



Tinged with seasonal splendor throughout the year...
Cycle amidst a wondrous natural landscape of mountains, rivers and lakes.

Welcome to Shiga

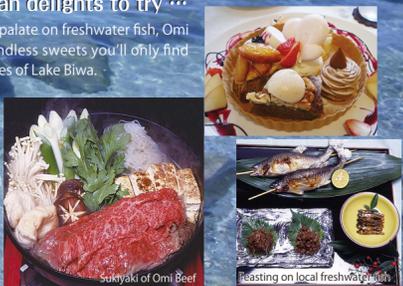
'The Wind Serenades You and the Waves Entice You'
Proud Location of Japan's Biggest Lake

Imagine blue skies and forested mountains reflecting off a lake. Then, picture yourself on a bicycle Pedaling around its shores. Biwaichi offers a great way to take in Lake Biwa with all 5 senses and come out feeling elated, fulfilled and rewarded. There is so much for you to discover, learn and relish about Shiga Prefecture. Do it on a bicycle! Ride Biwaichi!

History everywhere...
Travel to sites with long histories and discover how generals lived in Japan's century of civil war.



Epicurean delights to try...
Tickle your palate on freshwater fish, Omi Beef and endless sweets you'll only find on the shores of Lake Biwa.



Nagisa Park (Otsu)



Hiyoshi-taisha Shrine (Otsu)

Cultural immersion...
Encounter a contemplative way of life and faith nurtured by nature.



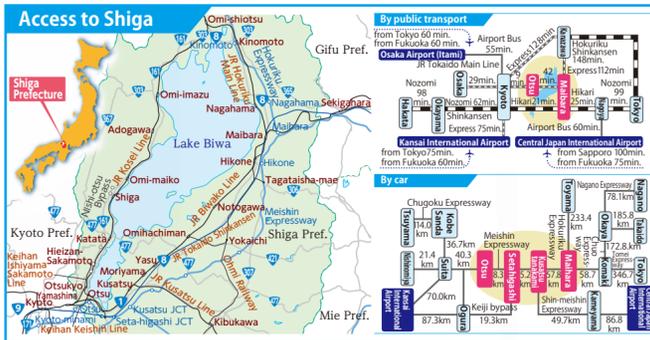
Biwaichi (ビワイチ) is the code word for circling the entire perimeter of Japan's largest lake, Lake Biwa. It is particularly used in reference to circling the lake on a bicycle.



Architectural works of William Merrell Voiles (Omihachiman)



Seta-no-karashashi Bridge (Otsu)



BIWAICHI Cycle Support Station

Field service for those who enjoy riding around Lake Biwa.

The aid stations provide bike pump rentals and restrooms for cyclists. About 130 amenities (convenience stores, roadside stations, restaurants, cafes, hotels, etc.) in Shiga.

Contents for basic support.

- Restrooms
- Bike tools and pumps

This banner is a symbol for aid stations!

Example: Sajo-townshop (Otsu)

Biwako Free Wi-Fi

In Shiga Prefecture you can use Biwako Free Wi-Fi. This icon is displayed where Biwako Free Wi-Fi is available. Methods of connecting may vary depending upon the location of use. Please check this website for more information.

URL: <https://biwako-wifi-info.jp/about?locale=en>

Bicycle Insurance Required in Shiga Prefecture

By prefectural ordinance, anyone who wants to ride a bicycle in Shiga Prefecture must have 'private or group' insurance that covers all accidents related to bicycle use'. Before setting out on your trip, check whether you have insurance or not and the coverage provided by your policy. Insurance is included in rental rates at some locations. For details, contact the rental bicycle location.

Cycling Map of Shiga Prefecture - Let's cycle around Lake Biwa! March 2017

[For more information]

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R270 GREENABLE
This map was printed on 70% recycled paper with vegetable oil ink using a system driven by wind power.

Cycling Map of Shiga Prefecture

Let's cycle around Lake Biwa!



Facts & Tips for Cycling around Lake Biwa

One lap around Lake Biwa is about 200 km. Seasoned riders can cover this distance in one day, but we recommend you take 2 or 3 days and do some sightseeing and try the local food along the way. You can also do just the northern half of the lake, which is about 150 km ride, or the southern half of the lake, which is about a 50 km ride, or you can combine biking and ferry rides. The lake should be circled in the counterclockwise direction. So, since bicycles must be ridden on the left side of the road like cars in Japan, the lake will be on your left. This puts you that much closer to the shore and makes your ride easier because there are less roads to cross. The best seasons are spring and autumn. In summer, you must watch out for heatstroke. Winter, though beautiful in its own way, is not suited for cycling because of the snow accumulation.

Plan your trip out

Plan your trip on an assumed average speed of 12 km/h and include breaks.

For a 2-day 1-night trip
If departing from Otsu, you should consider somewhere around Kinomoto (approx. 96 km of riding) for staying the night. If starting from Maibara, somewhere around Omi-maiko (approx. 85 km of riding) would be good.

For a 3-day 2-night trip
If departing from Otsu, you should consider somewhere around Hikone (65 km) for the first night and somewhere around Omi-takashima (80km) for the second night. If starting from Maibara, somewhere around Omi-takashima (75km) would be good for the first night and somewhere around Omihachiman (86km) for the second night.

Beginners who are thinking of 2 days and 1 night, doing just the northern half of the lake (150 km around) instead of the full 200 km round would not be unreasonable, or you might also want to explore the possibilities and benefits of a 3-day 2-night journey. We recommend covering a shorter distance on the first day and giving yourself plenty of leeway so that you can arrive at your lodging early. Get as early of a start as possible and plan out your ride so as to get to your overnight destination by 17:00, especially if travelling between October and April when the sun sets earlier in the day.



Bicycle recommendations

Choose a 'sports bike' for your ride.

Road bike (Rated ★★)
A road bike is built for road racing, so it is made to cover long distances at high speeds. However, you have to be somewhat used to the thin tires, drop bars and forward-leaning riding posture. More recently, manufacturers have come out with many long-rise models that can be ridden in a more comfortable posture for people who are not looking for race-competitive speeds.

Mountain bike (Rated ★★)
As its name suggest, a mountain bike is built for off-road riding such as on mountain trails. All Biwaichi courses travel on paved surfaces, so the deep treads typical of mountain bike tires will meet with greater resistance.

Minivelo (Small diameter tire bike) (Rated ★★)
A minivelo uses small wheels of no more than 20 inches in diameter. Foldable types work great in combining riding with public transportation like trains, buses or ferries. However, the minivelo offers less riding performance than road bikes and cross bikes.

Cross bike (Rated ★★)
This genre of sports bicycle comes with straight handlebars and slightly wider on-road tires. Though a cross bike does not reach the speeds of a road bike, it is operated much like a city bike, so first-timers will feel safe riding it.

Check your bike out before riding

To ensure safe riding, check the following before heading out on your ride. If you do not feel capable of checking you bike properly, consult a bicycle shop, etc.

Tires
Check that your tires are properly inflated and not scratched, damaged or deformed in any way. Also, spin your tires by hand and check if they are warped.

Brakes
Try moving your bike forward and back with the front and rear brakes squeezed, and check that the brakes are working properly and are not loose. Also, check that the rubber brake shoes are not worn down and that the brake wires are not damaged in any way.

Tightness of assembled parts
Raise one tire at a time about 10 cm off the ground, then drop the bike and listen for sounds that might suggest loose parts. Check also that the handlebars and seat are aligned straight and tight.

Chain and gears
Check your chain for dirt and grime. It should be lubricated only to the degree that it looks slightly wet. Also, check that your gears function properly.

Lights
Make sure that your front lights are sufficiently bright. (When riding through tunnels, you are required to turn your lights ON. On the rear, it is safer to mount a taillight and have it flicker the whole time you are riding, rather than rely on reflectors.)

Bell
Check that your bike has a bell and that it actually rings.

Position
Once your bike clears all of the above checks, check your riding position and posture. The proper seat height is when, seated with your heels on the pedals, your knees can fully extend. If the ball of your foot cannot touch the ground when seated, lower the seat slightly. At that same height, try grabbing the handlebars and check that your posture is not unbearable. If too strenuous, you should adjust the position of your handlebars. Also, make sure that you can easily operate the brake and gear levers.

Clothing and carried items

Bicycling is a sport. Choose clothing that is appropriate for doing sports. Minimize and bundle carried items in as light and small of a baggage as possible.

Helmet
For your safety, always wear a helmet. Helmets are also easy for drivers to spot.

Eyewear
It is wise to wear sunglasses or eyeglasses in order to protect your eyes against the sunlight, flying insects, kicked-up rocks, etc.

What to bring with you

- Water bottle
- Food (Portable supplements)
- Flat tire repair kit (Spare tube, portable pump and tools)
- Bicycle lock
- Change of clothes
- Map
- Rain gear
- First-aid kit
- Other (Cash, credit card, smartphone, camera, etc.)

Torso
Wear multiple layers of clothing that you can take off or put on when you feel hot or cold. You will be sweating, so we recommend 'dry' wear be worn against the skin.

Legs
Stretchwear that does not inhibit leg motion is a must. Do not wear stiff denim or the like. If your butt hurts, we recommend using padded innerwear. You must also be careful that cuffs do not get caught in the chain.

Gloves
Gloves dampen the impacts transmitted to your hands. They also protect hands should you fall.

Shoes
The best shoes for riding are low-cut athletic shoes with hard soles. Laces must be kept tied so that they do not get entangled in the chain.

Flat tire repair kit

Mini pump

Spare tube

Riding style

You should know how to ride long distances without straining yourself, as well as the basics of riding a bicycle.

Using the proper gear
The best gear for riding long distances is that which makes it slightly easy to pedal. Switch gears as often as needed when climbing slopes or riding into the wind, so that you keep pedaling at a constant speed.

Taking breaks
Rest for 5 - 10 minutes every hour of Pedaling. Longer breaks can be counterproductive.

Staying hydrated
Bicycling causes you to sweat more than you think. It is best to hydrate yourself constantly rather than waiting till you feel thirsty.

Braking
The right brake lever is for the front wheel and the left brake lever for the rear wheel. Braking with just one or the other can cause you to fall. So, brake with both hands.

Replenishing your energy
Unless you eat something, you might run out of energy and find yourself unable to ride. A hearty breakfast before setting out on your ride is particularly important. Replenish your energy often as you ride. And, since there are many great food options along the way, why not try some of the local treats!

To relieve fatigue
Stretch a little before riding and massage your muscles during breaks. A good massage at the end of a day's ride greatly lessens the fatigue that carries over to the next day. Fatigue accumulates in the latter half of a trip and can cause you to hit obstacles you would normally avoid or fall when riding over different levels. Therefore, be especially careful.

Traffic rules and etiquette

Like cars, bicycles are to be ridden on the left of vehicle roads. Also, you must be considerate of pedestrians.

Ride on the left of vehicle lanes in Japan!
A bicycle is a vehicle of sorts. Under the law, bicycles must be ridden in the farthest left lane of the roadway. Bicycles may be ridden on sidewalks where marked 'Bicycles Permitted on Sidewalk', but pedestrians have the right-of-way. If you encounter pedestrians, slow down and pass them with safe clearance. If you cannot pass them safely, stop and walk your bike. Do not ring your bell!

Observe traffic rules!

- Obey signals at intersections. If the traffic light in front of you is red, you cannot proceed forward or turn left. If wanting to turn right, ride on the left edge of the roadway, first cross the street before you, then, once across, turn to the right and cross the street you were just on.
- Always come to a full stop at intersections. Bicycles must obey stop signs and roadway indications at intersections with poor visibility.
- Ride behind each other in a row. Do not ride side-by-side. Always turn lights ON in tunnels. Also, turn your lights ON if having to ride in the dark.
- It is prohibited to drink and ride, ride in twos (except for children under the age of 6 with proper child seat), ride with an open umbrella, or use a cellphone or earphones while riding.

Be courteous to pedestrians and local residents!
A road is not a race course. People live and work in the area. Be appreciative of local residents for allowing Biwaichi to ride through their community. Be sure to reduce your speed when riding through villages. It will make those who get out of your way happy if you would say 'thank you'.

Hand signals (Whether riding alone or in a group)
Since bicycles are not equipped with indicators or brake lights, hand signals tell drivers and others behind you what your intentions are. Also, say what you are doing at the same time. If you are unable to use hand signals, you may just announce your intentions. Riding in a group is safer when trailing cyclists verbally acknowledge the leader's hand signals.

Major traffic signs

- Road Closed to All Traffic
- Road Closed to Vehicles
- No Bicycle
- No Vehicles
- One-way Street (Except bicycles)
- One-way Street (Except bicycles)

Hand signals:

- Turning left
- Turning right
- Stopping / 'Slowing down'
- 'Watch out for OO!' (To warn trailing cyclists of objects or level changes in the roadway)

Rental Bicycle locations in Shiga Prefecture

* Business hours, rates, usable area, return policy and other conditions of use differ by location. For details, contact the rental bicycle location. The coordinates in the MAP column indicate locations on the maps on the backside of this pamphlet. The mark before the coordinates indicates which map to use. (O): Otsu enlarged view, (K): Katata enlarged view, (H): Hikone enlarged view, (N): Nagahama enlarged view. Locations indicated in this color carry sports bicycles for long-distance cycling.

Name	MAP	Name	MAP
Katata Tourism Association (Kozoku-no-sato Museum)	(K)D11	Kokka Shop	K11
Outdoor Sports Club O'PAL (Biwako O'PAL)	(O)D11	Michi-no-Eki Alto Marguerite Station	M11
Ogoto Onsen Kaniko Park	(O)D11	Plaza Sanpohyoshi Tourist Information Center	K10
Sakamoto Tourism Association	(O)C12	Ohmi Railway Gokasho Station	K10
Biwako Otsukan	(O)C12	Creefee Koto Hotel	M10
Biwako Otsu Port	(O)C13	Aoki Bicycle Shop	J9
Otsu Port Parking	(O)C13	Rental Bicycle Shop Tanaka	J9
Biwako Hotel	(O)C13	Aisho Town Rental Bicycle Shop Megurinko	M10
Lake Biwa Otsu Prince Hotel	(O)D13	Tourist Information Center Kotoh-sanzan-kan-Aisho	M10
Nagisa Park Rental Bicycle Shop	(O)D13	Aisho Town Rental Bicycle Shop Megurinko	K9
JR Otsu Station Tourist Information Center	(O)D13	Community House Louvre-Echigawa	J9
Ekinfun Ishiyama Shop	(O)D13	Toyosato Town Rental Bicycle Shop Megurinko	J9
Hotaru-no-sato Ishiyama-dera Tourist Information Center	D14	in Former Toyosato Elementary School	L9
River hill Oishi	D15	Tourist Information Center	L9
Ekinfun Kusatsu Shop	E11	Kora Town Rental Bicycle Shop Megurinko	L8
Michi-no-Eki Kusatsu Green Plaza Karasuma	E12	Amago Station Community House	M6
Karasuma-hanto Rental Bicycle Shop	E13	Taga Town Rental Bicycle Shop Megurinko	M8
CAFE INTRO	E11	Taga Tourist Information Center	M8
JR Teihara ekimae Rental Bicycle Shop	F12	Taga Town Rental Bicycle Shop Megurinko	M8
JR Ritto Station East-exit Rental Bicycle Shop	F12	Taga-ekimae Tourist Information Center	M8
Ishibe Community House	H13	Sazanami Bicycle Shop	H1
Konan City Society of Commerce and Industry	H13	Ekinfun Hikone Shop	H1
Traditional Crafts Center of Shigaraki	H16	Hikone City Rental Bicycle Shop Megurinko	H1
Shigaraki Kohgen Railway Rental Bicycle Shop	H16	Hikone-ekimae Cycle Station	H1
JR Kibukawa Station Rental Bicycle Shop	J14	Tsushikawa Akira Bicycle Shop	H1
Suginoto Shop	J14	Maibara City Hall	M6
Ogawa Shop	K15	Biwako Isshu Rental Bicycle (Maibara-eki Cycle Station)	M6
JR Koka Station Rental Bicycle Shop	K15	Samegai Mizu-no-Eki	O6
JR Aburahi Station Rental Bicycle Shop	L15	Omi-haha-no-sato Community House	M6
Michi-no-Eki Ai-no-Tsuyama	M15	Michi-no-Eki Omi-haha-no-sato	M6
Giant Store Biwako Moriama	(K)E10	Green Park Santo	O5
Moriyama City Tourist Rental Bicycle Shop Misaki Park	(K)E10	Orik Rent a Car Nagahama Station West-exit Shop	(N)
Ekinfun Moriama Shop	F12	Tabichari Center (Nagahama Station West-exit Parking Shop)	(N)
Moriyama-city Tourist Rental Bicycle Shop Moriyama ekimae General Information Center	F12	Torahime Community House	M4
Moriyama City Tourist Rental Bicycle Shop Rise Ville Tsuyayama	F12	Kawake Station Community House	L3
Moriyama City Tourist Rental Bicycle Shop Uonke	F12	Takatsuki Tourist Information Center	L3
Moriyama City Tourist Rental Bicycle Shop Ohimichi	F12	Kinokoto Tourist Information Center	L2
Kyushokai Minamiguchi Cycle Center	G11	Yogo Station Community House	K2
Michi-no-Eki Anri Park Ryuu	J12	Omi-Hikitsu Station Community House	J2
Imose-no-sato	J12	Nagahara Station Community House Koki	J2
Hino Rental Bicycle Shop Shokien	L13	JR Makino Station Tourist Information Center	H3
Hino Rental Bicycle Shop Nishizuka Shop	L13	Tourist Information Center in JR Omi-imazu Station	G5
Hino Rental Bicycle Shop Hino Town Tourist Association	L13	Biwako Takashima Tourism Association	G6
Ekinfun Omihachiman Shop	L10	Blue 3196 (Cycle) & Soap	F6
Azuchi Rental Bicycle Shop Fukao	I10	Tourist Information Center in JR Adogawa Station	G6
Azuchi Rental Bicycle Shop Takashima	I10	Tourist Information Center in JR Omi-takashima Station	G7