

Visiting the Hiruzen Winery

Built in 2010, the Hiruzen Winery facility Coignetiae welcomes guests with a café, shop, and tasting counter that showcase the wild grapes of the native *yamabudō* species.

Café

The café space serves freshly prepared dishes made with local produce and designed to pair well with Hiruzen wines. For a full meal, the daily lunch plate features seasonal produce and is served with bread and soup. Customers can also try local Jersey beef in a flavorful curry or roasted and served over rice in a *donburi* bowl. Wines are available by the glass, as well as small accompanying bites such as olives, nuts, and an assortment of local cheeses. There is even *yamabudō* soft-serve ice cream for dessert. Relax in the sunny indoor dining room with views of the surrounding hills, or try the patio for al fresco dining.

Tasting Counter

At the tasting counter, visitors can sample a selection of Hiruzen wines. At least ten are on offer at all times, either free or for a small fee, depending on the selection. The knowledgeable staff—and often the owner himself—are standing by to answer any questions.

Shop

The wine shop carries the full Hiruzen Winery lineup, including the popular Hillzen series made with 100-percent *yamabudō* grapes, the Sanzan series of blends, and the award-winning Okayama Pione dessert wine. The shop also offers brandies and other liqueurs produced in-house, such as a potent grappa made by distilling the *yamabudō* wine lees, and tart *yamabudō* juice, delicious on its own or as a cocktail mixer. Locally produced cheeses and other specialties like tinned venison are also available to complete a perfect *aperitivo* menu.

Tour

A windowed hallway extends from the shop into the production area, so visitors can see the fermentation tanks, bottling machine, and distillation equipment in action. A small vineyard behind the building offers a closer look at the unique trellising used here, as well as the chance to examine *yamabudō* vines up close.

Volunteer

Visitors looking to learn about *yamabudō* cultivation first-hand may wish to assist with the winery's vine maintenance. Interested parties should inquire at the Maniwa Visitor Center for details.