

When in operation, the Ikuno silver mine was one of Japan's top five silver producing mines. In 1868, it was also the first mine chosen by the Meiji government to undergo modernization with the help of French engineers. As the starting point of the Silver Mine Carriage Road (the Ikuno Kozanryo Bashamichi, now known as the Gin no Bashamichi), completed in 1876 and running south to ports of Himeji, Ikuno represented Japan's march toward industrialization.

The Ikuno mine was shut down in 1973 after more than 1,200 years of operation. Soon after, exhibits were set up in the old tunnels to teach visitors about the mine's history and mining techniques in different eras. Outside the mine entrance is an information center and another building displaying the Edo-period (1603–1867) smelting process.