

One of Nozawa Onsen's must-see spots is Ogama, the village's charming communal open-air kitchen, which is named after the hottest spring among the thirty sources of Nozawa Onsen and located on top of a slope. Villagers use Ogama's five pools, through which 90-degrees Celsius steaming-hot mineral water endlessly flows, for washing and boiling vegetables and eggs. And you can see why they continue to flock to this community hub—the mineral-rich hot spring water gives the food its extraordinary, delicious taste, especially the area's signature leaf vegetable Nozawana. But don't start dreaming up your own onsen-enhanced culinary creations just yet. Since access to Ogama is restricted to community members, and also for safety reasons, visitors are not allowed to go near the pools, but you can still observe the spectacle from a close-enough distance—with the best views in the morning. And there's no need to miss out on the food. To get a taste of legendary onsen eggs, walk down the alleyway that connects Ogama with Yurari, a terrace-like open space, housing one of the public foot-baths as well as a tub for boiling prepurchased eggs (available at one of the souvenir shops along the alleyway). The eggs may need about twenty minutes until they are ready to eat, but a relaxing foot-bath combined with a superb view of Nozawa Onsen definitely makes it worth the wait.