

Below are some English translations of Matsuo Bashô's *Oku no hosomichi*. I have ranked them loosely in the order of my own personal preferences.

*Narrow Road to Oku*

- ✓ Translated by Donald Keene, with Illustrations by Miyata Masayuki
- ✓ Kodansha Intl, 1997
- ✓ Keene is the most esteemed translator in this group, and holds up well under scrutiny. This is a "shiny", almost coffee-table type book with superb, though very modern, illustrations. A pleasure to own. Has the classical Japanese on the facing pages.

"The Narrow Road of the Interior"

- ✓ Translated by Helen McCullough
- ✓ Included in her *Classical Japanese Prose: An Anthology*
- ✓ Stanford UP, 1990
- ✓ McCullough was more of a historian than a literature person; however, her translation is very clear and accurate and somewhat footnoted.

*Narrow Road to the Deep North*

- ✓ Translated by Nobuyuki Yuasa
- ✓ Penguin Books, 1967
- ✓ This remains the most usual pick for academics when they teach on campus, either because of habit, availability, or the more scholarly introduction. It is somewhat dated, though.

*Narrow Road to the Interior*

- ✓ Translated by Sam Hamill
- ✓ Shambhala, 2000
- ✓ Sam Hamill is a translator of Chinese literature as well and so sometimes he notes where others don't those sorts of connections.

*A Haiku Journey: Basho's Narrow Road to a Far Province*

- ✓ Translated by Dorothy Britton, with Illustrations by Shiro Tsujimura
- ✓ Kodansha Intl, 2002
- ✓ Tsujimura is a ceramic artist; Britton, it seems, is a professional translator with a background in Japan. She also translated *Totto-chan*. This has a definite poetic feel to it, but isn't as close as some of the others to the original.

*Back Roads to Far Towns: Basho's Oko-no-Hosomichi*

- ✓ Translated by Cid Corman and Kamaike Susumu
- ✓ White Pine Press, 1986
- ✓ This is a "beat" style translation and though it has more of a traveler's notebook sense than the very carefully written and rewritten original, the "dryness" in the voice catches something of Bashô's style. Yes, that is an unfortunate misspelling in the title.