



About Mitsuba House

Annaka, Gunma, Japan

Near Isobe Hot Spring Resort Area

Airbnb Listing
 “Japanese Elegance near Hot Springs”

Contact:

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 Motoyasu Sawazaki +81 (0)90-8490-4669
 (Japanese, Spanish, a little English)



Dear Guests,

Thank you for choosing to stay at Mitsuba House! We hope you enjoy this newly renovated traditional Japanese home and the beauty and culture that Gunma and Nagano have to offer. We have provided a binder with some information about the house and local sites, and have created this document to support your stay.

You can find information on our website: <https://www.mrsgunma.com/mitsuba-house> as well.
 Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can serve you.

We hope you enjoy your stay!

Kind regards,
Motoyasu and Renée Sawazaki

Welcome to our home!

- **Tea and coffee** are in the cabinet. You can filtered water from the sink.
- Help yourself to the **sembei and snacks** in the dining room basket.
- Warm your room with the **gas stove** in the dining room. You can move the machine into the tatami room and plug it in there. You can also turn on the heater for the “kotatsu” table with comforter.
- Cool your room with wall **air conditioners** - one in each of the tatami rooms. There is a fan for the dining room and kitchen.
- **Bath:** Press the button on the left side for the plug. Press “jido” button to fill the bath automatically. Please wash your body and hair outside the bath (Hair clogs the bath easily.)
- Your **towel sets** are numbered so you can tell whose is whose!
- Please leave wet towels in the basket or hang on the rack.
- You can leave your futons as is upon checkout.
- If you need a **meal**, you can order delivery from **Imai Shokudo** (at Isobe station, 027-385-6752). They will deliver if you order 2 or more meals. Please say you are “Sawazaki” and they will know where to deliver. 11AM-2PM, 5-7PM (last order). Friday closed. If you do not speak Japanese, please contact us and we can order for you.
- **Megumi no Yu Hot Springs and Sand Bath.** Indoor and outdoor hot springs and sauna. You can get a basic meal for around 5-700 yen and enjoy a bath for 500 yen. 10AM - 9PM. Closed 1st / 3rd Tuesday and holidays. Sand bath (2 hours, additional 2500 yen) requires advanced reservations. 027-85-1126



Traveling to Mitsuba House

General location:

- Near Isobe Onsen, hot spring resort area.
- 1.6 km from Isobe Station. Taxis available at station.
- Closest Shinkansen stations: Takasaki and Annaka-Haruna
- 18-min train ride from Takasaki Station
- 20-min drive from Annaka-Haruna Station
- Closest expressway exit: Matsuida-Miyogi exit (Joshinetsu Expressway)
- Karuizawa: 30-min drive. 1 hour by train/bus

Train schedule and fare information

www.hyperdia.com

Directions:

- Bus or train ride from Narita or Haneda airports.
- 20-minute drive from the Annaka-Haruna Shinkansen (bullet train) station.
- 15-minute drive from Matsuida-Miyogi exit of Joshinetsu Expressway.
- 18-minute local train ride from Takasaki Station to Isobe Station on the Yokokawa Line.
- Mitsuba is 1.6 kilometers from Isobe Station with taxis waiting.
- If you do not come by car, we recommend renting a car either at Takasaki or Annaka Haruna Station. If you prefer not to drive, however, public transportation is easily accessible.

There are several options for travel from Tokyo, depending on your location and budget. You can take a bus from Shinjuku or Ikebukuro to Takasaki for about 1600yen one way, then a local train from Takasaki to Isobe. Or, shinkansen from Tokyo/Ueno/Omiya to Takasaki. Our house is only 1.8 km down the road from Isobe Station. There is a taxi stand right at the station, or we can pick you up, if possible.

Parking

Lot for 10 regular-sized cars. Large vehicles: Vans, small bus, camper car OK!

Taxi

Kounai Taxi, Isobe Sales Office

Taxi company in Annaka, Japan

1 17-4, Ichibe Ichiba Annaka, Gunma

Phone: 0120-366-850 or 027-385-6850

About Mitsuba House, Amenities & House Rules

About Mitsuba House

Mitsuba means “Three Leaves”

It is named after the Toyotomi family crest that is on the tile roof.

Built in 1981, the height of the bubble economy using the best traditional woods and design, and completely renovated in 2016: Refinished rare woods to their original glory, new paper screens, flooring and tatami mats. The large kitchen, bath (seat with a view of the mountains) and lavatory were completely redesigned using the most modern appliances available and in large enough spacing and storage to make Westerners feel comfortable.

The design allows for a natural breeze and the thick tiled roof keeps the home cool even in the summer heat. There is an air conditioner in the double tatami room and smaller tatami room. In the winter, the engawa (enclosed patio areas) mean the living space is far from the windows, so it stays warm. We do have brand-new gas heaters to use when necessary. You can move it from the dining room area to the large tatami room as necessary. It turns off automatically after 3 hours of use. If you turn it on too many times after that, the safety system might turn it off and you have to go outside to switch on the gas.

View from bath, kitchen and backyard: Scenic mountains in Japan

Trees: Ginko, persimmon trees

Mountains: Mt. Miyogi (renown as one of the top three most beautiful natural sites in Japan) and Mt. Asama (gorgeous volcano)

House Rules

No pets, smoking, parties, extra guests.

You can prepare light meals. Basic cooking appliances and utensils.

(Restaurants and delivery services available – information in a folder in the home.)

Check in: From 5pm

Check out: By 10AM

Note: If you would like to request to be in the house during the 10am - 5pm cleaning hours, please contact us.

Towels, bedding & Japanese-style sleeping customs

Bath: Please wash your body outside of the bath, then get in and enjoy the warm water.

Plush US cotton towels were lovingly decorated and numbered by our children for the convenience of large parties. You can take these towels with you to the local hot springs, but please remember to bring them back and leave them in the laundry basket so we have enough for the incoming party to use.

We provide plush futons, blankets and comforters for your sleeping comfort.

For practical usage of space and for sanitary and aesthetic reasons, we request that you adhere to the Japanese custom of leaving your shoes in the entry hall and using our sanitized slippers inside, and folding and putting away your futons in the morning, and taking them out just before going to bed. Prior to check out, please take the sheets off the futons and leave them in a pile next to the futons.

Amenities & Services

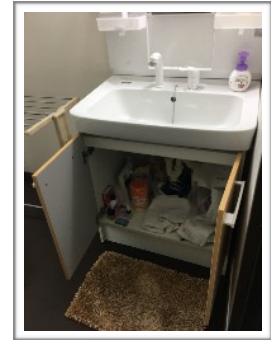
Bath area: Washing machine, towel and clothes rack/hangers, hair dryer, basic toiletries

First aid supplies: Under sink next to washing machine

Kitchen & dining room: Toaster oven, microwave, hot pot, small rice cooker, dishes, utensils. Please wash, dry and put away any cooking supplies or dishes.

Books & Games

Please enjoy the English books about Japan and travel, and games. Please return them in the same place when finished using.



Heating

Electric unit

Your room has an electric heater/air conditioner unit Gas stove: Click the button on the far right to turn on and off.

Gas Stove

The dining room has a powerful gas stove that can be used there, in the kitchen, or the tatami room. For the tatami room, unplug the unit and plug it in near in the room. You need to keep the sliding door slightly open for the gas hose. Please be careful when walking through the entry when the hose is across it.

*** If the stove turns off automatically: Do not keep on for more than 2 hours!!**

✱ Press the on button again.

✱ If it continues to turn off, the safety feature may have shut down the system. To turn it back on, go outside to the back of the house. You will find two large silver gas containers with a control box below it. Press the on button.

Grocery Shopping and Eating Out

Grocery Shopping

- Going to markets is always a great cultural experience. Just a 5-min drive away is a huge “Shoku no Eki “ produce market, bakery and homemade foods shop. You can see and purchase local seasonal produce, flowers, breads, rice and side dishes, roasted sweet potatoes and many other items.
 - 027-380-2121
 - Annaka-shi Gonara Azanakahara 281
 - 5-min drive
 - 8:30AM - 7PM (Closed on New Years Day)
 - **Convenience stores:** None in the immediate area. 7-11 is 2.4 km away
 - **Trial Mart:** 24-hour supermarket
 - Annaka-shi Haraichi 362 in Annaka Bell City shopping center
 - 027-380-5757
 - 12-min drive
- トリアル 安中店

所在地：〒379-0133 群馬県安中市原市 3 6 2

時間：本日営業・24 時間営業

電話：027-380-5757

- **Yaoko supermarket:** Can buy prepared foods and heat & eat them in the dining area (Free teas, water and microwave available if you want to eat there)
 - Annaka-shi Haraichi 2-1042-9
 - 8-min drive
 - 9:30AM - 10PM

ヤオコー

所在地：〒379-0133 群馬県安中市原市 2 丁目 1 0 4 2 - 9

時間：本日営業・9時30分～22時00分

電話：027-380-2311

Restaurants & local dishes

- **Imai Shokado** (Meal delivery service) 0273-85-6752
 - Menu and call in information on the refrigerator.
- **Hot spring resort food** is hearty and reasonable – and you can eat in the comfort of your loungewear after a bath and sauna.
- There are many excellent restaurants within a 10-minute drive: Japanese, Pork cutlet, Indian, Nagasaki champon, Italian, Korean BBQ, noodles. Most are on Route 17, a short drive up from the Isobe Hot Springs area.
 - **Star Sanji** スターサンジ: Indian food. Annaka Haraichi 347-1, 027-382-0469. Open year round. Weekdays: Lunch 11AM - 3PM, Dinner 5PM-10:30PM; Weekends/holidays: Lunch 11AM - 3PM, Dinner 3PM - 10:30PM
 - Conveyor belt sushi: Kaiten Sushi Takara Bune Annaka 回転寿司 宝船 安中店
 - 027-380-5110 Annaka-shi Kobe 351-1
- **Oyinoia** (www.oginoia.co.jp): Touge no Kama-meshi: Popular dish of vegetables and meat on rice, in an earthenware dish you can keep.
- Gunma is a wheat-producing area, so the noodles are fantastic – ramen, udon, soba and champon.
- Try the other wheat products like yakimochi, yakimanjyu, okonomiyaki, takoyaki and okirikomi.

Shopping

- **Karuizawa's Prince Shopping Plaza** (Huge, beautiful outlet mall) Skiing, shopping, IMAX theater: 40-min drive; 11 min shinkansen from Annaka-Haruna station; 18 min local train from Isobe Station to Takasaki station & 20 min shinkansen from Takasaki - Karuizawa
- Shopping at **Takasaki Station** (35-min drive; 18-min train ride)
 - **OPA** Aeon shopping mall: West exit
 - **LABI**: Yamada Denki's headquarters at Takasaki Station, East exit
 - Stores in the station area: There are many gift shops, clothing stores, 100 yen shop, grocery stores, restaurants and more right in the station area.
 - **Takashimaya Department Store**: West exit

- View beautiful Japanese traditional and modern goods
- **Suzuran Department Store** (10 minute walk from the west side of Takasaki Station): Can enjoy the nearby Takasaki Park, City Hall, City Gallery, Music Center, festival grounds and library.
- **Yamatoya** (Takasaki)
 - Best poetry from around Japan, washi paper, artisan goods, free coffee and exhibits

Tourism and Recreation

1.8 km from Megumi no Yu Onsen and Sand Bath

Megumi no Yu 027-85-1126, indoor spa sand bath and hot spring spa, restaurant and gift shop. We recommend spending a half day treating your travel-tired body to this 36-mineral sand bath and post spa experience (3000 yen) Reservations should be made well in advance as only 4 guests are allowed per hour (coed OK). We can help you with reservations if you like.

Year-round beauty and fun within an hour of Mitsuba

Autumn: Rice harvesting and stunning fall foliage.

Winter: Crisp air, blue skies and sweet-smelling robai flowers. Karuizawa Prince Ski resort & gorgeous outlet mall / IMAX theatre (45-min by car. 20 min drive to shinkansen station (free parking!), 11-min ride. (Can rent ski equipment & apparel) Ice skating

Spring: March plum blossom viewing and weekend festivals in Akima Bairin – rolling hillsides of plum blossoms.

Train schedule and fare information

www.hyperdia.com

Tourism web sites:

Tourism map of Takasaki

<https://www.city.takasaki.gunma.jp/docs/2014021500034/files/welcometakasaki.pdf>

Misato-machi tourism

<http://www.takasaki-kankoukyoukai.or.jp/en/?cat=13>

Tourist Guide of Gunma

<https://www.visitgunma.jp/en/sightseeing/area5.php>

Takasaki Tourism Association

<http://www.takasaki-kankoukyoukai.or.jp/en/>

Japan Visitor: Takasaki

<http://www.japanvisitor.com/japan-city-guides/takasaki-guide-gunma>

Takasaki Tourism Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/TakasakiDiscover/#> =



Japanese:

http://www.jalan.net/kankou/sta_014878/page_2/

Culture adventures

Nationally renowned sites within a 45-minute drive in all directions!

Scenic drive to Japan's #1 resort village, Karuizawa. Comparable to California's 17-mile drive to Carmel. Mt. Miyogi and the top imperial shrine, UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Tomioka Silk Mill, Museum of Natural History, drive-through and walking Safari Park, nearly 42 meter tall Byakui Kannon

Make crafts that are easy to take home: Daruma & Shorinzan Shrine / Kokeshi & Mizusawa Kannon

Hot springs

There are so many hot springs around!

Some of our favorites are:

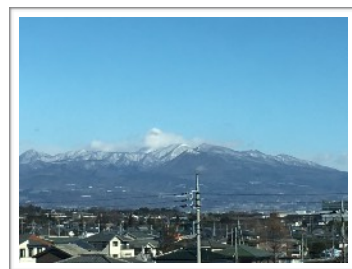
- **Megumi no Yu hot spring and sand bath spa:** 1.8 km down the road. Enjoy a relaxing meal and indoor/outdoor hot springs bath (500 yen for 3 hours), or make a reservation for a 2-hour sand bath spa treatment (additional 2,500 yen)
 - Closed 1st & 3rd Tuesdays
 - 10AM - 9PM
 - How to take a **sand bath**:
 - Up to 4 people (co-ed is OK)
 - Drink a large mug of tea before entering.
 - Dress in a cotton robe and go in the sand bath spa area. Get buried in sand and stay in for up to 15 minutes.
 - The staff mist your face and wipe your face periodically with a cool towel.
- **Toge-no-Yu Hot Springs**
 - Toge no Yu hot springs
 - Annaka-shi Matuida-machi Sakamoto 1222; 027-380-4000
 - 2nd & 4th Tuesdays are closed
 - 10AM - 9PM
 - 600 yen for 3 hours
- **Miyogi Fureai Plaza Momiji no Yu Hot Springs.** 妙義ふれあいプラザ もみじの湯
 - 5 min drive from Miyogi Shrine
 - Tomioka-shi Miyogi-machi Miyogi 1-1; 0274-60-7600
 - Closed on Mondays
 - 10AM - 8PM (December - February: Closes at 7PM)
- Great regions with lots of hot springs to choose from:
 - **Ikaho:** Beautiful stone steps. Enjoy tea and beautiful Japanese art & decor at Tamaki Inn on the left side of the base of the steps. Foot baths, hot springs and shops along the steps <http://www.oyado-tamaki.com/>
 - **Kusatsu:** Ranked #1 in Japan. https://www.visitgunma.jp/en/sightseeing/detail.php?sightseeing_id=8
 - A must visit for those who want to experience a true healing hot spring. Very hot water - do not use soap or shampoo - pour over head 30 times to get the body used to the temperature

- Now Resort: Big Bath and Pool - great for an entire day, and can make reservations for a buffet dinner at the hotel's restaurant. Super for families!
- **Tanigawa/Minakami**
- **Kawaba** (Numata area)
 - Yutorian 3-star hotel: Great for a day trip
 - <http://kawaba-yutorian.jp/daytrip/index.html?ga=2.85687257.1519148702.1499439399-1092748814.1499439399>
9 Lunch reservations required.
 - 378-0102 Gunma, Kawaba, Kawabayubara 451-1, Japan
- **Shima** <http://shimaonsen.com/en/> (Model for
 - Shima Onsen Association
 - 4379 Shima, Nakanojo, Agatsuma-gun, Gunma
 - 0279-64-2321
- Kurabuchi
- Sawatari

Hiking



- Hike beautiful Mt. Miyogi and visit the national Miyogi Shrine. 15 min drive
- Park in the visitor center parking lot and get a map from the center. There is a gift shop, produce market and restaurant with very nice traditional foods.
- Miyogi Fureai Plaza Momiji no Yu Hot Springs. 妙義ふれあいプラザ もみじの湯
- 5 min drive from Miyogi Shrine
- Tomioka-shi Miyogi-machi Miyogi 1-1; 0274-60-7600
 - Closed on Mondays
 - 10AM - 8PM (December - February: Closes at 7PM)
 - Good food!
- Oneyama Shinrin Koen in Yokokawa 小根山森林公園
 - Matsuida-machi Yokokawa; 027-395-3026; 9AM - 4:30PM
 - A bit of a narrow drive up from Yokokawa station area, but a very relaxing flat, wide-trailed walk around the international forest. Structures for viewing Mt. Miyogi and picnics
- Walk around Lake Usui, then go to Toge no Yu hot spring and walk along historic railroad track to the brick Megane Bridge
 - Toge no Yu hot springs
 - Annaka-shi Matuida-machi Sakamoto 1222; 027-380-4000
 - 2nd & 4th Tuesdays are closed
 - 10AM - 9PM
 - 600 yen for 3 hours
- Onioshidashi Park: <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e6036.html> 1 ½ hour drive
 - After visiting Karuizawa, enjoy a walk among the lava rocks and visit the temple on the top. Large gift shop where you can enjoy lunch.
 - 8AM - 5PM
 - 600 yen



- Closed early December to mid-March
- Haruna Shrine and Lake Haruna
 - Beautiful 700-meter walk from the entrance to the shrine with statues, stream and waterfall and gift shops, including a beautiful plum blossom themed shop
 - Petal boat around the lake

Family fun and Sightseeing

- Tomioka Silk Mill (UNESCO World Heritage Site): 20-min drive
- Safari Park and Lake Oshio in Tomioka: 25-min drive
- Museum of Natural History and Momijidaira Park: 12-min drive (Moving dinosaurs, nature of Gunma, human history, special exhibits)
- Usui Pass Railway Heritage Park (Usui Touge Tetsudo Mura) 碓氷峠鉄道文化むら 17-min drive
 - 407-16 Matsuidamachi Yokokawa, 安中市松井田町 Gunma-ken 379-0301
 - www.usuitouge.com
 - 027-380-4163
 - Closed on Tuesdays. Open 9AM - 5PM

Cultural and Spiritual sites

- There are fantastic, nationally-known temples and shrines in every direction.

- **Miyogi Shrine**

- Sister shrine to Toshogun in Nikko, but with the Imperial christanthremum mark and imperial wall.

- **Byakui Dai-Kannon statue of Kannon-sama (Quan Yin) and nearby caves**

- Glorious nearly 42 meter tall statue of the Goddess of Mercy (Kannon-sama, Quan Yin). Experience temples and nature around her and enjoy art, statues and a view of Takasaki as you climb up inside (300 yen entrance fee). 2710-1 Ishihara-machi, Takasaki-shi

- 9am - 5pm

- Doukutsu Kannon (Underground temple with 33 statues of the Goddess of Mercy), Award-winning Japanese gardens & small museum

- 10am - 5pm

- 800 yen entrance fee (500 for groups of 10 or more)

- Beautiful restaurant with a view: 一路堂カフェ Ichiroudou Japanese restaurant Ishihara-machi 2710-1 090-2475-4893

- <https://g.co/kgs/Jmnqu7>

- **Caves:** Lava rocks brought in from Oniyoshidashi

- **Haruna Shrine & Lake Haruna**

- **Mizusawa Kannon** - Market. Spectacular collection of statues in the building on the right at you enter. Many



buildings. Hiking area at the end of the temple area. Region is famous for Mizusawa udon.

- **Takasaki Uekeno Haniwa : Hachimanzuka Kofun**
- **Nippon Silk Center: Kinu-no Sato (Sericulture and silk museum)**
 - 888-1 Kaneko-machi, Takasaki-shi 027-360-6300
 - 9:30 - 17:00; closed on Tuesdays
 - 200 yen for adults, 100 for students
 - <http://www.nippon-kinunosato.or.jp/> (Japanese)
 - History of silk and information: <http://www.nippon-kinunosato.or.jp/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Nippon-Silk-Center.pdf>
 - Hands-on experience: Dying (about 3000 yen), weaving (about 300 - 800 yen) cocoon craft (free) Reservations required
- **Haruna Area (About 40min by car)**
 - **Lake Haruna**
 - Enjoy the view or water sports (Pedal boat: 1500 yen for up to 3 people; Motor boat: 4000 yen for up to 5 people)
 - Mt Haruna-Fuji viewing and ropeway gondola
 - 840 yen roundtrip
 - Horse-drawn carriage ride (1000 yen each, less for groups)
 - Horseback riding (2000 yen for 5-6 min)
 - **Haruna Shrine**
 - Glorious area along a valley you will want to spend around 1 hour exploring: Sound of running water, ancient cedars, waterfalls, statues, moss lined 700m stone paved walkway up to several shrine buildings built into rock formations.
 - About 1400 years old
 - Shrine for gods who give blessings for world peace, bountiful harvests, marriage and prosperous business.
 - Very cool in the summer!



Cultural Crafts

- Daruma making at Daimonya and visit Shorinzan Temple
- Nippon Silk Center (http://www.gtia.jp/kokusai/english/traveling/recommendation_201402.php)
 - 888-1 Kaneko-machi, Takasaki-shi
 - 027-360-6300
- Kokeshi doll making
- Takumi no Sato 匠の里 (Making Japanese crafts and foods)
 - http://www.takuminosato.or.jp/e_index.html
 - 847 Sukawa, Minakami-machi, Tone-gun, Gunma-ken 379-1418,



Sports

- Haruna Shrine and pedal boating at Lake Haruna
- Cycling
- Ice skating: Takasaki, Isesaki and Karuizawa
- Kusatsu's Forest Stage ropes course or Minakami's canyoning or bunji jumping for the adventurous.

Swimming

- **Annaka Sports Center: Annaka Sougo Taikukan**
 - Indoor pool & jacuzzi with a view of Mt. Miyogi and rice fields
 - Annaka-shi, Annaka 1531-1; 027-382-2500; Closed on Mondays; 1PM - 8PM
 - Buy a ticket from the machine on the left of the office and give to the staff. About 600 yen for visitors from out of the area.
 - Lockers require 100 yen coin to shut (coin returns afterwards). Wear the wrist band.
 - Showers available - bring your own soap and shampoo
 - Cap and goggles required.

Enjoy your stay in Gunma!!!

