

## **Mountain Biking in Hakone**

Mountain biking is one of the most comfortable and convenient ways to tour the Hakone wilderness. Tour operators provide all the necessary equipment, including helmets and bottled water, and let participants customize tours to their liking. Standard three-hour excursions of the Sengokuhara area start at the Visitor Center, from which a local guide will take you past Lake Ashi and through a forest up toward hills that overlook the northern end of the lake. On a clear day, this route affords impressive views of the Hakone peaks and Mt. Fuji. The return route passes by natural sights such as Nukuyu, a series of warm-water ponds that stay a steady 22°C–24°C year-round thanks to a nearby hot spring. These 17-kilometer tours are available both in the morning and afternoon and can be reserved for one to 12 participants. Riders should be at least 135 centimeters tall. Another option for seeing Hakone on two wheels is the 18-kilometer “power spot” tour, which is recommended for inexperienced cyclists and takes participants to see some of the major sights along the shores of Lake Ashi.