

If you want to see how Japan's traditional rural landscape used to look, this little park offers a window to history. Encompassing an area of 5.9 hectares along both sides of the winding Himekawa River, the park was completed in 2006 and is dedicated to preserving Hakuba Happo-one's historical scenery.

You can enjoy the area's abundant nature, while getting to know the locals who inhabit the traditional buildings. The park's spectacular viewpoint is especially picturesque during cherry blossom season, but capable of taking your breath away at any time of year with its magnificent panorama of the Shirouma Sanzan mountain range of Japan's Northern Alps, the Himekawa River, the park's wooden suspension bridge and thatched houses. It is a popular spot for landscape painters, so with luck you can observe a masterpiece in the making.

Snacks and drinks are available at the Tsurihashi Teahouse, or the Kappa Tei Café, which occupies a one hundred-year-old structure with a small water wheel near its entrance. Here you can enjoy a range of dishes made from local produce, including pork from Hakuba and Shinshu salmon from Nagano Prefecture. (The Kappa Tei Café operates between May and October).