

THE SECRET RURAL JAPAN

My favorite traditional towns in Japan

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Exploring Japan since 2017



Welcome to the real Japan

Japan is much more than Tokyo, Kyoto or Osaka. After years exploring the country, hitchhiking through rural areas and living on the road, I discovered that the real magic of Japan is often hidden in small towns and forgotten villages. These are some of my favorite rural places in Japan. Places where time seems to stop.

All locations included with Google Maps links





Explore these villages

These villages are spread across different regions of Japan.

Each one offers a unique atmosphere, traditional architecture and a glimpse of authentic Japanese life.

Yoshino
Unno-juku
Narai-juku
Gokayama
Kayabuki no Sato
Kurashiki Bikan





1.YOSHINO NARA PREFECTURE

Yoshino is famous for its thousands of cherry trees and peaceful mountain atmosphere.

The entire mountain becomes pink during sakura season, creating one of the most beautiful landscapes in Japan.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/o4SFJbUBAuFv1TAh9>

Tip:

Best time: Cherry blossom season.



2.UNNO-JUKU NAGANO PREFECTURE

A beautifully preserved Edo-period post town.
Walking through Unno-juku feels like stepping into
old Japan, with traditional wooden houses and quiet
streets.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/MRf3c8PDZXYyYwNN9>



3. NARAI-JUKU NAGANO PREFECTURE

One of the best preserved post towns along the old Nakasendo route.

The long street lined with wooden buildings gives a perfect glimpse of Edo-period travel life.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/RPGsBsK15a8q18Vd9>



4.GOKAYAMA TOYAMA PREFECTURE

A remote mountain village known for its traditional gassho-zukuri houses with steep thatched roofs. Less crowded than Shirakawa-go but equally magical.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/o962Sv1ZcQ4u9QnKA>



5.KAYABUKI NO SATO KYOTO PREFECTURE

A small village with traditional thatched-roof houses
surrounded by mountains.

It feels like a hidden countryside world just a few
hours from Kyoto.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/yWc28QKUUBRCc9G57>



6.KURASHIKI BIKAN DISTRICT OKAYAMA PREFECTURE

One of the most beautiful historical districts in Japan.
White warehouses, canals and willow trees create an
atmosphere that feels timeless.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/UEQqfJQGRRpADqPfy8>



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- Hidden villages
- Scenic viewpoints
- Local restaurants
- Unique travel routes

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