

Walking Paths in Kikuchi Gorge

Kikuchi Gorge can be explored on two walking paths that start at the gorge's visitor center and go uphill along the Kikuchi River from there. The shorter path is approximately 1 kilometer in length and takes about 40 minutes to finish, while the longer is 2 kilometers and can be completed in 1 hour and 20 minutes. Neither trail is particularly demanding, and no special equipment is required.

From the visitor center, the shorter path crosses a bridge over the river in front of Reimei Falls, the most photographed feature of the gorge. It continues past the Momijigase shallows, an area noted for its maple trees and thick moss. Upon reaching the Ryugabuchi pool the trail traverses another bridge, this one providing a view of Tengu Falls, one of the largest and loudest waterfalls in the gorge. It then turns back toward the starting point, providing views of the river from above during a gentle descent to the visitor center.

The longer path follows the same course as the shorter one until Ryugabuchi, from where it ascends through a forested section toward Yonjusanman Falls. Beyond this series of cascades in various shapes and sizes lies the Hirokawara area, a calm part of the river where the path crisscrosses between small pools inhabited by frogs, salamanders, and water insects. A bridge over Hirokawara leads to a gazebo that marks the trail's turning point. The path then snakes along a steep mountainside above the river before reuniting with the shorter trail at Tengu Falls.

Guided "Health Tourism" walking tours are also offered in the gorge. Please inquire about details and prices at the Kikuchi Tourist Information Center.