

The View of Mount Fuji That Has Become Known the World Over

Mt. Fuji in the spring, viewed over cherry blossoms and the five-story pagoda (right) from the observation deck in Arakurayama Sengen Park
Photo: Courtesy of Fujiyoshida Tourism Promotion Association



The view of Mt. Fuji from the observation deck at Arakurayama Sengen Park in Fujiyoshida City, Yamanashi Prefecture has recently come to international prominence.

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MT. Fuji looks beautiful from many locations in Fujiyoshida, a city at the northern base of the mountain. Among these, the view from the observation deck in Arakurayama Sengen Park, which is easily accessed from Fujikyu Railway's Shimoyoshida Station, has recently become popular.

This park is located halfway up Mount Arakura within the precincts of Arakura Fuji Sengen-jinja Shrine at the foot of the mountain. To reach the observation deck, visitors must climb 398 stone steps. The climb will bring out a sweat even in winter, but ascending all those steps is worth it because

the view from the observation deck is superb. There is also a sloped path for those who prefer not to or cannot climb the steps.

In spring, as around 650 cherry blossom trees reach full bloom in the park, the vista reveals the skirt of Mt. Fuji spreading out symmetrically on both sides behind a five-story pagodaⁱ with impressive white walls and vermillion pillars. Spring-time Mt. Fuji with lingering snow at the peak is remarkably beautiful. This sight is very popular with visitors from overseas as it is a chance to see both Mt. Fuji and the sort of distinctive Japanese scenery that is also found in Kyoto.

Previously, few other than local residents knew of the view of Mt. Fuji seen from this location, but it quickly came to international prominence after it appeared on the cover of

ⁱ Built as the Fujiyoshida Cenotaph Monument (popularly known as the Chureito Pagoda) in 1962 to memorialize those lost in war

The view from the observation deck in the fall
Photo: Courtesy of Fujiyoshida Tourism Promotion Association



The view from the observation deck in the winter
Photo: Courtesy of Fujiyoshida Tourism Promotion Association



the *Michelin Guide Japon* (fourth revised edition) in 2015 and the National Geographic's *Traveler* magazine in 2018 (photography: TAKASHI [see pp. 22-23]). There has been an increase in tourists since around 2016 when the Arakurayama Sengen Park began holding a Cherry Blossom Festival, and in spring 2019 just before the spread of COVID-19, there was an hour-long line to get to the observation deck. In February 2022, the observation deck was renovated, allowing Mt. Fuji to be seen from behind both sides of the pagoda, making the observation deck even more attractive to visitors.

Miyashita Takashi, a member of staff at the Fujiyoshida Tourism Promotion Association, says, "From here you can enjoy the view as it changes from season to season, taking in the cherry blossoms in the spring, the autumn leaves in the fall and the snow scenery in winter.

The scenery also changes depending on the weather, the cloud cover, and the sun's rays throughout the day. As such it

is a special place at any time and season, and it has even been chosen as one of the best 100 night views in Japan. You will never see the same scenery twice here."

Miyashita says he hopes that many visitors both from within Japan and overseas can enjoy this picturesque location that has become known the world over. ㊦

The cover of National Geographic's *Traveler* magazine featuring the view from the observation deck in Arakurayama Sengen Park
Photo: Courtesy of Nikkei National Geographic Inc.

