

Geography of Gifu Prefecture

Situated in the heartland of Japan

Gifu is one of Japan's few landlocked prefectures, situated approximately in the center of the Japanese archipelago. It takes about 1 hour by train from Chubu Centrair International Airport to Gifu Prefecture.

Gifu is conveniently close to the three major cities of Japan: It takes about 1 hour and 40 minutes from Tokyo to Nagoya by bullet train (*Shinkansen*), about 50 minutes from Osaka to Nagoya by *Shinkansen*, and about 20 minutes from Nagoya to Gifu by local express train.



History of Gifu Prefecture

By the abolition of the *han* system and its replacement by the prefecture system (*haihan-chiken*) in July 1871, *hans* and prefectures, which were until then separately governed, were unified under the same control, and *han* was renamed to prefecture. As a result, nine prefectures in the Mino District and one in the Hida District (Takayama Prefecture) were established. In November 1871, the whole district of Mino was unified into one prefecture, Gifu. Takayama, which had initially joined Chikuma Prefecture (present Nagano

Prefecture), was transferred to Gifu Prefecture in 1876. Later in 2005, Yamaguchi Village in Nagano Prefecture was incorporated into Gifu, resulting in the formation of Gifu Prefecture as it is today. Municipalities in Gifu Prefecture merged to form larger districts during the Meiji and Showa period. In 1889, there were 948 municipalities, but the figure decreased to 105 in 1961. Gifu Prefecture currently comprises 21 cities, 19 towns and 2 villages, totaling to 42 municipalities (as of July 2022).