

Mt. Tenjo

Mt. Tenjo, which rises 972 meters above sea level, is located deep in the mountainous Tsutsuga district of southern Akiota. A trail leads from the foot of the mountain—which includes the Ryuzu gorge, a base for so-called Forest Therapy—to the forest known as Hikiake no Mori in the middle, then on to the summit. The trail is strenuous both uphill and downhill, and is only recommended for experienced hikers.

Hikiake no Mori is virtually primary forest, filled with giant—in both height and girth—cryptomeria, *hinoki* cypress, fir, and Japanese horse chestnut trees, among others. Most of the trees are between 100 and 400 years old. Trekking through Hikiake no Mori feels like walking through the past, present, and future: toppled, disintegrating trees lie next to both thick, leafy ones and young, budding plants. To protect this precious forest, hikers should be careful not to disturb the wildlife and to stay on the trail, where majestic views await those who complete the climb to the summit.