

Practical Travel Guide - 506

KOBE,
HIMEJI and
TAKARAZUKA



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In collaboration with
Tourist Information Centers in the area

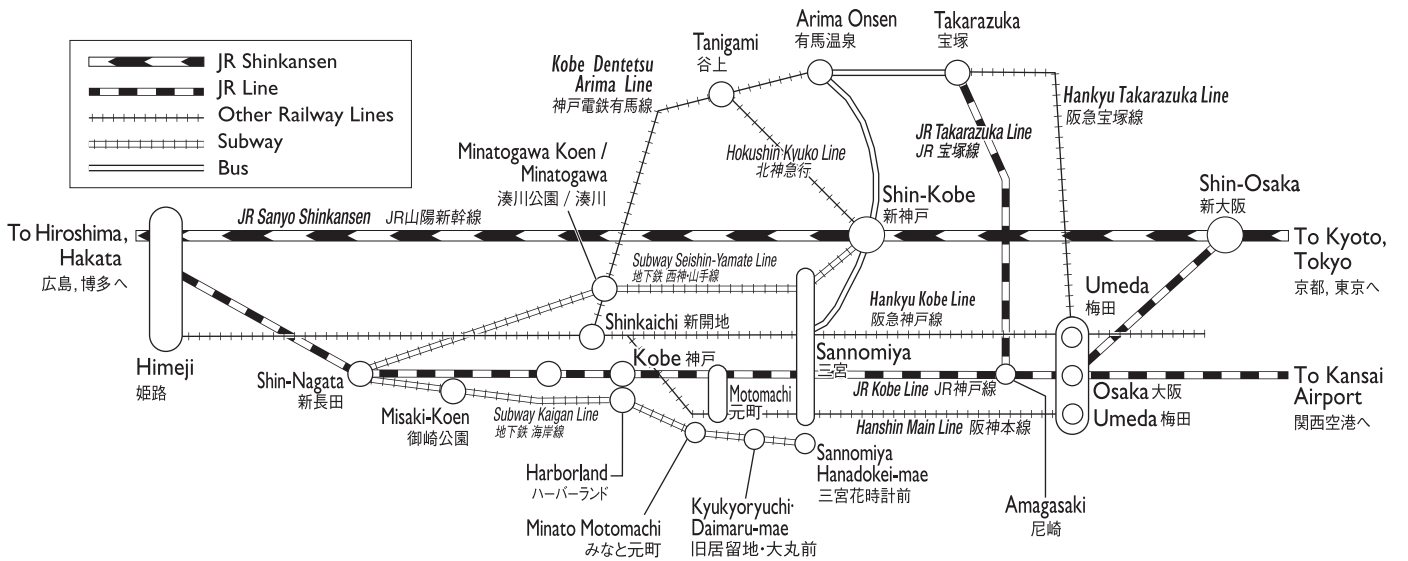


Kobe (神戸), the capital of Hyogo Prefecture, is the foremost international port city in Western Japan. Mt. Rokko, near the city center, and Arima Onsen set in the suburbs offer a variety of attractions to visitors.

Himeji (姫路), noted for its imposing 400-year-old Himeji Castle, is a leading industrial and commercial city in the heart of the Harima Plain.

Takarazuka (宝塚), known as the “City of Music,” is the seat of the Takarazuka Revue, an all-female musical theater group. Hot springs and many historical spots are found in and around the city.

Traffic Network



Access:

From	To	By	Approx. Travel Time	Price
Tokyo	Shin-Kobe	JR Shinkansen “Hikari”	3 hrs. 20 min.	¥14,950*
		JR Shinkansen “Nozomi”	2 hrs. 50 min.	¥15,380*
Tokyo	Himeji	JR Shinkansen “Hikari”	3 hrs. 40 min.	¥15,930*
		JR Shinkansen “Nozomi”	3 hrs. 5 min.	¥16,460*
Osaka / Umeda (Osaka)	Sannomiya (Kobe)	JR Kobe Line (Special Rapid)	20 min.	¥410
		Hankyu Kobe Line (Limited express)	30 min.	¥320
		Hanshin Main Line (Limited express)	30 min.	¥320
	Takarazuka	JR Takarazuka Line (Rapid)	30 min.	¥330
		Hankyu Takarazuka Line (Express)	35 min.	¥280
Sannomiya (Kobe)	Himeji	JR Kobe Line (Special Rapid)	40 min.	¥990
Shin-Kobe	Tanigami	Hokushin Kyuko Line	10 min.	¥370
Sannomiya	Arima Onsen	Hankyu Bus	50 min.	¥710
Shinkaichi		Kobe Dentetsu Arima Line	40 min.	¥690
Takarazuka		Hankyu Bus	35 min.	¥580
Osaka		Hankyu Bus (Arima Kyuko Express)	55 min.	¥1,400
Kansai Airport	Sannomiya	Airport Limousine Bus	65 min.	¥2,000
	Himeji		125 min.	¥3,400

* Fare + express charge (with seat reservation, normal season).

• Between Shin-Kobe and Sannomiya (downtown Kobe), subways are operated. Fare: ¥210.

The City Loop Bus (シティー・ループバス)

One-way ticket: ¥260 One-day ticket: ¥680

The City Loop Bus circulates around main sightseeing areas in the city center, such as Kitano (former foreign residential district), Harborland, Motomachi shopping street and main

stations such as Sannomiya and Shin-Kobe. You can get on / off as many times as you like if you buy the one-day ticket. You can also buy it on the bus. Service is offered every 15–20 min. One round: about one hour.

<https://kobecityloop.jp>

*See p. 5 for admission and opening times.

KOBE

Places of Interest:

Kobe City is well known for its legendary **Kobe beef** (神戸牛) dishes and its clothing and fashion industries. Both are worth trying and browsing around in.

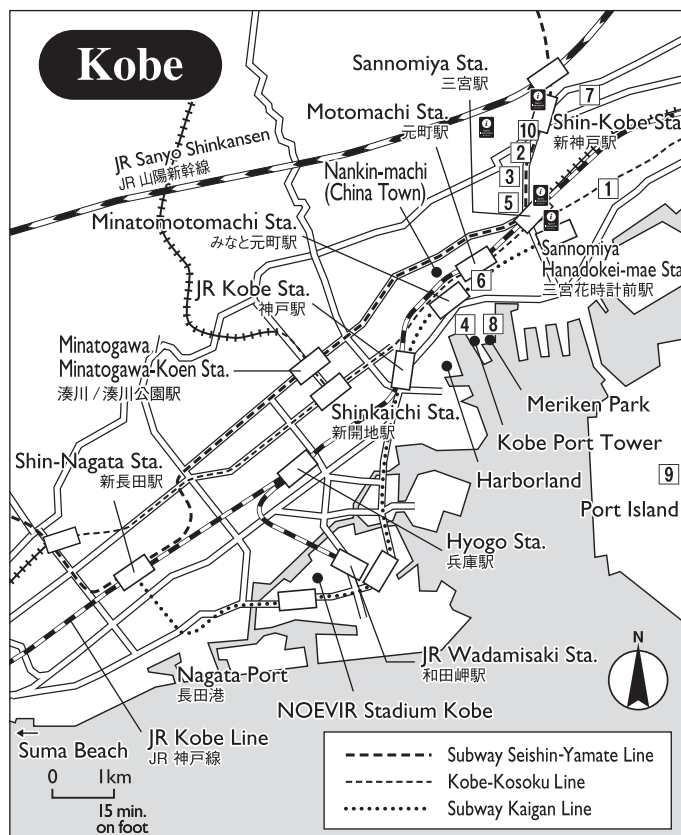
Downtown Kobe: The 3 principal JR stations in Kobe are Shin-Kobe, Sannomiya and Kobe. The most convenient for tourists is **Sannomiya** (三ノ宮/三宮), as it is in the center of the city and offers a variety of shopping opportunities. **Motomachi** (元町), next to Sannomiya on either JR or Hanshin Lines, is another choice for shoppers. **Kobe Port** (神戸港) is one of the most distinguished trading ports in Japan. The 108 m high Port Tower provides a panoramic view of the city and harbor.

Kitano (北野), a 15-min. walk north from Sannomiya Sta., was once the heart of Kobe's foreign settlement during the Meiji and Taisho Periods. Old Western-style houses are well preserved and some of them are open to the public.

Harborland: A coastal commercial facilities complex located 3 min. on foot from JR Kobe Sta., subway Harborland Sta. or Kosoku-Kobe Sta. Many shops and restaurants are all at hand here. At "umie MOSAIC," a shopping and amusement complex located along the seaside, there is a big ferris wheel from where you can enjoy a wonderful panoramic view of Kobe Port and the ocean, especially beautiful at night.

Suma (須磨) and **Suma Seaside Park** (須磨海浜公園), 12 min. by JR Kobe Line from Sannomiya Sta. to Sumakaihinkoen Sta., is a beautiful white sand beach fringed with pine trees. **Suma Aqualife Park** (須磨海浜水族園) is one of major aquariums in Japan. Hours: 9:00–17:00, –21:00 (Golden Week holiday, Summer holiday) enter by 1 hr. before each closing time. Closed: Wed. (Dec.–Feb. except New Year holiday and national holidays). Admission: ¥1,300.

Maiko Coast (舞子): The Akashi Kaikyo Bridge is the world's longest (3911.1 m) suspension bridge connecting the Maiko district of Kobe and Awaji Island. Splendid views of this bridge can be enjoyed from the Marine Pia Kobe which houses the Fish School (a fisheries-related educational facility) and fashionable outlet shops.

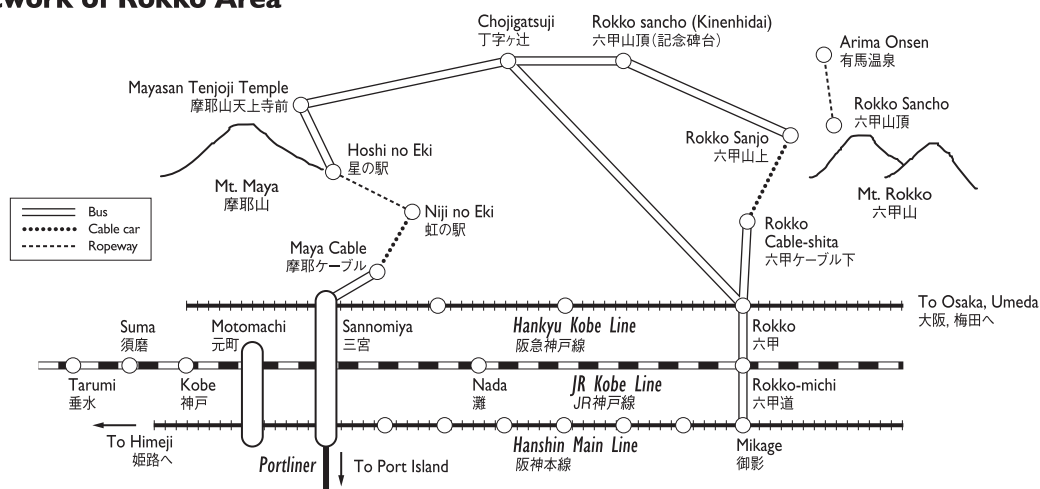


Numbers 1 – 10 correspond to those in the Accommodations list on page 5/5

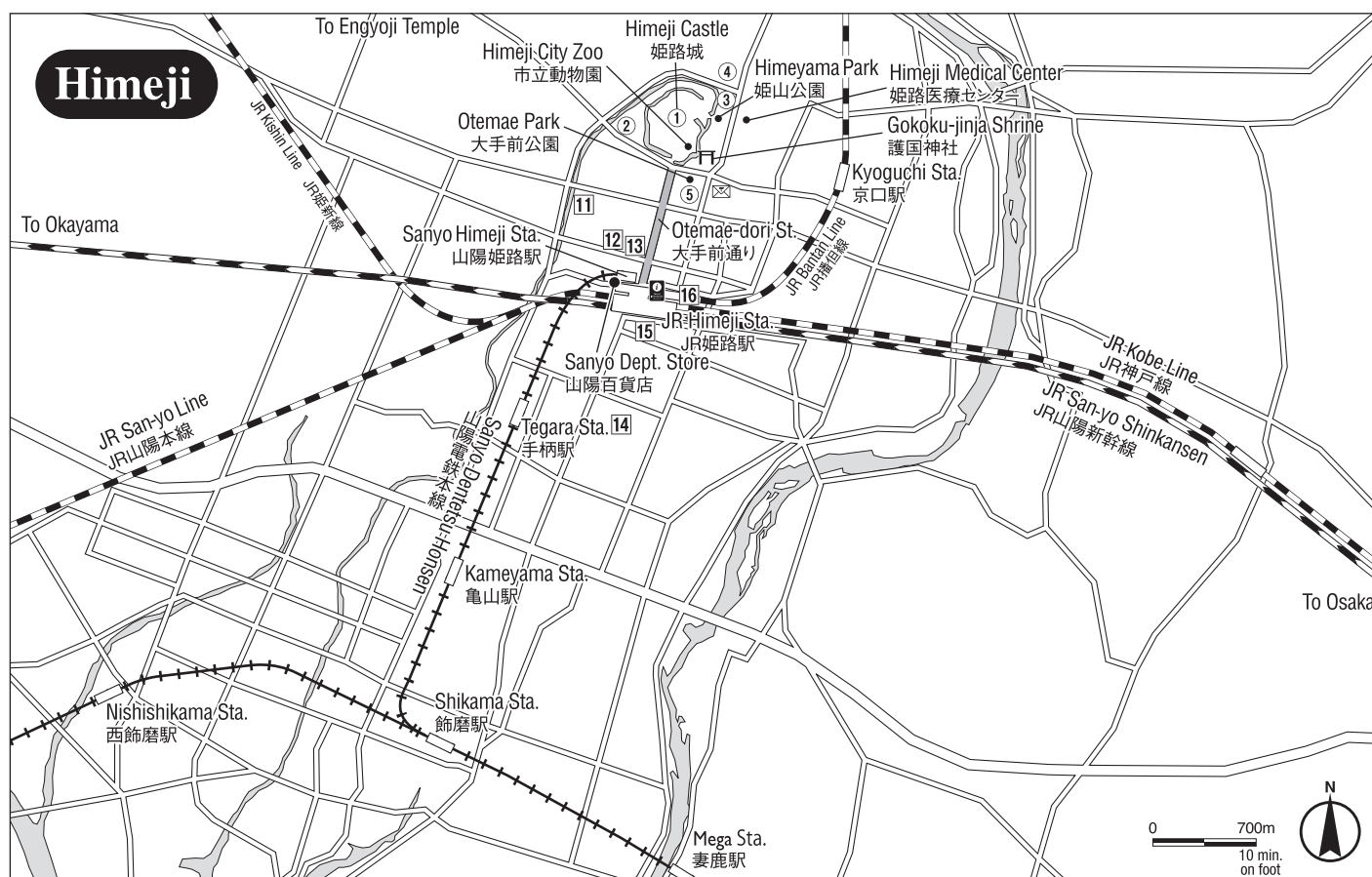
Mt. Rokko (六甲山), spreading behind the city, provides year-round leisure and sporting opportunities. The mountains are accessible by buses, cable cars and ropeways, and there are numerous hiking trails, too. The night view of the city and the Kobe Port from here has been dubbed the "Ten-million-dollar night view."

Arima Onsen (有馬温泉) is a historical, tranquil hot-spring resort on the other side of Mt. Rokko. Its common iron and salt springs are good for the treatment of diseases of the digestive organs, women's problems, neuralgia and rheumatism. Its natural radium and carbonate spring waters are efficacious against dyspepsia and skin diseases.

Traffic Network of Rokko Area



HIMEJI



Numbers 11 – 16 correspond to those in the Accommodations list on page 5/5

Places of Interest:

①**Himeji Castle** (姫路城), a 3 min. bus ride and a 5-min. walk / a 20-min. walk from the north exit of Himeji Sta., is a splendid and one of the few original castles remaining in Japan. It was built as a fort in the 14th century, and then rebuilt into the present style at the beginning of the 17th century. It was designated as World Cultural Heritage. Almost a 6-year restoration project on the entire castle was completed in 2015. The five-storied main donjon together with the three smaller donjons forms a magnificent shape and is highly appreciated from both the esthetic and architectural viewpoints. Another name given to this castle is “Hakurojo” or White Heron Castle, for its resemblance, at a distance, of a white silhouette of a heron poised gracefully in the heart of the plain. It takes one and a half hours to see the castle’s major structures. In Himeji Castle, the venue of some famous Japanese films such as “Kagemusha,” you can become familiar with the Samurai culture. English-speaking volunteer guides are available at the castle’s entrance most of the time to help you. Hours: 9:00–17:00, –18:00 (late Apr.–Aug.). Enter by 1 hr. before closing time. Closed: Dec. 29–30. Admission: ¥1,050.

②**Kokoen Garden** (好古園), a 5-min. walk from the castle, is composed of 9 various sized traditional Japanese gardens on the former site where a mansion of the Himeji lord and his men’s samurai houses existed. You can enjoy a distant view of the castle from some viewing spots in the garden. Hours: 9:00–17:00, –18:00 (late Apr.–Aug.). Enter by 30 min. before closing time. Closed: Dec. 29–30. Admission: ¥310.

③**Himeji City Museum of Art** (姫路市立美術館), a 5-min. walk from the castle, is a brick structure, which used to be the

City Hall. Hours: 10:00–17:00 (enter by 16:30). Closed: Mon. (open when a Mon. falls on a national holiday) & New Year holiday. Admission: ¥200. *Scheduled to close Jan. 27–late Apr. in 2020 (except the front garden).

④**Hyogo Prefectural Museum of History** (兵庫県立歴史博物館), a 1-min. walk from the Art Museum, displays objects and materials concerning the history of Himeji Castle and Hyogo Pref. Hours: 10:00–17:00 (enter by 16:30). Closed: Mon. (the following weekday when Mon. falls on a national holiday) & the New Year’s holiday. Admission: ¥200.

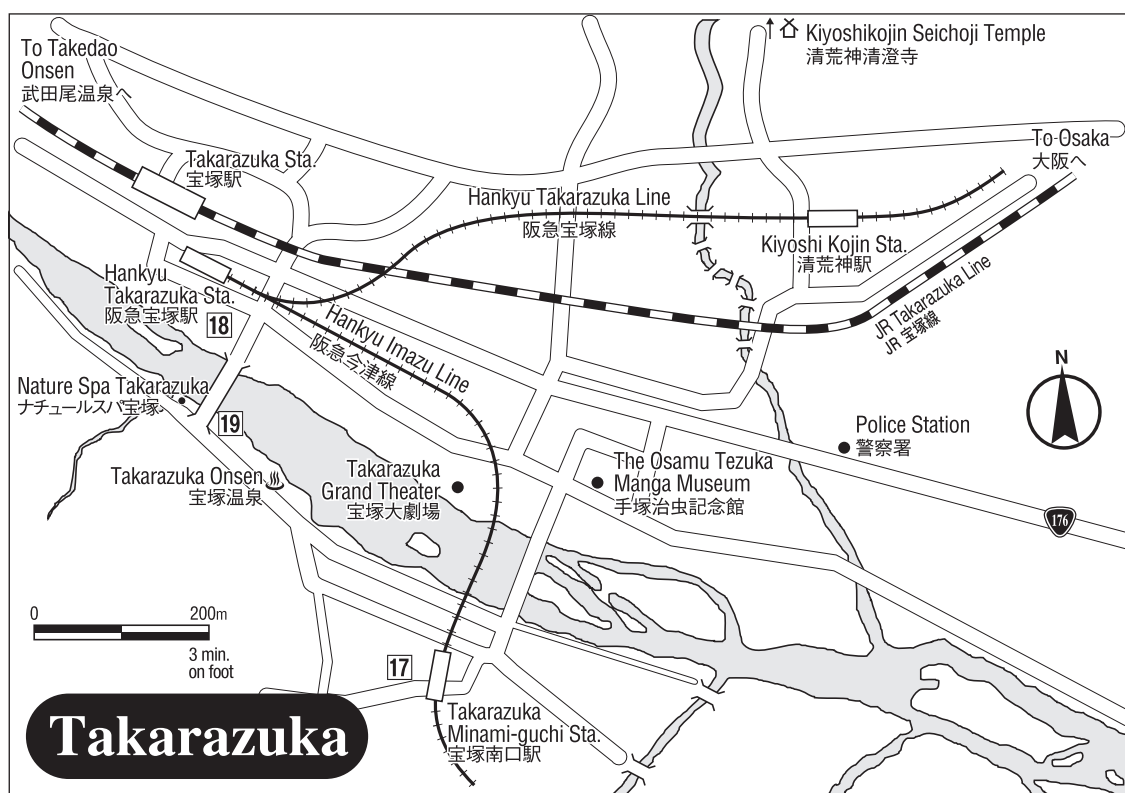
⑤**Egret Himeji** (イーグレひめじ), a 10-min. walk from JR Himeji Sta., is a community and commerce zone featuring Himeji International Exchange Center, Gender Equality Promotion Center, restaurants and shops. There is a roof garden on the top, and you can enjoy a distance view of Himeji castle and the city center.

Nagoyama Cemetery (名古屋霊苑), 10 min. by bus from Himeji Sta. to Bus Stop, then a 15-min. walk, is a hill on which a 36.7-m-high stupa, or tower, stands. Magnificent interior. Hours: 8:40–16:30. Closed: Dec. 29–31. Admission: ¥210 (Busshari Tower).

Shoshazan Engyoji Temple (書寫山圓教寺), 30 min. by bus from Himeji Sta. and 4 min. by ropeway (¥600 for one-way, ¥1,000 for round-trip), is a Tendai Sect temple with a history of more than 1,000 years. It consists of three magnificent buildings and several Buddhist statues, some of which are designated as Important Cultural Property. The excursion will make your extra half-day in Himeji worthwhile. A part of “The Last Samurai” was shot here. Admission: ¥500 (only for visitors over the age of 19).

*See p. 5 for admission and opening times.

TAKARAZUKA



Numbers 17 – 19 correspond to those in the Accommodations list on page 5/5

Places of Interest:

Takarazuka Grand Theater (宝塚大劇場) 5 min. walk from JR or Hankyu Takarazuka Sta., is where an all-female revue is staged. The revue company was founded in 1913 by Mr. Ichizo Kobayashi who ingeniously blended the traditional Japanese drama with the Western opera and succeeded in creating a new form of entertainment. Showtime and price differ for each program. URL: <http://kageki.hankyu.co.jp/english/>

Kiyoshikojin Seichoji Temple (清荒神清澄寺), a 15-min. walk from Kiyoshikojin Sta., is revered for its “God of Fire.” A 1-km-long approach to the temple is lined with small shops selling religious objects, antiques and souvenirs. Paintings by Tessai Tomioka, one of the representative artists of modern Japan, are displayed in Tessai Museum (Seikoden) in the temple precinct. Hours (Museum): 10:00–16:30 (enter by 16:00). Closed: Mon. (Tue. when Mon. falls on a national holiday). Admission: ¥300 (Museum). *Museum temporarily closed.

Takarazuka Onsen (宝塚温泉), a 3-min. walk from JR or Hankyu Takarazuka Sta., is a small hot spring resort located along with the Mukogawa River, and you can experience one-day spa at 2 facilities. Those spas, contain carbon dioxide, are effective against neuralgia and muscle pain.

The Osamu Tezuka Manga Museum (手塚治虫記念館), a 8-min. walk from JR or Hankyu Takarazuka Sta., or 5 min. from Hankyu Takarazuka-Minamiguchi Sta. “Astro Boy” and other characters of his animation greet you here. The museum features a theater showing his animation works, galleries in which his works are exhibited, as well as a library of his comics. Hours: 9:30–17:00 (enter by 16:30). Closed: Wed. (except Aug. & when Wed. falls on a national holiday), Dec. 29–31. Admission: ¥700.

Takedao Onsen (武田尾温泉), 8 min. by JR Takarazuka Line from JR Takarazuka Sta. to Takedao Sta., is a quiet, simple hot spring resort situated deep in the mountains. Hiking can be especially enjoyed during early spring and fall when the respective colors of the leaves are the brightest.

Accommodations:

Name of facilities	Tel.	Fax.	Room rate (¥)	Name of facilities	Tel.	Fax.	Room rate (¥)
Kobe:				Himeji:			
① Kobe Sannomiya Union Hotel (BH)	(078)242-3000	(078)242-0220	¥	⑪ Himeji Green Hotel Sakamoto(BH)	(079)289-0088	(079)225-1455	¥
② Green Hill Hotel Kobe (BH)	(078)222-0909	(078)222-1139	¥	⑫ Hotel Claire Higasa (BH)	(079)224-3421	(079)289-3729	¥
③ Green Hill Hotel Urban (BH)	(078)222-1221	(078)242-1194	¥	⑬ Himeji Green Hotel Tatemachi (BH)	(079)288-2000	(079)286-7000	¥
④ Kobe Port Tower Hotel (H)	(078)371-8080	(078)371-8090	¥	⑭ Grandvrio Hotel Himeji Castle (H)	(050)5847-7770	(079)284-3729	¥¥
⑤ Kitagami Hotel (H)	(078)391-8781	(078)391-8785	¥	⑮ Hotel Nikko Himeji (H)	(079)222-2231	(079)224-3731	¥¥¥
⑥ Kobe Plaza Hotel (BH)	(078)332-1141	(078)331-2630	¥¥	⑯ Hotel Monterey Himeji (H)	(079)224-7111	(079)224-7100	¥¥
⑦ Hotel ISAGO Kobe (R)	(078)241-0135	(078)241-0195	¥¥	Takarazuka:			
⑧ Hotel Okura Kobe (H)	(078)333-0111	(078)333-6673	¥¥¥	⑰ Takarazuka Hotel (H)	(0797)87-1151	(0797)87-9833	¥¥
⑨ Kobe Portopia Hotel (H)	(078)302-1111	(078)302-6877	¥¥	⑱ Takarazuka Washington Hotel (H)	(0797)87-1771	(0797)86-2287	¥¥
⑩ ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel Kobe (H)	(078)291-1121	(078)291-1154	¥¥	⑲ Hotel Wakamizu (R)	(0797)86-0151	(0797)86-2846	¥¥¥
Arima Onsen:				Takedao Onsen:			
Gekkoen Yugetsusanso (R)	(078)904-0366	(078)904-0360	¥¥¥	Maruki Ryokan (R) (temporarily closed)	(0797)61-0221	(0797)61-2234	¥¥¥
Arima Grand Hotel (H)	(078)904-0181	(078)904-0297	¥¥	Koyokan Bettei Azalee (R)	(0797)91-0131	(0797)91-1213	¥¥¥
Nakanobo Zui-en (R)	(078)904-0781	(078)904-0346	¥¥¥				

Remarks:

① – ⑩ (Kobe), ⑪ – ⑯ (Himeji), and ⑰ – ⑲ (Takarazuka) correspond to those on page 2/5, 3/5, 4/5 respectively. Rate per person.

H = Hotel

BH = Business Hotel

R = Ryokan

¥¥¥ = more than 15,000 yen

¥¥ = 8,001 yen – 15,000 yen

¥ = 8,000 yen or less

* Standard basis rate (no meals, taxes included)

[Good to know] Admission and opening times at tourist attractions:

- Last entry to the most of attractions is 30 min. before the closing time.
- In general, if their weekly closing day (most are on Mon.) falls on a national holiday, they are open on the day and are closed on the following day after the holiday(s).
- Most are closed throughout / a part of New Year holiday period (especially Dec. 29–Jan. 3).
- Please visit the official website of each venue / your nearest tourist information center for the updates.

JNTO TIC (Tourist Information Center)

TIC of Japan National Tourism Organization is your helping hand while in Japan. Its main services are providing travel information and free literature on Japan such as tourist spots, transportation, and suggesting tour itineraries, etc.

1F, Shin-Tokyo Bldg., 3-3-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0005 Tel. 03-3201-3331 (in Japan)
Open daily from 9:00 to 18:00 (Closed on Jan. 1)
<https://www.japan.travel/en/plan/tic/>



Goodwill Guide Groups offer tourists from overseas local tours guided in English or other languages. The guides are registered with JNTO and display the badge shown. As they are volunteers, there is no charge for their service. You are only expected to pay for their transportation, admission to tourist facilities if you visit any and their meals if you eat with them.

JNTO Website

<https://www.japan.travel/en/plan/list-of-volunteer-guides/>

JNTO Website: <https://www.jnto.go.jp>

All information, including transportation schedules, fares, prices and accommodation charges which is contained in this leaflet is based on data as of October 2019, and is subject to change without notice. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of all information, regrettably errors do occasionally occur. Therefore, you should check with organizations concerned for updated and accurate information on your chosen destination. JNTO shall not be liable for any loss or damage of whatever nature that may arise as a result, directly or indirectly, from the use of any of the information or material contained in this leaflet.

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TOURIST INFORMATION in the area

Shin-Kobe Station Tourist Information Center (JR Shin-Kobe Sta.):

2F of JR Shin-Kobe Station, 1-3-1 Kano-cho, Chuo-ku, Kobe City, Hyogo
Hours: 9:00–18:00 (Opening hours may be subject to change on Year-end & New Year period)
Tel. (078)241-9550

Himeji Tourist Information Center:

JR Himeji Sta., 210-2 Ekimae-cho, Himeji City, Hyogo
Hours: 9:00–19:00 (Closed on Dec. 29 & 30) Tel. (079) 287-0003

Hankyu Tourist Center (OSAKA-UMEDA):

Hankyu Umeda Sta., 1-1-2 Shibata, Kitaku, Osaka City, Osaka
Hours: 8:00–17:00

To find

other Tourist Information Centers,
visit <https://tic.jnto.go.jp/>

