

# Nanshin, Blessed with Breathtaking Views and History

The Nanshin Region, nestled between two 3,000-meter-high mountain ranges located almost in the center of the Japanese archipelago, offers magnificent beauty and preserves its old farming village traditions such as original folk customs



## A local train line offering an eclectic journey

The local JR Iida Line runs north to south through the Nanshin Region. Out the windows, passengers not only can enjoy the beautiful rural scenery, but also a stunning expanse of mountains and gorges. In addition, they can enjoy unexplored regions such a station that stands on the edge of a mountain cliff and a station that can only be accessed via a suspension bridge.

## Scenery reminiscent of a landscape painting

In the center of the Nanshin Region, embraced by the imposing two mountain ranges, the Tenryu river flows from north to south. The Tenryu-kyo Valley, located in an area midway down the river, is a scenic region featuring cliffs sliced out of mountains by strong river currents. The spectacular view of the lush green forests, the massive rocks and strange rock formations is even more exceptional when one gazes over the scenery from a boat descending down the river.



## A sanctuary with images of an ancient faith

The Suwa Grand Shrine, located in Suwa City in the northern part of the Nanshin Region, is one of the oldest shrines in Japan and has about 10 thousand branches throughout the country. Enshrined there is the guardian deity of wind and water, which is also worshipped as the god of rich harvest or the god of heroism.



## A traditional food loved since ancient times

In Nagano Prefecture, where the Nanshin Region is located, buckwheat grain has been cultivated since ancient times. "Soba noodles" are thin noodles made from ground buckwheat flour and are a healthy food representative of Japanese cuisine. Soba noodles are sometimes eaten with hot broth soup, but in those areas where soba has been eaten for generations such as the Nanshin Region, it is more common to eat it with cold broth soup and wasabi.

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## Conveying classical performing arts to the future

The Nanshin Region, where many ancient festivals and events have been maintained, is also known for its flourishing puppet shows, known as *Ningyo Joruri*, which is a Japanese classical performing art. In Iida City, which boasts a history of 300 years, Japan's largest international puppet theater festival is held with the intention to convey this tradition to future generations.

