

Hiruzen Hiking Trails: Mt. Naka-Hiruzen Trailhead

This trailhead leads to the summits of Mt. Naka-Hiruzen (1,123 m), Mt. Kami-Hiruzen (1,202 m), and Mt. Shimo-Hiruzen (1,100 m), the three peaks collectively known as the Hiruzen Sanza.

The trail ascends the south side of Mt. Naka-Hiruzen, gaining about 600 meters of elevation. Pockets of beech forest are scattered along the ridgeline near the peak. Shortly before the summit, the path forks to the west and east.

The **west** fork heads first to the summit of Mt. Naka-Hiruzen, which gives excellent views of the Hiruzen Highlands to the south and the Sea of Japan to the north. In damp, cool weather, dense mists tend to collect in the lower elevations of the Hiruzen Basin, affording dramatic views of what is called an *unkai*, or “sea of clouds.” Hiking this 2.7-kilometer section takes 1.5 to 2 hours (one way).

Continuing west along the ridgeline for 1.6 kilometers, hikers can reach the summit of Mt. Kami-Hiruzen in about 1 hour. From there the trail continues west, leading eventually to another trailhead entrance and parking. Hikers who follow this path about 0.5 kilometers past the Kami-Hiruzen summit will be rewarded with excellent views of Mt. Daisen, a massive dormant volcano in neighboring Tottori Prefecture. In June, pale-pink bamboo lilies bloom along the trail.

Hikers who head **east** at the original fork will need between 1.5 and 2 hours to traverse the roughly 3 kilometers to the summit of Mt. Shimo-Hiruzen. There they will find panoramic views of the highlands and fields of bamboo grass lining its eastern face.