Hiking Japan: Its Coins And Stamps
Map of Japan showing Kii Peninsula and Kumano Kodo
World Heritage

Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range

熊野参詣道中辺路
Kumano Sankeimichi Nakahechi
KUMANO KODO
CAMINO DE KUMANO

WAY OF ST. JAMES
CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

World Heritage Pilgrimage Routes
Rutas de Peregrinación Patrimonio de la Humanidad

www.spiritual-pilgrimages.com
This was a National Geographic Society trip. They provided all the logistics (travel, housing, food), and guides. All excellent.
On the Trail
*Head Guide– Yuki-san

*Excellent English
*Knowledgeable
*Always smiling and laughing
*Energetic
*Patient and helpful
*Avid hiker
*How old? She wouldn’t say

“Little Mother Yuki”
THE PERFECT GUIDE!
Assistant Guide: Hiroshi Sato san, 71 years old and spry like a goat. Has done the trail over 60 times. Encyclopedic knowledge of Buddhist mythology and genealogy. Ever cheerful.
Mamushi viper (picture from the web)

Road kill
“Mileposts” every 500 meters
Stamp box, a.k.a. viper box, contains stamp signifying “you were there”..
Susan R. hiked the Camino de Santiago
Stamps from the stamp boxes on the trail. Note the golden stamp from one of the major shrines.
Assistant Guide Hiroshi-san explaining Buddhist mythology
Ancient paving stones on trail—very slippery when wet
Cypress tree stripped of bark for temple roof
The Mountain Monk
Guest Guide
Excellent English
Great joker
Practitioner of ancient syncretic Shinto-Buddhism
Mountain Monk signals beginning of hike by blowing on his conch horn
Tea house on the trail
The three-legged raven: symbol of the Kumano Kodo
Map of Kumano Kodo segments
Note very steep 300 meter ascent
Boat trip
Shrines and Temples
Ancient royal tomb
Largest Torii (gate) in Japan
Coin offerings at oji (small trail-side shrine). Locals maintain the shrine, and donate the coins to charities.
More “Oji” or little shrines
Famous Gyuba-doji statue of Boy-Emperor Kazan, who rode a cow and a horse on the first Emperor pilgrimage a thousand years ago. The Gyuba-doji has become a symbol of the Kumano Kodo.
Kumano Hayatama Taisha Grand Shrine
Susan R.– photo op
Kumano Hongu Taisha Grand Shrine
Susan S. making a burnt offering
Earliest shrine of Shinto Buddhism behind the beach
First Deity came to earth at this cliff
You can go inside
For a few yen
The Nachi Waterfall is considered a Deity in its own right.
Torii at the bottom of the 400 steps...
And at the top
Housing and Food
Marriott Osaka
Chris in mountain ryokan (traditional guest house)
Morning window view from mountain ryokan
Turtle ferry and cliff-top hotel
Cliff-top hotel room
Window view from cliff-top hotel

natural cave converted to a luxury hot springs bath
Looking the other way
Life in Japan
Observation deck at our first hotel in Osaka.
“Fireworks wall” at top Of Marriott
Riding the subway in Osaka
Street scenes—Osaka
Fire lilies or red spider lilies
Cartoon character scarecrow
Marlin

Auctioneer at work
Zen Temple
Zen meditation temple
Zen Master
Rice paddies in Japan

Inca agricultural terracing in Peru
Lunch stop at fancy resort
Volcanic dike extending into the sea. The large boulders in the foreground were knocked there by a tsunami.
Kids on school outing. Japan has a very low birth rate. We saw lots of kids.
Electronic remote controls for the toilet; the Japanese are way ahead of us in toilet technology.
People
Yuki
The whole group - 11 Americans, in the Zen Temple with the Zen Master
This guy is really getting into it
Yuki san and Hiroshi san: best guides ever
The End (of the Travelogue)
Establishing the identity of Japanese coins and stamps
Three languages use characters instead of an alphabet: Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. To the untrained American eye they are hard to tell apart.
Chinese Hanji is made up mostly of dense, Square characters. Some punctuation is used.
Japanese has three sets of characters

Hiragana are curvy and Irregular (feminine)

Kanji are Chinese characters, dense and square

Katakana are straight or slightly curved and simple (masculine)
Many circular and oval shapes and straight lines. Full Western-style punctuation.
Chinese, Korean, and Japanese: which one is which?
“Japan”

日本

Ni Hon

(Land of the Rising Sun)
Chrysanthemum: Symbol of the Emperor
Definitives
Some of the National Parks Series
陸中漸岸

RIKUCHU KAIGAN NATIONAL PARK

1955
Souvenir Sheet on the occasion of Prince Akihito’s wedding in 1959
Some of my...
The Real End