

KUMANO KODO

Takahara to Chikatsuyu-oji (Nakahechi) | 高原から近露王子へ（中辺路）

Distance: ~9 km

Time: ~ 4 to 6 hrs

Start : Takahara

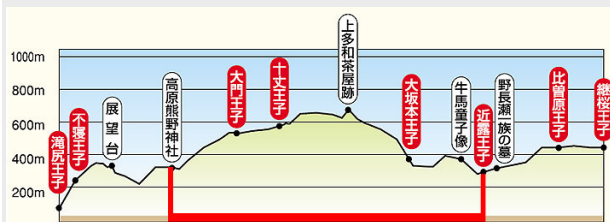
Finish : Chikatsuyu-oji (Chikatsuyu Village)

Access: Local Bus

The nearest bus stop is Kurisugawa on route 311.

It is a ~30 minute walk up hill to Takahara

Elevation Chart:



熊野古道

Takahara views



Kumano Kodo



Takahara village

Takahara is known as "Kiri-no-Sato" (Village in the Mist) because the scenic mountain vistas are often blanketed with mist. The valley below sometimes fills with fog, creating a beautiful sea of clouds.

Minamoto-no-Michikata, a nobleman who accompanied the retired emperor Gotoba on his pilgrimage to Kumano, composed the following waka poem:

In Takahara the moon
Rising above the mountaintop
Shines on a 1000-year-old pine

Past Takahara

From the Takahara parking area the trail runs up and east along a small walking path between houses and terraces fields.

This path is located directly south of the Takahara parking area on the other side of the road, look for a Kumano Kodo signpost pointing the way.

The walk

The trail from Takahara continues to climb into the mountains from the east end of the tiny settlement through the forest.

Gyuba-doji statue



Chikatsuyu village



Chikatsuyu-oji



About 1.5 hours past Takahara is the Jujo-oji clearing, a popular spot for picnic lunches. There is a toilet here.

The highest part of this trail is the remains of the Uwada-jaya Teahouse (~690 meters above sea level) near signpost number 18.

The trail then descends quickly past the Three-Fold Moon Viewing area to the creek by Osakamoto-oji.

The Three-Fold Moon is a legend about a Yamabushi mountain ascetic and his miraculous encounter with the Kumano deities.

Kumano Kodo Nakahechi Michi-no-Eki

From Osakamoto-oji the trail follows a small creek until the pilgrimage route connects with Highway #311.

Across the highway is the Kumano Kodo Nakahechi Michi-no-Eki rest stop. The store sells local souvenirs, snacks and drinks, and has a collection of vending machines. The public toilets are next to the parking lot.

The Gyubadoji-guchi bus stop is directly in front of the rest stop.

Gyuba-doji statue

A short climb from the rest stop leads to the Hashiori-toge pass and a collection of statues.

The one on the left is known as Gyuba-doji and depicts Retired Emperor Kazan (968-1008) as a boy riding a horse and cow. He was one of the first to make an imperial pilgrimage to Kumano.

To its right is a stone carving of Ennogyoja, the legendary founder of Shugendō, a mixed religion based on mountain ascetic practices. A third monument, a Hokyoin-to stupa dating from the 12th century.

Chikatsuyu

A short 10 minute walk descends to the valley bottom and Chikatsuyu village. Chikatsuyu-oji is located on the left just past the bridge. There are public toilets here. Vending machines and a bus stop are a short walk up the road.