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01/ It was just getting into the season for sorting apples when we rode past Hirosaki City Apple Park. They have more than 50 varieties of apples! 02/ The Owani Line on the Konan Railway operates as a cycling train on weekends and holidays as well as certain times during weekdays. Bicycles can be wheeled straight onto the train. 03/ Enjoying the special Owani hot spring bean sprouts at Yamazaki Shokudo close to Owani Station. The crispy texture and delicious flavor has made it a popular dish. 04/ Apple paper weights created using Tsugaru-nuri - exquisite craftsmanship that could be mistaken for the real thing. 05/ Taking a rest at an apple farm we passed along the way. An upside down apple bin acts as a rest bench. 06/ The forest of Zen temples where 33 Zen temples of the Soto sect line the road.

Course 3 HIROSAKI

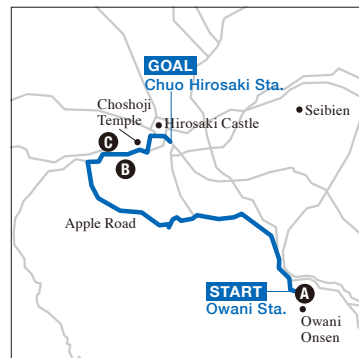
Apple Fields Forever Ride

Connecting the cycle train and apple road by bicycle

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- A Yamazaki Shokudo**
Maeda34-21, Owani-machi
TEL.0172-48-2134
- B Apple Park**
Terasawa125, Shimizutomita, Hirosaki-shi
TEL.0172-36-7439
www.hi-it.net/~ringo-kouen
- C Icecream Shop Souma**
Naruse136-1, Akudo, Hirosaki-shi
TEL.0172-32-6816

Distance: 28 km Duration: 2 hours



Mention of Hirosaki might bring to mind images of Hirosaki Castle and apples for a lot of people, but an added attraction is Japan's most northern private train line, the Konan Railway. This train also operates as a cycling train so if you are a cyclist, that makes traveling this area a hundred times more fun! After 30 minutes rocking gently back and forth you arrive at Owani Station lined with hot springs. Located close to the station is the relaxingly old-fashioned Yamazaki Shokudo where you can enjoy a plate of crunchy Owani hot spring bean sprouts.

When leaving town, avoid the main road and head toward Hirosaki via the Koiki-Nodo (wide-area agricultural road), also known as Apple Road. When you see the beautiful ridgeline of a lone peak far off in the distance, that is Mt. Iwaki. It's also a good landmark if you get lost. Few cars travel this road so it is a nice road to ride, and the apple trees weighed down with glistening red fruit sway gently in the breeze as if they are cheering you on. Icecream Shop Souma sells old-fashioned ice candy, so mark this place down as a good place to take a break.