

Scenes of the New Year's Season



Cape Inubosaki: Choshi, Chiba Prefecture

Cape Inubosaki in Choshi, Chiba Prefecture, is located about 100 kilometers (60 miles) east of Tokyo and 50 km (30 miles) east of Narita International Airport. It is famous as the location where the New Year's sun rises first on the Japanese mainland. Making one's New Year's resolutions while watching the first sunrise of the year is a Japanese custom, and on the morning of January 1 Cape Inubosaki is thronged with visitors from around the country. At the tip of the cape is historic Inubosaki Lighthouse, built in 1874. The sight of the sun rising beyond this lighthouse over the vast Pacific offers the many visitors a captivating scene.



Bitchu Matsuyama Castle: Takahashi, Okayama Prefecture

Bitchu Matsuyama Castle is about an hour's drive from the prefectural capital of Okayama. Built near a summit at an elevation of 430 meters (about 1,400 feet), it is the highest among the mountain castles of Japan that have their original donjon. From autumn to winter, the surrounding basin is sometimes shrouded in morning mist, becoming a magnificent sea of clouds. This phenomenon only occurs for a few hours around sunrise on days when the weather is fair and the temperature has fallen sharply at dawn. But when it happens, a fantastic panorama comes into view as the rays of the rising sun strike the castle, which seems to float in the sea of clouds under the crisp, clear sky.