

## **Making the Most of the River**

The Shimanto River is wide and slow and is ideal for river recreation. Roadside stores and camping grounds along Route 340 have rental equipment such as canoes, kayaks, rafts, and stand-up paddleboards (SUP). Guided canoe tours with instruction are available at several points along the river.

### *Cruising*

*Yakatabune* (traditional houseboats) are a relaxing way to explore Japan's rivers. The roofed wooden boats are low enough to pass under the *chinkabashi* submersible bridges and operate along the middle and lower reaches of the river. Lunch and dinner cruises include meals of locally caught river fish. In early summer, fireflies light up the banks of the river near Takase Bridge, adding natural entertainment to an evening cruise.

Sailboats ply the waters in the northern part of Nakamura, offering short tours, and a glimpse of the Shimanto River of yesteryear. Before reliable roads were constructed, small boats with tall, rectangular sails called *senbasen* were the main means of transporting goods along the river. They were phased out after the *chinkabashi* bridges were introduced in the 1930s, when cars and trucks became more common. Now, a few replica *senbasen* offer short tours.

### *Paddling and playing*

The river's slow current makes it safe for canoeing, kayaking, and stand-up paddleboarding (SUP). Several tour operators along the river offer instruction and equipment rentals. Visitors can opt for half-day or full-day courses with instruction and optional guided tours. Several sections of the river have natural pebble beaches, which make popular swimming and snorkeling spots in summer.