



THE KING OF TOYAMA BAY



*Fisherman processing yellowtail
Photo by Chunichi*

LOCAL

Yellowtail is a fish that is famous in Toyama. In Toyama, yellowtail is called the king of Toyama Bay. Although the period for catching yellowtail is short, many tourists come to Toyama to eat it. Yellowtail usually come from Hokkaido. So, why is it possible to catch so many yellowtail in Toyama?

Though yellowtail accumulate nutrients in Hokkaido, they also migrate south. Normally, yellowtail would go to the Kyushu region. However, because of the presence of the Noto Peninsula, water flows to Toyama as if by magic. Therefore, in Toyama, people can eat delicious yellowtail. The environment of Toyama Bay is also an excellent habitat for

yellowtail. Toyama Bay is very deep with a depth of 1300 meters. Also, the water temperature is stable at around 20 degrees. This environment is suitable for the habitat of yellowtail. Therefore, yellowtail live in Toyama Bay and have been enjoyed by residents and visitors for generations.

By D. T.



*The Noto Peninsula (above)
Map by Inside Japan Tours*

*Tonami hot air balloons (right)
Photo by Tonami Tourist Board*

UPCOMING TONAMI FESTIVAL

EVENTS

There are two types of balloons. There are hot air balloons and gas balloons. A hot air balloon sends hot air into a bag and flies with its buoyancy. In Toyama Prefecture, balloons are raised once a year in Tonami City. At this festival about

40 balloons will decorate the sky above the tulips and you can experience riding in a hot air balloon. You can enjoy it, so please go there in April.

By K. M.



NOTO EARTHQUAKE IMPACT AND RECONSTRUCTION

LOCAL NEWS

The Noto Peninsula earthquake occurred on January 1, 2024. It caused a lot of damage in Hokuriku and made people in the region sad and scared. The city with the most damage was Noto City. A maximum seismic intensity of 7 was observed there. In Toyama Prefecture, seven cities and villages, including Toyama, Takaoka, and Imizu, observed a seismic intensity of more than five. It caused the most damage in the cities of Himi and Kurobe.

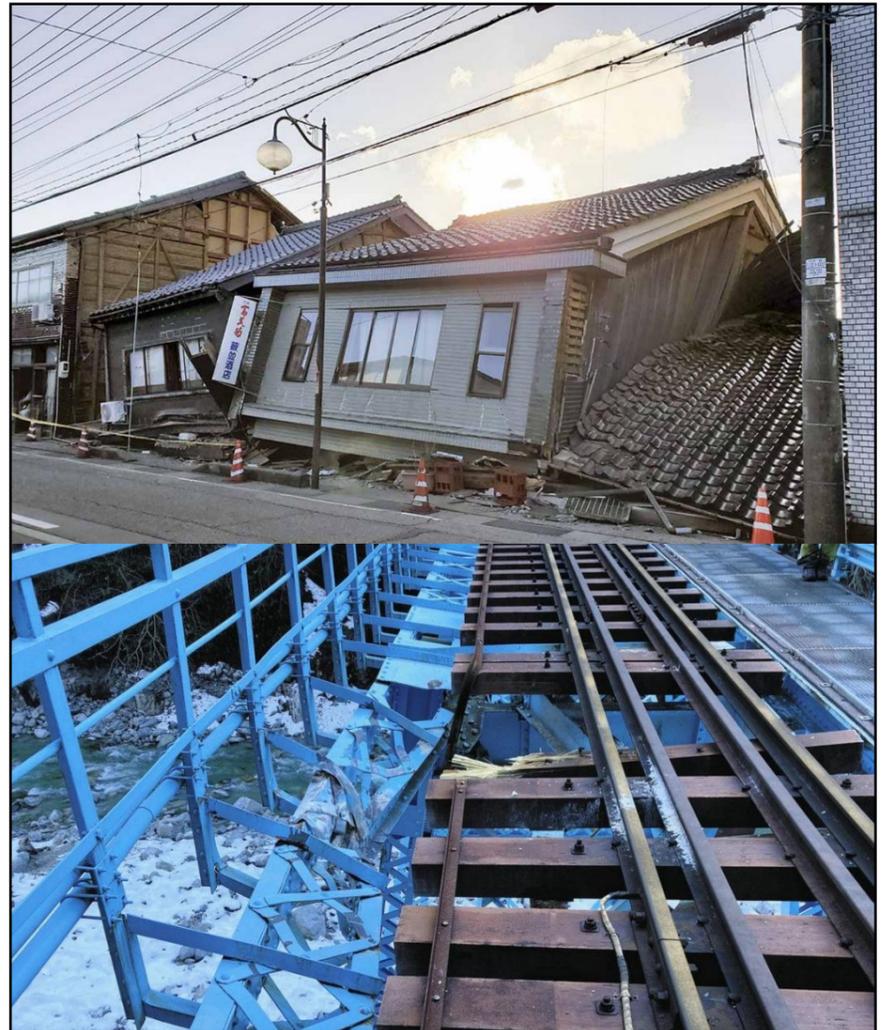
Though the earthquake was in Ishikawa Prefecture, it also caused great damage to the neighboring Toyama Prefecture. Liquefaction occurred in the area where the Shindo Neighborhood Association in Sakaemachi, Himi City is located.

In this coastal area, liquefaction occurred mainly near the prefectural road that runs along the coast. A few buildings collapsed and cracks appeared in many places. Red signs indicating "dangerous to enter" were posted on many houses after an emergency assessment.

202 houses were destroyed, 424 were partially destroyed, and 4,693 were partially damaged, for a total of 5,319 houses damaged. Miyata Elementary School, in the southern part of Himi City, Toyama Prefecture, was damaged greatly by the earthquake. There was a big crack in the field. Also, asphalt was damaged. Moreover, the water line was broken.

A year later, recovery activities are continuing. A ruined building has already been demolished. Disaster-stricken houses along the coast were also demolished, there are many vacant lots. There are still 400 requests for demolition. There are many people currently living out of town. It is a challenge for citizens to maintain the community.

The Kanetsuri Bridge over the Kurobe Gorge, where the *tokko* train line goes, was damaged by falling rocks in the earthquake. As a result, the opening of the line between Kanetsuri and Nekomata to the public was postponed for approximately three months from the originally scheduled June 30th to around October 1st of last year. The entire line through



Keyakidaira Station will open fall of 2026.

Earthquake damage in Himi
Photo by 47News

By Y. K.

Earthquake damage in Kurobe
Photo by Kurobe Gorge Railway

A NEW SOCCER POWER

LOCAL SPORTS

Toyama Daiichi's boys' soccer team has a long history of winning prefectural championships. But, this year there is a new champion in Toyama. It's the Toyama Daiichi girls' soccer team. They won the Shinzin Taikai on November 10th, defeating Toyama University of International Studies High School by a score of 6-0.

K. O., a member of the team, gave

some comments about it. They had never won the championship before so it was a hard game. There are twelve members and two managers so it's not a large team, she said, "we felt a lot of pressure because there were few players in our team and we didn't rotate players but we were very happy to win the game." It was an amazing match and the school community is proud of their achievement.



In addition, the game ended in a penalty shootout. It was the first time for her so she was very nervous. However, according to her, they could get a great result because of everyone's support.

They did some training in order to win the game, for example, running and practice matches. Before she plays soccer, she always warms up and forms a circle with her teammates. Asked the reason for their success, she said, "we often get a lot of cheering and support from many people and also we practice soccer with adults on Saturday and Sunday." In this way, they could defeat their opponents.

As a team they have a goal of participating in a national tournament. They will continue to practice soccer and help each other so their dream can come true.

By C. U.

Tomiiichi girls' soccer team
Photo by K. O.

A PLACE TO VISIT

GLOBAL NEWS

The New York Times announced 52 places to go in 2025 and Toyama City and Osaka City were selected to represent Japan. Many people visit the recommended places. Residents of Toyama City are happy that Toyama was selected and think that it will be a good chance to show their hometown to foreigners. Local high school students were excited but surprised that it was chosen over a lot of famous and popular tourist attractions. Y. K. was happy that his favorite restaurant was actually introduced in the article. C. U. shares her classmate's excitement, but thinks that residents "must create good environments for visitors to enjoy and follow the rules." Overall, they agreed that this is a good opportunity for people to experience the city they are proud of.

By M. H.

SIGHTS AROUND THE PREFECTURE

SOUVENIR SPOTLIGHT

FOOD

There is a culture of sharing something with your neighbors for milestones in Toyama. People often gift traditional fish cakes called *kamaboko*. *Kamaboko* in Toyama stand out for their various colors and shapes. As there are many kinds of fresh fish in Toyama Bay, people have been making *kamaboko* for generations. There are nineteen *kamaboko* manufacturers in Toyama who work to improve their techniques and preserve local history.



Fish-shaped kamaboko
Photo by Amazon

Masunosushi, a type of trout sushi, is one of the most popular souvenirs in Toyama because it keeps fresh for a long time so visitors can take it home. *Masunosushi* has been eaten since about five hundred years ago and it has been sold as *ekiben* since around a hundred fifty years ago. Now, each *masunosushi* manufacturer has a different way to make it and different tastes. For example, people change the amount of salt that they use as flavoring and can decide the size of the *masunosushi*. To this day, people continue to eat it and buy it as a souvenir.



Kankontan at Toyama Station
Photo by C. U.

Kankontan is a traditional sweet from Toyama with a name that comes from a historical medicine that was produced in Toyama. The texture is soft and moist and the cake is filled with custard. In addition to the original flavor, there are many kinds of special flavors, including strawberry, pistachio, black sesame and yuzu. *Kankontan* has won some prizes, and people give it as a thank you gift to friends and family.

By C. U.

TRAVEL

Tateyama is one of the most famous spots in Toyama, with something to offer in every season. In spring, you can walk through the Snow Corridor on the Tateyama-Kurobe Alpine Route, where snow walls as tall as 20 meters surround the path. In summer, the area is filled with colorful flowers, letting you enjoy the beauty of nature. In autumn, the mountains turn bright red and orange with the autumn leaves.



Tateyama in autumn
Photo by K. M.

Gokayama is best known for its *gassho-zukuri* houses with steep, thatched roofs designed to handle heavy snow. One of the highlights is the light-up events, held only about 20 times a year, so be sure to check the schedule. During the light-up, the village is beautifully illuminated. There are also campgrounds nearby, so you can stay overnight and enjoy the quiet surroundings. In the area you can try local dishes like soba and tofu, which are made with traditional techniques.

The Takaoka Great Buddha is one of Japan's Three Great Buddhas. It is 16 meters tall and very big. It was made with traditional skills and shows the history and culture of the area. You can also try *daibutsu* croquettes near the statue. They are a famous and tasty local snack. The Buddha is easy to visit because the location is convenient. Many people come to see it.

By K. M.



Snow corridor
Photo by K. M.

DISCOVERING TOYAMA'S GLASS

CULTURE

The glass industry has a long history in Toyama. Toyama is well known for medicine making and a lot of glass was made for medicine bottles. City officials thought that glass could have a charming appeal. So, Toyama City has started a campaign to enliven the city by using glass.

If you are interested in glass, here is our recommended itinerary.

Vase inspired by medicine bottle
Photo by Toyama Glass Studio



First, you should visit Kirari. Toyama Kirari is a library and museum of glass. Toyama Kirari is the most famous building for glass. It was designed by Kengo Kuma. He is one of the most famous architects in the world. He is known for designing the Japanese National Stadium.

The second spot we recommend is Toyama Glass Studio which is the location of a glass maker where a lot of glass items are made and

Kirari, the Toyama Glass Museum and city library
Photo by Visit Toyama



you can experience glass making. Moreover, there is a cafe, gallery, and shop. So, you can enjoy glass in a variety of ways.

The last place you should visit is Amano Lacquerware Co., Ltd. which is famous for Laden glass. Laden glass is decorated with shells. So, it looks luxurious.

By K. S.

KAMIICHI TOWN

On November 10th, 2024, “Tsurugi Festival in Kamiichi 2024” was held. This festival was held every February as the “Tsurugidake Yuki no Festival” until the COVID-19 pandemic. “Tsurugi Festival in Kamiichi” was held for the first time in 2023. This festival is also known as *kumanabe matsuri*. *Kumanabe* is a bear meat stew which is sold at the event every year. Some people come to the event to eat it. As the name of the event suggests, you can see Mt. Tsurugi from the site. Moreover, the weather was sunny, the visitors could see a beautiful view and enjoyed the event.

The event venue was divided into three sections: *Shoku no Hiroba*, *Minna no Hiroba*, and the Event Stage. At the same time, “E-cation in Kamiichi” was held there. It was an E-sports event and there were competitions for Street Fighter and *Taiko no Tatsujin*.

EATING BEAR STEW IN KAMIICHI



Tsurugi festival entrance
Photo by S. S.

Shoku no Hiroba was an area with over twenty shops and some food trucks. All of the shops were run by the local community or local restaurants. A big highlight of this area was the “KAMInabe,” a soup with mountain yam and beef that is made in Kamiichi. Advance

Bear stew
Photo by S. S.

tickets for “KAMInabe” were sold out before the event. There was *kumanabe*, *yakiniku* bento with Japanese black beef from Kamiichi, and many more.

Emergency vehicles, a fire engine, a patrol car and some self-defense

force vehicles were displayed at *Minna no Hiroba*. Visitors could ride them. For children, the local construction trade associations held a ball scooping game with a mini backhoe. The game was so popular that it attracted a long line of children waiting to play

The local dance school and brass band performed at the Event Stage. People enjoyed their performances while they ate the food. Atsushi Asaoka who is mayor of Kujukuri Town which is a sister town of Kamiichi came to this festival. He held a rock paper scissors tournament for clams, a famous agricultural product of Kujukuri Town. Kamiichi Town and Kujukuri Town became sister cities because of their “sea and mountain” relationship. The two cities have exchanged gifts, like clams from the sea and bear meat from the mountains.

By S. S.

SABO SAVE LIVES

TATEYAMA TOWN

Japan has a lot of disasters such as debris flows, slope failures, and landslides caused by heavy rain or earthquakes. They destroy many people’s lives. The technology for preventing and mitigating these landslide disasters is called erosion control or *sabo*. In recent years, many Japanese *sabo* technologies have been seen in foreign countries. Tateyama Town in Toyama Prefecture is famous for *sabo*.

Sabo have two functions. First, they prevent riverbeds from being eroded and slow the flow of water. Second, they stop debris flow. These functions save many lives.

Tateyama Caldera is a huge depression stretching 6.5 km east

to west and 4.5 km north to south, with an elevation difference of 500 to 1,700 meters. It is an eroded caldera that formed when a valley cut into the Tateyama volcano expanded due to intense erosion. The Tateyama Caldera has caused mudslides many times in the past. So, people created Shiraiwa Sabo and Hongu Sabo, these *sabo* are the biggest in Japan.

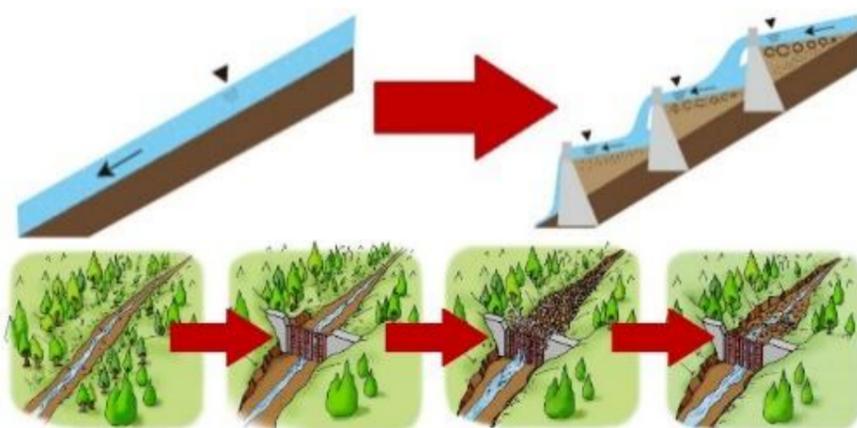
Tateyama Caldera Sabo Museum is a museum about the Tateyama Caldera and *sabo* in Tateyama Town. People can do a lot of things there. For example, they can learn about the history of *sabo* and Tateyama Caldera. Also, they can tour the Tateyama Caldera and its *sabo* from July to October.

By T. M.

Sabo slow water (above)

Sabo stop debris flow (below)

Diagrams from Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism Hokuriku Regional Development



A CONNECTED CITY

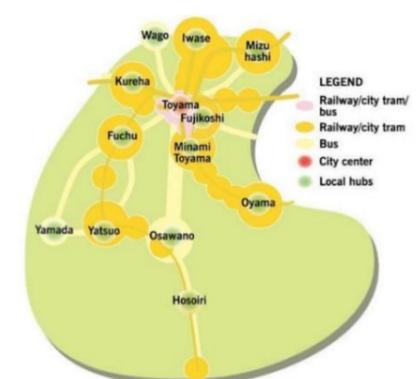
TOYAMA CITY

A compact city is a city where houses are near various facilities. Compact cities have good effects, people can live comfortable and healthy lives and the city’s finances and environment can grow sustainably. However, residents should be careful not to rely too much on new facilities; their capacities are limited.

Toyama Prefecture is known for its compact city success. Toyama’s compact city has a concept. It is “urban structure of *dango* and *kushi*.” *Kushi* means quality public transportation. *Dango* means walking areas connected by the *kushi*. To realize these goals there are three pillars. First is helping transportation improve. Second is promoting

migration to areas along public transportation lines. Third is activating central city areas. Visitors can experience a compact city in Toyama.

Transit connections in Toyama
Diagram from the World Bank



By M. A.

The Tomiichi Telegraph

Published by a group of ten students from Toyama Daiichi High School, a private high school in Toyama City, in cooperation with the not-for-profit Global Education Information Center (GEIC).

Publisher: Toyama Daiichi High School

Project Supervisors: A. K., C. C., and J. B.

Chief Editors: C. U., Y. K.

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