

Shimizu Onsen

Shimizu Onsen is a sodium hydrogen carbonate spring with alkaline waters that are believed to lift away dead, dry skin cells and cleanse the pores, promoting smooth skin. Its history is closely tied to the development of the surrounding community.

Although Shimizu's residents had known of the spring's existence for many decades, a bathing facility was not built to enjoy it until the 1980s. At the time, Shimizu's population had shrunk to just a few thousand from a peak of 11,377 in 1960. In order to create jobs and attract visitors to the area, a public foundation was established to build bathing and lodging facilities at Shimizu Onsen.

In 2024, a brand-new bathing facility opened next door to the original Shimizu Onsen. It has modern amenities, such as a mist sauna and cypress wood relaxation lounge. In keeping with the hot spring's original purpose

of supporting the community, the current facility was largely designed and built by local experts, and high-quality lumber from Aridagawa was used throughout the building.

Another new feature of Shimizu Onsen is a cold water bath (*mizuburo*) that uses pure spring water. Most hot springs are 25 degrees Celsius or hotter at the source and require the addition of cold water to be used as a *mizuburo*. This has the downside of diluting the beneficial mineral content. Since Shimizu's waters naturally range from 17 to 23 degrees, the *mizuburo* is instead filled with undiluted, mineral-rich water.