

Miyagi *Olle*: Oku-Matsushima Trail

Olle (pronounced o-ru-re) trails are hiking routes that bring together nature, history, and the local community. These beginner-friendly trails are usually around 10 kilometers long and can be completed in about 4 hours. In Korea, where *olle* originated, the word means “the alley that connects the main road to your home.” The trails thus often pass by homes and little settlements, giving hikers a glimpse of local lifestyles. Besides the Oku-Matsushima Trail, Miyagi Prefecture has three other *olle*: the Kesenuma/Karakuwa, Osaki/Naruko Onsen, and Tome Trails. These are known collectively as the Miyagi *Olle*.

The 10-kilometer Oku-Matsushima Trail begins and ends at the Aomina Visitor Center, making it a convenient, short hike for visitors who wish to experience the beach, forest, and little settlements of the Oku-Matsushima area. The trail winds past small temples and seaside houses, the terraced flower fields of Satohama Historical Park, sheltered Hatsutsuura Bay, Shinhama promontory, and finally, a lushly forested path that leads to Mt. Otakamori, a highlight of the trail. The vista from the top of this 105.8-meter peak is named Sokan, literally “gorgeous view,” and offers one of the best views of Matsushima Bay.