

## Discover Your Favorite Giant Trees!

# Sado Island, Niigata

Encounter giant trees  
on an island where crested  
ibises soar



Sado Island, covering a total area of 855 km<sup>2</sup> and boasting a 280km coastline, is the largest island in the Sea of Japan. Influenced by the Tsushima Warm Current, the island enjoys a cool summer and warm winter, offering a rich and beautiful natural environment that varies with the seasons.

In the past, Sado had forests of giant Tabunoki and Japanese cedar trees in various places, which were used for constructing fishing boats and traditional Japanese ships. Many of these trees were cut down for use in refining at the Sado mines and for charcoal for housing. However, a forest of giant natural cedar trees still remains on the northwest side of the ridgeline in the northeastern part of the Osado Mountains. In July 2024, the Sado Island Gold Mines site was inscribed on the World Heritage List, attracting worldwide attention.

This course begins at the Osado Ishina Natural Forest, home to these natural cedars, and takes visitors on a journey through giant trees that evoke the sense of Sado's long history.



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### Access

Spot 1. To Osado Ishina Natural Cedar Forest  
By rental car or taxi: About 1 hour from Ryotsu Port

## 1 Unique Japanese cedar trees at 900m elevation Osado Ishina Natural Cedar Forest

This walking trail offers visitors the chance to immerse themselves in a natural cedar forest at an elevation of around 900 meters. The trailhead is accessible by car, making it convenient for beginners to try trekking. The highlight of the trail, which can be completed in about one hour, is the presence of giant, oddly shaped natural cedar trees. The region's heavy snowfall and strong winds prevent the cedars from growing straight, resulting in many trees with distinctive forms.



Trunk girth : Zogesugi (ivory cedar) 960 cm  
Shiten-nousugi (four guardians cedar) 1,260 cm  
Daikokusugi (Daikoku cedar) 350 cm  
Height : Zogesugi 18 m, Shiten-nousugi 21 m  
Daikokusugi 19 m  
Estimated age : Hundreds of years old  
Location : Ishina Sado City, Niigata

\*Please note that the site is located at a high altitude where there is no reception.

## 4 The tranquil and mystical atmosphere of the temple is also a highlight Ushio Shrine's cedar tree for safe delivery

The huge Japanese cedar tree standing on the east side of the approach in front of the worship hall is known as the "safe delivery cedar tree." It is estimated around 1,000 years old and has long been revered for bringing good fortune in childbirth and fertility. To the left of the main hall, a magnificent Noh stage can be found, which hosts Noh performances during the annual Yoimiya (festival vigil eve) on June 12.



Trunk girth : 670 cm  
Height : 30 m  
Estimated age : 1,000 years old  
Protected designation : Natural Monuments of Sado City  
Location : Ushino Shrine, 2529 Niibokatagami,  
Sado City, Niigata

## 2 One of the three most famous mulberry trees in Japan Giant Aino Mulberry in Hayoshi

The giant Aino mulberry tree, recognized as one of the three most renowned mulberry trees in Japan, is worth visiting on the island. Sado was once prospered through sericulture, and the leaves of the Aino mulberry are the food for silkworms. The tree was once characterized by four trunks sprouting from its base. Unfortunately, one was damaged by heavy snowfall in 1944, and another by a typhoon in 1961. Despite these events, the tree remains impressively large and full of life.

Though the tree is located on private property, it is managed by the Sado City government. A pathway has been provided for visitors to access the tree from the road, allowing for a closer look at this notable tree.



Trunk girth : 270 cm      Height : 9 m  
Estimated age : 1,300 years old  
Protected designation : National Natural Monument  
Location : 116 Hayoshi, Sado City, Niigata

## 5 The weeping condition as the name implies Weeping cedar at Bosatsu Temple

Three majestic cedar trees tower in front of the gate of Bosatsu Temple, their grandeur so expansive that they resemble a small forest. These trees are robust and healthy, with high branches and leaves that cascade down to the ground, creating the impression of a weeping cedar, true to their name.

These cedars have been long venerated as emblems of local faith, and numerous legends warn that harm to their branches or foliage may bring about illness or fire.



Trunk girth : 500 cm, 410 cm, 500 cm  
from left to right  
Height : 33 m, 36 m, 35 m (same as above)  
Estimated age : 1,000 years old  
Protected designation : Natural Monument of Sado City  
Location : 383 Niibotosawa, Sado City, Niigata

## 3 Huge pine tree that overwhelms visitors as they approach it Murasame no Matsu

This giant Japanese black pine tree, with its two large trunks and expansive branches, stands on the site of the former Sado Coast Guard Station. It served as a navigational landmark for ships at sea and has been immortalized in the local Ryotsu Jinku, a traditional bon dance song of Sado City. The tree was named "Murasame" by Momiji Ozaki, a writer from the Meiji period. This tree can be seen from the car window, but it is worth approaching and appreciating it up close.



Trunk girth : 600 cm  
Height : 6 m  
Estimated age : 300 years old  
Protected designation : Natural Monument of Niigata  
Location : 1 Ryotsuebisu, Sado City, Niigata

### Survey on Giant Trees

The Ministry of the Environment has been conducting Survey on Giant Trees and Forests since 1988 as a part of the baseline survey for conservation of natural environment, targeting trees of 130 cm above ground and with trunk girth of 300 cm or more. For information on giant trees and forests, please visit the website Database of the Giant Trees and Forests. (Japanese text only)



### National Association of the Forest and Big Tree

If you are interested in giant trees and forests, check out the website National Association of the Forests and Big Trees! The association conducts the activities related to giant trees and forests, such as observing giant trees and forests, publishing the newsletter Big Trees and Forests, and organizing National Forum for talking about Giant Trees, etc. (Japanese text only)



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Required time: About half a day by car  
(Approximately 35 km)

## Ryotsu Port

↓ 1-hour drive (23 km)

### 1 Osado Ishina Natural Cedar Forest

↓ 1-hour drive (19 km)

### 2 Giant Aino Mulberry in Hayoshi

↓ 10-minutes drive (4 km)

### 3 Murasame no Matsu

↓ 12-minutes drive (6 km)

### 4 Ushio Shrine's cedar tree for safe delivery

↓ 10-minutes drive (5 km)

### 5 Weeping cedar at Bosatsu Temple

Unique Japanese cedar trees at 900 m elevation

## Osado Ishina Natural Cedar Forest

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**Osado Ishina Natural Cedar Forest's Pathway**

Enlarged view 1

Approximately 800 m

60-minutes

Pathway entrance

Donden Traverse

Shiten-nousugi (four guardians cedar)

Daikokusugi (daikoku cedar)

Zogesugi (ivory cedar)

Pathway entrance

Donden Traverse entrance

Kazoku sugi (family cedar)

Hagoromo sugi (a robe of feathers)

To parking area

※ Approximately 500 m, 20-minutes from pathway entrance to parking area

4 The tranquil and mystical atmosphere of the temple is also a highlight

## Ushio Shrine's cedar tree for safe delivery

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