

Journeying to Fuji Country:

TOURISM INFORMATION FOR MOUNT FUJI AND ENVIRONS

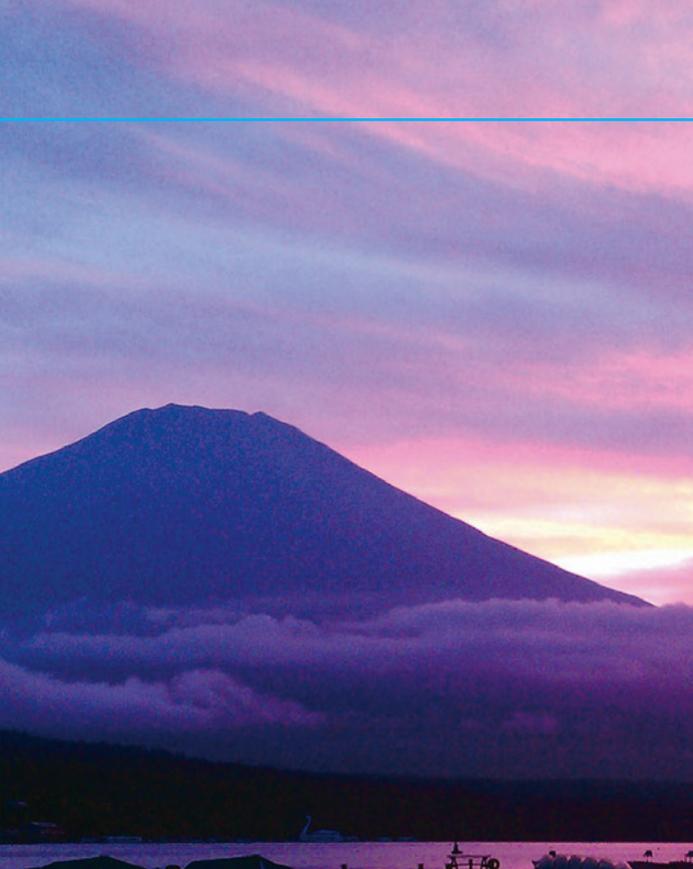
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MANY people are inspired to visit Mt. Fuji each year, but have you ever considered the challenges of getting there or the special rewards involved?

Many transportation links and tourist facilities exist for those people wishing to visit the Mt. Fuji area or ascend the peak of Mt. Fuji. The climbing season for Mt. Fuji runs for only two months between July 1st and late August each year. Approximately 300,000 people hike to the top of the mountain via one of four trails (Fujinomiya, Gotemba, Subashiri and Yoshida Routes), and many more travelers visit the Fuji Five Lakes and the surrounding areas each season.

The closest train stations are either Fujinomiya sta., Gotemba sta. or Kawaguchiko sta., you can catch local buses departing to the 5th Station of the mountain from each station. Alternatively, it is also possible to take a tour-bus shuttle that is operated by Fujikyu Shizuoka, Fuji Kyuko and Fujikyu Yamanashi bus lines that run daily during the open season.

For those hikers who wish to try visiting Mt. Fuji without climbing all the way to the peak, thirteen nature trails have been built at the lower reaches of the mountain that traverse forests, hills, streams and fields and have a longer open season than the national park at the upside. Several Prefectural parks can also be found in the vicinity of Mt. Fuji that offer options for camping, swimming, picnicking and cycling.



Guide books are available to provide basic informations related to ascending Mt. Fuji, including the guidelines for manners and safety as well as instructions on adequately preparing for the challenges of the climb. Various volunteer groups and nature studying groups formed the Mt. Fuji Network which copes with environmental conservation synthetically.

The summit stands at 3776m in height and weather can be unpredictable at higher elevations, so altitude sickness and hypothermia are concerns for mountain climbers, as well as adequate water supplies and proper boots and clothing. Visitors must come prepared, since the ascent to the top is a physical and mental challenge.

As for tourism destinations beyond the mountain itself, many cultural and natural wonders draw people to the region. For instance, the Fuji Five Lakes, the Sengen shrines, Shiraito no Taki waterfalls and Mihonomatsubara pine tree grove. You can enjoy boat riding, driving, camping in the Fuji Five Lakes. It's not only the place for summer resort but you can also experience various kinds



Cycling

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Grape Picking

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Tea field

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of activities there throughout the year. In the spring Cherry blossoms and Azaleas, in the summer Lavenders and Hydrangeas color the beautiful views of the mountain. Many foreigners look forward to see the fireworks displayed above the lake. People are delighted to see the colored leaves in the fall, the mountain covered with white snow in the winter. Not only the nature is the entertainments, numbers of museums and art galleries dotted around the Kawaguchi lake. You can relish the arts Mt. Fuji in the background.

A new recreation initiative - known as *Fuji-no-kuni* or 'Fujisan country' - offers various green tourism options to visitors. Found in over fifty locations around

Shizuoka Prefecture, visitors are given an opportunity to try their hand at various arts and crafts, participate in outdoor excursions and experience a traditional Japanese inn or restaurant. *Fuji-no-kuni* draws upon the connection that Mt. Fuji provides in linking various locations in Shizuoka together through sights, sounds and tastes.

Prefectural delicacies are also a draw for travelers. Yamanashi Prefecture is an abundant fruit growing region that produces peaches and grapes, whereas Shizuoka is famous for its green tea, *Mikan* oranges and seafood, so visitors are encouraged to try these locally produced goods as well. Most travelers to the Mt. Fuji region are not only struck by the magnificence of

the countryside, but also the bountiful foods and varied flavors that are on offer.

Ms. Nicole Bauer a tourist writer from America, climbed Mt. Fuji in August 2012 and had this to say about her impressions: "Watching the sunrise from the top of Mount Fuji, Japan's highest mountain, is an unforgettable experience - incomparable to any other sunrise I have ever seen. The views are magnificent and the light is magic; plus, it's different every time, depending on general weather conditions, especially the clouds. This is my second time to climb Mount Fuji, and I'm bringing my best camera with me this time!" 

Further information can be found online at the Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO, <http://www.jnto.go.jp/>), the Prefectural Government of Shizuoka (http://www.pref.shizuoka.jp/a_foreign/english/index.html) and the Prefectural Government of Yamanashi (<http://www.pref.yamanashi.jp/foreign/index.html>).