



Welcome to Shiga

The Wind Serenades You and the Waves Entice You' Proud Location of Japan's Biggest Lake

Imagine blue skies and forested mountains reflecting off a lake. Then, picture yourself on a bicycle pedaling around its shores. Biwaichi offers a great way to take in Lake Biwa with all 5 senses and come out feeling elated, fulfilled and rewarded. There is so much for you to discover, learn and relish about Shiga Prefecture. Do it on a bicycle! Ride Biwaichi!

History everywhere

Travel to sites with long histories and discover how generals lived in Japan's century of civil war.



Facts & Tips for Cycling around Lake Biwa

One lap around Lake Biwa is about 200 km. Seasoned riders can cover this distance in one day, but we recommend you take 2 or 3 days and do some sightseeing and try the local food along the way. You can also do just the northern half of the lake, which is about a 150 km ride, or the southern half of the lake, which is about a 50 km ride, or you can combine biking and ferry rides.

For a 2-day 1-night trip
If departing from Otsu, you should consider somewhere around Kinomoto (approx. 96 km) for staying the night. If starting from Maibara, somewhere around Omi-makino (approx. 65 km) would be good.

For a 3-day 2-night trip
If departing from Otsu, you should consider somewhere around Hikone (65 km) for the first night and somewhere around Omi-takahama (86km) for the second night. If starting from Maibara, somewhere around Omi-takahama (75km) would be good for the first night and somewhere around Omihachiman (86km) for the second night.

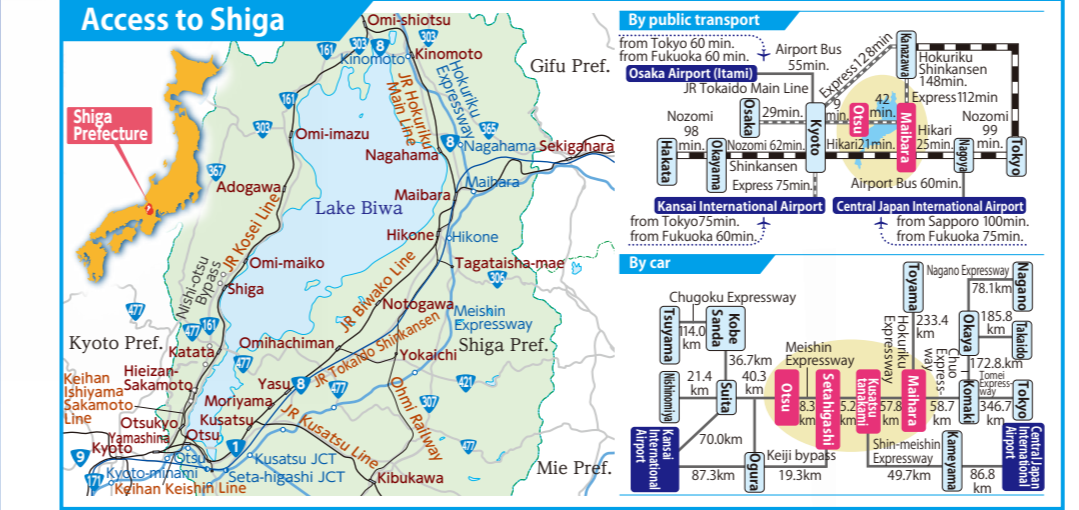
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Check your bike out before riding

- Tires** Check that your tires are properly inflated and not scratched, damaged or deflated in any way. Also, spin your tire by hand and check if they are warped.
- Brakes** Try turning your bike forward and back with the front and rear brake squeezed, and check that the brakes are working properly and are not loose. Also, check that the rubber brake shoes are not worn down and that the brake wires are not damaged in any way.
- Tightness of assembled parts** Ride one to a time about 10 m off the ground, then drop the bike and listen for sounds that might suggest loose parts. Check also that the handlebars and seat are aligned straight and tight.
- Chain and gears** Check your chain for dirt and grime. It should be lubricated only to the degree that it looks slightly wet. Also, check that your gears function properly.

Clothing and carried items

- Lightweight and small of a bundle as possible.**
- Eye wear** It is wise to wear sunglasses or eyeglasses in order to protect your eyes against the sunlight, flying insects, kick-up rocks, etc.
- Gloves** Gloves dampen the impacts transmitted to your hands. They also protect hands should you fall.
- Flat tire repair kit** As its name suggests, a water bottle, a portable pump, a spare tube, a patch kit, a mini pump, a spare tube, and a patch kit.
- Bags** Bags should be as light and compact as possible; the general practice is to carry just what can fit in a bag that can be hung on or strapped to the bike. Lessen the physical load if placed on your back.



BIWAICHI Cycle Support Station

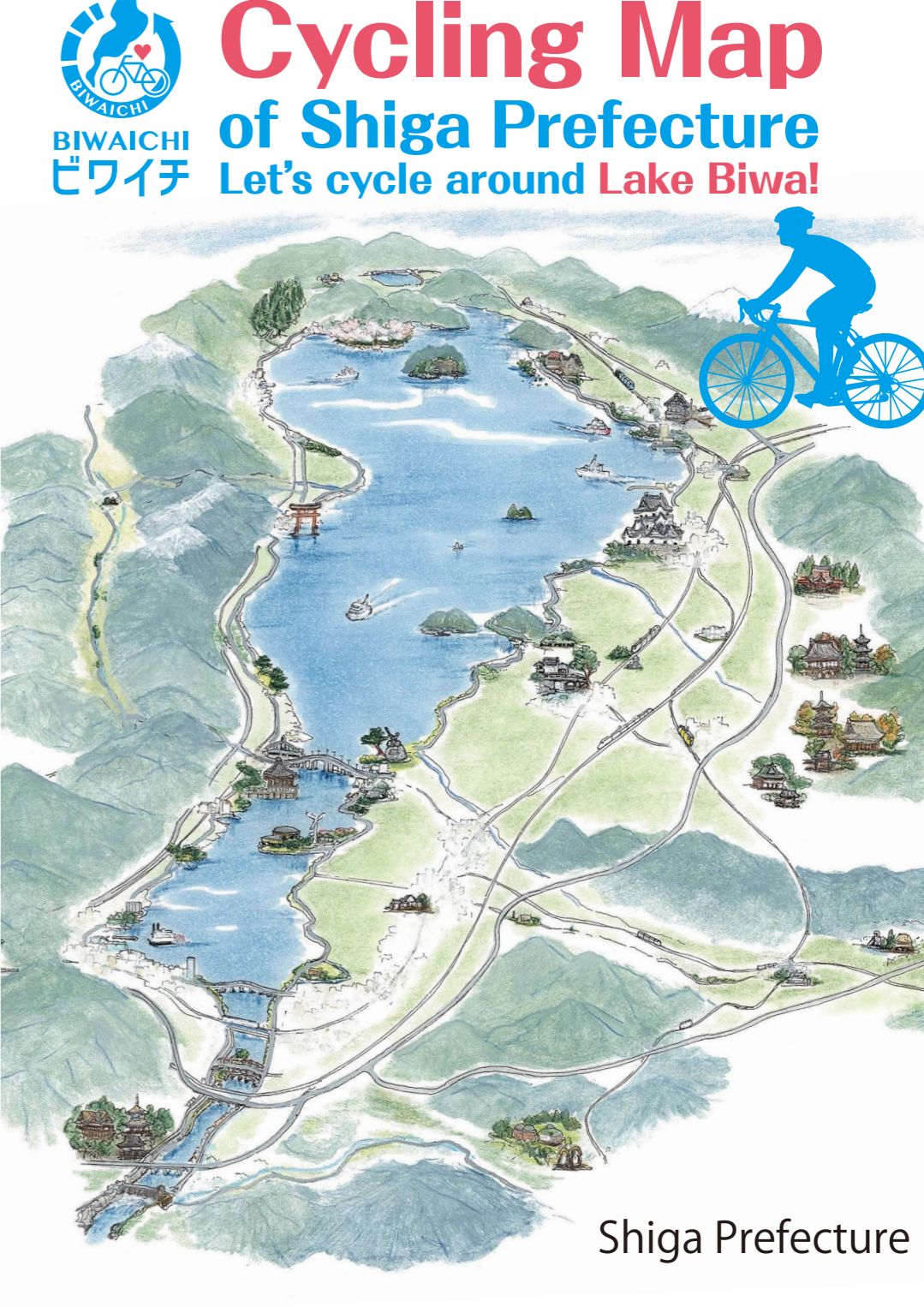
Field service for those who enjoy riding around Lake Biwa. The aid stations provide bike pump rentals and restrooms for cyclists. About 130 amenities (convenience stores, roadside stations, restaurants, cafes, hotels, etc.) in Shiga.

Biwako Free Wi-Fi

In Shiga Prefecture you can use Biwako Free Wi-Fi. This icon is displayed where Biwako Free Wi-Fi is available. Methods of connecting may vary depending on the location of use. Please check this website for more information.

Bicycle Insurance Required in Shiga Prefecture

By prefectural ordinance, anyone who wants to ride a bicycle in Shiga Prefecture must have "private or group insurance that covers all accidents related to bicycle use." Before setting out on your trip, check whether you have insurance or not and the coverage provided by your policy. Insurance is included in rental rates at some locations. For details, contact the rental bicycle location.



Rental Bicycle locations in Shiga Prefecture

Name	MAP	Name	MAP
Katata Tourism Association (Kawakubo-no-ato Museum)	D011	Kokka Shop	K11
Osaka Green Cycling Club (Miyoshi Park)	D012	Michino-ko Ato Maruyama Station	M11
Ogino Onsen Kanko Park	D013	Plaza Sanyoshiyoshi Tourist Information Center	M12
Sakamoto Tourism Association	D014	Ono Railway Gokusho Station	M13
Biwaiko Onsen	D015	Credited Koto Hotel	M14
Osaka Port Parking	D016	Aoki Bicycle Shop	M15
Biwaiko Hotel	D017	Rental Bicycle Shop Tanaka	M16
Lake Biwa Otsu Prince Hotel	D018	Aho Town Rental Bicycle Shop Meguroku	M17
Naga Park Rental Bicycle Shop	D019	Biwaiko Hotel	M18
Lake Biwa Otsu Prince Hotel	D020	Aho Town Rental Bicycle Shop Meguroku	M19
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D021	Biwaiko Hotel	M20
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D022	Biwaiko Hotel	M21
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D023	Biwaiko Hotel	M22
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D024	Biwaiko Hotel	M23
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D025	Biwaiko Hotel	M24
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D026	Biwaiko Hotel	M25
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D027	Biwaiko Hotel	M26
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D028	Biwaiko Hotel	M27
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D029	Biwaiko Hotel	M28
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D030	Biwaiko Hotel	M29
Ikoma Station Rental Bicycle Shop	D031	Biwaiko Hotel	M30

Major traffic signs



BIWAICHI Plus I want to see more of Shiga! Discover the Sites and Attractions Found Only by Circling Lake Biwa

Short easy-biking course to local legacies

Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu

This course guides you to many of the historical legacies in the central part of Otsu City. It covers a total distance of 12 km, so even beginners can get a shot. The journey starts from Ogoto Onsen Kanko Park at Ogoto Onsen Hot spring, which made its mark in history as the closest hot springs to Mt. Hiei, then joins the Nishiojima Byway. The longest uphill climb in this course is just Heizan-Sakamoto Station. At the top of the climb is Hyoshi-taisha Shrine. From there, you pedal along the Keihan Electric Railway's Ishiyama-Sakamoto Line with the view of Lake Biwa to the east. The traffic picks up in the Nishiojima Shrine area, since it's basically little traffic. If you're a fan of the shrine, you have to be careful in this segment. At around Mida-dera Temple, the course allows a slower pace along the Lake Biwa Canal, which is known for its cherry blossoms, until reaching the end at the Biwako Kisen Otsu Port.

Idyllic Fields of Asamiya Tea (Ride through Tea Groves and Stop for a Cup) Around Shigaraki from Seta-no-karashahi Bridge

This course runs along the Seta and Shigaraki Rivers from Seta-no-karashahi Bridge. Through the initial climb Sekinotsu is steep, it is short and the course is free from big ups and downs. There is also little traffic, lots of nature all around and villages with traditional houses. The halfway point is Asamiya, known for growing Japanese tea. There are many tea shops where you can quench your thirst. As you enter the Town of Shigaraki, the ceramic raccoon dogs will catch your attention; Shigaraki is the home to one of Japan's most representative ceramic industries. The latter half of the course has many downhill hills where it is easy to pick up speed. There are also numerous blind spots, so watch your speed and stay alert.

Traveling Japan's Historical Roads Yabase and Shinakaido Byway

This course departs from the former site of the Yabase Landing on Lake Biwa and merges with the Tokaido Highway that served as a principal road in the 17th century, in Kusatsu. After taking in the historical streetscape of Kusatsu, the course heads to Ishibe. This is where you cross the Yasu River and get your first sight of the beautifully contoured Mt. Mikami, which looks very much like Mt. Fuji. The route that takes you on the eastern side of the mountain is great for riding because of the lush natural landscape and panoramic views. And, of course, Kusatsu is famous for its hot springs. After taking in the historical streetscape of Kusatsu, the course heads to Ishibe. This is where you cross the Yasu River and get your first sight of the beautifully contoured Mt. Mikami, which looks very much like Mt. Fuji. The route that takes you on the eastern side of the mountain is great for riding because of the lush natural landscape and panoramic views. And, of course, Kusatsu is famous for its hot springs.

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Traveling Japan's Historical Roads Nakasendo and Hokkoku Wakiokan

This course follows a section of the Nakasendo Highway that was built in the 17th century as a primary road between Kyoto and Edo (now Tokyo), and a shortcut from there to the Hokkoku Byway, known as the Hokkoku Wakiokan Byway. You start at Maibara Station and visit the Samegai-shuku that operated as a layover point on the Nakasendo. Then, from Koshiwabara-shuku on the border with Gifu Prefecture, you first ride to Isumi-jinja Shrine where you get your first view of the famously tozed water, then pass Mt. Ibuki over its southern foot until finding the Hokkoku Wakiokan that will take you to Kinomoto. Along the way, you will encounter a series of historical locations to note the 16th century Awa-no-Battai and the former site of Odani Castle. Without any major ups and downs, the 53.2 km are easy to ride, so the various attractions along the way can be enjoyed.

Cultural Exploration on the Nature-Rich West side of Lake Biwa Dawn Redwoods and Worship

This roughly 68.6 km course runs through valleys and over a mixture of ups and downs. After spinning past the rows of dawn redwoods lining the road from Makino Station, you cross the foot of Mt. Hakodate from Imazu and head to Kutsuki Village where the ADO River originates. You will gradually get a feel for how important the river was to livelihoods long ago, from the numerous shrines that safeguarded the local rafters who floated timber downstream in days gone by. The course eventually joins the Saba-kaido Byway and crosses Hanaone Pass. After that, it's across the Biwako-ohashi Bridge with its over-water views of a seemingly endless Lake Biwa. Once off the bridge, you turn left at the Biwako-ohashi-Nigahizume Intersection onto Kogan Rd. and follow the lakeshore until you reach the end at the Hotel Lafort Biwako Resort.

Legacy Road Azuchi Castle, Hikone Castle and Other Historically Important Sites

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This course starts at the Shiga Prefectural Azuchi Castle Archeological Museum where you find artifacts and information about Azuchi Castle and Nobunaga Oda, one of the 16th century generals who helped end decades of civil war in Japan. You then visit the site where Azuchi Castle stood. Next is the Nakasendo and plenty of interesting places to visit like the Gokoshu Kondo Quarter where the homes are 200 plus years old, and the former Toyotsato Elementary School that is known for its architectural importance and the setting of the anime 'K-On!'. After that, you go from Hikone Castle to the road travelled by Korean traders (Hikone-michi Byway). There is a steep but short climb to make, but it takes you to the final destination on Mt. Kojin (about 150 m in elevation) where you have a spectacular view of Lake Biwa.

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Lake Biwa Canal

This multipurpose waterway stretches 111 km from its intake in the Hama-otsu to the Kamo River in Kyoto. It was built in 1885 as a means of transport to Kyoto, hydroelectric power source and drinking water source.

Former Site of Azuchi Castle

The General Nobunaga Oda spent 3 years building this castle, which was completed in 1576. Just 3 years later, Oda was forced into committing suicide by his retainers and the castle was burnt to the ground. Only the stone wall remains today.

Kashiwabara-shuku

This layover point of the Nakasendo lies in the valley between Mt. Ibuki and the Suzaka Mountains. It is the longest layover town at about 1.4 km. On a corner in the historical quarter is the Kashiwabara Museum of History that explains the history of the local area.

Rows of Dawn Redwoods

This enchanting road is lined on both sides with dawn redwoods for 2.4 km. The roughly 500 trees are beautiful in spring for their vibrant green foliage and in autumn for their colorful foliage and in winter for their white snowy landscape.

Eigenji Temple

Built in 1361, this Zen temple sits amongst a silent forest, which makes a prime location for viewing the autumnal foliage. The thatched roof over the main hall of worship was made with hands grown around Lake Biwa. The 'Futsugi Kannon' revered by the temple is known as a god of conception.

Hikone Castle

The castle was built on Mt. Hikone in 1622 and still looks today as it did when it was first built. The main keep, extended watchtower and wooden gates are National Treasures. Around the base of the mountain are the historically important inner and middle moats. The Genji Bakufukan Garden of the lord's villa is designated a Place of Scenic Beauty by Japan.

Isumi-jinja Shrine

Everyday, about 4,500 of spring water gush from the limestone of Mt. Ibuki. Because of its freshness, this water was selected amongst the Top 100 Springs by the Ministry of the Environment. The water produced at Kano-jinja Shrine in Samegai is on this list. (It is recommended to boil the water before drinking.)

Biwako-ohashi Bridge

Opened in 1964, this bridge stretches 1,335 m across Lake Biwa at its narrowest point and sits 26.3 m above the water at its highest point. It is the longest bridge in the world with a single span.

Legend

- Biwako Full Loop
- Biwako Plus Course (Please see the backside)
- Biwako Yoshida Road
- Sidetrack
- Shiga Slope
- Shiga Slope
- Shiga Slope
- Shiga Slope
- Shiga Slope
- Shiga Slope
- Special sightseeing spots
- Tourist attractions
- Japan Heritage Sites registration spot
- Swimming area
- Bathing Cycle Support Station
- Bike rental
- Caution required area
- Cherry blossom site
- Autumn foliage site
- Flower site
- Camp site
- Swimming area
- Public toilet
- Shrine
- Temple
- Shrine
- Waterfall
- National route #
- Prefectural road #
- Intersection name
- Prefectural hall
- City hall
- Town / Ward office
- Highway / Toll road
- National route
- Prefectural road
- Road
- Prefectural border
- City limit / Neighborhood boundary
- Quasi-National Park boundary
- Elevation (m)
- Prefectural road
- City hall
- Town / Ward office
- Highway / Toll road
- National route
- Prefectural road
- Road
- Prefectural border
- City limit / Neighborhood boundary
- Quasi-National Park boundary
- Elevation (m)

Cycling tips appearing on the map are for riding around Lake Biwa in the counterclockwise direction.

The cycling course shown on the map circles all of Lake Biwa. It is about 180 km long and has been designed and built by Shiga Prefecture under the name of the 'Guruto Biwako Cycle Line'.

The map provides cycling tips and facts that beginners will find useful. Most of the riding is done on sidewalks and bike paths, but intermediate and higher skilled cyclists that seek speed about ride on vehicle roadways.

The 'Guruto Biwako Cycle Line' starts and ends on the island in the Seto River crossed by the Seto-no-karakashi Bridge. Guide signs along the route and blue circles on the pavement are used at junction points where the course direction is difficult to understand. Also, distance markers that indicate the distance from the starting point are found every 5 km both in the clockwise and counterclockwise directions. Use these indications and the map to pinpoint your location and the direction in which to walk.

When riding through wooded areas and villages, slow down to ensure pedestrian safety. If necessary, get off and walk your bicycle.

この地図の作成にあたって、地誌情報提供の提供、印刷制作の提供（印刷委託）等に謝辞を述べさせていただきます。ご協力いただいた方には、改めてお礼申し上げます。

Biwako Loop Shortcut Cruise

Start/End	Distance	Time	Fare
Hikone Port to Chikubu Island to Makino Landing	15.5km	1.5h	Adult ¥1,200 (TAX included) Child ¥700 (TAX included) Bicycle fee
Hikone Port to Chikubu Island	10.5km	1.0h	Adult ¥800 (TAX included) Child ¥450 (TAX included) Bicycle fee
Hikone Port to Makino Landing	5.0km	0.5h	Adult ¥400 (TAX included) Child ¥200 (TAX included) Bicycle fee

Otsu Cycle Cruise

Start/End	Distance	Time	Fare
Otsu Port to Lake Biwa	10.5km	1.0h	Adult ¥1,200 (TAX included) Child ¥700 (TAX included) Bicycle fee
Otsu Port to Lake Biwa	11.0km	1.0h	Adult ¥1,300 (TAX included) Child ¥800 (TAX included) Bicycle fee
Otsu Port to Lake Biwa	11.5km	1.0h	Adult ¥1,400 (TAX included) Child ¥850 (TAX included) Bicycle fee

Only on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays between April 21 - December 3, 2017 (Reservations required)

Contains the below effects as a specialty of traveling with more than 10 bicycles.

- Reservations must be made at least 1 week in advance.
- Contents are subject to change without notice.
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Sightseeing information

- Shiga Japan Heritage Lake Biwa and its Surrounding Water: <http://en.biwakovisitors.jp/>
- SHIGA Tourism Official Website: <http://en.biwakovisitors.jp/>
- Biwako Otsu Travel Guide: <http://www.otsu.or.jp/en/>
- Ogoto Otsen: <http://www.ogotoosen.com/english/>
- Hikone Tourism Guide: <http://www.hikone-shi.com/en/>
- TRAVEL GUIDE NORTHERN LAKE BIWA: <http://www.biwakovisitors.jp/travel/guide/>
- Takashima City Tourism Information: <http://www.takashima-kanjo.jp/english/index.html>

Bottom right 'Kata' enlarged view

- Start: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu
- GOAL: Yabase and Shinakaido Byway
- GOAL: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu
- START: Yabase and Shinakaido Byway
- GOAL: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu

Bottom left 'Kata' enlarged view

- START: Around Shigarak from Seto-no-karakashi Bridge
- GOAL: Pedal and Ride the Ohmi Railway
- START: Touring Koka on the Somakaido and Tokaido
- GOAL: Pedal and Ride the Ohmi Railway
- START: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu

Otsu enlarged view 1:50,000

- START: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu
- GOAL: Yabase and Shinakaido Byway
- GOAL: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu
- START: Yabase and Shinakaido Byway
- GOAL: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu

Otsu City enlarged view 1:25,000

- START: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu
- GOAL: Yabase and Shinakaido Byway
- GOAL: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu
- START: Yabase and Shinakaido Byway
- GOAL: Touring the Historical Legacies of Otsu