

For Travel Agents

SETOUCHI JAPAN

22 New Experiences
Brush Up PROJECT 2018



Videos

The reflection of
Setouchi in your eyes



~Re-wind~ You are a
vision of beauty at Setouchi



To those who are considering traveling to Japan,
Please enjoy these videos which illustrate the enchantment of travel to the Setouchi area.

Information

Setouchi DMO
Official Homepage





Ultimate Experiences to Inspire You

For Travel Agents

To travel professionals planning for Japan,

“Setouchi” is an area that is gaining attention as a new destination location in Japan.

Eleven experts have refined and polished hitherto unknown charms of this gemstone of an area, and 22 new travel products have been produced.

All of these products designed for foreign tourists visiting Japan have been made for professionals active in the tourism industry.

In planning this “brush up” project,

the advice and opinions of both domestic and foreign tourism industry professionals, land operators, and tourists from North America and Europe who have experience visiting Japan were taken into consideration.

Please make use of this brochure which lays out “Unique Experiences in Setouchi” as new proposals for foreign customers visiting Japan.

*The term “Setouchi” refers to the area comprised of the seven prefectures that surround Japan’s Seto Inland Sea.

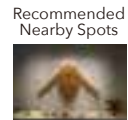
SETOUCHI DMO
Chief Operating Officer
Katsunori Murahashi

For Travel Agents



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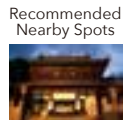
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©Tatsuroh Kohno (Studio Mr.K)

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Ruriko-ji Temple Pagoda

From Kansai International Airport

To Kobe Airport	30 min.
To Himeji Sta.	1 hr. 45 min.
To Hiroshima Sta.	2 hrs. 50 min.
To Okayama Sta.	2 hrs.
To Takamatsu Sta.	3 hrs. 30 min.
To Matsuyama Sta.	1 hr. 15 min.
To Tokushima Sta.	2 hrs. 50 min.
To Shin-Yamaguchi Sta.	3 hrs. 15 min.
To Shin-Shimonoseki Sta.	4 hrs.
To Sumoto Port	1 hr. 5 min.

From Haneda Airport

To Kansai International Airport	1 hr. 20 min.
To Kobe Airport	1 hr. 20 min.
To Okayama Airport	1 hr. 20 min.
To Tokushima Awaodori Airport	1 hr. 20 min.
To Hiroshima Airport	1 hr. 30 min.
To Takamatsu Airport	1 hr. 30 min.
To Matsuyama Airport	1 hr. 40 min.
To Iwakuni Kintaiyo Airport	1 hr. 45 min.
To Yamaguchi Ube Airport	1 hr. 50 min.
To Fukuoka Airport	1 hr. 40 min.

✈ Airplane	✈ Shinkansen
🚆 Conventional lines	🚌 Limousine bus
🚢 Ship	

San'in-Setouchi-Shikoku Expressway Pass (SEP)
Enjoy fixed prices at all highway toll booths!
This drive pass offers the best deal for touring the specified area by rental car during the designated travel period.
<http://global.w-nexco.co.jp/en/sep/>

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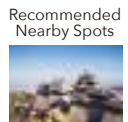
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Near World Heritage Sites

World Heritage sites are representative of Japan and are popular with foreign tourists. Special experiences such as a “deep visit” or approach from an angle that has hitherto been unavailable have been established.



Himeji Castle
photo: Himeji City



Atomic Bomb Dome
photo: Hiroshima Prefecture



For Travel Agents

Arima Onsen, Hyogo



HIGHLIGHTS

01

Listen to the story of a producer of Kobe beef

The ancestor of high grade Wagyu beef is in Ojiro, in the northern part of Hyogo Prefecture, where "Tajima-guro" beef was first produced under the Tajima beef brand. While protecting these cows threatened with endangerment up to the present time, the 15th-generation inn manager has fostered a friendship with the people of Ojiro town, and this is the reason that high quality Kobe beef can be obtained. Guests can learn about the superior qualities of Kobe beef directly from the producer.



02

Participate in a seafood auction at Akashiura Fishing Port

Entrance to the auction is allowed only for a few select inns in the Kobe area. Guests can view and choose the fish they like, and the chef will bid in the auction and make cuisine according to the guest's wishes.



03

Visit a Japanese sake brewery in Kobe

Visit the sake brewery that produces "Fukuju", the sake served at the Nobel Prize dinner ceremony. Sommeliers rich in overseas experience will explain the differences between wine and sake in English, as well as how to enjoy sake the Kobe way. As well as touring and learning about the brewery, guests can sample special sakes produced at the brewery and choose a sake to accompany their dinner using their five senses.



04

Luxurious time at the inn

Based on the ingredients selected, the chef will prepare dinner while communicating with the customer to make a one-time, unique dinner for that guest only. Enjoy an exclusively, private natural hot spring of 6 million-year-old seawater.



Unique special-order course at a luxurious inn

Located north of Mt. Rokko in Hyogo Prefecture, Arima Hot Spring resort town can be found at the base of a mountain in a valley filled with Japanese maples. In this hot spring area with abundant nature, such as Zuihoji Park which is famous for its Japanese maples, and the Arima River which is enjoyable to stroll along, there is a "silver spring" which features clear spring water and a "golden spring" which features water that turns a reddish-brown when it makes contact with air. It is also known as a spring well-loved by historical figure Hideyoshi Toyotomi and is one of Japan's three oldest hot springs. As such, there are several very old inns, with the oldest inn in Arima being Tocen Goshoboh Inn. Established about 800 years ago in the Kamakura Period, history tells us that Yoshimitsu Ashikaga sojourned here, and remains indicate that Hideyoshi set up his palace in Arima. The current Tocen Goshoboh Inn has been refurbished but

retains all the charms of the past and is an inn that has been providing excellent Japanese cuisine due to the skilled chef. The meals usually feature mountain-based ingredients, but in this tour the cuisine will focus on high-quality ingredients from Hyogo Prefecture. Together with the chef, guests will select fresh seafood that has been harvested from Akashiura Fishing Port, as well as Kobe beef; the meal will be order-made based on the type of cuisine the guest would like to eat. Additionally, guests will visit a sake brewery in the Nada area of Hyogo and can enjoy selecting a fine Japanese sake to accompany their meal with brewery staff. At Goshoboh, we've prepared a variety of ways to pass the time, including strolling through town with the proprietress (who has been designated as a "Cool Japan Ambassador" by the National Cabinet Office), enjoying time with Arima 'geisha', trekking through Mt. Rokko, and more.

DETAILS

① Unique special-order course at a luxurious inn

- Time Required : 2 days / 1 night
- Period of Availability : Year-round
- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 2~10 people
- Inquiries & Reservations : Mitate Company, Ltd.: info@mitate.kyoto
- Related URL : <https://mitate.kyoto/tag/products/>

When contacting for inquiries, please mention that you saw this "Brush Up Project" brochure.
Produced by Hideo Shoji



Feel “Real Japan” in this temple-stay experience

HIGHLIGHTS

① *Sutra Singing at the Jogyo-do Hall*

This hall was used by monks in training during this ascetic ritual in which they would circle around the main image of the Amida Buddha while chanting; guests can experience this chanting ritual of the Tendai sect that is part of a liturgy ceremony in which the sutras are sung aloud. Reservations are required at least 1 month in advance. As there are no parishioners in the hall, the liturgies echo in this quiet space. Additionally, a Zazen meditation experience is available in the Jogyo-do Hall (reservations required at least 3 days in advance).

② *Try your hand at calligraphy at the Engyoji Temple lecture hall*

Built in 1174, the lecture hall 'Jiki-do' was originally used by monks in training for sleeping and dining and is an Important Cultural Property. Also called 'Cho-do', which means “long hall”, this wooden-planked hall is about 40 meters in length; guests can calm their hearts and try calligraphy with monks while being watched over by the principal image of the Monju Bodhisattva as a monk. Reservations are required at least 1 month in advance. The scent of ink drifts through the quiet space.

③ *Experience a Dedication Ceremony*

In the open space in front of the three halls, guests can watch “Iaikiri” swordsmanship or other dedication ceremonies, as well as see and touch an actual sword. As this is a filming location for the Hollywood movie “The Last Samurai”, a samurai experience is also available. Reservations are required at least 1 month in advance.

④ *Enjoy vegetarian Buddhist cuisine at Juryo-in, a sub-temple of Engyoji*

The Juryo-in sub-temple, an Important Cultural Property, is located in the East Valley area of the Engyoji complex and provides an opportunity to enjoy Buddhist cuisine that does not utilize any animal products. Meals are created based on past event records of Engyoji but have been updated to suit modern tastes. Meals are served on rare and unusual red lacquerware known as 'shosha-nuri'; the lacquerware is hand-painted a bright red vermillion color. (Available between April and November excluding Tuesdays and Thursdays; please reserve at least 3 days in advance. The basic plan is for 5 people or more, but please inquire if otherwise.). Noted in the Michelin guide.

For①②③, these experiences are held before the ropeway begins running; therefore, it is necessary for guests to lodge in temple lodging the night beforehand.



The tour location is about 30 minutes by car from Himeji Castle, also called “White Egret Castle”. Ride the Mt. Shosha Ropeway and reach Sanjo Station at the summit in about 4 minutes while looking out over Awajishima, the Iejima Island chain, Tangashima, Shodoshima, and more, over deep valleys surrounded by trees that are hundreds of years old and into dignified forests. Engyoji Temple is an old temple of the Tendai sect and is called the “Mt. Hiei of the West”; it is number 27 on pilgrimage route of 33 temples of the Saigoku region and is also the largest. In addition to being listed in the Michelin Green Guide, it is also known as a set for both Japanese and Hollywood movies, and is known as a place where “Real Japan” can be felt. It is said that the structure was built in 966 by the monk Shoku, and that many parishioners came to visit the three halls. There is a hall for copying sutras, an exhibition hall for temple treasures, and the great lecture hall which was originally a place for disciplines to sleep, eat, and study and which is the main

auditorium of Engyoji Temple. Guests can make an appointment to use the Jogyodo Hall, where they can practice Zen meditation and spend time in calmness being watched over by the seated statue of the principal image Joroku Amida Nyorai Buddha. Furthermore, guests can have the opportunity to experience old Buddhist culture through ‘shojin ryori’, which is vegetarian Buddhist cuisine, and spend a night at a facility or sub-temple within the precincts. Guests can reserve one month in advance to experience a unique Buddhist chanting ceremony of the Tendai sect in the Jogyodo Hall if there are no special events scheduled at the time of visit. This is an unusual experience that is not readily available even to Japanese people.



DETAILS | ② Feel “Real Japan” in this temple-stay experience

① Liturgy ceremony experience at Jogyo-do Hall

- Time Required : 60 minutes

② Calligraphy experience at the lecture hall

- Time Required : 90 minutes

③ Dedication Ceremony Experience

- Time Required : 120 minutes

④ Vegetarian Buddhist cuisine

All:

- Period of Availability : ①~③ all seasons except winter ④ All days except Tuesdays and Thursdays between April and November

- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : ①~③ 2~10 people ④ In principle, more than 5 people; please consult.

- Inquiries & Reservations : Mitate Company, Ltd.: info@mitate.kyoto

- Related URL : <https://mitate.kyoto/tag/products/>



Cycle through Hiroshima, the City of Peace

HIGHLIGHTS

01

Meander through Hiroshima City on a rent-a-cycle

Guests can express the places they want to visit and their interests when making a reservation, and the cycling course will be designed with this information in mind. The course can include shrines and temples that are not listed in guidebooks; it is also possible to include an “okonomiyaki”-making workshop in the plan.

02

Receive a present of pleasant memories in photos and video form

Your experiences cycling in Hiroshima City and in the Yokogawa Shopping Arcade will be recorded in photos and video. A video will be sent to participants after the tour.

03

Pub crawl in the evening at the Yokogawa Shopping Arcade

Look forward to visiting 3 restaurants and bars in the Yokogawa Shopping Arcade after cycling. The guide will accompany guests to shops such as Japanese-style pubs, liquor shops, and more according to guests' interests. Interact with locals and shop staff to have a great evening in Hiroshima!



With six beautiful rivers flowing through it, Hiroshima City is called "The City of Water"; water taxis ferry through the city center, which is set in a rich natural land next to the sea and mountains. "Sokoiko!" offers a daytime cycling course throughout the city, but for this project they are offering a special evening course as well. Starting with the World Heritage site of the Atomic Bomb Dome which symbolizes the City of Peace, local staff will create a special route with locations based on customers' interests and which are not listed in guidebooks; they will then guide guests through the course. Guests are welcome

to stop and see things along the way that interest them. It is a real pleasure to interact with local people on this cycling trip along with English-speaking staff. After cycling, visit local restaurants and bars in the Yokogawa Shopping Arcade. The shops include a popular tavern that uses beer crates as chairs, a liquor shop that offers a wide variety of Japanese sake, and more. Through interacting with Hiroshima locals who are outgoing, friendly, and enjoy a good time, guests can experience Hiroshima as both a historical city of peace as well as a charming modern city.

DETAILS

3

sokoikanight!

- Time Required : cycling: approximately 2 hours / pub visits: approximately 2 hours

- Period of Availability : Year-round *advance reservation required

- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 1~10 people (please consult if more than 10 maximum)

- Inquiries & Reservations : via e-mail or homepage / E-mail: toby@mintinc.co.jp / Homepage: <http://sokoiko-mint.com>

- Business name : mint, Ltd.

- Email : toby@mintinc.co.jp

- Related URL : <https://www.sokoiko-mint.com/>

For Travel Agents

Hatsukaichi, Hiroshima



World Heritage site Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima Island has been worshipped as a sacred island since ancient times. There are many shrines scattered over the island including the large ‘torii’ shrine gate and the vermillion shrine that were built on the sea bed; in addition, areas of unspoiled nature such as Mt. Misen are still being protected. The surrounding waters are rich in nutrients and are famous for growing high-quality oysters, and there are many oyster rafts floating in the sea.

On this tour, instead of fast-paced tourism sites, guests will be able to relax and slowly enjoy the natural environment that encompasses Miyajima Island. On the first day, stay at an inn that looks out on Miyajima Island and enjoy the hot spring baths and local cuisine of the Setouchi area; on the following morning, ride a chartered boat and approach the large shrine gate and the island from the sea. Afterwards, enjoy a barbeque featuring Hiroshima’s branded oysters “Aki no Hitotsubu”, seafood harvested from the Seto Inland Sea, and craft gin produced from local Hiroshima ingredients.



Private shrine worship from the sea, with Hiroshima oysters & craft gin

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | Stay at Miyahama Onsen on the opposite shore from Miyajima Island

Miyahama Onsen is the area where cozy inns are lined up against the sea overlooking Miyajima Island. Relax while enjoying the hot springs and delicious seafood. Accommodation may be selected from five facilities according to guest’s budge and taste.

02 | Visit Itsukushima Shrine by chartered boat

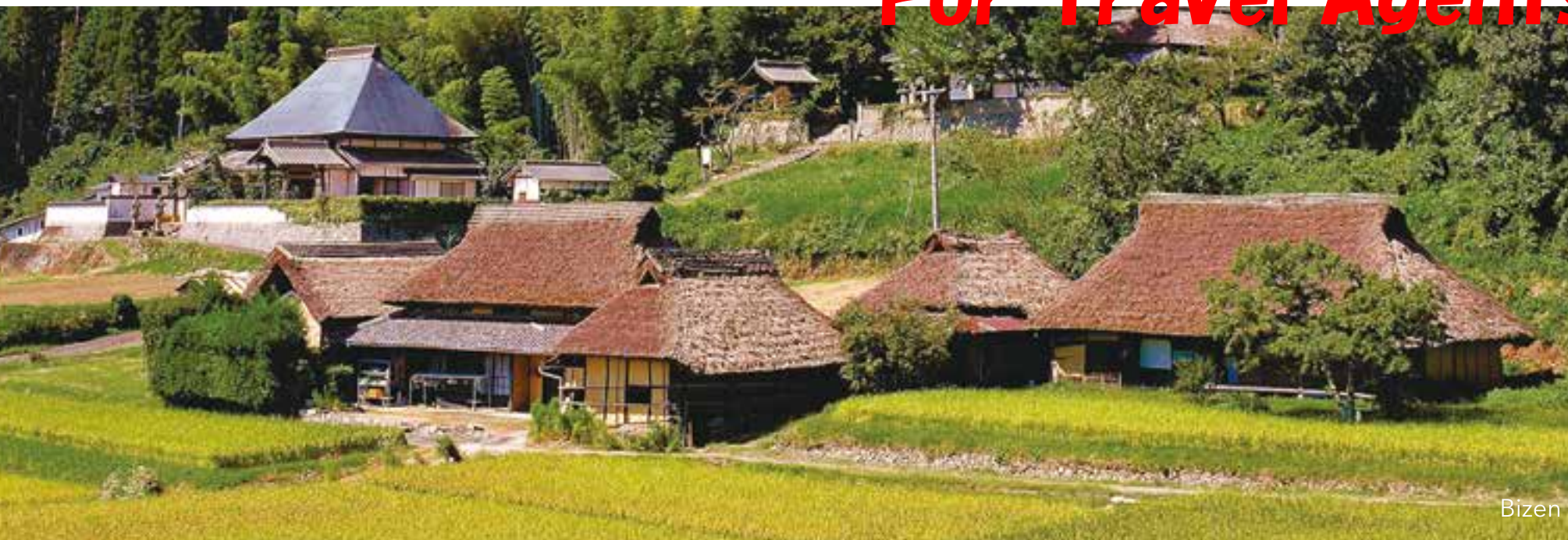
Take a chartered boat and see the Onoseto Sea spread between the mainland and Miyajima Island. Although the distance depends on the condition of the tide on any given day, guests can approach Itsukushima Shrine and worship from the sea.

03 | Enjoy local seafood and sake from the Setouchi area

Taste extra-large branded oysters and other seafood at a barbeque at a local oyster production company. To accompany the delicacies, enjoy botanical craft gin made from ingredients harvested from the mountains and sea of Hiroshima by the Chugoku Jozo, a local brewing company.

DETAILS | ④ Private & Relaxing Time with Seafood BBQ at World Heritage Site Miyajima

- *There are five accommodation facilities available: please contact for details. - **Time Required** : 2 days / 1 night
- **Period of Availability** : Year-round - **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : Minimum of 2 people
- **Inquiries & Reservations / Business Name** : Regional Branding Institute Co., Ltd.
- **Tel** : +81 3-5246-4248 (English / Chinese) - **Email** : attractive-j@chibra.co.jp - **Related URL** : <https://chibra.co.jp/> (Japanese only)



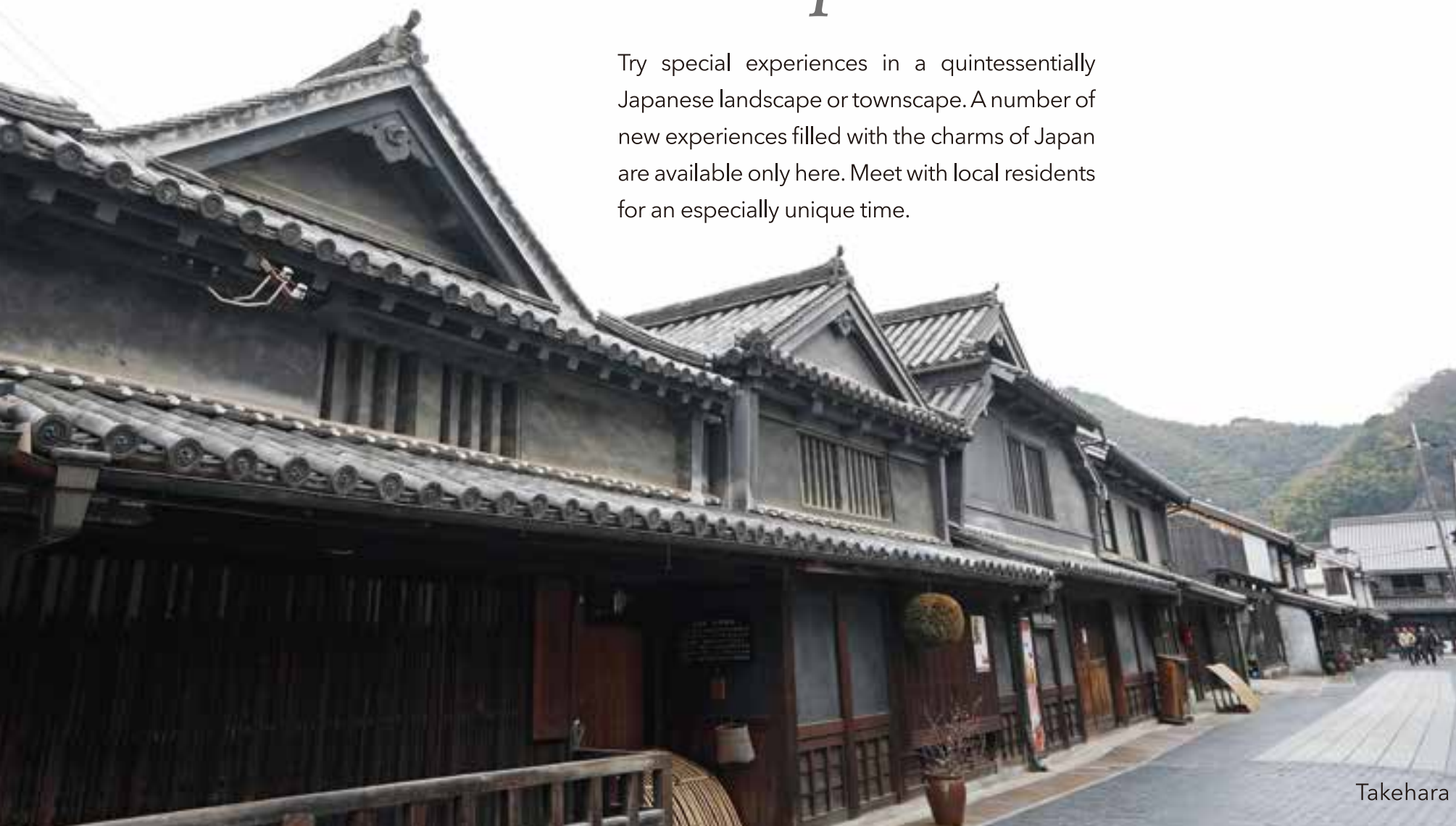
Bizen



Uchiko

Historical townscapes/ Cultural experiences

Try special experiences in a quintessentially Japanese landscape or townscape. A number of new experiences filled with the charms of Japan are available only here. Meet with local residents for an especially unique time.



Takehara



Shimonoseki



Kurashiki



03

Denim Kimono Night Plan

After putting on a denim kimono, walking around the Kurashiki Historical Area. Take commemorative photos in recommended scenic spots.

The information center in front of the station offers English-language support, and there is an English-language guide map available as well.

04

Shopping in the Bikan Historical Area

Look into the many shops that offer accessories and other items to coordinate with your denim kimono. Stroll around while snacking, and enjoy free time in the Bikan Historical Area.

HIGHLIGHTS



01

Takakibi Noodle & Local Cuisine Set

Enjoy local cuisine items made with care including “takakibi-men” noodles made from millet and which have a firm texture, sushi made with locally branded Chiya Beef or specially produced yellow leeks, and more.



02

Sake Tasting Course at a Standing Bar

Guests can sample local Japanese sake at Standing Bar Jizakeya, which carries between 40~50 varieties of sake. Enjoy speaking freely with the American staff member on weekends, who is a sake aficionado.

Stroll through Kurashiki’s townscape in a denim kimono

Located in the southern portion of Okayama Prefecture, Kurashiki City flourished under direct jurisdiction of the Edo Shogunate. The remnants of that era can still be seen clearly in the Bikan Historical Area, an area in, which the townscape has been well preserved. The white walls of the warehouses and merchant’s townhouses stand in a continuous line, and the view of traditional Japan merged with modernism in this elegant townscape is impressive. There are museums, Japanese-style inns, and restaurants and cafes in this lively area. Strolling through the area during daytime is recommended but strolling in the evening is also lovely. The illuminated buildings reflected on the surface of the river is extremely photo-worthy.

Known for spinning, the Kojima area of Kurashiki is also known as the birthplace of Japanese jeans. On this tour, participants will wear a denim kimono, stroll through the Kurashiki Historical Area, and enjoy local cuisine. Professional staff will dress guests in denim kimonos. Unlike regular kimonos, you can wear denim kimonos casually and add your own unique fashion touches. Additionally, this tour provides the opportunity to try and learn about local sake. Guests can try a tasting course at Standing Bar Jizakeya, a bar specializing in sakes from Okayama. Try to find your favorite sake!

DETAILS

⑤ Stroll through Kurashiki’s townscape in a denim kimono, and enjoy local cuisine and Japanese sake

- **Time Required** : 6 hours (kimono dressing ⇒ local cuisine⇒ local sake)
- **Period of Availability** : Year- round
- **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : 1~15 people
- **Inquiries & Reservations** :
Regional Branding Institute Co., Ltd.
- **Business Name** :
Kurashiki Kimono Komachi / Toraiya / Jizakeya
- **Tel** : +81 3-5246-4248
- **Email** : attractive.japan@chibra.co.jp
- **Related URL** : <http://kimonokomachi.jp/>
<http://www.try8.jp/>
<http://standing-bar-jizakeya.business.site/>

When contacting for inquiries, please mention that you saw this “Brush Up Project” brochure.
Produced by Shinichi Sato & Koki Maeda

Create unique Japanese sake set on this 2 days / 1 night adventure!

For Travel Agents

Uchiko, Ehime

Uchiko in Ehime Prefecture is a town with a beautiful townscape of continuous merchant's houses and clay-walled storehouses; this town prospered from the Edo Period through the Meiji Period sumac wax production. In the town area, there is a refurbished traditional home that has been turned into an inn, and the restored "Uchiko-za" theater which was built at the beginning of the Taisho Period; the current townscape is the result of townspeople who are involved in innovation while protecting tradition.

Tour participants will stay in Uchiko for two days and will utilize the three traditional crafts of sake brewing, Japanese paper making, and woodworking to make an original Japanese sake set. Sake brewing will take place at the Chiyo-no-Kame Brewery, which has been in business for 300 years. The label will be a 'washi' paper label that is made by hand at the Tenjin Paper Factory, which is a production location of Ozu Japanese 'washi' paper; this paper has a history of about 1,200 years. The wooden sake cup will be made at the Uchiko Craftsmen's House using locally grown wood. In the evening, enjoy talking to the brewers while drinking together. Complete your special souvenir set by placing your finished Japanese sake with a handmade label and your wooden cup into a box made of paulownia wood, also made from Uchiko-grown wood. Interact with innovative craftsmen who utilize traditional techniques to make a unique, one-of-a-kind Japanese sake set, and feel the charm of Uchiko.



HIGHLIGHTS



01 Day 1 9:00

Experience making Japanese sake at a brewery that is not open to the public

Sake in the 'Junmai Daiginjo' class made by the Chiyo-no-Kame Brewery is made using techniques such as cold storage brewing; this brewery continues to use challenging techniques from the past. You can experience the process of making sake on the day of your visit, performing such tasks as separating freshly-steamed rice, planting 'koji' mold on rice, and more. On the final day, bottle a 720ml bottle of Japanese sake to take home as a souvenir.



02 Day 1 19:00

Enjoy dinner and drinks with Japanese sake brewers

In the evening, enjoy dinner with brewers at the Chiyo-no-kame Brewery. While discussing sake brewing, enjoy a meal created from local ingredients such as Uchiko pork and Uchiko chestnuts paired with Japanese sake made in Uchiko.



03 Day 2 10:00

Make an original sake cup from Uchiko-harvested cedar

Experience making a sake cup using cedar grown in Uchiko; the workshop will be held at the Uchiko Craftsmen's House, which houses traditional crafts from the Uchiko area. Make your wooden cup by hammering the pieces together so that no cracks or spaces remain; an instructor will be there to assist you.



04 Day 2 13:00

Make an original Japanese sake label from Ozu Japanese washi paper

Ozu Japanese washi paper has a long history extending from the Heian Period, and its high quality, high grade calligraphy paper is especially loved by calligraphers all over Japan. After watching skilled craftsmen at the paper factory, make an original Japanese sake label from Japanese washi paper. You can choose to write your name in Japanese calligraphy, or create a design using a gilding technique that has been transmitted from a French artisan.

DETAILS

⑥ 2-Day Unique Sake Set Workshop in Uchiko

- Time Required : 2 days / 1 night
- Period of Availability : mid-October through the end of March
- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 1~5 people
- Inquiries & Reservations : Uchiko Visitor's Center
- Business Name : JJ Travel Center Co.,Ltd. / Uchiko Tourism Association
- Tel : +81 893-44-3790 (Japanese and English)
- Email : uchiko-k@lagoon.ocn.ne.jp (Uchiko Tourism Association group mail)
- Related URL : www.we-love-uchiko.jp

When contacting for inquiries, please mention that you saw this "Brush Up Project" brochure.
Produced by Takashi Kadota & Yoko Suganami





HIGHLIGHTS

01

Kabuki Make-up Workshop

Experience putting on Kabuki make-up, called 'Kumadori'. Colorful lines are drawn on the face that delineate the blood vessels and muscles. Each color has a meaning: red represents youth, justice, and power; blue represents conspiracy and evil spirits; brown represents change into a phantom or specter.

03

Tour of the Old Konpira Grand Theater / Kanamaru-za

On this tour, guests can tour the backstage area and take photos. This theater still relays the atmosphere of the Edo Period, and the reliance on manpower to move all the stage equipment backstage can be seen.

02

Kabuki Movement Workshop

When the protagonist of Kabuki reaches the climax of the story, he strikes a pose and then stops suddenly for emphasis. This stop-motion technique is called 'mie-o-kiru' and is used to impress the audience; this workshop with commentary will teach guests how to perform this technique.

04

Stroll around the Konpira Hot Spring town area and take photos

Guests who so desire can walk around Konpira Hot Spring town area while wearing 'kumadori' make-up. Enjoy taking photos for Instagram or other SNS sites in this photogenic environment while wearing Kabuki make-up. Participants who choose to wear a mask instead of make-up can also put on an authentic Kabuki costume and take commemorative photos.

Immerse yourself in Kabuki at Japan's oldest Kabuki playhouse

"Kabuki" is one of Japan's historical and traditional arts and is said to have begun in 1603 with a woman performing a dance piece called "Okuni". The playhouse in Kotohira, Kagawa Prefecture was established about 230 years later. This is because worship at the Kotohiragu Shrine, known as the Konpira of the Sanuki area, was popular. This shrine is a place where many people come from all over the country since the Edo Period to worship the gods of Ise-jingu Shrine. Visits to the shrine known as "Konpira-mode" were held three times a year and the town would turn into a city; performances were held in temporary structures until 1835, when a permanent theater building for large performances in Konpira was built. As Japan's oldest playhouse in existence the "Old Konpira Grand Theater", a.k.a Kanamaru-za, is a nationally designated Important Cultural Property; Kabuki actors active in Tokyo and Osaka today are invited to perform at Kanamaru-za, just as actors in the old days of east and west stepped onto the cypress stage. On this tour, guests can put on Kabuki make-up known as 'kumadori', take photos, and make special memories while experiencing this important cultural asset.

DETAILS

⑦ Kabuki experience at the oldest playhouse in Japan

Tour guide for konpira Omotesando and Kanamaru-za (English available)

Additional program: 1) kabuki mask & kimono fitting, 2) kabuki make-up & kimono fitting

※1) kimono fitting for 4 persons, 2) make-up for 2 persons in maximum per group.

- **Time Required** : 60 minutes, plus time for exploring

- **Period of Availability** : Year-round

- **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : 1~10 people

- **Inquiries & Reservations** : KOTOHIRA TRIP BASE kotori

- **Business Name** : KOTOHIRA TRIP BASE kotori

- **Tel** : +81 877 75 2657 (English)

- **Email** : kotori@kotobus.com

- **Related URL** : <http://kotori.kotobus.com/>

*Contents provided by "KOTOHIRA TRIP BASE kotori", specialists in inbound tourist information. Consultation on sightseeing and tourist activities is welcomed.



Japanese sake & cuisine pairing party with a brewer

Takehara City is located in the central region of Hiroshima Prefecture. From historical records at the manor at Shimogamo Shrine in Kyoto, which dates from the Heian Period, we know that the area called "the little Kyoto of the Aki region" flourished in salt and sake production in the Edo Period. If you stroll through the historical area, you can see white-walled merchant houses, wooden two-storied storehouses, and traditional Japanese houses in a row; it feels as if you've gone back in time. It's also interesting to see the detailed structural pieces known as "Takehara Lattice" which look like laser-cut paper.

There are three sake breweries in the area, and on this tour, we will visit the Fujii Brewery, which was established in 1863 as a brewer of pure sake and is known for the brands "Ryusei" and "Hoju". The tour will be guided by fifth generation brewmaster Mr. Yoshifumi Fujii, or his son Mr. Norihiro Fujii. This is a unique chance to hear about the history of Takehara City, about sake brewing and the philosophy thereof, about pairing Japanese sake with food, and much more about Japanese sake directly from the manufacturer.

HIGHLIGHTS

① Pairing party at a historical brewery

To start, tour the historical area of Takehara City including the sake warehouse at Fujii Brewery. Enjoy a sake and cuisine pairing party guided by Mr. Fujii in a historical brewery. Enjoy tasting five different unusual sakes that are not commercially available that will be paired with seasonal seafood and other fresh ingredients harvested from the Setouchi region.

② Cruising and a pairing party on a remote island

Enjoy cruising around the Seto Inland Sea and taking in the scenery on a private chartered cruiser for up to 10 people. Arrive at the remote island Osakikamijima about 30 minutes after departure and visit the oyster bar at Farm Suzuki, which has the only salt water oyster cultivation farm in the country. Eat several varieties of oysters and enjoying tasting five types of Japanese sake from Fujii Brewery that are not commercially available while listening to Mr. Fujii talk about sake production.

DETAILS

⑧ Japanese sake & cuisine pairing party with a brewer

① Pairing party at a historical brewery
- Time Required : 4.5 hours

② Cruising and a pairing party on a remote island
- Time Required : 5.5 hours

- Period of Availability : Year-round
- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 2~10 people
- Inquiries & Reservations : iine-takehara
- Business Name : iine-takehara
- Tel : +81 846-22-1123 (Japanese only)
- Email : machi@iine-takehara.com
- Related URL : <http://www.iine-takehara.com/> (Japanese only)

Contents may change without prior notice; please contact for detailed information.

When contacting for inquiries, please mention that you saw this "Brush Up Project" brochure.
Produced by Yoko Suganami & Hiroshi Yoshida



02

Take commemorative photos in a variety of period costumes

At the Chofu Mori Residence, guests can enjoy trying on a wide variety of period costumes. Women can also try on armor. After dressing, guests can receive guidance on swordsmanship, and take authentic-looking commemorative photos in the Japanese garden.



HIGHLIGHTS

01

Appreciate the Japanese martial art “Iaido”

The ‘mugairyu Iaido’ demonstration will be performed by practitioners of the martial art hall located in Shimonoseki City. Once a method developed for killing, this art demonstrated the way to cultivate a whole healthy being including mind and body. The dramatic sight of a sword slicing through the tensioned air before our very eyes causes our breath to stop.



Exciting swordsmanship demonstration at a former feudal lord’s residence

Chofu has a long history of about 1800 years and flourished as a castle town in the Edo Period. In Chofu, the area that most retains vestiges of the old castle town is the Furue-shoji district. If you walk along the streets and feel history and the Japanese-style charm, you will arrive at the Chofu Mori Residence. Visitors can have a unique experience at this 115-year-old residence built in the samurai style with attached Japanese garden.

On this tour, you can watch an ‘Iaido’ swordsmanship demonstration in which the way to draw a sword while sitting or with one knee up is shown; the movement of the sword while in a sitting position is especially beautiful. Additionally, guests can dress up in various costumes including real samurai armor weighing 20 kg or a long-sleeved kimono. After getting dressed, learn how to pose from the swordsmanship master and take commemorative photos in the Japanese garden. Experience Japanese culture via uniquely Japanese ‘Iaido’ swordsmanship and authentic costumes in this historical town.

DETAILS

9 Samurai Costume Experience and Swordsmanship Demonstration at the Chofu Mori Residence

*for tea ceremony experience, please inquire

- **Time Required** : from 1 hour 30 minutes
- **Period of Availability** : Year-round (excluding scheduled events)
- **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : 4 (for other numbers, please inquire)
- **Inquiries & Reservations** : reservations required at the Chofu Mori Residence at least 10 days in advance
- **Business Name** : Shimonoseki Public Facilities Management Corporation
- **Tel** : +81 83-245-8090 (Chofu Mori Residence; Japanese only)
- **Email** : y.adachi@s-kanrikousha.com (Japanese and English)
- **Related URL** : <http://s-kanrikousha.com/mouriteitop.html>

When contacting for inquiries, please mention that you saw this “Brush Up Project” brochure.
Produced by Shinichi Sato & Koki Maeda

Dine on nouveau Japanese cuisine in a beautiful old farmhouse

Located about 20 km north of Yoshinaga Station in Yoshinaga Town, Bizen City, Hattoji Village is located at an altitude of 400m in a mountain woodland area that retains an original Japanese landscape. In 728, a priest of the Hosso sect of Buddhism named Dokyo Yugen founded a temple here. Called "Mt. Koya of the West", it is a place where mountain Buddhism developed. There are old temple ruins and remains of facilities for devotees dotted throughout the area, recalling a time of prosperity. The landscape that spreads out before one's eyes is straight out of a Japanese fairy tale. The beauty of abundant nature, stepped rice paddies, and thatched straw roofs on the antique homesteads weaves together to make you feel that you are in a world of dreams. The area is famous as a set for numerous movies and television series, including "Black Rain", "Village of Eight Tombs", and "Grave of the Fireflies".

On this tour, guests can enjoy staying at the Hattoji International Exchange Villa, an old homestead lodging facility in Hattoji Village, and enjoy a nouveau Japanese-style meal served on traditional Bizen ware pottery. The villa has a 'goemonburo' steel bath and an 'irori' fire pit for cooking, items that were used in Japanese rural life; guests can spend a relaxing time while experiencing traditional Japan. How about stopping by to enjoy the original landscape of Japan after visiting Himeji Castle and before heading to the World Heritage sites in Hiroshima?



*Bizen ware pottery and cuisine as pictured are for imaging purposes only. Actual contents will differ.



HIGHLIGHTS

Enjoy a gourmet meal by an on-call chef in this lodging experience

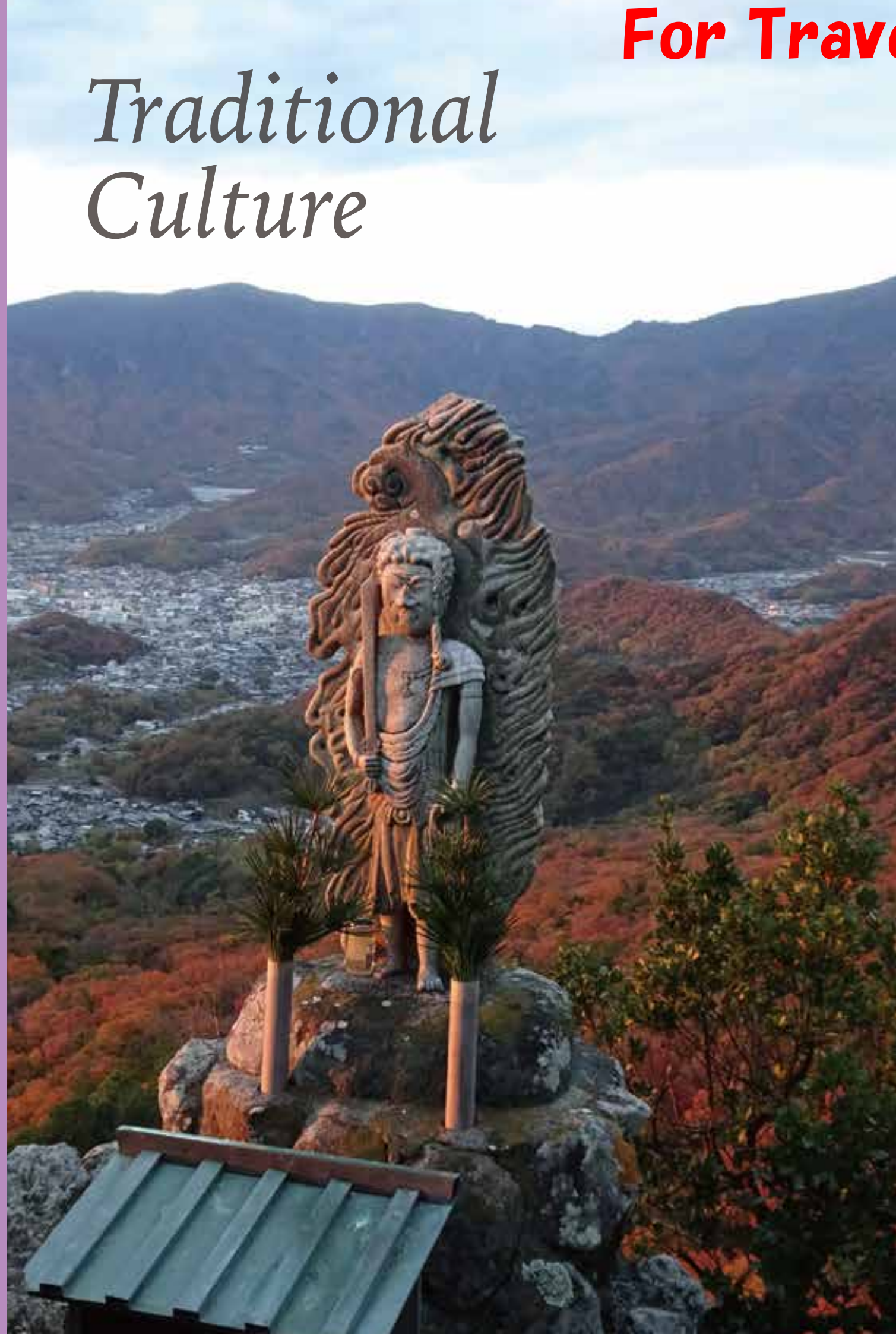
Stay at the Hattoji International Exchange Villa and enjoy a nouveau Japanese meal served on Bizen ware pottery.

DETAILS

- 10 Dine on nouveau Japanese cuisine served on Bizen ware pottery by an on-call chef while staying at the Hattoji International Villa
- Time Required : 18 hours
- Period of Availability : Year-round
- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 2 people ~
- Inquiries & Reservations : Bizen Tourism Association
- Business Name : Hattoji Furusato-mura
- Tel : +81 869-72-1919 (Japanese, English, Chinese)
- Email : kankoinfo@bizen-kanko.com
- Related URL : <http://international-villa.or.jp/en/>
<http://touyuukai.jp>

When contacting for inquiries, please mention that you saw this "Brush Up Project" brochure. Produced by Manabu Kato

Traditional Culture



Goma Fire Ritual at this sanctuary in the sky

Shodoshima Island is the second largest outlying island in the Setouchi region after Awajishima and has the highest peak in the Seto Inland Sea region at Mt. Hoshigajo. It is known throughout Japan as a resort area which makes the most of its warm climate to produce olives, as well as for being the location for various movies. The island was created due to an eruption of a subterranean volcano; one face of the island demonstrates rough and rugged peaks that were an ideal place for trainees seeking to train in the mountains. It is said that the founder of the Shingon Sect of Buddhism, Kobo Daishi (also known as Kukai), stopped over on Shodoshima Island on his way between his birthplace of Sanuki and his place of activity in Kyoto; 88 unique sacred places were designated across the island, which are different to the 88 sacred places of Shikoku, and to this day, the culture of pilgrimaging to

the 88 temples is still alive. Guests can experience a Goma Fire Ritual on Shodoshima Island, performed in a mountain temple that offers a stunning view. This ritual involving flames delivers wishes to Fudo-myo, a guardian figure, and burns the anxiety of those participating in the ritual. The view from the path to the ritual hall is typical of the Seto Inland Sea, a view of the calm sea and numerous islands, a view so beautiful it causes visitors to catch their breath. After the fire ritual, enjoy talking with the priest and capturing the scenery in photos. As Kobo Daishi reached enlightenment, it is fantastic to unify our spiritual senses through meditation. Guests can purify their hearts through Japanese Buddhism at sacred locations with an ocean view.

HIGHLIGHTS Please choose one from any temple.

01 | Jūkōji Temple / Mt. Goishizan

Jūkōji Temple, number 8 in the Shodoshima temple pilgrimage, has a history of being established by a line of monks in the Tempyo Era; the principle object of worship is Yakushi-nyorai, the Buddha who can cure all ills, at this old temple of the Shingon sect. The inner temple is number 2 in the Shodoshima temple pilgrimage. The head priest was an IT engineer at the forefront of the era before leaving his post.

02 | Ryūsuiji Temple / Nishi-no-Taki

Nishi-no-Taki is number 42 on the Shodoshima temple pilgrimage and is the oldest of Shodoshima's sacred sites. A huge boulder towering over the temple is said to be the place to make contact with the gods; visitors can make use of a ladder and chain to climb to the top. The head priest, who became a priest after retirement and who has studied at Shinbessho Entsuiji Temple at Mt. Koya, is also a master of esoteric yoga. He will teach visitors breathing methods and poses.

DETAILS | 11 Goma Fire Ritual at this sanctuary in the sky

- Time Required : 90 minutes
 - Period of Availability : all seasons except winter
 - Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 2~10 people
 - Inquiries & Reservations : Mitate Company, Ltd.
 - Email : info@mitate.kyoto
 - Related URL : <https://mitate.kyoto/tag/products/>
- *Information is for both temples. Please be advised that booking for experiences may not be available due to temple schedules.



Learn Zen meditation in an off-the-beaten-track old temple

For those familiar with the Gensai-ji Temple of the Soto Zen sect, this is an old and well-known temple connected to Mori, local Daimyo during the Warring States period. Here, visitors can try Zazen meditation and transcribing sutras. Zazen is the practice of sitting with proper posture and practicing breathing to harmonize the body, breath, and the spirit (Zazen while sitting on a chair is also possible). Transcribing sutras while writing with a brush allows the heart to relax. Zazen takes the stance of realigning the psychological senses in order to see the truth of things. The teachings have influenced the arts and led to the development in the Muromachi Period of the Karesansui style of Japanese gardening, in which absolutely no water is used. At Gensai-ji

Temple, the head priest will explain the teachings and methods of Zen in English so that you can experience and deeply understand Japanese culture when you try Zazen and transcribing sutras. There is a hot spring resort about 5 minutes by car from Gensai-ji Temple called Yuda Onsen, which started spouting water about 600 years ago. At the Sansui-en Inn at Yuda Onsen, you can enjoy a Zen meal. Based on the teachings of Buddha, the meals are vegetarian and are made using no meat, fish, or eggs. The Sansui-en Inn also has a Japanese garden in the Karesansui style of gardening. This is a perfect trip for those who want to discover Japanese culture deeply in a unique way that is not listed in any guidebooks.

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | Experience Zazen and transcribing sutras while being taught in English

You can study the heart of Buddhism under the guidance of the English-speaking head priest at Gensai-ji Temple. At Yuda Onsen hot spring resort, enjoy a vegetarian meal while looking out over the Japanese garden at an inn registered as a National Tangible Cultural Asset and National Registered Monument.

02 | Convenient access by Shinkansen

Visitors can utilize taxis prepared by the tourist information center at the nearest Shinkansen station, Shin-Yamaguchi Station, to access many locations. Because the route from Gensai-ji Temple to Sansui-en Inn has been set in advance, all you need to do is take a ride to reach your destination. After completing this tour, you can choose to start on your return journey, or sightsee around the city freely.

DETAILS | 12 Japanese landscape known only to you: Experience Zen at an old, off-the-beaten track temple / Look out over a Japanese garden while enjoying a vegetarian Buddhist meal

- Time Required : 5 hours
- Period of Availability : Year-round
- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 2~20 people
- Inquiries & Reservations : Association of Yamaguchi Tourism convention
- Tel : +81 83-933-0088 (English)
- Email : info@yamaguchi-city.jp
- Related URL : <http://yamaguchi-city.jp/>





Try Japanese culture hands-on and local cuisine at Kakurinji Temple

The Harima region is located on the east side of the Setouchi region. Kakogawa City, located between Kobe and Himeji Cities, is an area rich in cultural heritage. Kakurinji Temple is a symbol of this culture. Built in 589 under orders by Prince Shotoku, it is called the "Horyuji Temple of the West" and possesses many cultural properties.

Kakogawa City is known for 'shogi', a game similar to chess; guests can try brush painting a 'kanji' character on an engraved game piece, eat a special hot pot made with local ingredients, and enjoy local sake along with enjoying talks with the head priest at this historical temple.

HIGHLIGHTS

① Be guided by the head priest, dress in special clothing

The head priest himself will guide you through the temple premises, buildings designated as National Treasures, the treasure hall, and more. While touring the temple precincts, you can wear a special kind of coat worn by caretakers at special events held throughout the year at Kakurinji Temple, as well as socks made from 'washi' paper and which are a specialty product of Kakogawa City.

*Guests may take the socks as a souvenir.

② Calligraphy

Practice writing special text based on 'shogi' motifs, practice copying sutras, trace a Buddhist statue image, or have the head priest write your favorite 'kanji' character. Your calligraphy or drawing can be transferred to a t-shirt or tote bag and can be taken home as a souvenir.

③ Zazen Meditation

Zazen meditation can be experienced inside the temple premises.

④ Cuisine & local sake

Guests can enjoy sampling a vegetarian Buddhist hot pot called 'shojin ecogawa nabe' made with seasonal vegetables, miso from the Takamatsu Seidayu Shinise store, and sake lees from nearby Okada Honke Brewery; enjoy tasting Japanese sake from the Okada Honke Brewery.

DETAILS | ⑬ Transcribe sutras, write calligraphy, draw a Buddhist statue, and enjoy local hotpot and local Japanese sake at National Treasure Kakurinji Temple

- Time Required : ①45~90 minutes *Time necessary for Japanese language guide.
- ②45 minutes / ③45 minutes / ④30 minutes *Time required for all combinations depends on number of participants
- Period of Availability : Year-round *However, not available at times when the head priest is unavailable due to events, etc.
- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 2~40 people *interpreter required
- Inquiries & Reservations : Kakogawa Tourism Association - Tel : +81 79-424-2170 (language support: none)
- Email : katsudemi@kako-navi.jp - Related URL : http://kako-navi.jp/



Visit Michelin 3-star Ritsurin Garden with a 40-year veteran gardener

Ritsurin Garden is located on the eastern base of Mt. Shiunzan; this famous garden incorporates a view of Mt. Shiunzan and has 6 lakes and 13 berms, along with a history of nearly 400 years. Although it is a scenic spot visited by many tourists, most of them leave without understanding the intent of the garden design or the aims of maintenance. In this plan, guests can stroll through the garden with a professional garden who has decades of experience, and hear explanations about the aims of the garden and details involved in care. Additionally, the group will be accompanied by an English-speaking guide who is familiar with Ritsurin Garden, so language support is not a problem. After strolling, the secluded Hankatei teahouse may be privately rented from the Hanazonotei teahouse, which is located near the north lake in the southern

garden; the Hankatei teahouse was built under the supervision of tea master Yurin Sai of the Mushakouji Senke school of tea. The 'shoji' screen windows offer a fantastic view when open, and guests can relax while enjoying the culture of the tea ceremony. As an aside, this plan is organized and managed by a company which operates an English conversation school in Takamatsu. In addition to visiting Ritsurin Garden, a tour of "Shikoku-mura", the outdoor museum that features restored traditional homes and structures that have been relocated from all over Shikoku Island, is also possible. For the future, a plan to visit 'bonsai' gardens that hold 80% of the market in Japan, and a sunset cruise with fishermen on a fishing boat are in the works.

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | Stroll through Ritsurin Garden, nationally designated Special Place of Scenic Beauty, with a veteran gardener

Ritsurin Garden is called a gem of a garden; it is a Japanese garden that is best discussed with a professional gardener. There are approximately 1,400 pine trees within the garden grounds, and of those, 1,000 trees are cared for by professional gardeners. Takamatsu is the largest production area of pine bonsai in the country; the climate of the Setouchi region is suitable for pine bonsai, and there are technical skills for garden making in the area. It is in regions such as this where craftsmanship is passed from one gardener to another over the course of 400 years, and in which the beauty of aging that appears in pines that have passed many years under an experienced gardener can be enjoyed.

02 | Open-air tea ceremony in front of the waterfall inside Shikoku-mura(in planning)

Shikoku-mura is an open-air museum that features old architecture as a theme, centering on private homes from the Taisho Period through the Meiji Period. Surrounded by trees and seasonal flowers, the works of sculptor Masayuki Nagare and architect Tadao Ando are scattered throughout the park. There is a stone spot that commemorates Kagawa Prefecture as the first production area of 'aji-ishi' stone, and a tea ceremony will be held in front of the waterfall, which is the work of Masayuki Nagare. You can experience this special ceremony while listening to the sound of flowing water in the "Somegataki" waterfall.

DETAILS | ⑭ Visit Michelin 3-star Ritsurin Garden with a 40-year veteran gardener

- Time Required : 2.5 hours - Period of Availability : Year-round
- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 2~8 people - Inquiries & Reservations : INAKA TOURISM, Ltd.
- Tel : +81 87-802-1915 - Email : info@i-tak.jp - Related URL : i-tak.jp - Meeting place : at location (please arrange for transportation to the garden) - Included in fee : fee for guide (includes interpreting), entrance fee, 'matcha' tea experience
- Other : Arrangements for riding a Japanese boat, or lunch or dinner arrangements at the Hankatei teahouse are possible.

Cruise



See these miraculous whirlpools while picnicking on local sake and snacks

The Naruto Straits are located between Minami-awaji City on Awajishima Island and Naruto City on Shikoku Island. The whirlpools are produced by a special topography made up of a strait about 1.3km in width and about 200m deep at the deepest point; the water rushing through the strait is especially powerful during flood tide seasons. The vortex formed by the swirling water sometimes exceeds 30m in diameter and shows us the mysterious power of nature. These whirlpools are rare throughout the world and can be felt with all five senses by boarding a ship departing from Fukura Port on Awajishima Island. Please note that the whirlpools occur during certain times and on certain dates. Five

days before and after the new moon and full moon, and during flood tide seasons are especially good times to see the whirlpools. Additionally, whirlpools only form for about two hours before and after high and low tide on any given day. For details on the best time to see the whirlpools, please check the Uzushio Cruise homepage. The Kanrin-maru and Nihon-maru are the 50m-long ships that will take you into the Naruto Channel. Bringing food and drinks on board is allowed, so be sure to pick up some drinks and snacks at the adjacent Fukura Marche shop, which sells only delicious items produced on Awajishima Island.

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | *Feel the whirlpools with your five senses on this cruise*

In addition to viewing the whirlpools, you can take in the sights of rural fishing villages while basking in the sea breeze on a fine day. In winter, you can feed seagulls or enjoy a sunset cruise in the evening. This tour can be enjoyed in all seasons by young and old alike.

02 | *Shop for Island Gourmet Items at “Fukura Marche” Market*

Fukura Marche is the marketplace where you can purchase gourmet items from Awajishima Island. The fresh vegetables and fish are procured directly from farmers and fisherman and are therefore fresh yet inexpensive. We recommend the ‘sashimi’ made from fresh local fish and the super popular Fukura Fishburger!

DETAILS | 15 See these miraculous whirlpools while picnicking on local sake and snacks

- *Costs at Fukura Marche depend on items purchased.
- **Time Required** : 60 minutes
 - **Period of Availability** : Year-round (Advance consultation required)
 - **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : In periods when whirlpools are not expected to form, there may be times when boats will not depart if less than 10 people. Maximum number for Kanrin-maru: 350 people / for Nihon-maru: 500 people.
 - **Inquiries & Reservations** : +81 799-52-2113 Joyport Minami-awaji Corporation (Japanese only)
 - **Email** : ishikawa@uzu-shio.com, kousaka@uzu-shio.com
 - **Related URL** : ①www.uzu-shio.com (homepage), ②http://www.uzu-shio.com/pdf/tourist/pamphlet_cruise_sc.pdf (simplified Chinese)



Cruise the Yoshinogawa River at sunset & enjoy regional cuisine

Tokushima is a passing-though point when travelling to Shikoku from Kansai International Airport. Even in Japan, it is relatively unknown that Tokushima is a "City of Water", but this city is home to the Yoshinogawa River, the largest river on Shikoku Island and one of the largest in the country as well; pleasure boats operate through the city. From a pleasure boat, guests can enjoy comparing the passing scenery of the Shinmachigawa River and the Okinosugawa River, as well as the large and serene Yoshinogawa River; guest satisfaction level is always high.

This tour is a Sunset Cruise and has a romantic evening departure. While listening to the history of the Yoshinogawa River and commentary on the course by a guide, gaze out on the panoramic scenery of the Yoshinogawa River at sunset. Additionally, cherry blossoms in spring and autumn foliage add color to the river, and being able to enjoy the beauty of the four seasons is a charm point. After the cruise, your guide will accompany you on a walk around Tokushima City and to a dinner of local cuisine. Enjoy local flavors with cuisine made from ingredients representative of Tokushima.

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | Cruise on the Yoshinogawa River through Tokushima City

Gazing at the sunset reflecting off the Yoshinogawa River from a boat on this river that runs east to west in Tokushima River is an experience that receives high marks for its dynamic qualities. When looking at bridges of the Shinmachigawa River up close by boat, it's easy to realize why Tokushima City is called the "City of Water".

*Note: There are times that boating on the Yoshinogawa River is not possible due to tide level or other conditions.

02 | Walk through the Castle Town of Tokushima & Have a Dinner of Local Cuisine

Stroll through the Teramachi neighborhood, which flourished as the castle town developed, and the area around the Awa Odori Museum; at night, visit Mt. Bizan by ropeway with a local guide. In the evening, you will be directed to a restaurant serving local cuisine.

DETAILS | 16 Cruise the Yoshinogawa River at Sunset & enjoy regional cuisine

- **Time Required** : Sunset cruise 60 minutes, Cruise recommended by a local guide & Tokushima local cuisine / stroll through town 3 hours - **Period of Availability** : April through June, and October through November
- **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : minimum 2, maximum 10 - **Inquiries & Reservations** : TOKUSHIMA TOURISM BUREAU - **Tel** : +81 88-622-8214 (Japanese only) - **Email** : toku.ta15@gmail.com
- **Related URL** : www.toku-ta.jp



Cruise to two old port towns while enjoying island views

Onomichi is known as the setting for novels and movies and is a town that follows the slope of the hills, with antique temples and an old-fashioned town that are built into the side of the mountain. If you follow the narrow paths and stairs that weave between buildings up the hillside and look back, you can see the town spreading out below, ships passing through the Onomichi Waterway, and islands floating in the Seto Inland Sea. Another charm of strolling through the hills is meeting with the carefree cats who live there. Tomo-no-Ura is connected to Onomichi through shipping. Although not well-known as a sightseeing location, it is a port town where the Edo Period can still be seen and felt, and is often used as a location for films; recently it has

been gaining the attention of domestic and international travelers.

There is land transport available between Onomichi and Tomo-no-Ura, but if you come for sightseeing you should choose to see the area via a cruise. Travel time is equivalent to that of car, or train and bus, and seeing the townscape from the viewpoint of a cruise is becoming popular. Feel relaxed as you look out over the town of Onomichi, the Onomichi Ohashi Bridge that is part of the Shimanami Bridgeline, islands along the route, and more while thinking of the time when the area was known for prosperous maritime traffic.

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | Cruise on a sea route that connects two quaint port towns

Cruise on a regularly scheduled ship that runs between Onomichi and Tomo-no-Ura. There is plenty to see on the route that weaves through the Onomichi Waterway and the islands in the Seto Inland Sea, such as a huge ship or tanker anchored in a coastal shipyard, or the statue of "Abuto Kannon" that is built on a cliff jutting out into the sea. On board, the captain announces the route over the broadcasting system...and he can be quite humorous!

02 | Stroll through an old Edo Period town at Tomo-no-Ura

Visit the symbol of Tomo-no-Ura, the port where the night lantern stands. On the shore, old stone stairwells for unloading boats called 'gangi' remain. The town, which retains the atmosphere of an Edo Period town, is said to be the model town for an animated feature film, as well as the location for the filming of a popular comic that was made into a movie.

DETAILS | 17 Cruise to two old port towns while enjoying island views

- **Time Required** : Approximately 3+ hours (cruise is 55 minutes)
- **Period of Availability** : Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays only between March 10~November 18, 2018 (* October 28 is a holiday) - **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : Maximum 80 people - **Inquiries & Reservations** : Setouchi Cruising +81 848-36-6113 (Japanese only) - **Email** : Please use the contact form on the homepage (Japanese / English support available)
- **Related URL** : {Setouchi Cruising: <http://www.s-cruise.jp/>} {Onomichi City Sightseeing Information: <https://www.ononavi.jp/>} {Fukuyama City Sightseeing Information: <http://www.fukuyama-kanko.com/>}
Private Reservation
*Please inquire. Advance reservation required (1 month in advance)



Get close to the “Murakami Kaizoku”, the Navy Seals of the Sengoku Period

The Murakami Kaizoku played an active role in the Seto Inland Sea from the mid-14th century and were the strongest coast guard during the Sengoku Period. With a background of having been made strong in the waters of strong tidal currents and whirlpools, they dominated the waters of the Seto Inland Sea during the Sengoku Period. They also dominated the military, political, and maritime activities of the era. Furthermore, they controlled maritime traffic in the area from Kyushu in the West to the Seto Inland Sea in the East; in times of peace, 10% of the cargo was collected as toll. They played an important role in the Seto Inland Sea in terms of maritime safety, trade, and distribution, for example in the areas of pilotage, security, and

transport. On the other hand, in times of combat, they were highly skilled at navigating small boats and were good in battles involving explosives. On this tour, participants will first learn about the history of the Murakami Kaizoku. After looking at a replica of the boat and the woven surcoat worn by General Takeyoshi Murakami from the period, visitors can try on a real set of armor or a kimono. Then, ride a boat to feel the actual tide off of Nojima, where they operated and were likely active 500 years ago. The waters around Nojima have a maximum speed of 18 km and swirl around; it's a powerful and thrilling cruise! Guests can also see the Nojima Castle ruins, the stronghold of the Murakami Kaizoku.

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | Murakami Suigun(Kaizoku) Museum

In addition to displaying items handed down from the Noshima Murakami Family, this is the only maritime museum in Japan where visitors can try on armor and kimono. A small boat called a ‘kobayabune’ used by the Murakami Kaizoku is on display outdoors.

02 | Tidal experience (Noshima Navy)

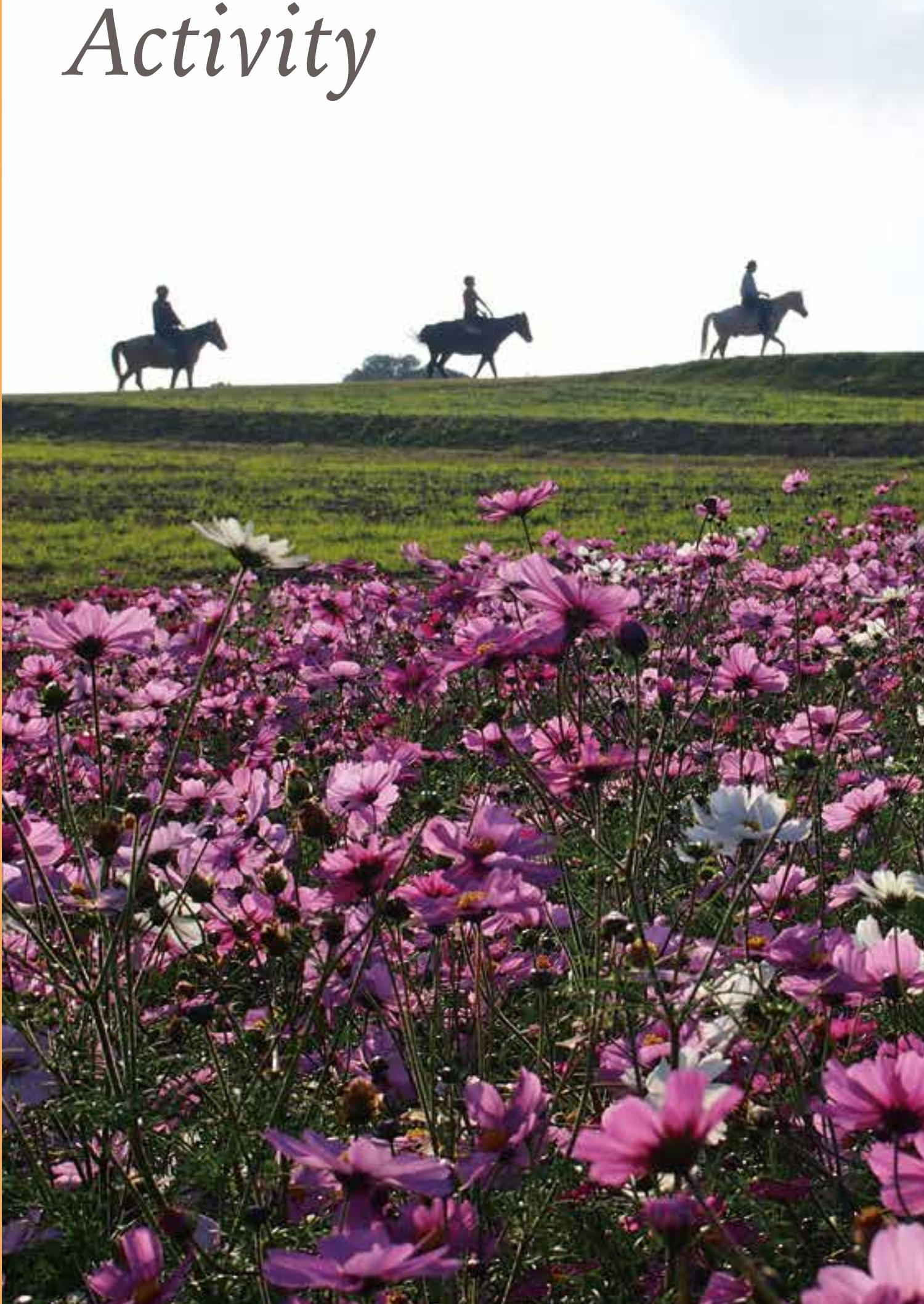
The cruise departs from in front of the Murakami Suigun Museum and goes to Nojima Castle ruins, Funaoriseto, Michikajima, and the Hakata Oshima Ohashi bridge. Participants can experience first-hand the intense tidal currents at Nojima, which are said since ancient times to be the strongest in the world.

DETAILS | **18** Experience the strongest sea current in the world!
Get up close to the Murakami Kaizoku, Navy Seals of the Warring States Period

- **Time Required** : Approximately 2 hours
 - **Period of Availability** : Year-round. Mondays are regularly scheduled holidays (in the case that Monday is a national holiday, the following day will be a holiday) - **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : 2~50 people
 - **Inquiries & Reservations** : Setouchi Shimanami Leading Co., Ltd. - **Business Name** : Setouchi Shimanami Leading Co., Ltd.
 - **Tel** : +81 898-35-4886 - **Email** : kanko@s-leading.co.jp
- *The intensity of the tidal current will vary depending on the date and time of day.



Activity



Enjoy stunning scenery on “Flower Island” from horseback

Maintaining an average year-round temperature of 16 degrees Celsius, Awajishima Island has a temperate Seto Inland climate. A land overflowing with abundant nature, there are sights of flowers scattered across the island, which is also called “Flower Island”. Among these spots is “Awaji Hanasajiki”, which is popular with tourists from both within and without the prefecture, and which sits on top of a 300-meter hill overlooking the sea; the spot has an area of 15 hectares. From canola blossoms and poppies in spring, to cleome in summer, cosmos in autumn, and stock in winter, a variety of flowers bloom year-round.

This tour will combine flower viewing at Awaji Hanasajiki and horse riding. From the Harmony Farm Awaji horse club, ride towards Awaji Hanasajiki and enjoy the view of the Akashi Straits and Osaka Bay, while walking through the romantic flower fields. The views of the flower fields and panoramic sea views will certainly become special memories. For experienced riders, you can opt to take your horse into the water (limited to summer only). In the Kansai area, this experience is rare and is available only here, so be sure to try it!

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | Horse Riding Experience at “Harmony Farm Awaji”

This is a riding club located near Awaji Hanasajiki. Beginners can enjoy riding a horse at a walking pace, as well riding on the beach with the sea as a backdrop or trekking through the forest. This tour will bring satisfaction with nature.

02 | Awaji Hanasajiki, where colorful flowers bloom

At the summit of the northern part of Awajishima Island, beautiful flowers bloom in every season on the plateau that is 235-298 meters high and which spreads out towards the sea.

DETAILS | 19 Enjoy stunning scenery on “Flower Island” from horseback

- Time Required : Approximately 40 minutes - Period of Availability : 4 times: 10:00~, 11:00~, 14:00~, 15:00~, Between mid-July ~ beginning of September, 2 times: 15:00~, 16:00~
- Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 1 person / maximum: 3 people (depending on reservations for other courses)
- Inquiries & Reservations : +81 799-75-3555 (Japanese only) Horse Club Harmony Farm Awaji
- Email : info@hf-awaji.com - Related URL : <http://www.hf-awaji.com>



Try breaking tiles on Awajishima, producer of Japanese tiles!

Roof tiles are indispensable to traditional Japanese homes. Minami-awaji City on Awajishima Island is blessed with high-quality clay, which is the base material for the tiles, and has been producing tiles since the Edo Period; it is still one of the largest tile producing areas, with over 100 manufacturers. On this tour, participants can experience breaking a tile at a tile factory; breaking tiles is one of the techniques of Ryukyu-style karate. Ryukyu-style tile breaking is popular both in and outside of the country, and the aim of this tour is to have both sides make contact with this aspect of traditional Japanese culture. This tile breaking experience tour starts with changing into proper 'dogi' clothing.

Even participants inexperienced in karate, including women and children, are able to break tiles as the tiles are specially made to a certain softness. Feel refreshed when breaking a tile! Currently, the record is 23 tiles; challenge this record and set a new one.

Since the tile breaking workshop is on the 2nd floor of a tile factory, participants can see how tiles are made as they pass through the factory. It is a good opportunity to see these beautiful, curved tiles up close as they are drawing attention from Europe and the United States.

HIGHLIGHTS

Tile breaking with factory-made specialty tiles

Change into a karate 'dogi', then become spiritually united by burning incense. Next, break a tile that has been placed behind the trick door in one strike! Take a video of your tile breaking experience and have a good time checking it out with your friends. You will also receive a certificate certifying the number of tiles you broke. If applying with a group of more than 10 people, you can watch the sunset at the adjacent stage made of tiles at Keino Matsubara.

DETAILS | 20 Try breaking tiles on Awajishima, producer of Japanese tiles!

- **Time Required** : Approximately 30~40 minutes *varies depending on number of people
- **Period of Availability** : Year-round (workshop at tile stage unavailable in winter)
- **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : 1~30 people
- **Inquiries & Reservations** : +81 799-38-0362 (Japanese only) Taniike Kenji Tile Manufacturing
- **Email** : taniken@kde.biglobe.ne.jp - **Related URL** : <http://karatekawara.com>



Experience a traditional sea fishing method in Tomo-no-Ura

Tomo-no-Ura in Fukuyama City, Hiroshima Prefecture is a historic port town where many people, items, and culture congregated when shipping was prosperous; the area was known as a port in which to wait for the sea tides to change. History can be observed in the old townscape and historical sites that remain, as well as in traditional events passed down through the generations.

Among such traditions is a fishing method called "tai-ami", which has been handed down for about 380 years since its development in the early Edo Period; this method is famous as an early summer tradition. The fish spend the winter in the open sea and return in

early summer to spawn in calm offshore area of Tomo-no-Ura, where fishermen await the flocks of fish. Six boats, each having a different role, cooperate in opening a large net and driving the fish into the net; this method is currently only carried out in Tomo-no-Ura. It is a magnificent sight to see fishermen wearing matching 'hanten' jackets raise the flags on their boat and start rowing, while calling out in unison and drawing in their nets. The pre-departure ceremony in which barrel 'taiko' drums and a dance called "Aiya-bushi" is performed by a maiden representing Benzaiten, the goddess of the sea, to pray for a safe voyage and a large catch is a must-see.

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | View net fishing from a sightseeing boat & ride a large boat for a hands-on experience

In addition to watching net fishing from a boat, applicants (4 per session, selected by lottery) can ride a larger boat and try net fishing for themselves. After fishing, a final ceremony with paper streamers will be held.

02 | Netted sea bream are sold onboard. The boat has facilities for cooking items brought on board also.

After hauling in the net, netted fish can be purchased onboard. Purchased fish can be cut into sashimi or cooked in the designated onboard facility and enjoyed while still fresh on Monday through Saturday.

03 | Stroll through historical area the old port town of Tomo-no-Ura, the only existing port town from the Edo Period

The town, brimming with the old-time atmosphere of the era, is said to be the model town for some animated feature films; it also known as the setting for a Japanese action movie that was based on a popular comic series.

DETAILS | 21 Experience a traditional sea fishing method in Tomo-no-Ura

- **Time Required** : Monday ~ Saturday: 3 hours (includes watching netting, fish purchase, cooking), Sundays & Holidays: 1 hour 40 minutes (watching netting only)
- **Period of Availability** : May 3 ~ 27, 2018 (held daily) - **Minimum/Maximum Number of People** : Monday ~ Friday: up to 250 people, Saturday, Sunday, Holidays: up to 400 people
- **Inquiries & Reservations** : Fukuyama Convention & Visitors Association + 81 84-926-2649 (Japanese only) - **Email** : use the contact form on the homepage, or kyokai@fukuyama-kanko.com (Japanese and English) - **Related URL** : <http://www.fukuyama-kanko.com/>

For Travel Agents

Other noteworthy places in Setouchi

Travel Tips
&
Information



Explore deep mountain living with a nature guide

The unexplored region of Iya, located in the western part of Tokushima Prefecture, is an area of dynamic nature with cliff walls interwoven with rich greenery; the beauty of this area is well known in popular scenic spots such as the Oboke-kobo Gorge. Additionally, agricultural systems that make use of the mountain area have gained attention, and in 2018 the area of Nishiawa was certified as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System. This reasonable system conforms to mountain living and has bequeathed a sustainable lifestyle for more than 400 years. The knowledge and wisdom to live in harmony with nature developed precisely because people lived on such steep slopes in this

mountainous area. The Iya area in the Nishiawa region is especially mountainous, and the Kazurabashi bridge made from vines is a landmark. The location for this tour is the Imakubo village, which overlooks the Kazurabashi bridge. On this hiking tour, guests can explore the village streets and view quintessentially Japanese landscapes; the greatest attraction is not only looking at scenery but having the guide explain about the lifestyle of this area in which people live in harmony with nature and experiencing it for oneself. Feel the mountain lifestyle that secretly continues in this land between mountains and valleys with both your heart and body.

HIGHLIGHTS

01 | See mountain life up close

The hiking route is the road used daily by villagers in this mountain settlement. Pass through the living scenery of farm fields, stone walls, shrines, and more, and head for an unusual waterfall; the round-trip route is about 2 hours. From the slope of the village, gaze out over the quintessentially Japanese scenery of the Kazurabashi bridge and the village on the opposite shore of the river that coexist with nature.

02 | Well-executed guiding carried out by a young local guide

While enjoying hiking, listen to commentary on history of the area, traditional culture, and more to further deepen your understanding of mountain living. After exploring, sit on the veranda of a community hall and take a break, and enjoy a cup of local Iya 'bancha' tea. After the tour, participants will receive a souvenir made from vine recycled from material used for bridge renovations.

DETAILS | 22 Walk with a Nature Guide: Explore the lifestyle of the Iya area with hiking in Imakubo Village

*Applicable for junior high school ages students and up. *Please wear comfortable shoes and clothing suitable for walking. *Price includes domestic travel accident insurance. *Please note that the hiking course may be altered without notice due to weather conditions. *Reservations are required at least 4 business days in advance.

- Time Required : 3 hours

- Period of Availability : April through September - Minimum/Maximum Number of People : 2~8 people

- Inquiries & Reservations : Sora-no-Sato Foundation - Tel : +81 883-76-0713

- Email : sora@cn05.awakeda.net - Related URL : <https://nishi-awa.jp/shokutonou/experience/>

Yamaguchi

| Kintaikyo Bridge



The Kintaikyo Bridge in Iwakuni that spans the Nishikigawa River is made up of five wooden arches, which is unusual throughout the world in terms of bridge design. The surface of the bridge is 210 meters in length, 5 meters wide, and the abutments are 6.6 meters tall. Since the construction of the first wooden bridge in 1673, and despite the repeated destruction of the bridge due to flooding, the current bridge is built utilizing techniques for building wooden structures born of over 300 years of study.

| Iwakuni Art Museum



The Iwakuni Art Museum is well-known as a museum displaying antique weapons and battle gear. The collection houses approximately 6,000 items of ceramics, glass craftwork, calligraphy and ink paintings, armor, swords, 'jinbaori' battle surcoats, horse harnesses, and more ranging from the Nara Period through the Edo Period. In addition to regular exhibits which are changed four times per year, the museum also displays a variety of special exhibits and organizes other planned exhibitions.

Basic Information

Location: 2-chome 10-27 Yokoyama, Iwakuni City, Yamaguchi Prefecture, 741-0081 Tel: +81 827-41-0506

HP: <http://www.iwakuni-art-museum.org>

Business Hours: 9:00~17:00 (until 16:00 between December and February) (last admission at 16:30)

Closed: Open year-round, except for some special set days off

Okayama

| Maneki-neko Art Museum



This cute museum that opened in 1994 is an old homestead that has been renovated. This museum specializes in "lucky cats", and with over 700 items, boasts the largest collection in the world of pieces gathered both domestically and internationally. "Lucky cats" are lucky charms used to wish for success in business, and although they are unique to Japanese culture, similar cultures exist around the world. Items in the collection range from the Taisho Era to contemporary pieces and are made from a wide variety of materials; each has a different expression, so that each piece is unique. Guests can participate in workshop and paint their own design on an unglazed cat figurine.

Basic Information

Location: 865-1 Kanayamaji, Kita-ku, Okayama City

Tel / Fax: +81 86-228-3301

Business Hours: 10:00~17:00 (last entrance at 16:30)

Closed: Wednesdays (open at New Years, national holiday, and Japanese 'Obon' holiday)

Work Shop

Lucky Cat Figure Painting



Paint on an unglazed cat figurine to create a unique, one-of-a-kind lucky cat.

Business Hours: 10:00~17:00 (last reception at 16:00)

Time Required: Approximately 1 hour

*Groups of 15 or more may reserve at times other than business hours and on days when the museum is closed.

Tokushima

| Kaiteki Penguin-mura



Located next to the Naruto Straits, one of the three largest tidal currents in the world. Fish that have grown strong in these waters are harvested and sold while still alive and healthy at the morning market which is held every fourth Saturday. This is a place where guests can talk and interact with local fishermen and women.

Work Shop

How to fillet a fish



Local fishermen teach how to fillet seasonal fish. Sometimes the ladies of the Fisherman's Association will prepare Japanese 'miso' soup, and souvenirs are also available. Enjoy outstandingly fresh sea bream prepared by local ladies in such dishes as 'sashimi' sliced raw fish, 'miso' soup, flavored steamed rice, and more. These dishes are delicious because they make use of naturally grown fish that are harvested in the local area.

Business Hours: 9:30~12:00

Limit: approximately 30 people Items to Bring: Knife, apron, cooler

*Reservations: +81 88-684-1152 (Naruto City Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Division)

Location: 209-6 Kitadomari, Seto-cho, Naruto City, Tokushima Prefecture