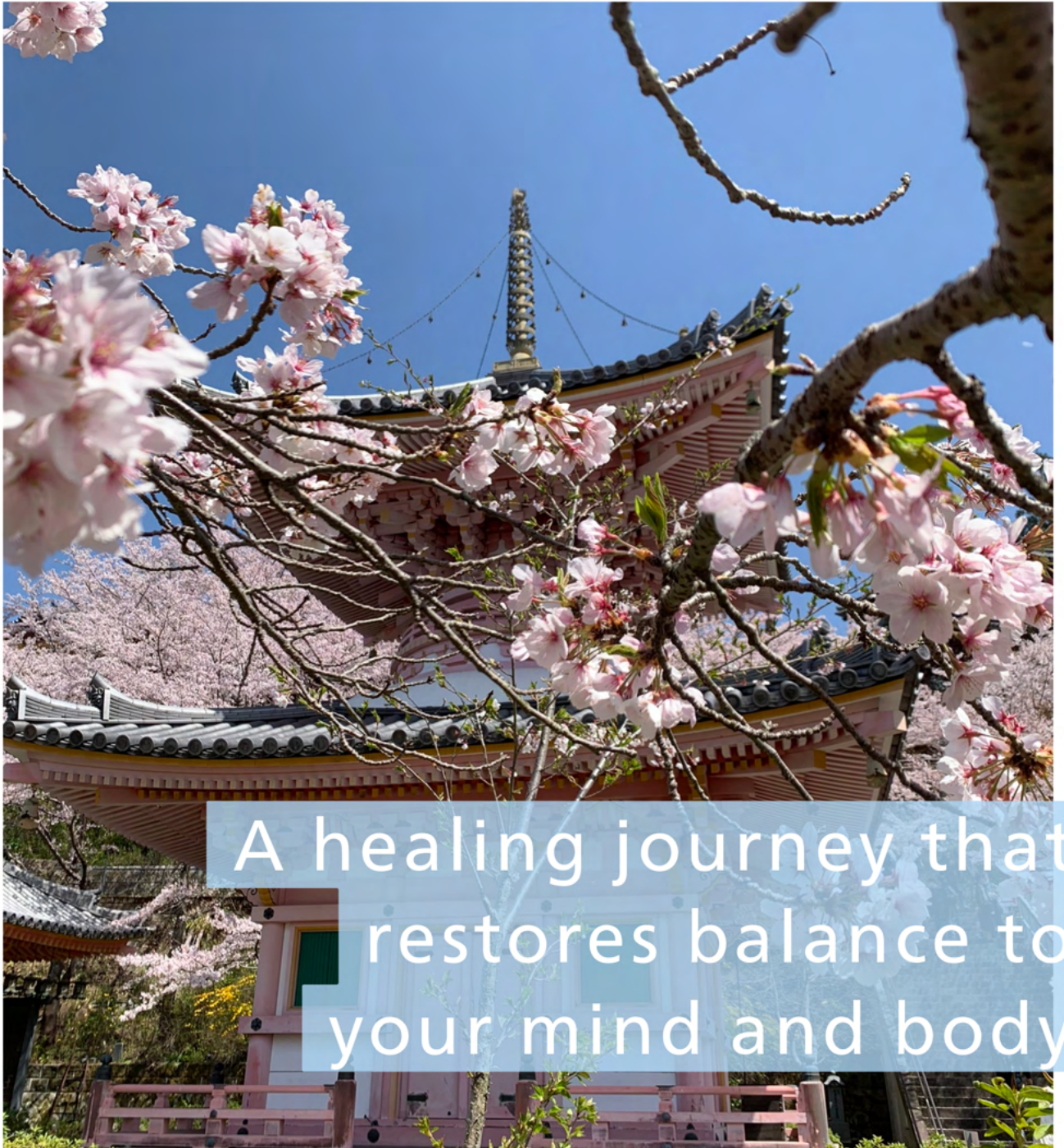


healing journey

# TRAVEL TO TAKATORI



A healing journey that  
restores balance to  
your mind and body

## Access to Takatori

### By Train



#### ● From Kansai Airport

Take the JR Kansai Airport Rapid Service and get off at "Tennoji Station."

→ Transfer to the Kintetsu Minami-Osaka Line at "Osaka Abenobashi Station."

→ Get off at "Tsubosakayama Station."

#### ● From Osaka

Take the JR Loop Line and get off at "Tennoji Station."

→ Transfer to the Kintetsu Minami-Osaka Line at "Osaka Abenobashi Station."

→ Get off at "Tsubosakayama Station" on the Kintetsu Yoshino Line.

#### ● From Kyoto

Take the Kintetsu Kyoto Line from "Kyoto Station."

→ Transfer at "Kashiharajingu-mae Station."

→ Take the Kintetsu Yoshino Line and get off at "Tsubosakayama Station."

# Hi everyone, we are Chiruttori team!



Our team is composed of students from Japan, Vietnam, and China at Nara Women's University. The origin of our team name comes from combining "chill" (as in "chill out," meaning to relax or take it easy) with "tori" from Takatori Town. By making use of our diverse perspectives and experiences, we aimed to create a guidebook that fully communicates the appeal of Takatori Town as we felt it ourselves. With the concept of "a book made by everyone, for everyone," we put our hearts into its creation.

## CHIRUTTORI

CHILL × TAKATORI



### We met each other in the course called "Invitation to International Campus Nara A"!

We learn firsthand about the attractions and challenges of the south-central Nara region by visiting the area. As a solution, we create multilingual PR content. Through group work with both international and Japanese students, this practical course encourages us to independently and collaboratively identify issues, explore possible solutions, as well as propose some effective strategies.

#### About us

**T**

From Osaka, Japan  
I prefer hidden gems to the usual tourist spots.  
Exploring unfamiliar towns excites me.



**S**

From Henan Province, China.  
I enjoy wandering around places to experience traditional culture and local ways of life, usually with a group of 2 or 3 friends.



**H**

Exchange student from Vietnam  
I like to be in nature and wander around by myself.



**C**

From Tokushima, Japan.  
I enjoy visiting temples and shrines, as well as taking photographs.  
Picturesque townscapes always make my heart leap with excitement.





## Welcome to Takatoricho

Takatoricho is a place where time seems to slow down—a town of healing, gently embraced by the rhythms of nature.

This book is your companion for a journey of relaxation and discovery.

Inside, you'll find the hidden charms of Takatoricho: tranquil temples to soothe your mind, herbal cuisine that nurtures your physical health, and the nostalgic atmosphere of narrow old streets that capture the spirit of rural Japan.

As you travel, let the stories and hints within inspire you to look inward.

Take a deep breath, turn the page, and let your healing journey in Takatoricho begin.



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Discover the benefits of Kampo herbal medicine!

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Visit a temple renowned for bringing relief to your eyes!



3

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What we need in today's stressful world is healing. A hidden café where you can heal through food.



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Medical bath salt that warms you to the core and looks adorable at the same time—perfect as a souvenir.



## MEMO





漢方薬

TSUBOSAKA

KAMPODO

The right herbal medicine for you

# Tsubosaka Kampo-do

About a 10-minute walk from Kintetsu Tsubosakayama Station, you'll spot a sign for "Daranisuke." Tsubosaka Kampo-do is a pharmacy that prescribes herbal medicine tailored to each person's health condition and constitution. It's the perfect place to take care of your body!

•🏠 health insurance applicable



The owner originally worked for a pharmaceutical company. After experiencing health issues, he was introduced to the world of Kampo (Japanese herbal medicine) by his younger brother and opened this pharmacy in his 40s. He learned about Kampo from his mentor, through personal experience, and by studying classical texts. Many patients come from outside the town, and the majority are women.



Pharmacist Mr. Sakamoto

# History of Kampo medicine and the connection with Takatori



Kampo (traditional Japanese herbal medicine) has ancient roots, tracing back to ancient China. In Japan, however, a distinct form known as Japanese Kampo emerged during the Edo period, developing independently from Chinese Kampo. Tsubosaka Kampo-do carries on the knowledge of traditional Japanese Kampo medicine ("Koho") and offers remedies that support both the body and mind. The connection between medicine and Takatori also runs deep, going back as far as the Manyo era. In this region, where many medicinal plants and animals once thrived, Empress Suiko held medicinal herb-gathering events as part of court rituals during the Asuka period. By the Edo period, Takatori's medicines had spread nationwide, with traveling medicine sellers ("gōyaku tosei") carrying their wares from Hokkaido to Kyushu.



## What is good about Kampodo



In Kampo, it is believed that the body's health is maintained by the mutual influence of the five organs—a concept known as "gozō renkei" (five-organ coordination). Based on this idea, Mr. Sakamoto meets each patient in person and carefully observes factors such as body frame, thinness, signs of coldness, voice volume, and complexion to determine and recommend the most suitable herbal remedy for each individual. Kampo medicine is effective for women's issues such as menstrual pain, irregular periods, and sensitivity to cold.

Why not consult about those everyday discomforts you might usually just put up with?

The "five organs" (gozo) refers collectively to the liver, heart, spleen, lungs, and kidneys. These organs are considered to have sac-like structures that produce and store essential substances for the body, such as qi (vital energy), blood, fluids, and nutrients.



# Tsubosaka Kampodo-Town of Medicine-Takatori

Some of the medicinal herbs handled at Tsubosaka Kampo-do include senburi, known for its intense bitterness that remains even after being brewed a thousand times; ukon (turmeric), which supports liver function; and Yamato tōki, said to be effective for poor circulation, sensitivity to cold, and pain relief.

Takatori Town is truly a place where the culture of medicinal herbs is still alive today. Along the stone-paved Tosa Kaido, you'll find tiles inlaid with illustrations of medicinal herbs, allowing you to feel this heritage throughout the town!





TSUBOSAKADERA  
TEMPLE

Nature  
the great buddha  
and me

take a break from reality

## "Founded in 703! A historic temple renowned for curing eye diseases."

Tsubosaka-dera was founded over 1,300 years ago, in 703.

Situated near Yoshino, a key location in Japanese history, the temple has gone through periods of prosperity, decline, and revival after being affected by numerous fires and wars over the centuries.

? Why is it called a temple for "curing eye diseases"?



### The answer lies in the story of "Sawachi, the Blind Man, and His Wife Osato."

Sawachi and his wife Osato were a poor but loving couple. Sawachi, who was blind, began to suspect that Osato might be seeing another man because she would quietly leave the house early every morning. One day, he decided to follow her—and discovered that Osato was actually visiting the Kannon (Bodhisattva of Compassion) at Tsubosaka-dera, praying every day for her husband's eyesight to be restored.

Sawachi deeply regretted doubting his wife. Feeling guilty for making Osato's life difficult because of his blindness, he decided to set her free by throwing himself into a valley. When Osato sensed something was wrong and rushed back, she was devastated and, unable to bear the loss, threw herself into the valley as well.

However, a miracle occurred because of their deep love and devotion. Both of their lives were saved, and Sawachi's sight was miraculously restored. The main deity of Tsubosaka-dera, the Eleven-Faced Thousand-Armed Kannon, is known for healing eye diseases—and it was this compassionate Kannon who saved them.



Special candles for eye health



Ema (wooden prayer plaques) for curing eye diseases and for good luck



Why not visit and experience it for yourself at least once? 10

## A temple with deep ties to India, connected by the wishes of the former chief priest!

As you walk around Tsubosaka-dera, you'll come across buildings you wouldn't normally see at other temples. One example is the "Tenjiku Torai Daiishidō," a large stone hall inspired by Indian rock-cut cave temples. It's said that around 120,000 people from both Japan and India worked together to carve and assemble it.



Inside, the ceilings and walls are covered with intricate decorations that are truly breathtaking. The design gives a strong sense of "India"—it's surprising to find such an exotic atmosphere right here in Nara. Even students from Nara Women's University are amazed by it.

Why India?

The answer is... it's related to the former chief priest's efforts to help people affected by leprosy in India!

Back in the 1960s, when India had the world's largest number of leprosy\* patients, the previous chief priest of Tsubosaka-dera devoted himself to helping them. Alongside Shoki Miyazaki, who treated leprosy patients, the priest used his powerful and persuasive voice to negotiate and advocate for the patients in India. At that time, leprosy patients faced severe discrimination, and even Indian doctors were afraid to treat them. However, seeing the Japanese team's dedication inspired the local doctors to start providing care as well.

The current chief priest shared that both Japanese and Indian people worked passionately to fight leprosy, and this was the first time after World War II that Japanese people went abroad to help others. The Indian-inspired art and architecture at the temple today are a testament to these ongoing ties between Tsubosaka-dera and India.

\*Leprosy: Hansen's disease, is a chronic infectious disease caused by slow-growing bacteria. Today, it is easily treatable with antibiotics, but in the past, it often led to severe social stigma and isolation for those affected.



Last time we went there, we  
were able to see...

## HYDRANGEA IN EARLY SUMMER

The "Yamato Kannon Hydrangea Corridor" is currently being held at four temples: Hasedera, Okadera, Tsubosakadera, and Muro-ji. From late May to early July, you can enjoy beautifully arranged hydrangeas.

Even in the hot and humid early summer, the sound of wind chimes brings a refreshing feeling. If you get tired from walking, take a break on a bench. Gazing at the lovely flowers and the Great Buddha naturally brings a sense of calm to your heart. It is especially charming even in the rain.



## Recommended way of relaxing

a peaceful break for your eyes on the  
veranda of the worship hall.



If your eyes are tired from using your smartphone or computer, try sitting here and taking a deep breath. The greenery of the trees and the blue of the sky will soothe your eyes.



Tsubosakadera

📍 3 Tsubosaka, Takatori-cho  
635-0102

☎ 0744-52-2016

For more details:

<https://www.tsubosaka1300.or.jp/>



HANAMIZUKA

花水土香

a stylish dim sum café where you can enjoy  
the flavors and visual beauty of the changing  
seasons

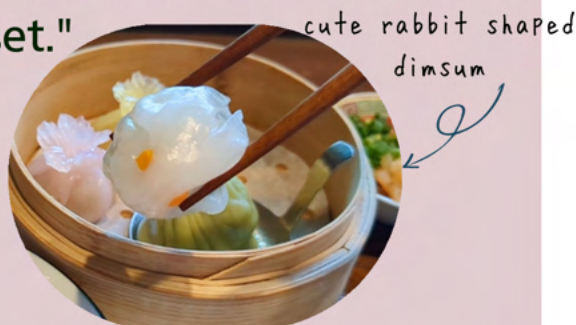


# HANAMIZUKA

Just an 8-minute walk from Tsubosakayama Station, "Hanamizuka" is a hidden café surrounded by greenery. It's a rare spot in Kansai where you can enjoy authentic dim sum cuisine. The beautifully presented dishes are a feast for the eyes, and the wood-based, calming interior creates a truly relaxing space—perfect for when you need a break from walking.



"Savor the seasons  
through food: seasonal  
limited dim sum lunch  
set."



The highlight is the "seasonal dim sum lunch set," which includes seasonal artisan dim sum, Chinese rice porridge, boiled dumplings, and a selection of Taiwanese teas. When you open the steamer, you'll find a colorful array of dim sum. The shapes change with the seasons—four varieties in total. In spring, you'll find rabbits and flowers; during the rainy season, hydrangeas and snails; in summer, goldfish and jellyfish; and in autumn, rabbits and the moon. Chef Maki Narita says, "I want people to enjoy looking at the food. I want them to be surprised when they open the steamer."

The Chinese rice porridge has a gentle flavor perfected through trial and error. Even S-san, a reporter from Henan Province in China, gave it high praise, saying, "It tastes just like my family's breakfast back home."

Nara-produced

mosquito nets (kaya)



The interior features a calm Oriental style that makes you want to stay longer and relax.



Hanamizuka owners

Mr. Narita Takeshi

Mrs. Narita Maki

## **"The path to food and agriculture inspired by a metabolic syndrome diagnosis."**

Takeshi Narita, once a Tokyo office worker, was diagnosed with metabolic syndrome, prompting him to change his diet and lose 13 kg in six months. This inspired his dream to open a restaurant using ingredients he grew himself. He quit his job and pursued farming in Chiba and Nara. His wife, Maki, who also has an agricultural background, shared this dream. They met while working at an agricultural company in Nara. Maki chose to focus on dim sum for their restaurant due to low competition and creative freedom. After gaining experience, they opened "Hanamizuka" in Takatori Town.



339-1 Shimodosa,  
Takatori Town, Takaichi  
District, Nara

0744-47-4247

For more details:

HP

<https://hanamizuka.com>



Instagram  
cafe\_hanamizuka



Hanamizuka mainly targets women looking for a place to go out with someone special. Takeshi says he feels happy seeing customers' genuine reactions to the beautiful and cute dishes. Recently, more families have been visiting, often bringing their elderly parents. Maki is delighted that people choose Hanamizuka as "a place to bring your special one." Takeshi also loves the Asuka area, including Takatori Town and Asuka Village. Today, the Narita couple continues to offer warm hospitality and provide visitors with comfort and energy in the nature-rich Takatori Town.

Reservation now:



1064 Shimizutani Takatoricho, Takatori-cho,  
Takaichi-gun Nara Prefecture



0744-52-2289

Saryo Hana Yamato

茶寮花大和

# Saryo Hana Yamato

Nestled in Takatori Town, Saryo Hana Yamato offers a serene escape with beautifully presented medicinal culinary delights. The restaurant boasts stunning views of tranquil ponds and lush greenery visible through its windows, creating the perfect setting for a healthful dining experience, complemented by calming natural light and an intimate ambiance. This time, two of our Chirutori members had a chance to savor the restaurant's exquisite delicacies while engaging in a heartwarming conversation with chef Nakagawa.



## Koka (benibana, safflower) as pre-meal tea

- use safflower as main ingredient
- help improve skin health, blood circulation and potentially prevent irregular menstrual cycles and alleviate menstrual pain.



## dessert made from Goji-berries

a traditional "panacea"

- Goji berries: noted for their versatility, believed to promote overall health and vitality.
- White fungus (tremella): especially appeal to women for its benefits to skin health, weight management and general vitality.
- The dessert has a refined sweetness and pairs beautifully with matcha, enhancing the overall experience.

Even if you don't have knowledge about medicinal herbs, the staff kindly and thoroughly explain everything, so there's no need to worry!

## Inside the old wooden medicine chest

In Takatoricho, dining takes a unique turn with a traditional medicine box presentation. This beautifully crafted wooden box, once used to store herbal remedies, now holds culinary treasures like tempura of young sweetfish, simmered vegetables, and rice, all delicately seasoned and irresistibly flavorful. The standout? Ginseng tempura—its earthy taste shines when eaten plain or dipped in honey for a touch of sweetness. Even beginners to medicinal cuisine will feel welcome, thanks to the staff's friendly guidance. A must-try for a one-of-a-kind experience!



# Let's meet Chef Nakagawa

## The start of Hanayamato

Hanayamato started about 45 years ago as a specialty medicinal cuisine restaurant, evolving from a Japanese restaurant founded in 1904. Under the supervision of a university professor who is an authority on traditional Chinese medicine in Toyama, they began offering medicinal meals. Since then, the restaurant has continually evolved, with its menu changing seasonally. They continue to provide medicinal cuisine that is visually beautiful, good for the body, and delicious.

### What is special about Hanayamato's cuisine?

"We express the feeling of the seasons in our food. For example, in May we serve sweets inspired by hydrangeas, in spring we provide dishes themed around cherry blossoms and the Doll Festival. The vegetables we use in our dishes are grown in our own fields. In summer, we harvest watermelons and melons. These are cultivated in fields behind the restaurant and in our mountain farms. Recently, we used so much water for irrigation that even the water department came to inquire (laughs). We nurture our crops."

somen noodles kneaded with medicinal herbs ↓



### Target customers

"Currently, most of our customers are over 40 years old, so we hope more young people will adopt healthier eating habits and truly appreciate its importance."

### A message from Chef Nakagawa

"We operate based on the philosophy of 'Ishokudōgen' (食同源), which means that medicine and food share the same origin. We believe that a balanced diet plays a vital role in preventing illness and improving health. We hope young people will also develop this awareness. Additionally, we plan to open a dango (Japanese sweet dumpling) cafe corner in the future and invite everyone to visit."



↑ quiet and relaxing interior ↓

## our two members' thought

"H, our Vietnamese member, said, 'It felt like enjoying a piece of art. I also noticed a popular Japanese eating habit called Hara Hachi Bu, which means eating until you're about 80% full and maintaining a balanced diet.' From the viewpoint of C, our Japanese member, she said, 'We were taught a lot about medicinal herbs and Chinese medicine, which many Japanese people don't know much about, so the meal was both enjoyable and educational.' This is an ideal place to relax if you're tired after walking a lot. Why not drop by for such a great dining experience?"



1064 Shimizudani,  
Takatori Town, Takaichi  
District, Nara



0744-52-2289





Kusuri Siryoukan



Musokan  
Takatori Tourist  
Information Center



## Kusuri Shiryokan (pharmaceutical museum)

The Kusuri Shiryōkan (Pharmaceutical Museum) in Takatori Town is a facility where you can learn about the area's long history with medicine. The museum features explanations about the traditional medicine-selling techniques that originally came from China, as well as displays of tools and equipment used in pharmaceutical production, and examples of medicines themselves. You'll also find retro medicine packages and signs, offering a glimpse into the town's unique connection with medicine and its development as a center for pharmaceuticals since ancient times.

The museum is located inside the "Musokan" tourist information center and is open to visitors **free of charge**.





## M Takatori Tourist Information Center

A merchant house that has been renovated to serve as the town's tourist information center, where you can find sightseeing guidance, local souvenirs, and regional products for sale. The building, known as "Yumesoukan," also hosts gallery exhibitions and displays historical materials, offering visitors a glimpse into Takatori's rich history and culture.

📍 20-2 Kamitosa, Takaichi-gun Takatori-cho, Nara

☎ 0744-52-1150

Open time : 9:30~16:30

Holidays: New year holiday

Access : About 15 minute walk from Tsubosakayama Station



Recommend for  
you!

# Yamato Touki

## Bath Salt

stay warm and cozy indoors  
with Yamato Touki



It warms your body so much that you might even feel hot, making it perfect for the cold season! The packaging is also retro and cute, making it an ideal souvenir!! Currently available at Musokan.

# Y A M A T O T O U K I



tastes like  
celery when  
eaten raw

Yamato Toki is a type of plant known as "tōki" (*Angelica acutiloba*) that is mainly cultivated in the Uda region of Nara Prefecture. It is a rare medicinal herb whose root is used in traditional Chinese and Japanese herbal medicine, while its leaves are also edible.

The health benefits of Yamato Toki are especially favorable for women, including relief from cold sensitivity, stiff shoulders, menstrual irregularities, and postpartum discomfort. It is also believed to have effects on mental health and is sometimes used during emotionally unstable periods.

the leaves are edible?

Actually, the leaves of Yamato Toki contain nutrients such as vitamins that are often lacking in the typical diet. In addition to vitamins, the leaves contain many other nutritional components. Because of this, the leaves can be consumed without losing their nutritional value even when prepared in dishes such as tempura or "ohitashi" (boiled and seasoned greens). In this sense, Yamato Toki can truly be called an "edible medicinal herb."

# YAMATO TOUKI: PRESENT AND FUTURE

We had the opportunity to interview Mrs. Akemi, the representative of Pony no Sato Farm, which produces, sells, and processes Yamato Toki (Japanese Angelica).

## About Pony no Sato

"Pony no Sato Farm" is an agricultural production corporation operated by its representative, Ms. Miyoko Akemi. Starting from pony riding therapy, it now focuses mainly on "agriculture-welfare collaboration" projects. Together with people with disabilities, they cultivate vegetables, fruits, and medicinal herbs such as Yamato Toki. The farm also engages in developing processed products using medicinal herbs and regional revitalization, creating a unique business model that integrates agriculture, welfare, and community development.



Representative,  
Mrs. Akemi Miyoko

## Make the most of the local treasure

Yamato Toki, which is associated with Nara Prefecture, is known for its very difficult cultivation. Ms. Akemi explains, "After planting the seeds, it takes about a year for the seedlings to grow. Then they are transplanted to the field. Even then, various efforts are needed. We must carefully manage the amount of water to prevent the roots from drying out."



## Mrs. Akemi's sharings

Mrs. Miyoko Akemi began with the goal of promoting Yamato Toki root as a symbol of the "medicine town." Finding it difficult to cultivate, she discovered the leaves could also be used as an herb, inspiring her to add value through food like tea and cooking. She organized simple medicinal cuisine events.

The leaves can be dried and preserved, then supplied to Tokyo for use in teas, hotel cuisine, cosmetics, and more. Yamato Toki warms the body and improves blood circulation, making it especially recommended for women. The leaves have a celery-like flavor that suits cooking well. Some women in their 30s have even purchased seedlings.

### Pony no Sato Farm

Open time : 9 : 30 ~ 17 : 00

Close : Sat, Sun, National Holiday

〒635-0121 883-6 Nikutani, Takatori-cho, Takashi-Shi-Gun, Nara

Tel: 0745-67-0104

<https://www.ponynosatofarm.com/>

With growing interest in Yamato Toki, Mrs. Akemi shared her future vision: "I want to promote traditional Chinese medicine as part of our diet to make it more familiar. Yamato Toki has long been known for its quality, and I hope it will spread more widely throughout Nara. Collaborations beyond regions, such as with Uda City, are expanding, and I look forward to this momentum growing."

## After the interview

Mrs. Miyoko Akemi is cheerful and kindly explained everything to us. We were impressed by her personality and spirit. Pony no Sato Farm is now engaged in agriculture-welfare collaboration.

Also, when we were conducting an interview at Musokan, a smartphone class for the elderly in Takatori Town was being held on the first floor. Ms. H, who is from Vietnam, said, "It was my first time to see Japanese people gather and laugh while talking outside of izakayas or restaurants." In Vietnam, there are many places where people gather to laugh loudly and talk happily. She commented, "There are also community hubs in Japan that connect people."

## Acknowledgements

We sincerely thank everyone who cooperated with us during the interviews for the production of this pamphlet. This course began with students learning about Takatori Town, and with the support of many people, they were able to have the invaluable experience of getting to know the townspeople. We hope this pamphlet will serve as a helpful companion for tourists visiting Takatori Town.

## Special thanks to

Takatori Town Tourism Association  
Takatori Town Sightseeing Volunteer Guides  
Tsubosaka Kampo-do  
Tsubosaka Temple  
Hanamizuka  
Hanayamato  
Pony no Sato Farm  
Musokan

This content was created by students enrolled in the 2025 first semester course “Introduction to International Campus NARA (A)” at Nara Women's University, with the cooperation of the Takatori Town Tourism Association and the Takatori Tourism Volunteer Guide Association.

**Nara Women's University** is a national women's university located in Nara City, Japan. It was established in 1908 as the Nara Women's Higher Normal School. The university has four faculties: Faculty of Literature, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Human Life and Environmental Studies, and Faculty of Engineering. It also has graduate school of Humanities and Sciences (master's and doctoral courses).



For more information about Nara Women's University and its class.



What did you think of this contents by NWU students?

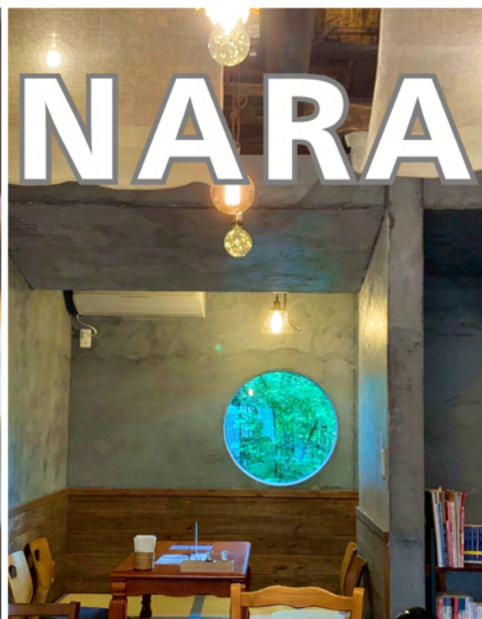




# TAKATORI



## WHAT TO DO IN TAKATORI?



# NARA

