

Yunotsu-Okidomari Road

The winding road between Iwami Ginzan and the ports of Yunotsu and Okidomari passes through mountains and deep forests on its way to the Sea of Japan. Established in the latter half of the sixteenth century, after the Mohri family had taken control of the silver mine, it quickly became the main road servicing Iwami Ginzan. All manner of supplies were transported from the ports to the mountain settlements around the mine, whereas silver extracted and refined at the mine traveled the other way, either loaded onto simple carts or carried by oxen.

The Yunotsu-Okidomari was initially a dirt road, but in the Edo period (1603–1867) parts were paved with stone to make it easier to travel. Quarries used to extract stone for this purpose can still be seen along the path. Although silver was carried to the coast along this road for only 40 years between the early 1560s and the first few years of the 1600s, it remained the primary route for transporting supplies to the mine until the late 1800s. Today, you can walk the entire 14-kilometer length of the old road from Omori to Yunotsu and Okidomari, but note that some sections can become difficult to traverse after heavy rain.