

Lake Motosuko

Lake Motosuko lies southwest of Lake Shojiko, near the border with Shizuoka Prefecture. It is the deepest of the Fuji Five Lakes, reaching 138 meters in depth.

In the past, the provinces of Kai (modern-day Yamanashi Prefecture) and Suruga (modern-day Shizuoka Prefecture) were connected by the Nakamichi Okan road. The lakeside village of Motosu, like the village of Shoji on Lake Shojiko's shores, was a key point on the road. Motosu Castle also stood nearby, on a mountain to the northeast. Researchers believe that the Takeda clan of Kai built the castle to monitor movements of people and supplies between their province and Suruga. Only the castle's ruins remain today.

Fuji-ko pilgrims performed *suigyō* purification rites on the lake's eastern shore, not far from the village of Motosu. Because this area was formed by lava filling the existing lake, the shore is bare igneous rock; there is no "beach." After finishing their ablutions, the pilgrims would continue south across the border to Suruga.