



# Harmony Between the Modern and the Classic

[Mandy J.M.Lin]

“Camera?”  
 “Set!”  
 “Pen and paper?”  
 “Set!”  
 “Train tickets?”  
 “Set!”



In this edition of "Railroad Journeys," GV reporter Mandy Lin visits Kobuchisawa, gateway to the famous Yatsugatake Mountains. Located 40 minutes away by train from the Kofu basin, the area offers unique experiences to be enjoyed with the surrounding natural environment. The GV staff hopes to introduce to you this unique combination of the modern and classic in Yamanashi's northwest region.

## Shop Machikobu

Walking down a street in front of the station into the Kobuchisawa Shopping District, a colourful store sign caught my attention. The store is called Shop Machikobu.



“Machikobu” refers to the Kobuchisawa Town Management Organization managed by the city of Hokuto, the Hokuto Commerce and Industry Association, and the local residents as an effort to promote the local agricultural industry and to revitalize the area as a whole. Shop Machikobu was opened as one of the venues to promote local revitalization. Locally grown fruits and vegetables are lined up neatly on the shelves, all of them having

been freshly harvested in the morning and immediately transported to the store. The Machikobu staff calls them “highland vegetables.”

These vegetables are said to have an enhanced flavour since in a highland environment the temperature varies greatly between night and day, influencing the ripening of agricultural products in such a way that they tend to be sweeter, richer in taste, and crunchier.



## Dagashi Store Hisago

The word dagashi refers to cheap candies and snacks that children can easily afford with their small allowances. More than half of this store is comprised of various types of dagashi. You can find candy drops, chocolates, cakes, sweet powders that you dissolve in water to make juice, rice crackers, flavored squid, and much, much more. They are usually wrapped in colorful packages and sold individually starting from about 10 yen. The shop owner told us that until around 40 years ago every Japanese town had a dagashi store, where coin-clutching children from the neighborhood would gather and hang out with their friends. The shops were filled with candies of every colour, and they also sold toys - in fact, this shop used to be a toy store. Due to the increasing numbers of supermarkets, department stores and shopping centres, dagashi stores became less popular. For the older generations, a dagashi store is not just a candy shop, but a playground, a place to gather and learn new things. The owner of Dagashi Store Hisago spoke about her wish to provide the same opportunities for the younger generations by continuing with this tradition.

## Yatsugatake Resort Outlet

The Yatsugatake Resort Outlet, opened in 2001, offers approximately 70 outlet stores including high fashion boutiques, lifestyle shops, stores specializing in sports and outdoor goods, and restaurants. It is within easy reach of the station, and there is a free shuttle bus that runs between the two locales. The ride is approximately fifteen minutes.



The Outlet is well known for a design that emphasizes a balance between nature and modern architecture. The most remarkable part about this place is that on a sunny day both the Yatsugatake Mountains and the Southern Alps can be viewed clearly from its spacious grounds.

Yatsugatake Resort Outlet is perfect for a leisurely day out, and since it is pet friendly, it has also become a popular spot for many pet owners.

