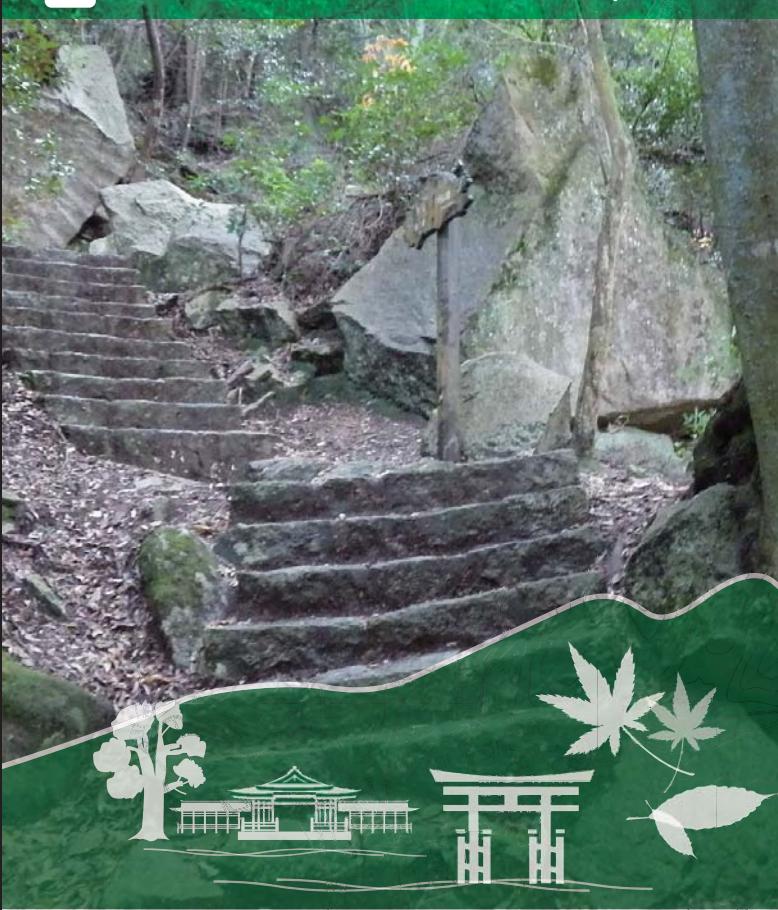


Miyajima Hiking Map

2 Wildlife Course Omoto Route – Momijidani Route



2 Wildlife Course

Omoto Route – Momijidani Route

This course departs from Momijidani Park and hikes up Mt. Misen through the Misen Virgin Forest. It takes you by the boulders and rock formations of Komagabayashi Forest that are interspersed with a wide variety of vegetation, before descending to Omoto Park where you find a naturally growing fir forest.

[Distance]

8.8 km total



[Required time]

About 4 – 5 hr

[Difficulty]

Easy



Ropeway & Ferry Information

Miyajima Ropeway Timetable (About every 15 min)

Dec. – Feb. 9:00 ~ 16:30 (Last ride down: 17:00)
March – Oct. 9:00 ~ 17:00 (Last ride down: 17:30)
Nov. 8:00 ~ 17:00 (Last ride down: 17:30)
GW/Obon 8:30 ~ 17:30 (Last ride down: 18:00)

Miyajima Ferry Timetable (About every 15 min [Daytime])

[Miyajima Matsudai Kisen Tourist Ship] [JR-W]
Departing Miyajimakuchi 7:15 ~ 20:35 Departing Miyajimakuchi 6:25 ~ 22:42
Departing Miyajima 7:00 ~ 20:35 Departing Miyajima 5:45 ~ 22:14

*Timetables are valid as of 03/31/2014.

* Both the ropeway and ferry lines operate according to special timetables during events, etc.
For more information, contact the respective operators.

Other Model Courses

- 1 Nature Course Daishoin Route – Miyajima Ropeway – Tsutsumigaura Nature Trail
- 3 Geology Course Omoto Route – Momijidani Route
- 4 History & Culture Course Tsutsumigaura Nature Trail

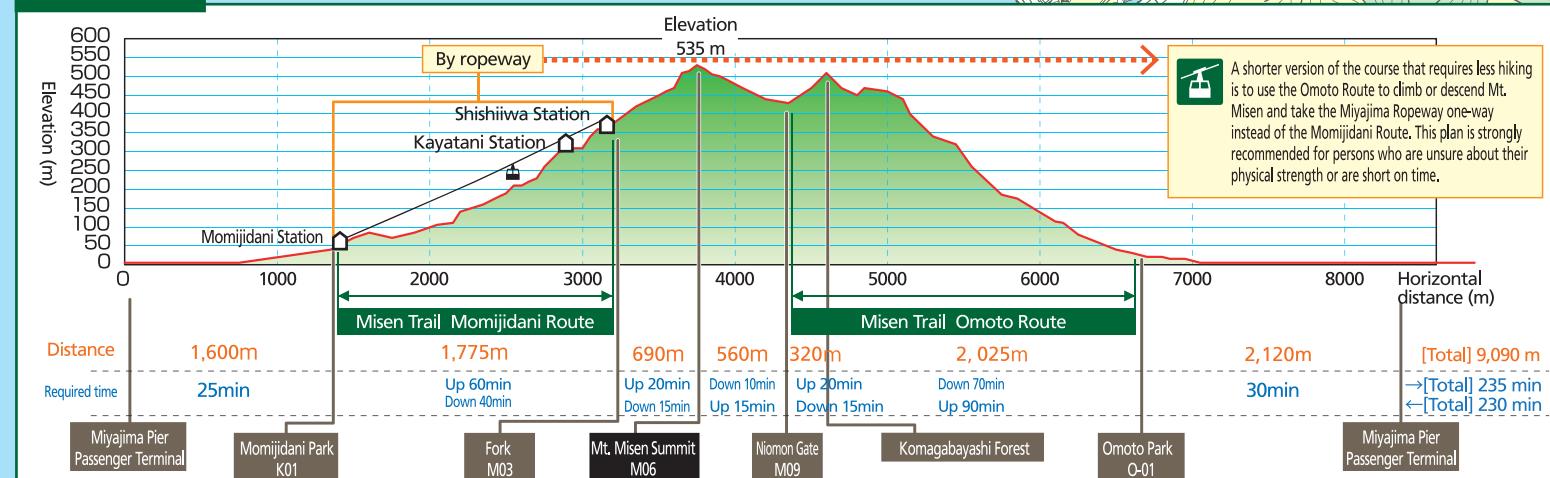
Guide maps can be downloaded from the below website.

Website

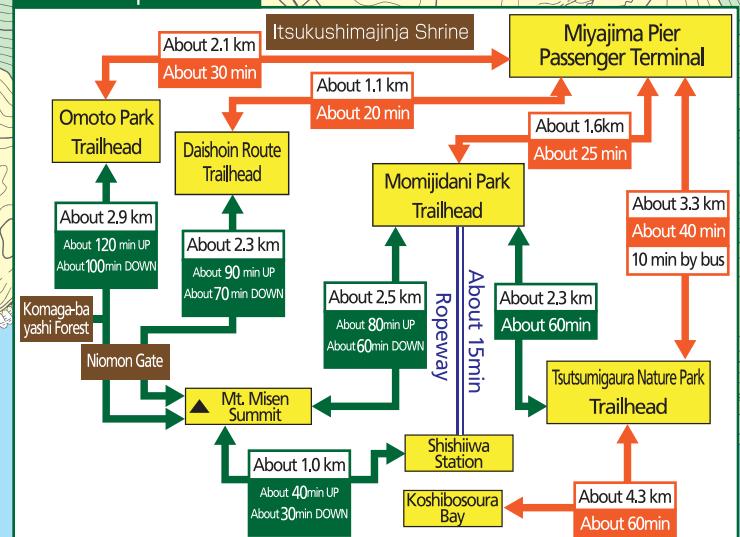
http://chushikoku.env.go.jp/nature/miyajima_guide_map/



Course Information



Course Required Time



2 What to See Along the Wildlife Course

The Wildlife Course hikes up Mt. Misen along the [1] Momijidani Route (Momijidani Park - Mt. Misen Summit) and hikes down the mountain along the [2] Omoto Route (Mt. Misen Summit - Omoto Park). Both routes feature rare plants and animals.

Wildlife Along the Momijidani Route

The ravines in Momijidani Park are populated with different species of Japanese maple that turn wonderful colors in autumn. They were planted here during Japan's Edo Period (1603 - 1868). A natural fir forest is found at the trailhead and broad-leaved trees including local species of oak, Mimizubai (*symplocos glaucas*), laurel and camellia appear as you enter the Misen Virgin Forest. Along the ridgeline, you find evergreen oaks and shikokiana beautyberries. In summer, you can see blue-and-white flycatchers, Japanese white-eyes and narcissus flycatchers in the ravines and forests, and hear common cuckoos and lesser cuckoos at higher elevations.

Natural Highlights

Momijidani Park and Mudslide Prevention



Momijidani Park stretches along the Momijidani River at the foot of Mt. Misen and has been known as a scenic location since long ago. A section of the park was buried in a mudslide spawned by Typhoon Makurazaki of 1945, but restoration work was passionately pursued by the local community with donations and cooperation from all across Japan, and is today a beautifully landscaped park with cleverly incorporated erosion control infrastructure. Professional landscape artists were employed to conserve the natural beauty while ensuring absolute safety. So, they used quarry stones from the area without any processing, left trees standing in place and positioned rocks so that cement surfaces would be hidden to the eye. Autumn is particularly worth seeing as the diverse species of Japanese maple trees change colors all at once. Spring with its cherry blossoms and summer with the fresh green foliage are equally as beautiful.

Shishiwa Rock



Located near the highest ropeway station up Mt. Misen, Shishiwa (literally "lion rock") gets its name from its resemblance to a lion. The station is designed as an observation point with views of the steep cliffs to the east, south and west, as well as a magnificent view of the Mt. Misen Summit that you shouldn't miss.

A View from Shishiwa Rock

Miyajima Hiking Rules

Because of its historical importance and scenic beauty, the entire island of Miyajima is a national park. Moreover, the Misen Virgin Forest is designated a Natural Monument of Japan. Therefore, it is strictly forbidden to pick plants, catch animals, collect rocks or light fires anywhere on the island. Please observe the below rules in order to preserve the rare natural environment of Miyajima for future generations.



Mt. Misen Summit

[Marker] M-06, M-06-1, M-06-2



Mt. Misen rises 535 m above sea-level at the summit. It is said that here Kobo-Daishi, the Japanese monk responsible for propagating Buddhism in Japan, founded a temple and claimed the mountain sacred. The panorama from the summit is so beautiful that it inspired the 19th century Japanese statesman Hirobumi Ito to describe it as the "greatest merit of Miyajima." Near the summit are found several temples associated with Kobo-Daishi and some rather interesting rock outcroppings and boulders like the boat-shaped Funaiwa Rock, the pillar-shaped Fudoiwa Rock and Kanmaniwa Rock, which has a tiny hole that fills with water and empties in sync with the tides.

Iwayataishiryuketsu Cave

[Marker] O-10-1



Underneath a massive cliff in Komagabayashi Forest is a mammoth boulder known as "Iwayataishido." In the rock is a fairly spacious

cave where Kobo-Daishi, the Japanese monk responsible for propagating Buddhism in Japan, is said to have practiced Mandala Yoga to improve his memory. Kobo-Daishi is venerated at the rear of the cave.



Japanese maple



Laurel species
(Listea coreana)



Shikokiana
beautyberry



Vittaria flexuosa
(Type of shoestring fern)

Hemlock Spruce Forest



Hemlock Spruce Forest

This tract of hemlock spruces is found in the middle of the Misen Virgin Forest. Because this particular species is vertically distributed across the Japanese Islands, it belongs to the temperate zone. On Miyajima, it grows at elevations 400 m above sea-level on Mt. Misen and Mt. Iwafunadake, and in Komagabayashi Forest. Hemlock spruces cover just 4.5% (1.4 km²) of the island and are no longer found on any other islands in the Seto Inland Sea, so this forest is an extremely rare find.

Red Pines and Symplycos Prunifolias



Red pines cover about 88% of the island. Once impacted by lumbering and volcanic activity, the species has been left untouched since the end of WWII, so many of the taller trees are between 60 - 120 years old. Broad-leaved trees like the *symplycos prunifolia*, Japanese star anise and indigenous species of camellia and laurel also grow thick.



Distance Marker

Stone markers such as this have indicated the route up Mt. Misen to Misendo Temple since ancient times. With the summit being the 24th such marker, each stone marks about 109 m. The oldest of these markers bears the date 1559.

Precautions for Hikers

- The required times in this brochure are for good weather and small groups of experienced hikers aged 40 to 50 prepared for a one-day hike. They do not include any time for sightseeing, nature observations or breaks; therefore use them as a basic reference.
- Being on trails after sunset is very dangerous. Check that the ropeway and other modes of transportation are running, confirm the last service of the day before setting out, and **start your descent at least 3 hours before sunset**.
- All courses involve hiking.** Whether taking an easy or moderate trail, wear shoes and clothing suited for hiking, and carry emergency food and beverage with you.
- Watch out for harmful wildlife (poisonous snakes, hornets, etc.).

Nature and History of Miyajima

Wildlife

Miyajima is a natural habitat for many rare plants and animals, including naturally growing fir trees in the Misen Virgin Forest and lowlands, vegetation peculiar to beachheads and salt marshes, and a species of mangrove skimmer that lives only on Miyajima. There are also deer all over the island, but they are wild and must not be fed.

Landscape and Geology

Miyajima is home to many temples, shrines and historical sites to note Mt. Misen, Daishoin Temple and Daiganji Temple and, of course, the World Heritage Itsukushima Shrine.

History and Culture

Miyajima is home to many temples, shrines and historical sites to note Mt. Misen, Daishoin Temple and Daiganji Temple and, of course, the World Heritage Itsukushima Shrine.

Itsukushima Shrine (World Heritage)

Itsukushima Shrine was registered as a World Heritage in 1996. The buildings and surrounding environment are highly valued for their integrated relationship as there is no other shrine in the world that incorporates the tide into its design.

Misen Virgin Forest (Natural Monument)

The Misen Virgin Forest is a designated Natural Monument of Japan. Its vegetation is a mixture of southern plants and conifers. It is a rare find where you can see wheel trees and other primeval plants in a natural state.

Wetland of International Importance and The Mangrove Skimmer

Miyajima is the only place in Japan where the mangrove skimmer lives. This particular species of dragonfly is classified as a Critically Endangered Species by both Japan's Ministry of the Environment and the Hiroshima Prefectural Government. Its wetland habitat along the southwestern coast of the island was registered under the Ramsar Convention as a Wetland of International Importance in July 2012.

Natural Fir Forest (Omoto Park)

Firs are a kind of conifer that likes cool mountainous environments and rarely grows along the coast. This section of Omoto Park features naturally growing firs, hemlock spruces and Japanese nutmegs that are normally found in colder regions, making it a rare botanical find.

Nanaurajinja Shrine (Subsidiary Shrines of Itsukushima Shrine)

What is known as the "Nanaura Meguri" (literally the "Seven-Bay Pilgrimage") is a time-honored Shinto practice of circumnavigating the roughly 30 km perimeter of Miyajima by boat with Mt. Misen always to the starboard side, and ultimately paying homage to the gods at the shrines venerated in each of seven bays.

Waterfront Wildlife

Miyajima has an environmentally diverse coastline that includes tidal flats, rocky shores and salt marshes. The expansive tidal flats that extend from Itsukushima Shrine to Omoto Park is home to a wide variety of shellfish, crabs and other marine life, and is certainly worth a visit.