Both cities are located in the center of Japan and within easy access of Tokyo and Osaka.

Getting to Kanazawa

Kanazawa

Getting to Nagano

Nagano

KANAZAWA×NAGANO

The two cities that are linked by history and a bullet train.
Go on a 60-minute journey by bullet train between the two cities with different attractions.

During the Edo period (1603 - 1868), when samurais ruled Japan, daimyos (feudal lords) in different provinces of Japan made an annual visit to Edo (present day Tokyo). The Kaga domain with its capital, Kanazawa, would take the route to Edo through present day Toyama, Joetsu, and Nagao. A minimum of 2,000 and a maximum of 4,000 people in a procession travelled 480 km between Kanazawa and Edo for around two weeks. Its halfway point is Zenkoji Temple in Nagano, and the neighborhood was thriving both as a temple and post-station town.

Opened in 2015, the Hokuriku Shinkansen largely runs along the route taken by the daimyo procession of the Kaga domain. It takes 2 hours and 28 minutes for the fastest “Kagayaki” train to travel the distance, for which people would walk for two weeks. Kanazawa can now be reached in just one hour from Nagano.

Kanazawa and Nagano – the two cities that were connected by historic highways – are now linked by a new Shinkansen route, and are expanding the enjoyment of sightseeing.

"Shojin Ryori," made mostly with cereals and seasonal vegetables, is traditional Buddhist cuisine. The simple dishes bring out the best of the ingredients. They are offered at zōri and watered on a specialty of the Zenkoji temple town.

In Japan, many castle towns were built throughout the country from the late 16th to the early 17th centuries. A characteristic of Japanese castle towns is a systematic arrangement of samurai houses, temple districts, watercourses, and green spaces surrounding the daimyo’s castle residence. Having been formed with two rivers as natural outer moats, Kanazawa prospered for 290 years under the Maeda family of the Kaga domain as one of Japan’s main castle towns. During the Edo period, the extent of the land owned by a domain throughout the country was indicated by the “Kokudaka.” This was a measure of the productivity of the land as expressed by its rice yield. The Kaga domain had a kokudaka of one million, which was the second highest in Japan after that of the Tokugawa shogunate of Edo. It is said that at that time, the population of the Kaga domain ranked fourth, following Edo (Tokyo), Osaka, and Kyoto.

With a kokudaka of one million, the Maeda family used their strong financial power for civilian policy, and established the foundation of the present Kanazawa, where arts and crafts thrive. Kanazawa escaped any damage caused by war or major disasters, and retains a number of relics as well as the atmosphere and culture of the castle town.
KANAZAWA

The city with samurai spirit and castle town’s character

Kanazawa, which flourished as a castle town under the Kaga domain, still retains the historic townscape and landscape that was systematically designed during the feudal period. A culture of accomplishments, such as tea ceremonies, and a number of sophisticated traditional crafts are still alive in people’s everyday lives. Kanazawa’s historic heritages are gathered compactly in the city center, where sightseeing may be enjoyed on foot from Kanazawa Station. The city’s new attractions include the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, and the redeveloped Kanazawa station. With a combination of new and old cultures, Kanazawa has become a popular tourist destination in the country.

The proudly standing gate is modelled on a Nohgaku drum.

Kanazawa has gained popularity in Kanazawa since the Edo period, and there are cultural facilities and teahouses withичу on Nohgaku.

Kanazawa Station

Kanazawa Station

21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa

2 | Kanazawa Castle/Ishikawamon Gate

These buildings have survived from the Edo period and are designated as Important Cultural Properties.

3 | Sushi

In Kanazawa, facing the Sea of Japan, you can enjoy delicious sushi.

4 | Kanazawa Haikumangoku Festival

This poetry festival features a daimyo procession led by Masanobu Tsukasa, the Edo lord of the Kaga domain.

5 | D.T. Suzuki Museum

This museum houses a collection of contemporary art, the new top attraction in the art and craft city, Kanazawa, attracting attention from both home and abroad.

6 | Nohgaku

Nohgaku has gained popularity in Kanazawa since the Edo period, and there are cultural facilities and teahouses withICHU on Nohgaku.

7 | Kanazawa Station

The proudly standing gate is modelled on a Nohgaku drum.

8 | Kenrokuen Garden

Developed by successive lords of the Kaga domain over a long period of time. The garden features beautiful scenery every season.

9 | Asanogawa River

The river flowing against the backdrop of the old cityscape provides a great photo spot.

10 | Tea Ceremony

Tea ceremonies held in Kanazawa show the interaction between the Maeda family and renowned tea experts. There are many facilities to enjoy tea ceremony experiences.

11 | Chaya District

Kanazawa has three hospitable Chaya (teahouse) districts, where geigi (geisha) perform dance and music in a teahouse drawing room.

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13 | Ohmicho Market

Boasting about 180 vendors selling a wide variety of products including fresh seafood and local vegetables, this “Kanazawa’s kitchen” has been supporting the gastronomic culture of the city for nearly 300 years.

14 | Kaga Firefighters Ladder Acrobatics

Having inherited the tradition from firefighters of the Kaga domain, the group demonstrates exquisite ladder climbing skills.

15 | Kaga Yuzen Dyeing

This is one of Kanazawa’s traditional arts—a kimono dyed with patterns featuring the beauties of nature.

16 | Wagashi

Kanazawa, with its prevalent tea ceremony culture, is also one of Japan’s top places for confectionery.
Standing on the hill about 2 km away from Nagano station, Zenkoji Temple, a symbol of Nagano, attracts a large number of tourists. In its long history, the temple town was formed and has been welcoming pilgrims around Zenkoji Temple, which has received many people’s prayers, regardless of religious sect. Townscapes with a traditional atmosphere still remain, and you can enjoy a stroll while popping into stores, such as long-established souvenir shops. There is easy access by bus from Nagano station to different areas, including “Togakushi,” known as the village of myth and legend, and castle town “Matsushiro,” which retains streetscapes with a traditional atmosphere.