



Learn the importance by an experience of working as a group, helping each other through cooking some traditional rural cuisine in here.



Experience a world-class traditional and artistic performance, Awa-odori which is a part of agricultural life.

The Real Rural Experience



Education
Experience
Trips

Sora no Sato

An association "Sora no Sato" is in Nishi Awa - Mt. Tsurugi - Yoshino River Sightseeing Area. (Mima City, Miyoshi City, Tsurugi Town, and Higashimiyoshi Town in Tokushima)

National Educational Lodging Association /
National Real Experience Network



Learn the wisdom of the people live here by an experience of farming at the World Agricultural Heritage.



Rural Japan
Connecting with the World



SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

The Real Japan—Welcome to Sora no Sato



General Incorporated Association Sora no Sato

Regional Characteristics

'Sora no Sato' is in the middle of Shikoku Island, part of the main Japanese archipelago. It has some of the best sightseeing spots in Shikoku, such as Oboke and Iya and this area that still lives and breathes with a simple, warm, and old-fashioned way of life. Most of the families who take in lodgers live in villages that cling to the steep hillsides in the area, and together they are characterised by their farming methods and cultural views that have gained global attention as a World Agricultural Heritage.

The families who take in lodgers have been living among steep hillsides and wild rivers since long ago. The unique scenery, together with nature, mountains, farmland, stone-masonry, Koeguro-style hay bales, and households, are collectively referred to as 'the garden of eden' and 'the real Japan', and the region has recently gained a lot of attention.

Developing 'The Power to Live' and 'Spiritual Happiness', and working towards realizing a sustainable regional society

The students are welcomed as family members, and will help with self-sufficiency related farm work, such as harvesting tea leaves, onions, and potatoes.

They will make some country-style meals as a group by using fresh and wild vegetables. A range of activities await with each family, including village cuisine, making soba noodles, making cutlery, chopsticks and furniture from natural bamboo, and making a noodle stream from scratch.

By experiencing and interacting with a lifestyle that creates fulfillment out of the harshness of the best rural area in Japan, we hope to contribute to a populace that will build a sustainable world, and provide time every day to explore the region.



Experience Program Content

Yoshino River Rafting Experience

The Yoshino River is one of the three wildest rivers in Japan, and one of the best rafting courses in the world. The 2017 world rafting championships were held there. The Yoshino River is wild and expansive. It carves a deep valley into the mountains and allows rafters to enjoy the beautiful and majestic surrounding scenery. Work together with friends, guide the raft, and overcome world-class rapids to experience true teamwork and gain a sense of accomplishment. Limited to 250 people.



Lodgers' Awa Odori Festival Experience

The Awa Odori has been handed down for generations in Sora no Sato, and brings prosperity to the villages with its elegant Buddhist dancing. The "Lodgers' Awa Odori" is a wonderful form of entertainment to relieve the stress of farming on steep hillsides. With a Sora no Sato Educational Trip you will be one of the villagers who live there, and will be able to experience house work, farm work and the Awa Odori Festival. In other words, you will live the real Sora no Sato village life. People dance in a circle when you leave the village, to celebrate your leaving and to vow to meet again.

Capacity of 100 to 300 people.



*Images are for illustrative purposes only

Contact Details

Address: 1893-1 Sarada, Ikeda town, Miyoshi City, Tokushima Prefecture 778-0003

Phone: 0883-76-0713 / FAX: 0883-72-0753

Basic Information

Number of Participants	Maximum 400 people
Participating Households	About 200 (Each household can take in 3 to 5 people)
Area	Nine locations within 30 minutes of each other
Welcoming and Farewell Ceremony	Conducted at all nine locations
Guided Lodging Location	Main Lodging House, hotels, 8 places Mima City: 1, Miyoshi City: 5, Tsurugi town: 1, Higashimiyoshi town: 1
Guided Tour	Possible *By regular taxi <small>We have two vehicles available to transport students who require assistance or are worried about their physical condition</small>
Past Record	2023: 39 schools/7,000 people 2022: 25 schools/2,298 people 2021: 25 schools/715 people 2018: 21 2017: 26 2016: 27
Emergency Hospital	Tokushima Prefecture Miyoshi Hospital Address: 815-2, Shima, Ikeda town, Miyoshi City, Tokushima Prefecture Phone: 0883-72-1131

Accepting Regions and Number of Households (200 in total)



Maximum number of people:
About 400

凡例

	高速自動車道
	国道
	主要地方道
	一般国道
	その他道路
	J 路線
	ロープウェイ
	境界線
	市町村界
	市役所
	町役所
	空港
	高速バス停留所
	道の駅
	登録入居村政舎

Sora no Sato Farming Experience Scenes

The Best Rural Area in Japan!! See the Wisdom of Pioneers!

In search for sustainable lifestyles that turn harsh conditions into fulfilling experiences!

Traditional Farming Experience on a Steep Hillside Farm

A cycle biomass farming method for growing Japanese silver grass (cogon grass) on steep hillsides to be used as fertilizer. This sustainable society has continued for over a thousand years, does not use any pesticides or fertilizers, and has a low impact on the environment.



They live by preserving grains like buckwheat, millet, Japanese millet, and broom-corn millet.



Living in a traditional house with a thatched straw roof



Learn methods of cultivating natural tea, production methods and ways of drinking teas such as *bancha* tea, green tea and fermented tea, and you will be able to experience the wisdom of people who live on home made tea, which is a symbol of hillside farming.



Sora no Sato Mountain Villages

Basic Schedule from Arrival to Departure [For Reference]

First Day		
Time	Content	Reverse side (partially)
10:00 ~	Arriving and congregating at the meeting place	
10:10 ~	Village Entrance Ceremony (Self Introductions)	
10:30 ~	Go to host houses	
11:00 ~	Arrive at House, Explanations (about what to do in emergencies, etc)	
12:20 ~	Lunch Making Experience	
13:00 ~	Lunch and Conversation (Meeting)	
14:30 ~	Farming Experience *See notes	
16:00 ~	Feedback (Opinion Exchange)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Farm tool maintenance ○ Bath preparation ・ Splitting firewood ・ Carrying firewood ・ Lighting fire ・ Heating water ○ Preparation for the next day, etc
16:30 ~	Break and Communication	
17:00 ~	Dinner Making Experience	
18:00 ~	Dinner and Conversation (Thoughts on the first day, plans for the next day)	
19:30 ~	Awa Odori Practice	
20:30 ~	Bath time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Washing ○ Star Gazing Experience
~	Villager Experience (Sleeping)	

Second day		
Time	Content	Reverse side
6:30 ~	Wake Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hachigo-giri (sea of clouds) experience ○ Washing ・ Bringing in
6:30 ~	Breakfast Making Experience	
7:30 ~	Breakfast and Conversation (Meeting)	
8:30 ~	Farming Experience *See notes	
10:00 ~	Tea time / Feedback (Opinion Exchange)	
10:30 ~	Awa Odori Practice	○ Prepare tea
11:00 ~	Lunch Making Experience	○ Farm tool maintenance
12:00 ~	Lunch and Conversation (Thoughts on the past few days)	
13:30 ~	Prepare to go home	
14:00 ~	Go to meeting place	
14:30 ~	Arriving and congregating at the meeting place	
14:40 ~	Leaving ceremony	
15:00 ~	Awa Odori Finale (Everyone Together)	
~	Depart	

*The activities and lengths of time may differ depending on the family you stay with

Lodger's Farming Experience: Notes

Month	Agricultural Experience Content		
	Agricultural Work (Harvesting, Planting, Maintenance, etc)	Other	Possible All Year
April	Harvesting strawberries, Sora beans, peas, green beans, butterburs, onions, etc. Digging up bamboo shoots. Picking wild vegetables	Noodle stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Awa Odori ・ Bamboo crafts (Chopsticks, bowls, Cups, etc) ・ Rope crafts ・ Kazura Crafts ・ Woodworking experience (Pencil stand) ・ Accessory making (Picture Frames, Hot pots, Tissue cases)
May	Harvesting peas, broad beans, shiitake mushrooms, potatoes, etc; Digging up bamboo shoots; picking wild vegetables; planting rice; sowing sunflower seeds; harvesting tomatoes; pillar construction; picking sprouts; pickling plums; plowing rice fields; digging up, washing and pickling shallots; picking tea and konjac potatoes; planting corn; working a corn field	Watching fireflies, fireworks, Playing in rivers (water drain), playing in valleys, Streaming noodles, pickling plum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Purse making ・ Mini bean-bag making ・ Origami (Chopstick holder) ・ Kimono wearing experience ・ Udon noodle making experience
June	Harvesting mountain garlic, snap peas, figs, etc, Onion harvesting and drying; tomato harvesting, planting, and sprouting; plum picking, potato digging; flower picking; bamboo shoot digging; rice planting; sweet summer orange picking; wild vegetables and herb picking; digging up and washing and pickling shallots.	Watching fireflies, fireworks, Playing in rivers (water drain), playing in valleys, Streaming noodles, pickling plum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Soba noodle making experience ・ Buckwheat flour making ・ Rice cooking ・ Stone-cooked fish and vegetables
July	Harvesting tomatoes, cucumbers, green peppers, eggplant, corn, pumpkins, watermelon, edamame, green beans, radish, peppers, bitter melons, okra, winter melons etc.; picking wild vegetables, sowing buckwheat and ginseng seeds; dogging up, washing and pickling shallots.	Fireworks, playing in rivers (water drain), playing in valleys, Streaming noodles, pickling plum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Local cuisine training ・ Making country dumpling
August	Shiso (perilla), okra, and wild ginger; Sowing seeds for potherb mustard, cabbage, carrots, onions, potatoes, turnips, daikon radishes, and buckwheat	Fireworks, playing in rivers (water drain), playing in valleys, streaming noodles, pickle making experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Firing up hearths ・ Splitting firewood ・ Goemon bath experience
September	Harvesting cucumbers, tomatoes, green peppers, eggplants, pumpkins, wild ginger, taro, ginger, lotus root, shiitake mushrooms, buckwheat, and persimmons; Sowing seeds for potherb mustard, spring chrysanthemum, Chinese cabbage, onions, and shallots; Picking chestnuts, digging up sweet potatoes, and harvesting rice	Baked sweet potato, autumnal leaf gathering, picking tree nuts, pickle making experiences; Dried persimmon and potato making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Mountain walk ・ Stary sky experience ・ Yamabiko ・ Sunrise viewing ・ Hachigo-giri (sea of clouds) experience ・ Shell blowing ・ Elementary school (ruins) tour
October	Harvesting pumpkins, radishes, turnips, taro, winter melons, ginkgo, wild ginger, buckwheat, and persimmons; Sowing seeds for peas, broad beans, chrysanthemum, spinach, and garlic; Picking chestnuts; Digging up sweet potato.	autumnal leaf gathering, picking tree nuts, pickle making experiences; Dried persimmon and potato making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ・ Bonfire experience ・ Bathing experience ・ Test of courage ・ Stonewall deaning ・ Community service work (at shrines, temples, community buildings)
November	Harvesting taro, Japanese spinach, spring chrysanthemum, buckwheat; Sowing seeds for asparagus, snap peas, broad beans, and onions; Digging up sweet potato.	autumnal leaf gathering, picking tree nuts, pickle making experiences; Dried persimmon and potato making	
December	Harvesting daikon radishes, potherb mustard, and Japanese spinach.	Plowing snow, snow hut experience, pickle making experience, making dried radish	
January	Harvesting green onion, brussel sprouts, and Chinese cabbage; Laying agricultural plastic film; Maintenance	Plowing snow, snow hut experience, pickle making experience, making dried radish	
February	Harvesting Japanese spinach and regular spinach; Laying agricultural plastic film; Maintenance	Plowing snow, snow hut experience, pickle making experience, making dried radish	
March	Harvesting cabbage, carrots and spinach; Planting seedlings for potatoes, spring onions, and asparagus.	Plowing snow, snow hut experience, pickle making experience	

*The activities may differ depending on the family you stay with.

Sora no Sato Group Cooking Meals



Nishi Awa Sora no Sato Country Cooking



- The meals consist primarily of soups, stews, dressed vegetables and pickles made from fresh seasonal vegetables.
- The meals are regional cuisine and country cooking that the locals eat every day.
- The food is locally produced for local consumption, and if the family you stay with have home-grown vegetables, you will start by harvesting those vegetables.
- You will cook together with the mother and father of the household where you stay, then gather around the table, talk and learn about the region.
- Everyone cleans up together

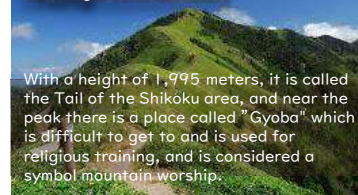


Dishes using seasonal vegetables



Blessing of the Mountains and the Rivers
Gaining Life and Living Life

Sacred Mountain Mt. Tsurugi



With a height of 1,995 meters, it is called the Tail of the Shikoku area, and near the peak there is a place called "Gyoba" which is difficult to get to and is used for religious training, and is considered a symbol mountain worship.

Nishi Awa is located in the middle of the Shikoku area, has direct connections to history, culture, exchange and faith focused on the mountains and the Yoshino River since olden times. It is an area that still has a food culture based on millet, buckwheat, and potatoes.

Yoshino River



The expansive flow creates fertile land for the lower region, with the plentiful water carrying nutrients, and has raised the historic culture of Nishi Awa.

Rice Dishes / Noodle Dishes						
	Barley Rice	Chestnut Rice	Vegetable Rice	Buckwheat dumplings	Grain Cake	Rice, beans and wild
Soup						
	Millet Rice	Soba Noodles	Toritsuke	Honda Somen Noodles	Indian Millet Rice	Boar Meat Hot Pot
Main Dish						
	Miso soup with seasonal vegetables	Dumpling soup	Buckwheat Soup	Buckwheat rice	Soba Subeshi	Yugo Somen Noodles
Side Dish						
	Fish and Vegetable in Vinegar	Mochi Corn	Hirarayaki	Stone Tofu	Dried Sweet Potato	Dried Persimmons
	Chrysanthemum turnip	Brailed vegetables	Dried sweet potato and stewed adzuki bean	Radish simmered in miso	Fried eggplant with sesame miso sauce	Seasoned pickled wild vegetables
	Pickled Radish	Wild Vegetable Tempura	Dressed fern	Dried daikon	Mountain garlic with wasabi and soy sauce	Butterbur in soy sauce
	Taro in miso	Hari Hari Pickles	Potatoes in miso	Dekomawashi	Knotweed in sesame	Sashimi konjac

○Characteristics of Food Culture

This is an area in which farming is difficult because it is not possible to farm rice on the steep hillsides of the mountains, and farming would affect the water quality of the Yoshino River, which is one of the few rivers that flow wildly on flat land in Japan.

For this reason, small-scale cultivation of many kinds of crops has been done for generations, such as buckwheat and other grains, native 'Mountain wild tea', and native vegetables.

Also, the temperature varies greatly and the cold winds of winter from which the mountains get their names are used to dry grains, vegetables, and fruits as a way of preserving them, with dried daikon radish, potatoes, chili peppers, persimmons and figs being used in a variety of dishes.



○Events and Local

Month	Event	Local Cuisine using Traditional Ingredients
January	New Years	Millet porridge, buckwheat porridge
February	Setsubun Holiday	Buckwheat noodles, black bean jelly in soy sauce
March	Doll festival, equinox week	Rolled sushi with seasonal vegetables, potato flour dumplings, rice dumplings
April	Beach festival, girls' festival, flower festival	Boiled fern and butterbur, wild vegetable tempura, mountain garlic and eggs
May	Boys' festival	Dried daikon radish soup, red rice, sushi rice
June	Crop planting	Boiled Goshu potatoes, dressed melon, butterbur in soy sauce
July	Summer Festival, Star Festival (Tanabata), Insect Prayer	Cucumber pickled in mustard, beans, Goshu potato in miso
August	Awa-odori Festival (Obon)	Yugo Somen noodles, dressed taro, Goshu potatoes baked in miso
September	Chestnut festival, equinox week	Bean cake, grain cake, chestnut red rice, potato
October	Autumn festival	Red rice, dressed taro stir fry, skewers, sweet potato tempura
November	Oinoko-san (Praying for a good harvest)	Soba noodles, Inoko sushi, potato dumplings, simmered taro and daikon radish
December	Winter solstice, New Year's Eve	Simmered pumpkin, yuzu miso, dekomawashi skewers, buckwheat rice, soba noodles

Exploring Hillside Farming Systems Recognized as World Agricultural Heritage sites for the future of Agriculture and Life in general

The wisdom of pioneers who turn farming in a harsh environment into a fulfilling lifestyle



In the mountains of Nishi Awa, there are not any terraced rice paddies, but rather a method of farming the steep hillsides has been used for generations. Soil erosion happens due to wind and rain. For this reason, bales of dried silver grass known as *Koeguro* are spread out over the ridges of the fields to reduce erosion. They stand on high ridges, and traditional tools such as a *Sarae* is used to protect the fertile soil. A *Koeguro*, a cone-shaped bundle of silver grass that is harvested in Autumn, is used to prevent soil erosion and fertilize the soil in the spring, and is a symbol of the steep hillside farming in Nishi Awa. This form of natural cycle-farming has no negative impact on the soil and has been handed down from generation to generation for over a thousand years.

Also, rice paddies cannot be made on steep hillsides, which means rice cultivation is not possible, so there are a number of small-scale farms that cultivate traditional vegetables, wild vegetables and grains such as buckwheat, foxtail millet, sorghum, and broomtail millet. The produce in this region includes native plants that have been carefully harvested and saved by ancestors of the region, and are considered a treasure-trove of precious genetic resources.

Traditional Village Cuisine



Iya Region Soba Noodles

Soba made in the Iya region doesn't use a thickening agent, so the noodles are shorter than regular Soba noodles. Iyadani Soba is fragrant and highly regarded.



Dekomawashi

Marinated hard tofu, also known as Stone Tofu, Goshu Potato and Konjac jelly are placed on a skewer that is set in place around a charcoal fire and cooked. They are slowly rotated around the heat source, and it is said that they look like the heads of traditional Awa dolls, which are a traditional art form in Tokushima, and is where the name 'Dekomawashi' comes from; 'Deko' meaning 'forehead' and 'Mawashi' meaning 'to turn'.

Rafting

Explore Natural Energy Resources through World-Class White-Water Rafting

Sharpen and excite your 5 senses with the waters of life in one of Japan's three major rivers: the Shikoku Saburo, Yoshino River!

Yoshino River offers a world class rafting course. More so than gaining the courage to take on the elements, you will develop teamwork by working together to move the raft, develop your ability to avoid things, and grow and develop as a person. We will be there to share in the excitement and put a smile on your face, as well as provide you time to explore your surroundings.

It's more than just a team-building exercise!



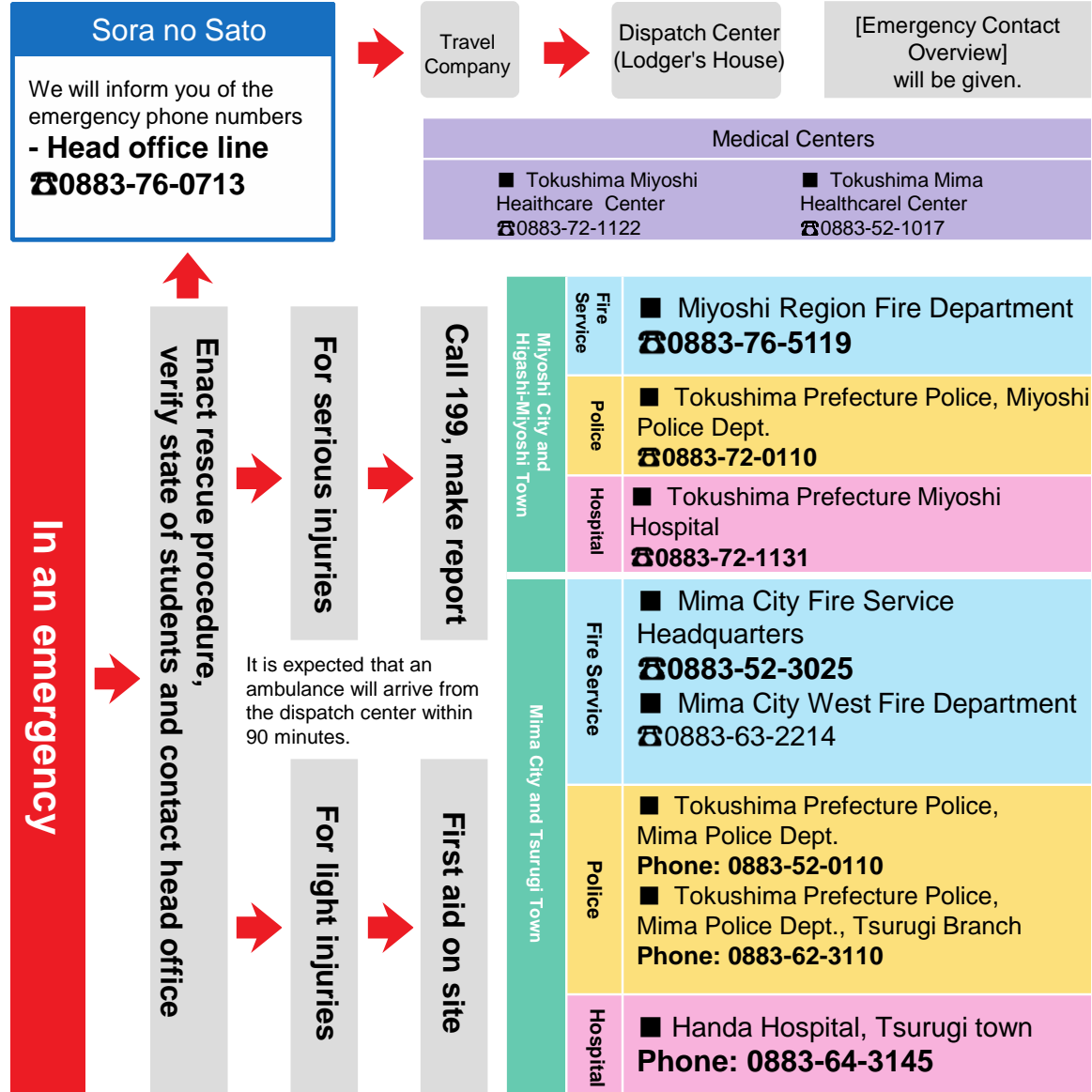
Japan's first World Championship was held here in October 2017.

Safety Measures - Hygiene - Emergency Contact Systems

- The agricultural village lifestyle experience involves experiencing village life as it is, and activities will be held regardless of the weather, as long as safety is ensured. Please bring as much wet-weather gear as you realistically can.
- Please let us know in advance about any dietary requirements you may have, such as food allergies, for when you dine during your stay (facilities, lunch experience, lodge experience).
- There are emergency contact systems and response manuals available, and we are very familiar with instructors, households and accommodation in the region. Also, we have made manuals for first aid and emergency response, as well as manuals for contacting and consulting with concerned parties, and these manuals have been distributed to all concerned parties.
- We have worked to establish safety policies for places where the activities take place, usually dangerous places and for when disasters strike.
- We have informed and trained the lodging households about hygiene for their dining, bathing, toilets and bedding.
- We have instructed the households to properly handle dangerous substances such as gas, gasoline and kerosene in order to prevent fires in the homes.
- All instructors and households that receive lodgers have undergone training for safety measures listed 1 to 6 above for experiences and lodging, and they are also re-trained at regular intervals.
- We have undertaken guidance and measures for safety as much as possible, but in the unlikely event that something should happen, accident insurance and liability insurance are added.

Facility Liability	Personal: 100 million yen (per incident) Property: 10 million yen per incident
Product Liability	Personal: 100 million yen per person (per incident) Property: 10 million yen per incident
Consignment Liability	Property: 30,000 yen per person (10,000 yen per incident)

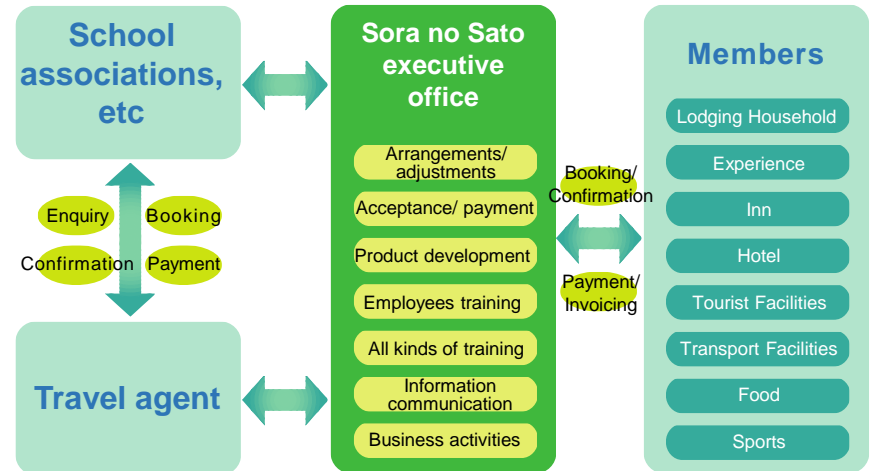
- If you ride in the personal vehicle of a host family, relevant automotive insurance will apply.
- The safety measures listed in 1 to 9 above correspond to the liability held by General Incorporated Association Sora no Sato



General Incorporated Association Sora no Sato Overview



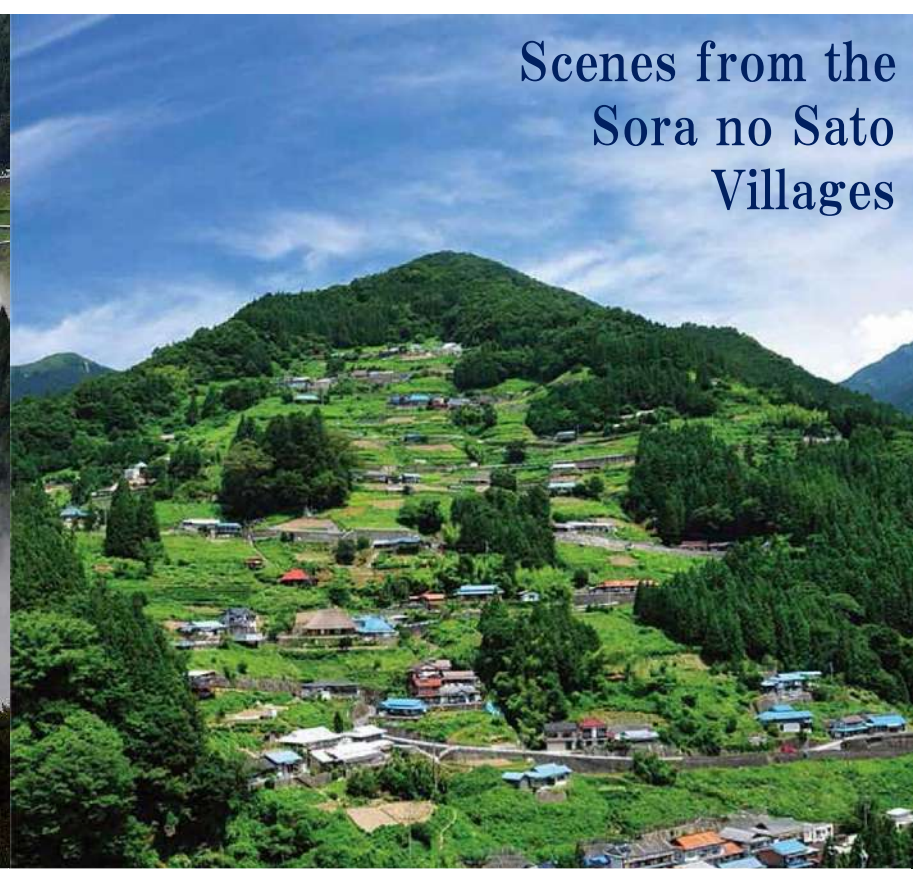
Name	General Incorporated Association Sora no Sato
Location	995-1 Shima, Ikeda Town, Miyoshi City, Tokushima Prefecture 778-0005
Director	Chairperson of the board: Keiji Matsuura
Executive office	Secretary General, Deputy Director General, Division Manager, Secretary (Sightseeing Region Development Manager)
Travel agent registration number	Tokushima Prefecture Registered Travel Industry No. 2-148
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attracting people for experience-based educational trips/Preparing and implementing systems to take for travelers Planning, development, sales, promotion and distribution of landing type travel products for regular customers Project planning and sales of specialty products Arranging travel based on the Travel Agency Act Promoting regional tourism Subcontracting management of public facilities Others



- 1995 Accepted into Kanto Agricultural High School (Formally Miyoshi Gun Yamashiro Town)
- 1998 Accepted into Kansai Junior High School Experience Program
- February, 2007 Established the Sora no Sato Monogatari Council
- October, 2008 Certified as a Sightseeing Area
- April, 2009 Higashimiyoshi Town added
- March, 2010 Mima City and Tsurugi Town added
- February, 2011 Established General Incorporated Association Sora no Sato (A platform for creating a tourist region)
- April, 2011 Started expanding the area to Nishi Awa (two cities and two towns)
- May, 2013 Newly Certified as a Sightseeing Area
- May, 2016 Registered as a Japanese DMO candidate corporation
- November, 2016 Recognized as a picturesque place for food and farming
- November, 2017 Japanese DMO registration (First)
- November, 2018 **Awarded with a Regional Development Award from the Ministry of Tourism**



The village of Kurisido as viewed from Ochiai



Scenes from the Sora no Sato Villages

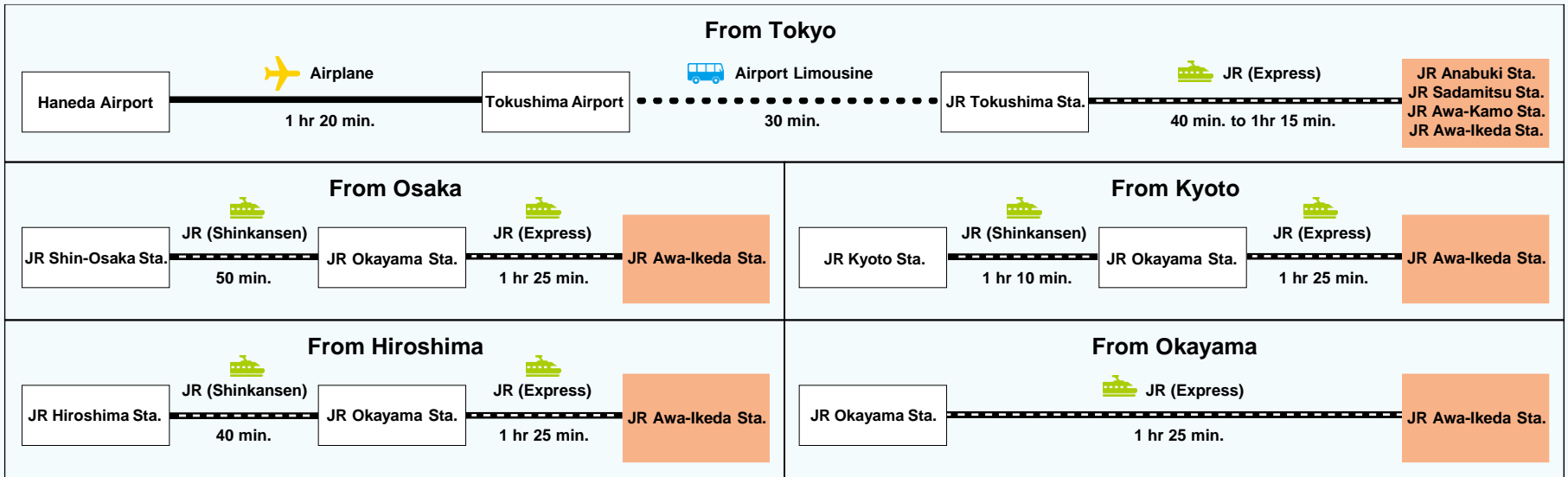
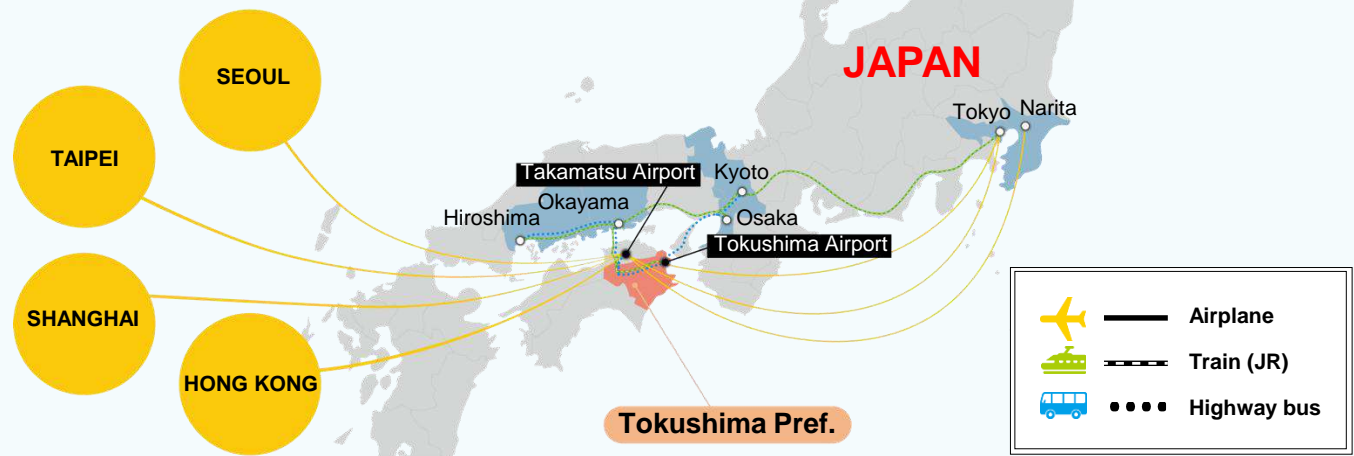
The village of Ochiai preserves important traditional buildings

World Agricultural Heritage Certification Steep Hillside Farming System (From the left: Koeguro, tea fields, a husband and wife in a buckwheat field, hillside farming in the village of Sarukai)



Access

How to get to Nishi-Awa from the main cities of Japan



A thousand years, a hidden hamlet

We always thought that the charm of mountain living would never be understood by outsiders. But in the 21st century, people have started to recognize the importance of stopping and looking back. Consequently, we really want to share the wisdom behind daily life in the mountains, living in harmony with nature for a thousand years.

