



Trail Running in Hakone

A challenging trail with spectacular views

The Daiyuzan Trail - Hakone

This is a round trip route starting and ending at Ashigara Hot Springs.

This trail is better for runners who prefer uncrowded trails with fantastic views and a beautiful outdoor onsen set deep in the forest awaiting you at the end of your run. The onsen will be our starting point.

From here we will walk along the paved road toward Daiyuzan Saijoji - a Buddhist temple built more than 615 years ago. The path leading to the temple is surrounded by an ancient grove of towering cedar trees. The trailhead is located across a small bridge. From here, the trail heads toward the peak of Myojingatake. The climb is simple but long, about two to two-and-a-half hours.

Halfway up the mountain, there are two springs, “Shinmeisui” and “Myōjinsui” where we can fill our water bottle as the water trickles out of the earth.

It gets steep near the top, but at the peak the 360-degree panoramas from here are outstanding. To the south, you’ll see the town of Hakone and, on a clear day, you’ll be able to see out to the ocean. The white “clouds” below are from the volcanic steam vents of Owakudani Valley. To the northeast, you’ll see the towns of Minami-Ashigara and Odawara, Sagami Bay and, if you’re lucky, a glimpse of Chiba Prefecture way beyond the bay. For the descent we continue west along the ridge for about five minutes to the trailhead leading down to Saijōji Okunoin. If you’re an avid downhill trail runner, this is where you’ll be greatly rewarded. From here the trail consists of continuous, gravity defying slopes. Parts of it are smooth paths and others are technical, complete with roots, rocks and obstacles. We cross the paved road and continue descending. We’ll pass “Okunoin” located high up the mountain within the innermost reaches of the Saijouji

Temple. Take a very long set of stone stairs down to the main temple buildings of Daiyuzan Saijōji. This is where our trail journey will come to an end. We will stop by the main temple to say a few prayers and thank the trail gods. We then head back to the onsen from where we started to kick back and relax in the hot springs.

Approximate distance of the trail: 8.3km

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