

A short twelve-minute stroll from the Yubatake hot water fields in the center of Kusatsu town brings you to Sainokawara Rotenburo, for a truly natural outdoor *onsen* experience.

The large outdoor bath (*rotenburo*) is separated for men and women, and at 500 meters square can comfortably accommodate up to one hundred people at a time, making this a good choice for larger groups. Fed by the Bandai hot water springs containing acidic chloride sulphate, and recommended for conditions including chronic digestive diseases and recovery from illness, the vast bath also features a hot waterfall-like cascade.

Sainokawara Rotenburo can be enjoyed at any time of year, and the four seasons provide a rotating backdrop to the baths. On clear nights, you can enjoy stargazing, while the changing autumn leaves bring a touch of vibrant colors to the experience. In winter, soaking in the hot waters of the bath under a gentle snowfall is unforgettable.

Although located just a short walk from Kusatsu Onsen town center, Sainokawara Rotenburo is very much part of the countryside of the area. A stone-paved promenade leads visitors along a winding path past a variety of popular sightseeing spots including Anamori Inari shrine, the Oni no Chagama monument, Matchmaking Jizo (a series of Buddhist statues which are said to be protectors of children and travelers), and the Kusatsu Visitor Center. This easy path is a good introduction to the natural beauty of the surrounding area. Not only can you immerse yourself in the healing waters of the outdoor bath but also in the history and culture of Kusatsu.

On your walk, be sure to seek out the busts of German physicians Dr Erwin Bälz and Dr Julius Scriba, local heroes of Kusatsu Onsen who were instrumental in expounding the healing virtues of the hot springs in Japan and abroad.

Sainokawara Rotenburo also offers an evening of mixed bathing every Friday, when the bath is open to everyone, including couples and families. During the mixed bathing evenings visitors can wear swimwear or wrap themselves in a towel, a chance to enjoy the full *onsen* experience together.

Sainokawara Rotenburo

Opening hours: April 1st–November 30th 7:00 am–8:00 pm (entry closes at 7:30 pm), Dec 1st–March 31st 9:00 am–8:00 pm (entry closes at 7:30 pm)

Prices: Adults 600 Yen, children 300 Yen (ages 3–12)

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