

Facilities

Most aspects of the hotel's facilities should be self explanatory but we provide here a few notes on facilities that are unique to Japan or whose usage is not directly apparent.

Japanese Hot Springs and Public Bathing

Japan is a volcanic country and public bathing in the many resulting hot springs is an age old Japanese tradition. Besides being a place to relax and socialize, many people believe in the therapeutic benefits of the hot, mineral rich water. Taking a Japanese hot spring bath or "onsen" is something you should definitely try during your stay.

The hotel is equipped with two public onsen, located on the second floor of the main building (the "moon view bath"), which is open daily from 12pm - 9am, and on the seventh floor of the second building (the "perspective bath"), open from 3pm to 12pm. Both onsen include indoor baths and the 2nd floor onsen also includes an outdoor pool - a "rotenburo" - it is from here at night that you can lie in the steaming waters and admire the stars above. Although both baths are open through the night, the accompanying sauna may only be used until midnight.

There is a procedure and etiquette to Japanese bathing which you need to know before you try. The principle is very simple - the bath is not for washing - you only enter the bath once you are clean. This way the bath remains clean for all users and it also means that you should take care to avoid getting any soap or other such product into the water by accident.

A nice way to take an onsen is to head to the bathroom already wearing a yukata (a kind of Japanese dressing gown) and slippers (these items should be in your room, but please do not wear them to the restaurant or other conference activities!), although you can go in your regular clothes if you prefer. The next step is to establish the correct bathroom. Bathing in onsen is performed naked and is almost never mixed these days. The Japanese characters for man and woman are indicated below

Man - *otoko* - 男

Woman - *onna* - 女

The entrance to bathrooms almost always has a kind of curtain (called a "noren"), which is marked with the relevant character and usually red or pink for women and blue for men. Once you have established the correct bathroom, make sure to take off your shoes or slippers at the entrance and leave them in the lockers / on the shelves.

Once in the bathroom, make sure to collect a large and a small towel which should be available there. Next you should undress and leave your clothes in a locker or basket. Leave your large towel in the locker / basket and keep your small towel with you - you will have this with you at all times. As you move toward the bathroom, it is common, but not necessary, to use this towel to cover your most private of areas. Either inside the bathroom or before you reach the bath, you will find a series of taps / showers along with stools and bowls. This is where you wash yourself before entering the bath. Find a tap / shower and sit on the stool. You can then wash yourself thoroughly (usually shampoo, conditioner and body soap will be provided), including your hair. Once you are completely clean, you are now free to enter the bath, but rinse down the stool and bucket first and put them away tidily for the next person.

Typically onsen are quite hot - 40 to 44°C, which can be a surprise if you are not used to it. Start by sitting at the edge of the pool and immersing your legs. As you get used to the heat, you can slowly lower yourself into the water. It is recommended that you only stay in for only a few minutes at a time - but you may find it difficult to stay in even that long.

Feel free to get out of the bath and take another shower at any point or move between the outdoor and indoor pool. The only things you need to do are make sure not to get soap into the bath and also to keep your towel with you, but not to put it in the water. Once you have finished, use your towel to basically dry yourself before returning to the changing room. There, you can return to your locker and use your main towel to get dry properly. The changing room will also contain sinks and other facilities, like hair dryers and weighing scales, which you can use.

You will find yourself very relaxed and possibly quite sleepy after your hot spring bath, so it may not be advisable to take one directly before a scientific session!

If you are staying at the conference with your family and you are keen to experience a hot spring bath together, the hotel has a private bath available at the 7th floor spa, that can be rented out for private use. The cost to rent the bath is ¥2100 and you can make the booking at the main reception.

PLEASE NOTE : For your own safety, make sure you do not enter the hot spring when drunk. This can be extremely dangerous.

Washing Machines

If you would like to wash any clothes during your stay, washing machines and dryers are available and are located on the 2nd floor. Use of the washing machines and dryers is free but you will need to purchase washing powder which is available at the gift shop on the third floor for 50 yen and may also be available from a vending machine located next to the washing machines, which takes only 100 yen coins and returns 50 yen coins.

Iron and Dry Cleaning

Irons are available to borrow from the hotel reception

A dry cleaning service is available. You will find a laundry bag and English instructions on using the service in your room.

Gift shop

A gift shop selling a range of local presents (known as “omiyage” in Japanese) is located on the third floor lobby of the hotel. Gifts include a wide range of local food and drink.

Snack shop

There is snack food available (not included in the conference fee) from the shop on the 2nd floor of the hotel.

Internet access

Wireless internet access is available in all guest rooms, in the poster session area and in the hotel lobby