

Yahiko Shrine's Chrysanthemum Festival



During my cycling trip to the summit of Mt. Yahiko in Niigata Prefecture, I stopped at the Yahiko Shrine which was on the way. I didn't know it before hand, but it was the time of the annual chrysanthemum festival. There were lots of visitors, probably more than usual.





Cycling adventure to the summit of Mt. Yahiko



November 19, 2012: It was a bright sunny day and I didn't want to spend it indoors in front of a PC screen. Instead I rode my bicycle to a village at the foothills of Mt. Yahiko, about 33 kilometers from home, and walked to the top, the very summit of Yahiko Mountain which is 634 meters above sea level.

It took me 2 hours to ride to Yahiko Village where I spent about a half hour visiting Yahiko Shrine and taking some photographs. After that it took a little over an hour to ride and push my bicycle to the parking lot area near the top. After that I walked 30 minutes further to get to the summit to photograph the view showing the Sea of Japan.



My transportation to Mt. Yahiko



View of Mt. Yahiko an hour bicycle ride from home.



View of Mt. Yahiko approaching Iwamuro Village. The arrow down is pointing to the highest peak and my destination. The peak in the center looks higher only because it's closer.



View about 3/4 of the way up Mt. Yahiko



Sign says, Mt. Yahiko, elevation
634 meters



Signs on Mt. Yahiko



View of Yahiko Mura, Tsubama and Sanjo cites from near the summit



Visitor at the summit of Mt. Yahiko



Visitor at the summit of Mt. Yahiko



Visitor at the summit of Mt. Yahiko overlooking the Sea of Japan.



Tori Gate at the summit of Mt. Yahiko



Japanese ladies who asked me to take their photo. I first met them only a minute before.



Tori Gate in Tsubame city near Mt. Yahiko. Twenty years ago it was the largest Tori Gate in Japan.



The same Tori Gate facing Mt. Yahiko.

At 3:30 p.m. I left the summit and cycled down the mountain 30 minutes later. It only took me 20 minutes to get to the village below! But home was still 33 kilometers away and now at 4 p.m. it was getting dark. By 4.45 p.m. I got to Tsubame city and photographed the Tori Gate in the photos above. At 6:30 it started to rain but I had an umbrella. I didn't get home till 8 p.m. with my pants soaked from the rain and thoroughly exhausted. I might have made it back earlier but because I took what I hoped was a shortcut, I got lost. After seeing the Shinkansen train tracks twice after 30 minutes, I realized I rode my bicycle in a circle!

[100 Kilometer Cycling Adventure](#)



Mt. Yahiko and Mt. Kakuda from a distance of 20 kilometers.

I enjoy taking long bicycle trips from time to time. I thought it would be a good day's challenge to circle two famous mountains of Niigata, Mt. Kakuda and Mt. Yahiko, and return home before nightfall. Mt. Kakuda and Mt. Yahiko are not famous for their height. Mt. Yahiko is only 600 some meters high. They are famous for being the only mountains smack dab on the coast of the Sea of Japan in the midst of the flat rice fields that Niigata is famous for. Click the photo to see an enlargement.

Niigata has some of the flattest areas in all of Japan. One reason it's so flat is that much of Niigata (Japanese meaning "new lagoon") was reclaimed from the ocean. All of the rice growing area between the Shinano and Agano

rivers, meaning the area you see in the photo below, used to be underwater.

It took me a little over two hours to cycle 30 kilometers to Kakudahama which is the northern base of Mt. Kakuda. I didn't know the roads but followed what I thought was the closest route by line of sight. It turned out that I probably zigzagged back and forth on the roads between the rice fields a lot more than I needed to.

From Kakudahama I took the only road that runs along the coast of the Sea of Japan, a road over rolling hills and through several tunnels. The traffic was light and therefore a bit safer for a cyclist than on a normal highway. I needed to ride as far as the lowest point past Mt. Yahiko. I knew I reached it when I arrived at the mouth of Bunsui, a river that is a tributary of the Shinano river, the longest river in Japan. There is a road running parallel to it going in the direction I needed to go, and I knew it would be therefore flat.

I could add photos to this post. If you want to see them, please say so in a comment.