine Factory



### Nakano BC Sakagura

Learn about how sake, fruit juice products, jams, and fruit wine (plum wine) are made. Reserve your slots by telephone. See the tour details here: [Nakano BC Sakagura Tour](#)

*Entrance Fee: FREE (brewery tour); ¥2,160/pax (plum liquor-making workshop)*

*Opening Hours: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM*

*Location: 649-0034 758-45 Fujishiro, Kainan City, Wakayama*

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#### 4. Kumano Kodo



Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Kumano Kodo is composed of five main pilgrimage routes, with Nakahechi Route, connecting Tanabe and Kumano Hongu Taisha, as the most popular. Another well-known site is Seiganto-ji Temple at Nachi Katsuura which towers over a lush forest with Nachi no Taki fall in the background.

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#### 5. Wakayama Castle



Built over four centuries ago, the castle stands proudly at the center of Wakayama City, becoming the symbol of the city. It is best to visit the castle during the season of the cherry blossoms in spring or during the season of the autumn leaves, covering the castle grounds with the distinctive colors of either season.

*Entrance Fee: ¥410 (adults); ¥200 (children)*

*Opening Hours: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM*

*Location: 3 Ichibancho, Wakayama City, Wakayama*

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## 6. Koyasan

A UNESCO-recognized World Heritage Site, Koyasan is a historic temple town located in the mountainous regions of the Kii Peninsula. It is the birthplace of the Shingon Buddhism, drawing plenty of pilgrims and tourists alike.



- **Danjo Garan Sacred Temple Complex**

Considered the heart of Koyasan, it houses the statue of Dainichi Nyorai (main Buddha) and the Konpon Daito (Great Pagoda).

*Entrance Fee: ¥200 (Kondo, Konpon Daito)*

*Opening Hours: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM*

*Location: 152 Koyasan, Koya-cho, Ito-gun*



- **Kongobu-ji Head Temple**

This is the head temple of the Koyasan Shingon Buddhism.

*Entrance Fee: ¥500 (adults); ¥200 (children)*

*Opening Hours: 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM*

*Location: 132 Koyasan, Koya-cho, Ito-gun*



- **Okuno-in**

As the center of the Koyasan belief and the mausoleum of its founder, Kobo Daishi, this site is considered the most sacred in Koyasan.

*Entrance Fee: FREE*

*Opening Hours: 24 hours*

*Location: 550 Koyasan, Koya-cho, Ito-gun*



- **Shukubo**

Shukubo means temple stay or temple lodging. Koyasan has 52 Shukubo temples, each offering unique experience with its own vibe, *shojin ryori* (vegetarian cuisine), services, and history. Visit the Temple Lodging Association (Koyasan Shukubo Kyokai) for reservation.

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## 7. Arida Fruit Picking Activity



The town of Arida enjoys a warm climate suitable for growing fruits. It is Japan's top producer of mandarin oranges.

- **Kuriyamaen**

This is a prominent mandarin orchard in Arida.

*Entrance Fee: ¥600 (adults); ¥500 (children)*

*Opening Hours: Mid-October to Mid-December*

*Location: 26 Iseki, Hirogawa-cho, Arida-gun, Wakayama*

- **Hayashi Farm**

*Entrance Fee: ¥600 (adults); ¥500 (children)*

*Opening Hours: Mid-October to Mid-December*

*Location: 353 Oshima, Aridagawa-cho, Arida-gun, Wakayama*

- **Other Attractions**

- **Wakayama City:** Wakayama Historical Center, Momijidani Teien Garden, Tomogashima Islands, Kataonami Park, Bandoko Teien Garden, Stationmaster Tama II (cat)
  - **Koyasan:** Daimon Gate, Tokugawa Mausoleum, Jison-in Temple, Reihokan Museum, Kudoyama-Sanada Museum
  - **Yuasa/Arida:** Aragijima Rice Terraces, Yuasa Important Preservation District (Traditional Buildings), Dojo-ji Temple, Shirasaki Coast
  - **Shirahama/Susami:** Saki-no-Yu Onsen, Shirahama Beach, Engetsuto Island, Sandanbeki Cave & Rock Cliff, Senjojiki Rock Plateau, Meotonami, Shihara Coast, Shirahama Energy Land
  - **Kushimoto/Kozagawa:** Ichimai-iwa Monolith, Hashigui-iwa Rock, Kushimoto Marine Park, Cape Shionomisaki, Tokinohai Waterfall
  - **Kumano:** Ryujin Onsen, Tanabe (Ajikoji Food Entertainment District, Tokei-jinja Shrine), Katsuura (Onsen Hopping, Benten-jima Island, Ki-no-Matsushima Cruise), Shingu (Kumano-gawa River Boat Tour, Doro-Kyo Gorge, Koya-zaka Slope)
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