

Otaki Lake Park

Otaki Lake Park is located at the eastern end of Otaki Gorge, between the city of Toyota and Matsudaira-go. Otaki Lake is an artificial lake created by damming the Nio River that flows through Otaki Gorge. The walk to the park from the entrance to the gorge takes roughly an hour, but there are also parking lots within a 10-minute walk of the lake.

In contrast to the western (lower) end of the gorge, which has narrow paths covered by trees, the Otaki Lake area is brighter and more open. The park is a favorite spot for outdoor barbecues, especially in autumn when the leaves on the surrounding maple trees turn bright orange and red. From winter through spring, Japanese camellias, plum trees, and cherry trees are in bloom.

Otaki Lake Bridge is a 90-meter red arched bridge leading to the park and offers a clear view of the dam and the river beyond it. Further north of the lake is a smaller bridge leading to the Nio River rapids and the Miyagawa walking trail. The path gives an up-close view of the rushing water and the towering rocks in the river. Floating through the rapids is possible if wearing appropriate swimming and safety gear.