

## **Nobesawa Silver Mine**

For nearly a century from around 1600, the mountains around Ginzan Onsen were mined mostly by hand, and silver was sent to the government in Edo (present-day Tokyo). The Nobesawa Silver Mine once had 53 mining tunnels, but now only one remains open to the public. This 20-meter-long tunnel gives visitors the chance to imagine what labor was like for miners hundreds of years ago.

The tunnel is cold year-round, and even now blackened sections of the cave walls and floor remain as evidence of *yakibori* (literally “burn digging”) mining. Using this technique, rocks were heated using charcoal, then doused with cold water until they became brittle, making them easier to break and extract the silver ore.