

A Season for Floral Brilliance



Kintaikyo Bridge: Iwakuni, Yamaguchi Prefecture

Kintaikyo Bridge, a beautifully shaped wooden structure, is the symbol of the city of Iwakuni, about an hour and a half by plane from Tokyo. The structure has five spans, something rarely seen in wooden bridges around the world. The arches of the three middle spans are particularly impressive. The bridge has charmed Iwakuni's residents and visitors for 300 years. This famous attraction displays changing aspects according to the season. Especially beautiful is the view in spring, when the wooden structure is complemented by the pink cherry blossoms of the trees on the riverside, a distinctively Japanese scenic collaboration.



The Sea of Japan and Daffodils: Echizen Coast, Fukui Prefecture

The Echizen Coast on the Sea of Japan, located about 150 kilometers (90 miles) northeast of Kyoto, is one of Japan's three main sites where wild daffodils grow in profusion. The flowers cover an area of some 60 hectares (150 acres). As many as five million white daffodils bloom fragrantly on steep seaside slopes against the backdrop of the vast, often wild waters of the sea below. The sight of the flowers standing firmly in the cold wind from the Sea of Japan has struck the hearts of Japanese people, inspiring haiku and other poetic compositions and serving as material for paintings and photographs. The highly aromatic and long-lasting daffodil is the prefectural flower of Fukui and is commercially cultivated by local growers.