

The Shosenkyo Gorge Story

Mitake Shosenkyo Gorge, the source of Koshu's craftsmanship
— Faith, skill, and advanced technology led by the crystal's pulse

The mountainous area around the Shosenkyo Gorge is a place of water source worship, producing crystals that were believed to be blocks of water. Around the upper reaches of the Arakawa River that flows through the area, visitors will be amazed by waterfalls of various sizes, gigantic stones, and oddly shaped rocks formed by erosion over eonies of time.

The beauty of this valley, which is said to be a work of art created by the water itself, was miraculously revealed when a new road was excavated at the end of the Edo period. It has been refined into one of the most scenic spots in Japan thanks to the enthusiasm of the local people.

The abundant crystals produced in the Shosenkyo area and their processing techniques joined to become the skills of artisanry that formed the foundation of Japan's top jewelry industry. Furthermore, they led to artificial crystal manufacturing techniques, which are used in electronic devices such as smartphones. It has supported our lives from past to present.



■ BY TRAIN

JR Kofu Station	Approx. 30 minutes by taxi (car)	Kanazakura Shrine
Bus stop #4 at JR Kofu station (South Exit)	Approx. 40 minutes by bus	Greenline Shosenkyo
	Approx. 60 minutes by bus	Shosenkyo Taki Ue

■ BY CAR

Futaba Smart IC	Approx. 30 minutes by car	Kanazakura Shrine
Kofu-Showa IC	Approx. 35 minutes by car	

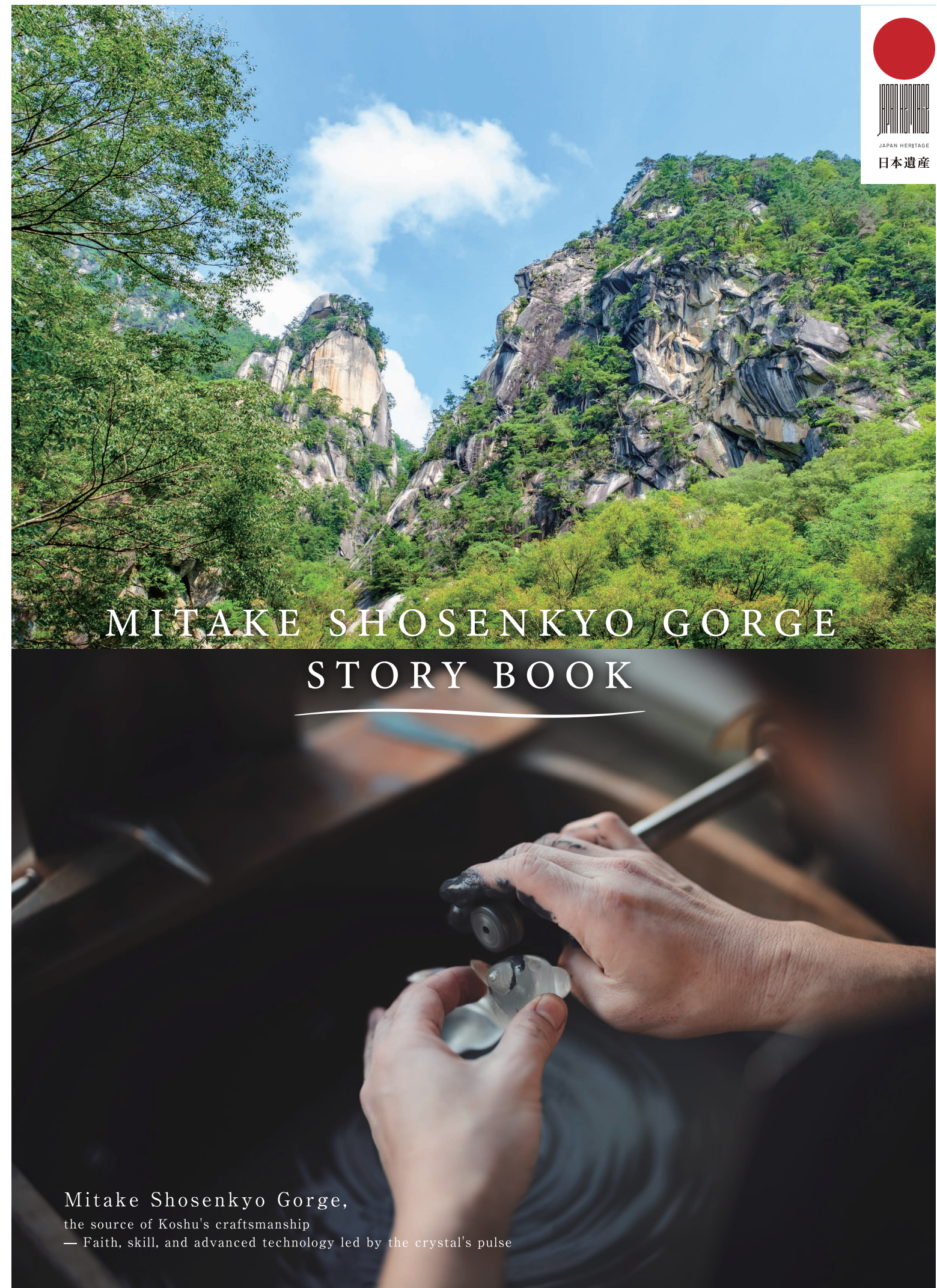


Japan Heritage Portal Site
Shosenkyo Regional Revitalization Promotion Council
<https://japan-heritage.bunka.go.jp/ja/stories/story091>

Shosenkyo Regional Revitalization Promotion Council

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MITAKE SHOSENKYO GORGE
STORY BOOK

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Mt. Shirosuna, a popular mountain climbing spot

Enjoy the depth of Mitake Shosenkyo Gorge.

What amazes visitors to Mitake Shosenkyo Gorge is the overwhelming beauty of the valley.

It has much to offer including mysterious rocks, gigantic stones, and waterfalls of various sizes that all spark the imagination.

The charm of the gorge lies in the combination of its mysterious scenery, its history as a place of faith, and its unique culture.

Feel the beauty of the valley and the accumulation of time with all your senses.



STORY 1 History of the Prayer Path

From ancient times to the Middle Ages, many ascetic hermits walked the Mitake Kodo (Mitake old road) to reach Mt. Kinpu. The road has long been used as an approach to Kanazakura Shrine and as a residential road for people living in Mitake Shosenkyo Gorge. Nowadays, many hikers use the road as a historical path that imparts the ancient atmosphere of the past.

1 | The Gojoiwa rock on Mt. Kinpu's summit
2 | Mitake Kodo in summer
3 | Mitake Kodo in winter

STORY 2

Kanazakura Shrine, a Place of Faith

Kanazakura Shrine houses a "goshintai" (an object of worship in a Shinto shrine) of the Gojoiwa rock on Mt. Kinpu. The shrine once had a vast territory and devoted its efforts to cultivating the forests that occupied large parts of the land. In recent years, it is also drawing attention as it brings good financial luck.

1 | The worship hall of Kanazakura Shrine
2 | Get a stamp from the crystal "goshuin" (a proof of visiting temples/shrines, which has religious meaning. 300 Yen)
3 | Cedar trees in the grounds of Kanazakura Shrine



STORY 3

Mitake Shindo Road That Opened Up the Future

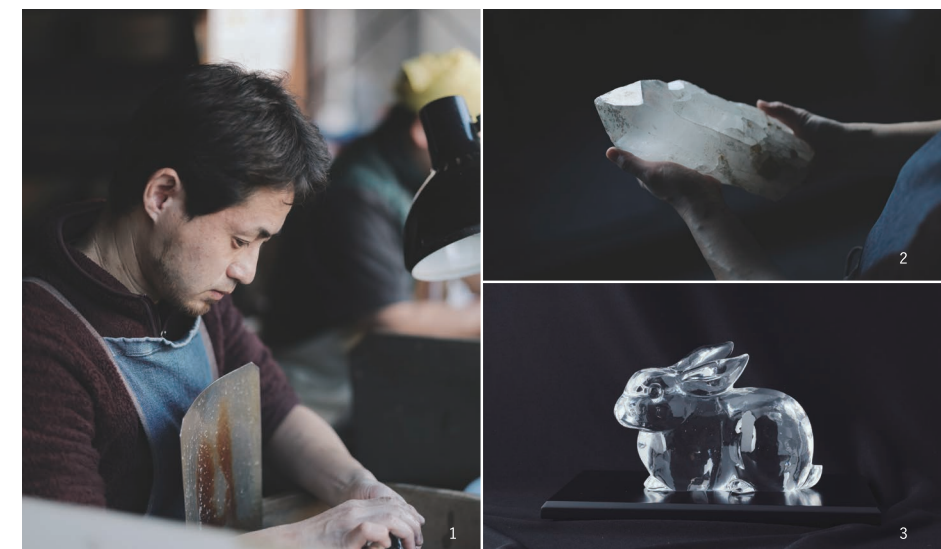
Mitake Shindo road was opened by local people in the Edo period (1603-1868), which made the scenery of Mitake Shosenkyo Gorge widely known. In 1923, it was designated a national scenic beauty and became known as a scenic spot, increasing its popularity as a tourist destination.



A Highlight of Shosenkyo Gorge, "Ishi-mon"

STORY 4 Inherited Crystal Processing Techniques

Since the Edo period, crystal has been mined at the foot of Mt. Kinpu and processed in the surrounding villages. The traditional crystal processing techniques in Koshu have been handed down over the generations to this day. Products are still made using the traditional methods.



1 | Crystal products are still made in the workshop
2 | Quartz crystal before processing
3 | Crystal sculptures are completed using cutting and polishing techniques