

Takachiho Valley: Manai Waterfall and View of the Three Takachiho Bridges

Pouring down from a height of 17 meters in a captivating white veil, Manai Waterfall is a highlight of any visit to the Takachiho Valley. One of Japan's top 100 waterfalls, the wonders of the Manai plume, which feathers out in a cascade to the Gokase River, can be taken in by walking the valley promenade or rowing into the river by rental rowboat. The myth of the origins of Manai Waterfall tells of a spring created as the first source of water on earth by the gods when they found there was no water in the area.

Another highlight here occurs after sundown from mid-July to mid-September when LED lights in blue, yellow, purple, and pink shine along the walls of the gorge as well as Manai Waterfall as part of the Takachiho Gorge Illumination. The best point to view the falls is along the valley promenade, where 200 traditional-style lanterns are lighted at dusk, enhancing the atmosphere of the walk popular for an evening stroll. Another rare perspective afforded by the gorge is Sanbashi (Three Bridges), claimed to be the only spot in Japan where you can see three arched bridges in one view. Each shows a variation in construction from different eras of Japan: Shinbashi, with stone masonry over a concrete arch; Takachiho Ohashi, made of steel in the Showa era (1926–1989); and Shinto Takachiho Ohashi, a bridge entirely of concrete constructed in the Heisei era (1989–2019).