



“Secret Tour of Love!” – Exploring Inuyama Castle Town –

**“What’s the best trip for you?”
“What do you want to do during your trip?”**

We are a group of university and high school students. Some of us are from Aichi. Some of us are from other places in Japan. One of us is from China. However, we all have similar answers to these questions: eating delicious food, taking nice photos, seeing beautiful views, and or enjoying the traditional atmosphere of a nice location.

At first, we didn’t know that Aichi Prefecture has those kinds of things. We imagined places like Kyoto or Tokyo. However, we found a place which meets our expectations right here in Aichi. It is INUYAMA CASTLE TOWN.

An original castle from the 1500s, Inuyama Castle is registered as a national treasure. The castle itself is famous in Japan, and there is a lot of English information.

You can look at the city’s website here:

<http://ml.inuyama.gr.jp/en/must-see-sight-en/2042>

However, these days Inuyama is not only a historical place but also a modern sightseeing spot. Young Aichi residents including couples and young women now go there for sweets, for Instagram photo opportunities, and even for romantic moments. In fact, there is now a theme of love and hearts found all around the town.



We were surprised at all these awesome things, so we want to share the experiences with international travelers. Our article will focus on what you can do in the area around the castle. In Japanese, it’s called *joka-machi*, which means “the town below the castle.” The modern castle town area has many modern buildings, but it also has old-fashioned Japanese atmosphere, with traditional wooden houses and friendly locals. In this article, we’ll take you on the “secret tour of love” in Inuyama. Let’s go!



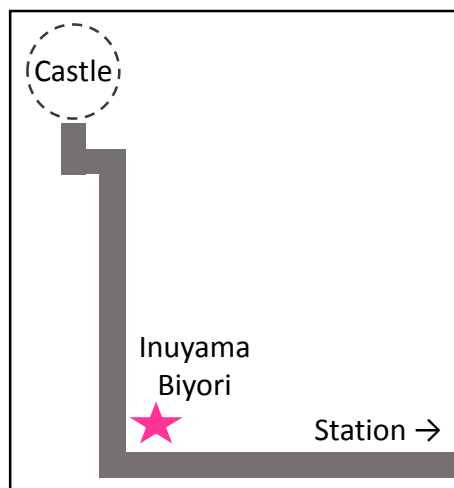
Inuyama-Biyori Kimono Rental: Experience Japan Beautifully!

Before walking around the castle town, why don't you rent a kimono? You can do it cheaply and conveniently in Inuyama! We used the kimono rental shop **Inuyama Biyori**.

Go straight to the west from the station and you'll find Inuyama Biyori on your right.

Address: Higashikoken 195,
Inuyama, Aichi 480-0081

<https://www.inuyamabiyori.com/english-top>

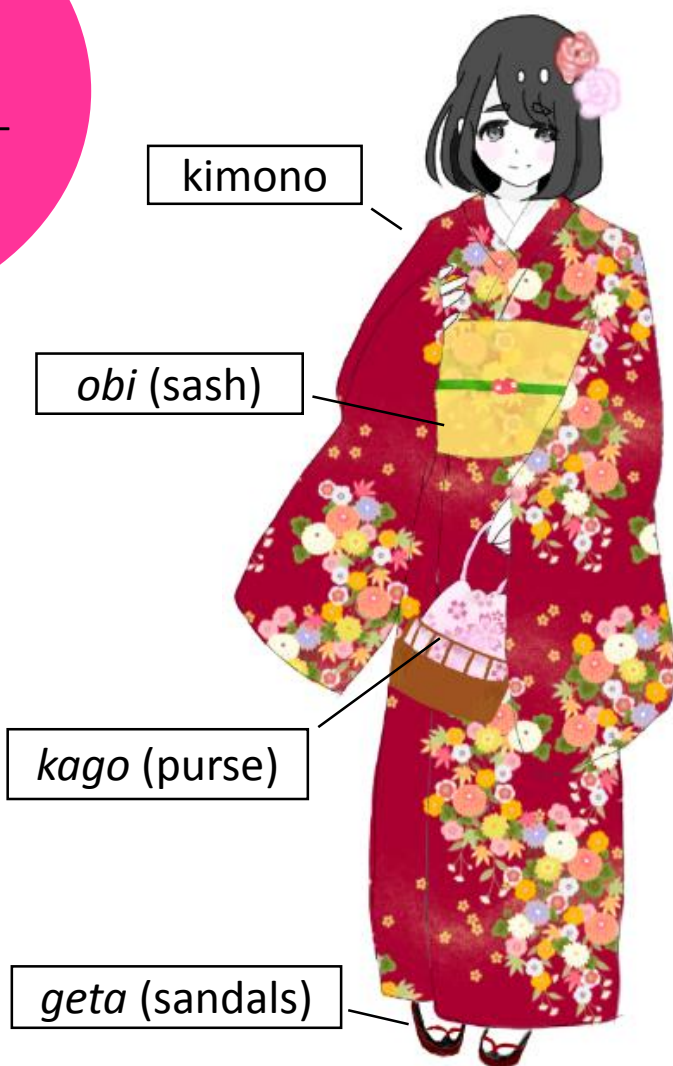


A Great Value!

You can rent the kimono and accessories – *geta* (sandals), *tabi* (two-toed socks), and *kago* (purse) – all for 3780yen.

The price includes the fitting.

*Dress up in
Traditional
Japanese
Beauty!*



You can choose your favorite kimono from a wide variety of colors and patterns. The clerk at the shop will help you choose some accessories which suit your kimono.

Points to Pay Attention to!

- ✓ Hairstyling for the kimono is optional, and costs extra money.
- ✓ You need to return the kimono by 6:00 pm, or a late fee will be charged.
- ✓ Also, don't be late for your appointment time or you will have to pay extra money.

One of the best ways to get into the traditional feeling is to rent a kimono. We rented a kimono at the shop Inuyama Biyori. This shop is ideally-located, because it's right at the entrance to the castle-town area. So, you can put on a kimono right away and start to enjoy the town. It's much cheaper here than in a famous place like Kyoto. The kimonos were very cute and stylish, and we felt like we were stepping back in time when we put them on!



Delicious food is an essential ingredient for an emotionally-satisfying trip. You can find fun and easy foods in the Showa Yokochō neighborhood on your left when you enter the town. This area is famous for casual shops and food stands selling fried food or *manju*; a kind of Japanese-style bun. The air is filled with fragrant smell of roasted soy sauce. If you buy some food, you can eat it right there on the spot. On our “secret tour of love,” all the foods we tried around the castle-town had heart shapes! We'll introduce our favorites.



～KURAYA～

Kuraya is in Showa Yokochō. It sells colorful *dango*: Japanese rice-dough dumplings. They have a unique texture with wonderful smoothness and elasticity. Kuraya makes different flavored dango for each season, including our favorite: the multicolored *koikomachi dango* on a stick. The friendly personality of the owner is charming as well.

Address: Higashikoken 60, Inuyama, Aichi 480-0085

Website (Japanese): <http://syowa-yokotyou.com/contents/kuraya.html>



～YOAKEYA～

YOAKEYA sells cream-cheesecake with matcha green tea powder on top. It smells like green tea. The sweet-sour cheese and bitter green tea flavors match well. You'll never be bored with the taste.

Address: Higashikoken 665, Inuyama, Aichi 480-0083

Website (Japanese): <http://yoakeya.com/>



～JUHYOYA～

JUHYOYA sells roasted rice balls, served with pickled Japanese radish on a skewer. If you can get a heart-shaped rice ball, your luck in love will double!

Address: Higashikoken 15, Inuyama, Aichi 480-0081

Website (Japanese):

<https://www.fusomoriguchi.co.jp/inuyamaan/>



Before you visit the castle, you should stop by Inuyama's most famous secret spot: the Sanko-Inari Shrine, which is located at the bottom of the Inuyama Castle Hill.



The shrine is notable for its beautiful red *torii* gate and its unique *ema*. *Ema* are wooden boards on which people write their wishes to ask the god of the shrine. Sanko-Inari shrine has cute pink *ema* in the shape of hearts.



You can also get a paper fortune called *omikuji*. The fortunes here are decorated with lovely pictures of dolls. In addition, sometimes you can see the fallen leaves gathered into the shape of a heart.

Because of this atmosphere, many people visit this shrine with wishes for romance. For example, young women go to pray that they will find the love of their life, and couples also go there for luck in their relationships. However, many people these days just go to take nice photos of the romantic scenery, often posting them on Instagram.

Also at Sanko Inari Shrine is a smaller shrine called Zeniarai Shrine. This shrine has a special pool of water, and a legend handed down by word of mouth. The legend says that if you wash your money in the pool's water, several times that amount will come back to you in time. People even wash their paper money there!



How to Get to Inuyama

Nagoya is on the way from Tokyo to Kyoto, so many international travelers will pass through. Inuyama is great because it's located just one short train-ride away from Nagoya. It's an easy and fulfilling day trip for your travels. Here's how to get there...

Take the Meitetsu Train Line. From Meitetsu Nagoya Station, get on the Inuyama Line to Inuyama Station.

(Be careful! The JR, Meitetsu and Kintetsu Railways and the city subway all have their respective "Nagoya Stations." If you arrive to Nagoya from a different line, you have to transfer to the Meitetsu line. In addition, various lines leave from the same platform. Be sure to check your direction of travel at the station entrance, and your line and destination when you get to the platform.)

The train fare from Meitetsu Nagoya station to Inuyama Station is a normal fare of 550 yen. There are also limited express trains which get there quickly. However, on these trains a separate limited express charge of 360 yen will be added, totaling 910 yen.

Food, photos, views, and atmosphere... Inuyama met our all expectations. We didn't know about it before, but we had great time there. International travelers can also find the picture-perfect Japanese experience in this small town. Now it's your turn! Please visit Inuyama and check out its charm with your own eyes. Don't miss it!! We hope to see the lovely pictures of your Inuyama trip on Instagram!