

## PRESS RELEASE

### **A Beautiful Garden Certified by the National Plant Collection Has Remained Unchanged for Over 100 Years!**

#### **Azalea and Rhododendron Fair 2024 Held at Odakyu Hotel de Yama**

—Beautiful flowers preserved from a baron’s villa, which once stood on the site of Odakyu Hotel de Yama and are certified as plant heritage—

Odakyu Hotel de Yama on the shores of Lake Ashi in Hakone will host Azalea and Rhododendron Fair 2024 from late April. The garden’s approx. 3,000 azalea bushes in 84 varieties, including 30 heirloom varieties, and approx.300 rhododendron bushes in 42 varieties, will be in full bloom. Against the magnificent backdrop of majestic Mt. Fuji and beautiful Lake Ashi, visitors are treated to a wonderful view of colorful azaleas in this gorgeous garden. The garden’s azaleas were the 10th to be registered with the National Plant Collection of the Japan Association of Botanical Gardens (JABG) in 2022 as plant heritage being passed down to future generations. In March 2023, the garden’s rhododendrons were the 15th to be registered with the JABG National Plant Collection. In 2024, in commemoration of the registration of the azaleas and rhododendrons in the list of the JABG National Plant Collection and the 75th anniversary of the hotel, *Azaleas and Rhododendrons at the Garden of Odakyu Hotel de Yama* will be released. This booklet also includes the history of the garden.



Azaleas in full bloom against the backdrop of Mt. Fuji



Azalea garden in Odakyu Hotel de Yama and Lake Ashi

## Azaleas and Rhododendrons at the Garden of Odakyu Hotel de Yama

Odakyu Hotel de Yama is located at the historic site of the former villa built in 1911 by Baron Koyata Iwasaki, the fourth president of the Mitsubishi Group. The azalea and rhododendron gardens planted by Koyata Iwasaki have been nurtured with loving care since Odakyu Hotel de Yama opened in 1948. Edo-kirishima, a variety of azaleas representative of the Edo period (1603–1867) that is now quite rare, and native Japanese rhododendrons classified as an endangered species have been growing in the garden for over 100 years. Visitors can see extremely valuable, rare varieties of these flowers. The rounded azaleas, called *Tama-jitate*, have remained unchanged for over 100 years.

### ◆◆◆ Azalea and Rhododendron Fair 2024 overview ◆◆◆

<Period> Late April–Middle of May (Period may change depending on the state of the blossoms.)

<Open> 9:00 am–4:30 pm (last entry)

<Admission> 1,000 yen (only during the period when the azaleas are blooming) \*Elementary school-aged and younger children are free.

<Best Time> Azaleas: Late April–Middle of May Rhododendrons: Early to Late May

<URL> [https://www.hakone-hoteldeyama.jp/tsutsuji\\_shakunage/](https://www.hakone-hoteldeyama.jp/tsutsuji_shakunage/) (Japanese only)

\*Free shuttle buses run from Moto-Hakone Port to the hotel.

\*Dogs are allowed. (Must be kept within the pet cart.) Eating with your dog is allowed on the Lounge Terrace in the main building and on the second floor of the Salon de thé Rosage in the annex building.

### ◆◆◆ Booklet on azaleas and rhododendrons ◆◆◆

<Title> *Azaleas and Rhododendrons at the Garden of Odakyu Hotel de Yama*

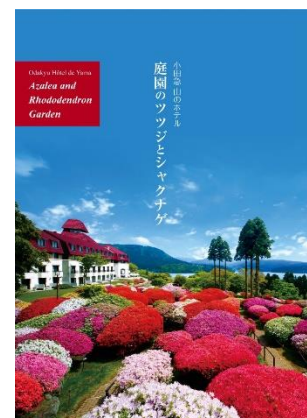
<Release Date> Early April, 2024

<Specifications> B5 size/32 pages/Full-colored

<Price> 800 yen (tax included)

<Language> Written in both Japanese and English

<Content> Describing the history of the garden, details of the azaleas and rhododendrons in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the hotel in 2023 and the registration of the azaleas and rhododendrons in the list of the JABG National Plant Collection.



## Azaleas and Rhododendrons at the Hotel Garden Are Certified as the JABG National Plant Collection

The National Plant Collection Certification System was established in 2017 by the JABG, for which His Imperial Highness Prince Akishino serves as governor. It is designed to certify and conserve precious plants cultivated in Japan, and pass them on to future generations as cultural assets and genetic resources, regardless of whether they are wild or cultivated.

Azaleas in the garden at Odakyu Hotel de Yama represent 84 varieties, including 30 heirloom varieties newly bred in the Edo period that are now quite rare. Along with the surrounding landscape, they were registered in the list of the JABG National Plant Collection (No.10) as a valuable collection being passed down to future generations in 2022 as the first site in

Kanagawa Prefecture. On March 17, 2023, rhododendrons in the garden at

Odakyu Hotel de Yama were registered in the same list (No.15) following azaleas. The rhododendron garden has 300 bushes in 42 varieties, including the original variety of Gomer Waterer, the first Western rhododendrons imported to Japan, nine rare varieties newly bred overseas from the end of the Edo period through the Meiji era, and Kyomaru-shakunage (*R. japonoheptamerum* var. *kyomaruense*) and Hosoba-shakunage (*R. makinoi*), two wild species designated as endangered species by the Ministry of the Environment. The reasons for certification are that this was the first rhododendron garden in Japan built between the Meiji (1868–1912) and Taisho eras (1912–1926) with such a large number of varieties and its great value as a garden.



JABG National Plant Collection



The JABG National Plant Collection Certification and plaque for Azalea Garden

## A Garden Project, A 100-year Challenge—Taking the Baron’s 100-year-old Azaleas to 200 Years, and Rare Varieties Grown at the Hotel Garden

During a heavy snow in February 2014, the hotel garden was covered with up to a meter of snow in some places and suffered significant damage. Some azalea branches were broken. Although a full-time staff was on site to care for the large garden throughout the year, this was insufficient to maintain the beautiful landscape for another 100 years. Therefore, we launched a garden project in 2015 called *the 100-year Challenge—Taking the Baron’s 100-year-old Azaleas to 200 Years* aiming to maintain and regenerate the gardens. Through this project, surveys on the different varieties have been conducted to create a database over the past nine years by Yuji Kurashige, an expert on azaleas and rhododendrons. The project has increased rare varieties under the direction of Mr. Kurashige, and improved soil conditions for the plants in the gardens with a vision for the next 100 years.

### ■ Rare varieties of azaleas



(Left) Yaegera: It has double-petaled vermilion blossoms with petaled calyxes. The largest bush of Yaegera in the garden measures more than three meters in height and diameter.

(Right) Wakasagi: When it blooms, it is a light pinkish-purple. It gradually fades to white. This variety is the only one in the garden that blooms twice a year, in spring and autumn. They have propagated through the garden project (At the side of the slope near the entrance of the garden).

### ■ Rare varieties of rhododendrons



(Left) Stella Waterer (*Hanagiso* in Japanese): It has a medium-size flower in purplish pink.

(Right) Halopeanum (*Suio* in Japanese): The bud is a deep reddish-pink that fades into a pale pink after it blooms.

Both are heirloom varieties newly bred overseas from the end of the Edo period through the Meiji era. They became so popular in Japan that they were given Japanese names. Grown in extremely small numbers and not commercially available, these are quite rare. The existence of the nine heirloom varieties of rhododendrons at Odakyu Hotel de Yama is one of the reasons for certification by the JABG National Plant Collection.

**Enjoy Dessert Made on the Motif of Pretty Azaleas at the Dessert Restaurant at the Shore of Lake Ashi**

The hotel's Premium Shop & Salon de thé Rosage is a dessert restaurant located in front of the hotel on the shores of Lake Ashi. The restaurant offers a delicious mousse dessert, Fleurir, available only during the azalea season. French for "blooming flower," Fleurir was inspired by the beautiful azaleas blooming in the garden. This luxurious dessert features a wonderful harmony of flavors created through a blend of fresh strawberries and black tea. Made with an original blend of tea that evokes the fragrance of azaleas, Fleurir is offered with a macaron and strawberry ice cream, treating guests to an aroma and flavor that are a perfect match with the spring atmosphere. The delicious strawberry sauce accompanying this wonderful dessert is poured over the dome-shaped meringue for an unforgettable experience.

Visitors are welcome to enjoy an elegant tea time at Premium Shop & Salon de thé Rosage after strolling around the azalea and rhododendron gardens.

◆◆◆ Limited-offer dessert ◆◆◆

<Period> Tuesday, April 16–Friday, May 31, 2024

<Dessert> Fleurir

<Location> Salon de thé Rosage (A dessert restaurant operated by Odakyu Hotel de Yama)

<Price> 1,800 yen for Fleurir, 2,600 yen for a set with tea (served in a pot)

\*Prices above include consumption and service taxes.



Fleurir



Terrace seats at Salon de thé Rosage

## Event Information

Odakyu Hodel de Yama holds a wide variety of events during Azalea and Rhododendron Fair 2024.

### 1. Lecture on azaleas and rhododendrons by Yuji Kurashige scheduled

#### **Azaleas and rhododendrons in the garden—Plant heritage being passed down to future generations; a certified National Plant Collection—**

Yuji Kurashige, an expert on azaleas and rhododendrons, will provide a lecture on the garden at Hotel de Yama, which is registered with the National Plant Collection, to highlight the deep attraction of these beautiful blossoms. During a conversation with general manager Kunieda, Mr. Kurashige will also introduce the history of the garden and the projects.

<Title> Azaleas and rhododendrons in the garden—Plant heritage being passed down to future generations; a certified National Plant Collection—

<Lecturer> Yuji Kurashige (Expert on azaleas and rhododendrons, Senior Managing Director at the Japan Association of Botanical Gardens)

<Date> Tuesday, May 7, 2024, From 11:00 am

<Location> Hotel de Yama Conference Room Kintoki

<Admission> Free (Capacity: 40)

<Reservations> Make reservations by telephone.

Odakyu Hotel de Yama TEL: 0460-83-6321 (9:30 am–7:30 pm)



Yuji Kurashige (Expert on azaleas and rhododendrons, Senior Managing Director at JABG)



Image for upcoming presentations

## 2. Concert at the chapel <First time in four years>

A concert will be held in the chapel at the garden at Hotel de Yama, a wonderful site with magnificent views of Mt. Fuji and Lake Ashi in Hakone.

<Date 1> Saturday, May 11, 2024 From 12:00 pm and 2:00 pm \*30 min. per performance

<Performers> Takako Fujieda (Arpa), Runa Matsuura (Violin)

<Date 2> Sunday, May 12, 2024 From 12:00 pm and 2:00 pm \*30 min. per performance

<Performers> Eimy Martin (Vocal), Yuki Nishiura (Piano)



Location: A chapel at Odakyu Hotel de Yama Garden

### Contact information for general public

## Odakyu Hotel de Yama

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