

Japan Pulse April 2026

## Kyushu Special Edition



### Exploring Aso Kuju National Park by Road Bike



For those who want to experience real cycling in the real wilderness, the Aso Kuju Cycle Tour offers the perfect opportunity for both aspiring and experienced cyclists, transforming sports cycling from a challenge into an unforgettable adventure. Aso, a longtime favourite of hill climbers, features the scenic Satoyama plains with its rice paddies and hot spring resorts with steam rising. With a nimble sports bike as your partner, you can enjoy the charms of Aso Kuju National Park on this tour. The Aso Mountain Course is a 15-km hill-climb course with an elevation difference of more than 600 metres. The Daikanbou Circuit Course is a 40-km course that starts from the inside of



the Aso Caldera, ascends to the outer rim of the mountain, and descends.

[Learn More](#)



## Discover Mt. Aso: Japan's Most Active Volcano

Mt. Aso in Aso-Kuju National Park, central Kyushu, is Japan's most active volcano. The huge caldera stretches 24 kilometres from north to south, surrounded by five peaks, known collectively as Aso Gogaku. Individually, they are Mt. Naka, Mt. Neko, Mt. Taka, Mt. Eboshi, and Mt. Kishima. Mt. Naka, with a milky green lake wreathed in smoke, is the most active peak, and the main attraction in the region. After the 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake, access to Mt. Naka was temporarily restricted, but the tourist route is now open again. It is a rare opportunity to see an active volcano up close. However, due to search operations following a sightseeing helicopter accident, access to the crater of Mt. Aso's Nakadake is currently restricted. Please do not enter the restricted area under any circumstances, as it is dangerous. Nonetheless, you may visit Kusasenri, the Aso Volcano Museum, and the Mountain Top Terminal in front of the gate as usual. Please check the latest information on restrictions in English at <http://www.aso.ne.jp/~volcano/eng/>.

[Learn More](#)



## The Natural Wonders of Takachiho Gorge in Northern Miyazaki

This spectacular gorge in northern Miyazaki was formed over 100,000 years ago after eruptions from nearby volcano Mt. Aso. The gorge's 80- to 100-metre-high basalt cliffs line a chasm, just 3 metres wide at its narrowest point. The dark abysses are complemented by vivid greenery in early summer and red-tinted leaves in autumn. You can see the gorge from above and below, along paths and bridges that span the river. For a unique and up-close look at the gorge, rent a boat at the south end and row along the Gokase River, through the ancient rock columns. You can also walk the perimeter of the gorge on the paved path that runs along its edge. The path is about one kilometre long and leads to Takachiho Shrine. You can see the 17-metre-high Manai Falls from above or from a rowboat below, as the waters splash into the river. The southern end of the gorge features a fishing pond, an aquarium, restaurants, and gift shops. There are also traditional inns and hotels nearby. If you visit in the summer months, try to see the special illuminations in the gorge until 10 PM each night.

[Learn More](#)

## A Cycling Journey Through Craters and Coastlines, Steam and Salt

Ever get that itch to take that random road on your bike, just to see where it goes? That's the spirit behind RINKO Tours.

[Tour information](#)





## Kyushu, the Large Island of Southwestern Japan

Kyushu, with its seven prefectures, is a land full of energy, from its vibrant people to its famous volcanoes. Close to the rest of Asia and easily accessible from Tokyo, Kyushu has welcomed new ideas and cultures for over a thousand years. Experience the dynamic landscapes, relax in the many hot springs, and enjoy the warmth of genuine hospitality.

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