

NOT ONLY MT. FUJI ATTRACTS MOUNTAIN LOVERS TO JAPAN



Japan lures hikers and climbers. Among their 14 UNESCO sites two are in the mountains. The tourist board includes hiking in their promotion campaign for 2009.

Japan is definitely not an unknown country. It is a business hub and it is also known to tourists. The country offers wonderful experience to people interested in history and culture. After all Japan boasts with **14 UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.

However, it is not only the cultural heritage that may lure tourists in here. The country also provides various possibilities for hikers. The Japan National Tourist Office promotes hiking and mountain climbing as an attractive pastime for this summer. Various mountains and hiking paths are opened to public since mid spring for all summer long.

The country can offer a hiking tour for both advanced hikers and for beginners. Among the UNESCO sites two are in the mountains. The first one is **Shirakami Mountain Range**. This site is not very accessible and the intention is to keep it that way so that the unique environment remains untouched. There is, however, a possibility to go on a 5.5-hour hike to the top of Shirakami-Dake from where tourists may enjoy a nice view of the Shirakami Mountains.

Another interesting UNESCO World Heritage site is the **Yakushima Island** with its ancient deep cedar forest. The highest point is Miyano-ura-Dake, at 6,352 ft (1,936 m). This site already is popular with World Heritage Sites tourists.

When writing about hiking in Japan we cannot omit to mention the symbol of Japan, **Mt. Fuji**. The country's highest peak (12,388 ft, 3,776 m) is a very popular site for all tourists who visit the country. Every year approximately 200,000 people travel to the top of Mt. Fuji which is open to the public from July 1 through Aug. 26. There are 19 cabins available to climbers and the trail itself is divided to 10 levels. A tourist may get to the top in five hours or more according to the path they chose. Probably the most popular experience for tourists climbing the mountain is to watch a sunrise from the top.

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Date: 2009-06-22

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/japanese-mountain-tourism-to-get-a-boost-news1684>