

# of Japan

historic silver-mining town of Iwami Ginzan



Kumagai House, Iwami Ginzan; a hand-painted dragon on the ceiling of the Kigami shrine. Photos / Alex Robertson

through the historic port town of Okidomari, a natural deep-water harbour where it's still possible to see bollards cut into the sandstone in the 16th century to moor ships taking silver to China and beyond. The path becomes a road snaking along the edge of the Sea of Japan to the port of Yunotsu where fishing boats bob on the waves.

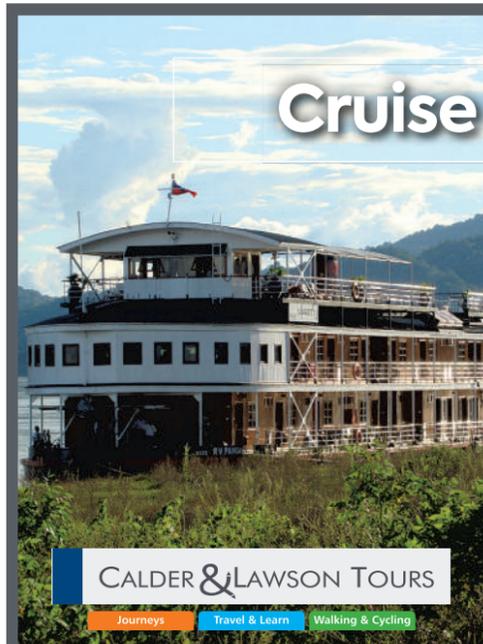
Yunotsu is known for its natural hot springs, which feed a couple of onsen, the public bath-houses. The Motoyu onsen features two mineral pools in gender-separated areas with hot and even hotter water. The locals seem immune to the heat but caution is advised when entering the pools.

Yunotsu is a well-preserved town of historic wooden buildings and shrines, the flickering glow of electric lights seemingly the only nod to present day as day fades into night. That is until the bus arrives to take us back to the ryokan — the 21st-century visiting the past. Mr Arime would be proud.



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