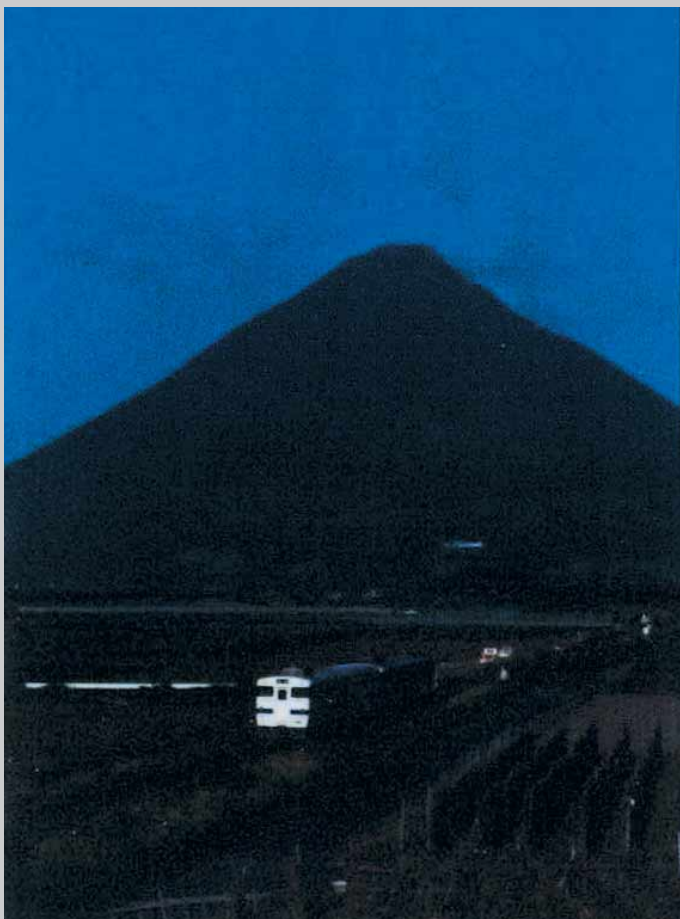


## New Japanese Railway Scenery 5



JR Kyushu's Series *Kiba* 40 DMUs running near Oyama Station on Ibusuki Makurazaki Line. Passengers enjoy a view of Mt Kaimon, a 924-m volcano located at southern Satsuma Peninsula. The mountain is nicknamed 'Satsuma Fuji,' known as one of Japan's 100 most notable mountains. The line first opened as Ibusuki Line between Nishi Kagoshima (today's Kagoshima Cuo) and Goino (14.1 km) on 1930. The line gradually extended until it finally reached Makurazaki Station (87.9 km) in 1963 and was renamed Ibusuki Makurazaki Line. Makurazaki Station was relocated in May 2006, shortening the 0.1 route-km. All local trains are driver-only cars. There are high passenger traffic between Kagoshima Chuo and Yamakawa, at least one train per hour in each direction, due to commuting demand. Contrary, there are a few services on Yamakawa-Makurazaki section, only two services between 12:00 to 18:00. JR Kyushu runs only 1.5 trains through entire line on each direction.

(Photo: M.Mashima Photo Office)



The photograph shows people burying themselves in the sand comfortably, and have some snooze with a sound of the sea. The staff first dig you an indentation in the sand and then help you get in and well placed. They wrap your towel around the back of your head so you don't burn and then quickly they bury you in sand. In the first few minutes your whole body throbs with your pulse but it really isn't an unpleasant experience. As you settle down, you become very calm and relaxed. You sweat into your *yukata*, which increases the sand's heat and eventually you get too warm to stay in so you break.

Ibusuki is famous for black-sand spas known as *sunamusubi onsen* (sand bath). Sand bath is very effective for perspiration due to the weight of sand. Its effectiveness has been loved by people for treatment since 300 years ago, and was not well-known till recent. As soon as medical explanation revealed its effect, the news ran through the entire world. According to Dr Tanaka, a professor at Kagoshima University medical school, it is understood that sand bathing increases the body temperature with high rate of heart impact. Increasing blood circulation refreshes your body by discharging wastes and observing oxygen sufficiently into your body. With this survey the effect of sand bathing reached to the conclusion that it has 3 to 4 times more effects compared to usual hot springs.

(Photo: Sand Bath Hall 'SARAKU')

