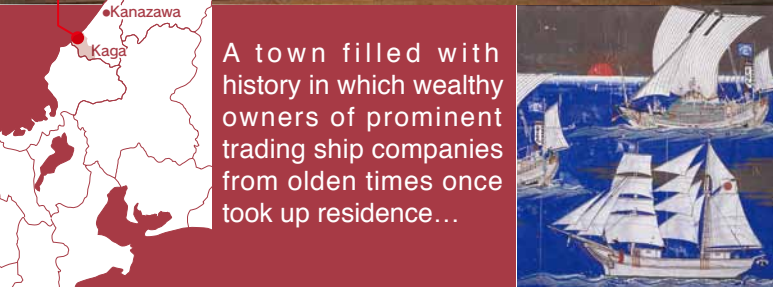


A Historical Promenade in Hashitate Walking Map



A town filled with history in which wealthy owners of prominent trading ship companies from olden times once took up residence...



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A Gastronomical Promenade in Hashitate Walking Map

A fishing port providing myriads of unforgettable delicacies such as the snow crab: righteously dubbed "the king of winter flavors"...

Hashitate and the glorious heritage of Kitamaebune

During the seclusion of Japan, companies of trading vessels connecting the ports of Osaka and Hakodate in Hokkaido were thriving. All along the Sea of Japan's shores, the ships known as "Kitamaebune" (northern-bound ships) would stop at numerous ports of call such as Hashitate to buy and sell a great variety of goods. The fact that the area is conveniently located half-way from Osaka to Hokkaido may be the reason why many company owners, sailors and navigators would ultimately settle down in Hashitate. Having made tremendous fortunes out of their business, they built splendid houses for which no expense would be spared. Beyond the extraordinary adventure of men who braved the stormy waves to fulfil their dreams, the Kitamaebune ships played a crucial role in the changing and evolving of Japanese habits, culture and life-style. Hashitate which was once known as Japan's wealthiest village has managed to preserve its Kitamaebune heritage ever since and was recently registered as a national tangible cultural asset.

Discover the vestiges of the Kitamaebune adventure while strolling in the historical town of Hashitate.

Seen from the top of a hill, soft red tile roofs blend nicely in the panorama with the Sea of Japan in the distance. At first glimpse, Kitamaebune ship owners' houses of Hashitate may look a bit austere compared to their contemporary

The certified story "Nonpareil spaces recalling the dreams of men who overcame the stormy waves. The Kitamaebune ship owners' settlement areas"

Grasping the mountains in splendid sceneries, several scenic port towns still remain here and there along the Sea of Japan's coastal shores. All over these towns, small lanes leading to the harbor are still adorned with magnificent ship owners and merchant houses. The temples and shrines around preserve ex-voto pictures and consecrated model-ships. Religious festivals that once originated in Kyoto or likewise distant places are still performed as folk songs from an old distant past have kept being hummed around up to the present time. Those towns were known as port of calls and settlement areas for the merchants and ship owners of the then thriving northern-bound maritime trade companies. Braving the stormy waves, those men accumulated tremendous fortunes over the centuries, meanwhile bringing prosperity to the areas around the ports they would call in. All those recalled glorious stories create a distinctive atmosphere which ever since has not ceased to mesmerize the Kitamaebune towns' visitors. The "story of Kitamaebune" was certified as a joint project between the cities of Hakodate, Matsumaecho, Ajigasawacho, Fukauracho, Akita, Sakata, Nigata, Nagaoka, Tsuruga, Minamieichizencho and Kaga.

samurai residences. What is the most peculiar to their highly recognizable style is that it seems to blend together a certain sense of aesthetic with the robustness of experienced sailors. Their sea adventures have even made their way to the very structure of these houses whose facades are covered with ship boards to protect the houses from the deteriorating effects of the nearby Sea of Japan's salty breeze. Ship owners' residences continue to display a very distinctive atmosphere that pervades the townscape. Hashitate is taking us in another dimension, a unique place filled with history and emotions that breathes with the memories of men who braved the waves to pursue their dreams of prosperity.

Characteristic features

Stone walls

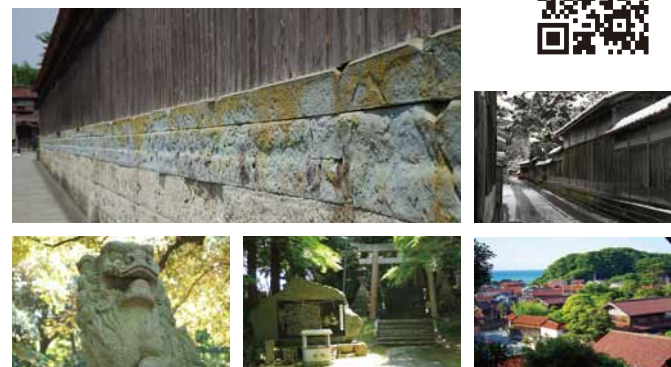
Of various height and length, the stone walls are meant to eliminate the difference of height in the site. The walls make use of volcanic stones from Shakudani in the nearby Fukui Prefecture; a stone which is famous for increasing its natural blueness when wet.

Wooden fences

In order to prevent the deteriorating effects of the sea breeze, many of the wooden fences stretching around the warehouses and mansions were assembled with reuse boards coming from the Kitamaebune ship's hulls. The wormholes that can be seen on many of them are glorious prints from their past existence.

Red tiles

The brownish red tiles incorporating iron powder are a notorious feature of Hashitate's townscape. Back in the days those red tiles were a symbol of wealth. There is also a house covered with Shakudani stones instead of ridge tiles.



Website



A town blessed with sea delicacies

Hashitate is a fishing port town located at the southern tip of Ishikawa Prefecture that is well known around as one of the most important fishing grounds in the area. Several hundreds of fishes and shellfishes such as crabs and sweet shrimps are caught daily, allowing Hashitate's visitors to enjoy delicious sea products anytime throughout the year.

The proximity of the fishing ground is the key to Hashitate's fish freshness and taste.

With daily fish catches quickly unloaded at the port and sold soon after during evening auctions, you can enjoy a product that was harvested on this very day for dinner.



Seafood seasons: be sure to try the best products at the right season!

Spring

"Madai" - red snapper, "amadai" - sweet bream, "aji" - horse mackerel, "akagarei" - red righteye flounder, "wakame" (Apr. 15th - Jun. 30th), "mozuku" seaweed

Summer

"Amadai" - sweet bream, "kurumaebi" - kuruma prawn, "shitahirame" - sole, "akaika" - red squid, "iwagaki" - rock oyster (Jun. 15th - Aug. 30th), "sazae" - turban shell (Jul. 1st - Aug. 20th), "awabi" - abalone

Autumn

"Amaebi" - sweet shrimp, "hatahata" - sailfin sandfish, "megisu" - dottedback, "akagarei" - red righteye flounder, "sasagarei" - willow flounder, "baigai" - whelk

Winter

"Zuwaigani" snowcrab (male Nov. 6th - Mar. 20th, female "kobakogani" Nov. 6th - late Dec.), "akagarei" red righteye flounder, "toraebi" velvet shrimp, "ankoh" - goosefish

Kitamaebune's features

The Kitamaebune Museum



The Museum is hosted in a splendid mansion, built in 1878, that used to be the residence of Chohei Sakatani one of the most affluent ship owner of the time. The museum exhibits a large collection of maps, pictures, handwritten documents and navigation tools related to the Kitamaebune's heyday.

Open: 9:00 to 17:00 (last entry entrance at 16:30) / ¥310
Open daily



Kitamaebune ship owner house Zorokuen

Property of a branch of the Sakatani family, yet another splendid house especially noted for its beautiful garden gathering a fascinating collection of stones and rocks of rather unusual shapes collected all over the country. Both the materials used and the collections collection of crafts on display give an idea of the wealthy life-style that the company owners enjoyed at that time.

Open: 9:00 to 17:00 / ¥400
Open daily (Closed occasionally)



A string of nice spots on the Sea of Japan

Amagozen Cape

Very close to an expressway service area, a short stroll leads to an impressive viewpoint towards the Sea of Japan. These rolling coastline and spectacular cliffs are part of the registered Echizen-Kaga Coastline Quasi-National Park.



Kasa no Misaki Cape

Highly recognizable by its white lighthouse, this is Kaga's westernmost extent to the Sea of Japan and an increasingly sought after viewing spot in the area. On a clear day, one can grasp from here both the coastlines of Noto and Tojinbo.

Sea bathing in the summer

In July and August, enjoy bathing and swimming safely in Hashitate where the sea and wind are usually calm.



Flower viewing spots

Facing the ocean, wild irises bloom on the cliffs of Kasa no Misaki in early June: a very graceful and rather unusual landscape. Later on, around mid-June, the Lyzrangea flowers on the slopes of Izumihama are particularly appreciated by the locals.

Enjoy a great variety of gourmet sea products in Hashitate!

"Zuwai-gani", male snow crab

Harvested from November to March, the "King of winter flavors" is big enough to be cooked and enjoyed in several ways. Savouring at least once in a lifetime this incomparable taste is still worth a price easily stretching according to the demand.



"Kobako-gani", female snow crab

Harvested in November and December the female snow crab is smaller and much more affordable. Having a lot of eggs, the locals get the best of its flavors by cooking the "kobako-gani" either in hot pot or miso soup.



"Ama-ebi", sweet shrimp

Harvested in autumn and winter, the "ama-ebi" is truly as sweet as a commonly-dubbed "sweet shrimp" should be. Noted for its graceful pink shade, its delicate taste is much appreciated raw within a sahimu assortment.

Seafood dishes using local delicacies



Hashitate is one of the prominent fishing ports on the Sea of Japan's shores. Strolling in town, you will find plenty of shops, restaurants and guesthouses run by fishermen where you can enjoy authentic local seafood dishes all year round.



Recommended souvenirs from Hashitate



"Hoshi amaebi", dried sweet shrimps

The dried and crispy sweet shrimp can be eaten with its shell containing a lot of calcium. Its natural salty taste and rich flavor makes it a popular snack.

Fujigiku soy sauce

This is a popular local soy sauce renowned for its sweet taste that will enhance the ingredients' delicate flavors.



Dried seaweed

Slightly roasted and hand-rubbed, it is delicious poured on steaming plain rice or hot miso soup.



Ichiyaboshi, overnight dried fish

Seasonal fish dried for just one night. When grilled the flesh turns fluffy and exhales great flavours. Righteye flounder, sailfin sandfish and dottedback make particularly popular "ichiyaboshi".

