The Oki Islands are made up of 4 main islands and several more uninhabited ones. Oki's unique natural environment has led to its being designated as a Global Geopark by UNESCO. Erosion has created several magnificent coastline views, including the Kuniga Coastline on Nishinosima, which features a stone arch and a sheer cliff face that stands at 207 meters tall. Candle Island off the coast of Dogo Island stands in such a way that if you catch the sunset at the right angle, it looks like a candle's flame set alight.

Kuniga Coast
Nicola Jones, New Zealand
Nishinosima is a wonderful place to take a stroll back in time, discover life in rural Japan and meet the local people. The Kuniga Coast is a great place to hike, picnic, take photos, kayak, etc. There are cows and horses grazing happily along the coast too! Stop off at a restaurant near the port to enjoy fresh catch of the day, or buy some locally made bread or croissants (rice balls) and have a picnic on top of Mogasa Cliff or in front of Tanikaze Art!

Candle Island
Taikodani Inari Shrine
This shrine is known as one of the five largest Inari shrines throughout the country, and many people come here to pray for good fortune. The path up the hill is lined with nearly 1200 vermilion-colored shrine gates which create a brilliantly colored tunnel to the shrine itself.

Tsunawano
Tsunawano was once the center of a feudal daimyo, and the grand houses of merchants and samurai line the streets of town. Hundreds of eatery teppanyaki in the town’s waterways, adding gaijin color to Tsunawano’s beautiful scenery.

National Treasure
Matsue Castle
Matsue Castle is also one of the few castles in Japan to have a completely intact castle town. Enjoy the castle scenery from a unique perspective by taking a boat tour of the moat!

Adachi Museum of Art
Adachi Museum of Art houses more than 1500 Japanese paintings, including masterpieces of Yokoyama Taikan, who contributed greatly to the development of modern Japanese art, and ceramic work by Kazuho Hashimoto. The museum also boasts beautiful Japanese gardens which have been selected as the best in Japan by a US magazine. Since 2003, the museum is blessed with beautiful cherry blossoms in full bloom at Adachi-gawa, which add even more color to the museum. The combination of the gardens and the surrounding mountains and enjoy how the scenery change as the seasons fluctuate, the Michelangelo Green Clock and the Castle Gate. The museum has also been featured in popular movies like The Last Samurai.

Mihonoseki
An old lighthouse village in the Shimane Peninsula. Access: 40 min by bus from JR Mihonoseki Station, 20 min by car from JR Shimokita Station.
About Shimane

Shimane Prefecture is located in the western part of Honshu facing the Sea of Japan, with the Oki Islands about 50 kilometers north from the mainland coast. It is an area blessed with natural beauty whose traditions and culture passed down from long ago still have roots in the everyday lives of people today.

Matsue Vogel Park

Matsue Vogel Park is a flower and bird park located in between Izumo Taisha and Matsue Castle. This place boasts one of the largest indoor gardens in the world where customers can enjoy the begonia flowers that fill the gardens and the many different types of birds that inhabit the park.

Access: Take the Ichibata Electric Railway to Matsue Vogel Park Station.

Yuushien Garden

Yuushien Garden is one of the most splendid Japanese gardens with seasonal flowers, trees, ponds, waterfalls, and paving stones creatively organized over 40,000 square-meters. Visitors are free to walk around and enjoy the gardens at their leisure.

Access: 25 min by car or by bus from JR Matsue Station; 40 min by bus from Matsue Shinkuji Onsen Station.

National Treasure

Izumo Taisha Grand Shrine

The Main Hall of this magnificent shrine, at 25 meters in height, is the tallest shrine building in Japan. Known for its, or the various connections people have with others during their lifetime. Izumo Grand Shrine is visited by tourists both domestic and international all year round. Once a year, it is said that all of the gods throughout Japan gather here to discuss what events people should have for the upcoming year.

Access: 25 min by car from JR Izumo Station; 45 min by foot from Izumo Electric Railway’s Izumo Taisha-emei Station.

Donovan Goto

Izumo Taisha Grand Shrine

The process that brings rocks from the mountains into the hands of the sculptors is a process called "Izumo iron manufacturing." It is such a dominating process that yields fascinating works that can only be described as a form of art. I got to witness the process of a world being held by a scissors and then get to try it for myself. Apparently he made it look a lot easier than it actually was.

Aquas

This aquarium houses over 10,000 specimens of marine life including penguins and sharks. The beluga whales are famous for their unique performance known as the bubble rings, which they can blow. Their new performance called magic rings is even more fantastic and can be seen only at Aquas.

Access: 15 min by bus from JR Hamada Station. Cut off at Aquas-one Bus Stop. Or 20 min by foot from JR Hamada Station.

Dustin Kidd

You get a real sense of the shrine's history from the moment you enter the grounds. It's like the air itself feels different. Everything here seems more historic. I could spend all day here, just stroll ing around and taking in the different areas of the shrine.
Traditional Performing Art
Iwami Kagura

This is a traditional performance in the western area of Shimane that originated as dances and music based on Japanese mythology that were performed during Shinto religious ceremonies. The extravagant costumes and lively, expressive dances are fascinating, and the Oouchi performance in particular should not be missed.

Regular schedule:

Tea Culture of Matsue

Matsue has a rich and distinct tea culture that you can enjoy. The seventh level of the Matsukaze rubi, Hata, and the sea and the tea ceremony, and the tea led to a unique tea culture developing in Matsue that is enjoyed by the city’s residents and visitors to this day. The Matsue Castle Grande Tea Ceremony in October is a great introduction to the city’s tea culture.

Shimane’s Delicacies

Shimane enjoys the bounties of both the mountains and the sea. The natural environment provides delicious seafood as well as seasonal delights.

Izumo Soba
These are Japanese noodles made from buckwheat. The outer shell of the grain is ground up together with the grain itself, making these soba noodles more flavorful, more aromatic, and more nutritious than other types of soba found throughout the country.

Shimane Wagyu Beef

Local Seafoods

Shimane’s Sake

There is an old Japanese myth that says the Sake industry began from which sake originated. If you have never tried the Sake from Shimane, you should try it. Shimane has a wide selection of Sake with many meanings and spilling from. Sake has high alcohol and sweetness, and it is enjoyed by many people. These are the reasons why Shimane has a wide variety of Sake, which is why it has a wide selection of Sake.

Du Chunhong
China

If you want to ease your tiredness, I recommend visiting an onsen. There are many onsen and more are included in Shimane’s scene, and I am sure that there are different effects such as helping with stiff shoulders, peppers, burns and more. One can especially look forward to its skin smoothing and relaxing effect.

Jeanne Morgan
United Kingdom

I love the beautiful sea and the fresh seafood in Hamada. It’s really interesting to take what is at first raw and follow the process of making it into a red postcard. The paper dyeing experience was my favorite though, as it’s a challenge to try and create a variety of different colorful patterns.

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Treasure

Sekishu Banshi

Sekishu Banshi is traditional Japanese handmade paper that has an over 1300-year history in the Shimane region of Shimane. It is praised for the high quality and durability. It was designated as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Property in 2007. You can try making your own Sekishu Washi at the Sekishu Washi Center in the Misumi area of Hamada City.

Sekishu Washi Center Access: 5 minutes by car or 10 minutes by the JR Tamba Onsen Station.