

9 Owase streets



Here you can see a huge camphor tree estimated to be 1000 years old at the entrance to the shrine and the two Deva King statues guarding the gate of the temple next door. Owase's Ya Ya (quarreling) festival is held from February 1st to 5th. With loud shouts, groups of men violently ram into other groups. You can see it on YouTube.



The many stone sign posts that can still be found here attest to large numbers of pilgrims that came this way. Here at this gateway to Kumano is told a legend as old as the hills. When people first started settling this area thousands of years ago, two settlement appeared on each side of the harbor. Each sent a young emissary to investigate and they just happened to meet here. They talked and became friends, and when it was time to go home, they exchange a sleeve from their shirt as proof to the people back at their village of the encounter. And thus, Sodekata Bashi, "one sleeve bridge."



The old western style building and the traditional storehouse are used to display one of Japan's leading exhibits of antique toys at the "Doi Kodomo Kurashikan" (by advanced reservation only). You can also enjoy the atmosphere of the streets of Owase and feel how things used to be back in the good old days. The Doi family built an emergency disaster relief warehouse on high ground safe from tsunamis.



Just off the coast from the Mie prefecture Kumano-Kodo Center is an island with a red gate called Benzai Jima Island. There is a shrine dedicated to Benzaiten. Sometimes on the low tide, you can walk out to the island and enjoy observing the tide pools on the way.

Crossing Yakiyama Mount · Owase Streets

