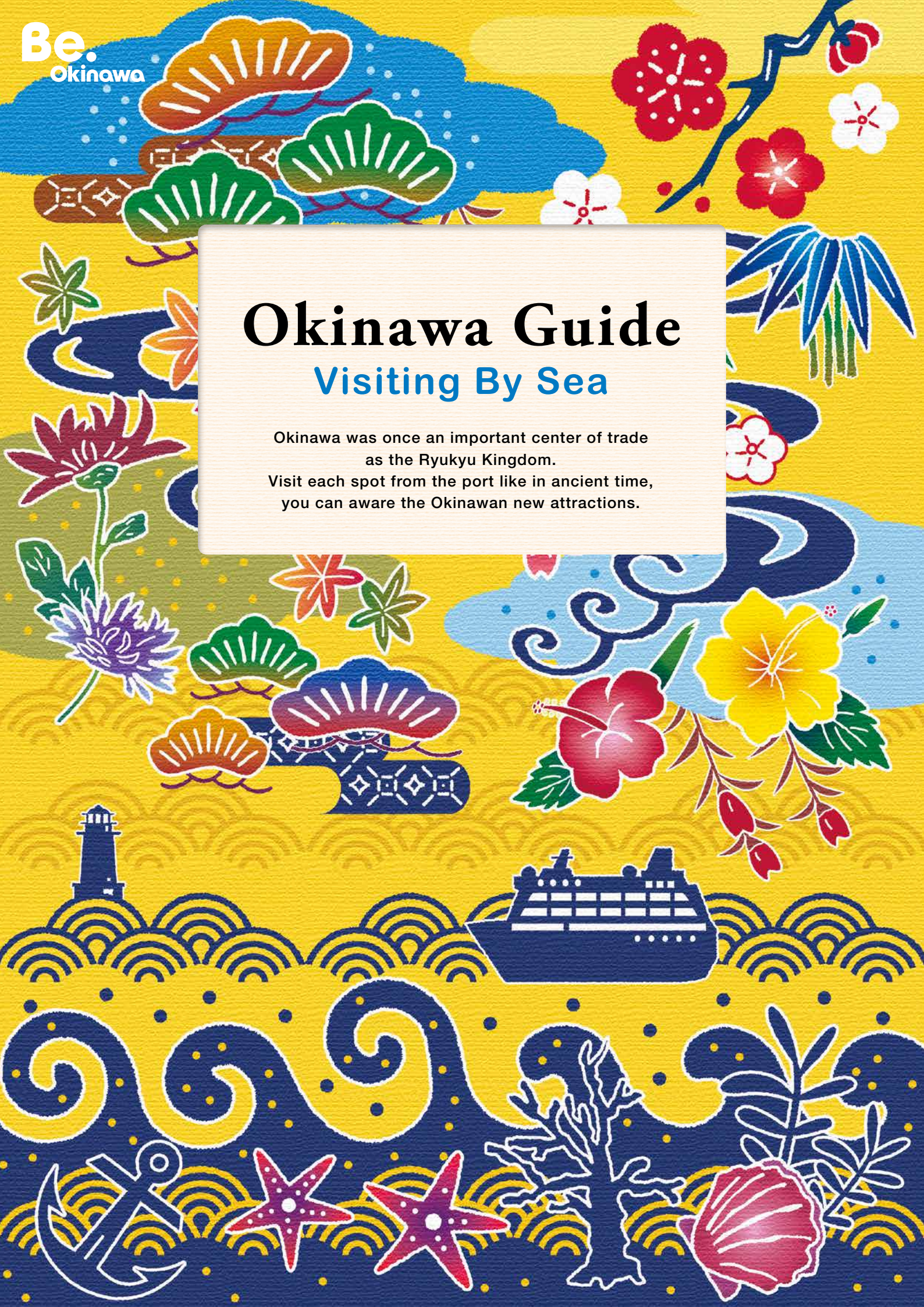


Okinawa Guide

Visiting By Sea

Okinawa was once an important center of trade
as the Ryukyu Kingdom.

Visit each spot from the port like in ancient time,
you can aware the Okinawan new attractions.



Naha Cruise Terminal Area Map

You can easily find many interesting spots near Naha Cruise Terminal, including the shopping district of Kokusai-dori Street. See the map below for more.



Look down below from your ship's deck and you'll see the vibrant southern seas. As the islands draw near, the dense green of the subtropics comes into view. With the warm ocean breeze in your hair, you'll be glad that you're coming to Okinawa by the ship.

The number of tourists visiting Okinawa is estimated to exceed 10 million a year. With Naha Port and other major ports throughout Okinawa reporting the largest number of visitors on record, they're all evolving day by day, expanding their positions as Asian gateways.

Okinawa's ports came to prominence in the 14th and 15th centuries from the period when King Sho Hashi unified the three Ryukyu domains. Trade with Japan, China, Korea, and Southeast Asian countries had been flourished and the ports became central to the Ryukyu Kingdom's trade. As such, Okinawa has long been a place where a diversity of people has mingled, sharing their technology and culture.

This background has given Okinawa a unique culture and history that visitors enjoy along with natural wonders on the main island and remote islands alike. Sailing into port for your visit will give you a unique perspective, like those arriving in ancient times.

Even if you've been to Okinawa before, a cruise will show you a new side of the islands, particularly if you're on a different ship and arrive at different ports.

A Sea Gateway

Naha Cruise Terminal



▶ 1, Wakasa, Naha
Phone: 098-863-5420
(Naha Cruise Terminal Security Office)

Free Wi-Fi is available at the terminal, and there's a convenient booth with tourist maps to gather the information you'll need. The second floor has immigration, customs, and quarantine areas, as well as an exhibit of traditional Okinawan crafts. The third floor has an observation deck. The terminal is just a 20-minute walk to Kokusai-dori Street with its souvenir shops and restaurants.



Ryuchū Dragon Pillar

Buses are great for seeing the main island.
They run from right near Yui Rail's Asahibashi Station.

Naha Bus Terminal



▶ 1-20-1 Izumizaki, Naha

Renovated in October 2018, the improved multi-purpose terminal links directly to Yui Rail's Asahibashi Station. Multi-lingual display at the terminal helps you when you get your bus to many sights in Okinawa. There is the Okinawa Tourism Information Center with a concierge and a convenience store next to the Bus Information Center.

Distance: About 7 kilometers
Time: About 5 hours

It's about 1.5 kilometers and a 20-minute walk from Naha Cruise Terminal to Kokusai-dori Street. You can take your time strolling this route because there aren't many hills to climb and there are souvenir shops and things to see along the way. You might want to take a taxi for the return to port, but it's better to avoid Kokusai-dori Street as it often has heavy traffic.

Naha Port

A Walking Course Starting at the Port

Okinawa Island is about 600 kilometers southwest of mainland Japan, with unique geographical features and the natural characteristics of a subtropical maritime climate. Its ports have been highly regarded since the 14th century, and it is now a gateway to the prefecture for international travelers coming by sea. Passenger ships most often arrive at the Naha Cruise Terminal, but larger ships may dock at Naha International Container Terminal.



A Splendid Chinese-style Garden ② Fukushu Garden

This garden opened in 1992 to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of Naha and China's Fuzhou (Japanese: Fukuoka) becoming friendship cities. The magnificent Chinese-style gardens with openwork sculptures give a sense of the strong ties between China and Okinawa.

► 2-29-19 Kume, Naha
Phone: 098-869-5384

10 Minutes-
walk



Okinawa's Premier Shrine With Splendid Cliff-Top Views

① Naminoue Shrine & Naminoue Beach

Naminoue Shrine has been a place of worship since the time of the Ryukyu Kingdom, honoring the Shinto three deities of the Kumano Shrines in Wakayama Prefecture. The main hall features the vermillion encountered so often on the island. Naminoue Beach is Naha's only public swimming area. It's right below the shrine and is a nice place for a walk after a visit. There's an observation deck with a good view of the harbor off the beach.

► 1-25 Wakasa, Naha
Phone: 098-863-7300



Walk, Eat, Shop

③ Kokusai-dori Street

About 600 stores line the 1.8 kilometers of this street. Entering on side lanes leading to Heiwa-dori Street and the First Makishi Public Market, you will find stores like variety shops and book shop. This was one of the first areas in Okinawa recovering after World War II. It happened so quickly it's sometimes called "The Miracle Mile."

10 Minutes-
walk



Experience Traditional Crafts

④ Naha City Traditional Crafts Hall

Stop here to join workshops making colorful, traditional Okinawan crafts ranging from Bingata cloth prints and Shuriori weaves to Tsuboya-yaki pottery and Ryukyu glass and lacquerware. There is also a shop that sells top quality pieces.

► Tenbus Naha 2nd Floor, 3-2-10 Makishi, Naha
Phone: 098-868-7866

5 Minutes-
walk



Naha's Kitchen

⑤ First Makishi Public Market

This market adjacent to Kokusai-dori Street grew out of the black market that sprung up there after World War II. It offers heaps of food essential to Okinawa's culinary culture, such as a colorful array of fish, pigs trotters (tebichi), pigs faces (chiraga), bitter melons (goya), and island shallots (shima rakkyo). Head to the second floor to dine on Okinawan cuisine featuring such fare. The market will be temporarily relocated to Nigihai Hiroba when construction of a new venue on the site begins in 2019.

► 2-10-1 Matsuo, Naha
Phone: 098-867-6560



5 Minutes-
walk



Discover the Culture of Yachimun Pottery

⑥ Tsuboya Pottery Museum ⑦ Tsuboya Yachimun Street

Okinawan pottery is known as Yachimun. It's hefty and features colorful and elongated patterns. This museum offers the chance to learn about the Tsuboya area that was at the vanguard of Yachimun culture and its Tsuboya-yaki pottery style. There are approximately 45 stores on Tsuboya Yachimun Street, including ones run by kilns producing the pottery. You'll be sure to find the perfect item.

► 1-9-32 Tsuboya, Naha
Phone: 098-862-3761 (Pottery Museum)

Time Out
While Exploring
Kokusai-dori
Street



Take a Break in Style Hyatt Regency Naha Okinawa

Enjoy the pastry chef's desserts and select coffees and teas at "the lounge" with its terrace set amid lush landscaping. They can call a taxi for you if needed.

► 3-6-20 Makishi, Naha
Phone: 098-866-8888



For a Rest in Sakurazaka Sangoza Kitchen

This cafe is in the Sakurazaka Theater. It serves fare made with Okinawan produce, sweets, and sake. Check out what's showing as they feature films with an Okinawan flair.

► 3-6-10 Makishi, Naha
Inside Sakurazaka Theater
Phone: 098-860-9555



Discover Okinawan Meat Culture Uehara Meat Shop (Ichibamae Honten)

This butcher shop supplies the Okinawan culinary scene and is run by the local businesses. They sell their meat retail and wholesale, and even have a hand in its production. The shop in front of the market offers their popular Island Series brand. They also have items like pork cubes (raffy) and stewed spare ribs (soki) that some buy as gifts.

► 2-9-19 Matsuo, Naha
Phone: 098-866-8506

Distance: About 14 kilometers
Time: About 5 hours

You'll need to be a fairly strong walker to cover this whole route on foot. You can take an excursion tour from the port or a taxi to make things easier. If you don't take a tour, you might use Yui Rail to access Shuri Station first, and then take a taxi to Shikinaen Royal Garden or back to the port.



Tour Okinawa's World Heritage Sites

Okinawa's historic ruins and castles (gusuku) were registered collectively as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000, the Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu. Venues include the Shuri, Nakagusuku, Zakimi, Katsuren, and Nakijin Castle Ruins, along with the related sites of Sonohyan Utaki Stone Gate, Tamaudun Mausoleum, Shikinaen Royal Garden, and Sefa Utaki. This route explores some of this heritage, transporting your imagination back to the time of the Ryukyu Kingdom.



3 Minutes-walk



Shurei-mon

Explore recommended routes and encourage reconstruction!

1 Shurijo Castle

Shurijo Castle is noted for its distinctive architecture and stonework fusing Japanese and Chinese castle construction skills. Many were deeply saddened in 2019 by the loss of the castle's Seiden (main hall) to a fire. Affected areas are gradually being re-opened to the public as reconstruction plans move forward. Highlights include historic structures such as the Shurei-mon, Kankai-mon and Zuisen-mon gates, and the beautiful Kinjocho Stone-Paved Path. Learn about the castle's history and charms on one of the recommended walking routes (from 30 minutes to a half-day).

► 1-2 Shuri Kinjocho, Naha
Phone: 098-886-2020
Please check the website for the latest information, including updates on areas currently open to the public.
<http://oki-park.jp/shurijo/>

Pray for Peace and Prosperity

2 Sonohyan Utaki Stone Gate

This place for royal worship in Shuri Castle Park was built in 1519. It is said that Ryuku royalty would visit here to pray when heading out on pilgrimage and before the initiation of the high priestess (kikoe-ogimi) of traditional Okinawan Shinto. Except for the wooden door, it is made entirely of Ryukyu limestone.

► At Shurijo Castle Park, 1-7 Shurimawashi, Naha



Kankai-mon



Kinjocho Stone-Paved Path



30 Minutes-walk

or

10 Minutes-drive

Spend Some Quiet Time
Contemplating History

3 Tamaudun Mausoleum

Built in 1501, this is the mausoleum where the second royal family (Daini Shoshi) of the Ryukyu Kingdom is interred. The enormous gabled tomb is surrounded by stone walls and has a triangular roof typical of Okinawa. A portion was destroyed by shelling during the Battle of Okinawa, but it was reconstructed in its present form in 1974. A visit here gives you a peak at Ryukyu funerary customs of the period.

► 1-3 Shuri Kinjocho, Naha
Phone: 098-885-2861

Give it a try!

Make Coral Print Cloth



Shuri Ryusen

This is the only studio that offers workshops where you can make coral print fabric. Combining corals you choose to create your design, then apply the colorful patterns to cloth items like T-shirts and tote bags. You can also try bingata stencil dyeing and other traditional Ryukyu Dynasty dyeing techniques.

► 1-54 Shuriyamagawacho, Naha
Phone: 098-886-1131

The "Jewel Studded Garden"

4 Shikinaen Royal Garden

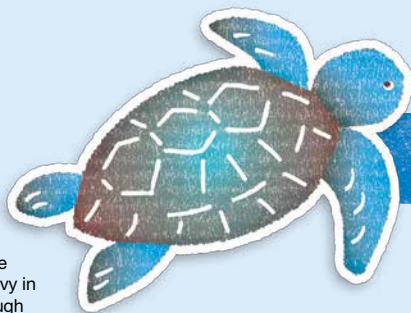
Enjoy the ever-changing landscape of this garden while strolling around the pond. Ryukyu elements are everywhere you look, including arched bridges of various sizes, a Chinese-style hexagonal pavilion on an islet in the pond, and stacked Ryukyu limestone features around it.

► 421-7 Maaji, Naha
Phone: 098-855-5936



Distance: About 50 kilometers
Time: About 7 hours

As the distance is too long to walk, you might rent a car, charter a taxi, or join an excursion tour. It's about 17 kilometers and 35 minutes to the first stop, Gyokusendo Cave. If you're driving, Naha's city traffic can be heavy in the evening, so be sure to leave enough time. Feel free to prioritize the spots you want to visit and see them in that order.



Feel the Healing of Okinawa's Natural World

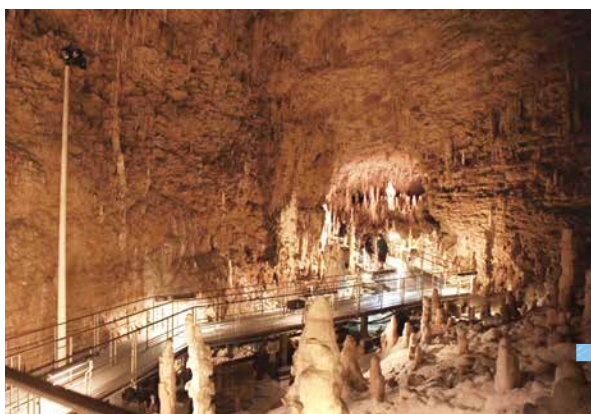
The islands of Okinawa have a warm subtropical climate and a complex topography beyond its crystal-clear sea and white sandy beaches. The forests also have lots to offer, like limestone caves and stretches of old-growth rich in biodiversity. In the deep green of these dense woodlands, you'll encounter the beauty of nature first hand, sublime and brimming with energy.

East Asia's Most Beautiful Cave

① Gyokusendo Cave

Nature carved this Ryukyu limestone cave over a period of 300,000 years. It has the most stalactites of any cave in Japan, totaling more than 1 million. At 5,000 meters long it's one of the nation's largest, and it's still growing at a rate of 1 millimeter every three years. It has an otherworldly atmosphere and has been designated a Natural Monument.

► Maekawa-1336
Tamagusuku, Nanjo
Phone: 098-949-7421



The Mystery of Life in All Things

② Valley of Gangala

This area of subtropical forest was a limestone cavern until several hundred thousand years ago when it had been collapsed. There is a high likelihood that prehistoric people occupied the area from about 18,000 years ago, and excavations are still being conducted. Guided walking tours are available through this vast and ancient world. Reservations required.

► Maekawa-202 Tamagusuku, Nanjo
Phone: 098-948-4192



5 Minutes-walk

A Panoramic View of the Pacific

③ Niraikanai Bridge

This bridge is 660 meters long and is 80 meters high. It's along the way between Prefectural Route 86 and National Route 331. Niraikanai means a far-off ocean paradise in traditional Ryukyuan religion.

► Chinen, Chinen, Nanjo



10 Minutes-drive

20 Minutes-drive



Superb Scenery for Those in the Know

④ Cape Chinen

This spot has a sweeping view of the sea to the east, said to be the location of Niraikanai, a far-off ocean paradise in traditional Ryukyuan religion. Gaze out over the amazing Okinawan view of the aquamarine sea spreading unobstructed in front of you. It's a great place to watch the sunrise too.

► 523 Kudeken Chinen, Nanjo



8 Minutes-drive

The Ryukyu's Most Sacred Site created by Amamikiyo

⑤ Sefa Utaki

Utaki is a generic term for the sacred place of the Nansei-shoto Islands, which include Okinawa. Sefa Utaki appears in the Ryukyu creation myth, and it's considered the most sacred place in the Ryukyu Kingdom. It's also a place of veneration on Okinawa's Agariumi pilgrimage, once performed by the Ryukyuan kings and the kikoe-ogimi high priestesses.

► Kudeken, Chinen, Nanjo Phone: 098-949-1899



Take the Orca to See an Underwater World



Underwater Sightseeing Cruise

West Marine Orca

This boat lets you take in Okinawa's underwater marine environment. Its observation room has 32 meters wide and 55-centimeter high windows along the bottom sides of the ship. Panoramic sea floor scenery stretches before you, revealing unforgettable views of coral reefs and tropical fish. You can make same day reservation as long as the seats are available.

► Terminal Building 1st Floor, 2-1 Tondocho, Naha
Phone: 098-866-0489

Distance: About 40 kilometers
Time: About 8 hours

The Peace Memorial Park is about 18 kilometers from the port, so it is best to take a taxi or an excursion tour. You can also follow this route from opposite direction, visiting Peace Memorial Park and The Tower of Himeyuri first and then seeing the other spots as time permits.

Feel Okinawa's History and Tradition

Okinawa has its own unique history and culture, and it has been described as "a treasure trove of folk art." An enormous variety of traditional crafts, including pottery, weaving, and dyeing have been passed down over the centuries and are still a part of daily life. Their designs are simple yet profound, and this route will get you in touch with Okinawa's traditional craftsmanship. There are also many venues related to World War II that will give you a sense of what Okinawa experienced.

Get Them Now

Items That Will Make Your Cruise More Special



Traditional Textiles, Perfect for Okinawa **Bashofu**

This traditional cloth has been designated a national important intangible cultural property. Thin, light, and sturdy, Bashofu fabric is perfect for Okinawan cruises. Bashofu clothing is available tailor made and is great to wear onboard. You can use smaller items like bags at ports of call.

Vivid and Eye Catching **Bingata Bowties**

These are great for parties onboard. The photos here are a collaboration with the Okinawan HABERU brand and Ryuka, a well-known bingata designer. You can find them at Blanco Ryubu in the Ryubu department store.



The Birthplace of Karate

④ Okinawa Karate Kaikan

Karate got its start in Okinawa. This facility holds events at its dojo, and has a museum you can enter for a fee with displays on the history of the martial art. There is also a shop selling karate merchandise.

► 854-1 Tomigusuku, Tomigusuku
Phone: 098-851-1025



30 Minutes-drive

Pray for World Peace

⑤ Peace Memorial Park

The park is situated on an elevated area overlooking Mabuni Hill to the south and the ruggedly beautiful coastline to the southeast. It's where the Battle of Okinawa drew to a close. The park has 50 monuments to those who died in battle, including the Cornerstone of Peace with the names of all those who lost their lives there, regardless of nationality. The Peace Memorial Museum on the grounds displays photographs and artifacts from that bitter time.

► 444 Mabuni, Itoman
Phone: 098-997-2765



Remembering the Himeyuri Students

⑥ The Tower of Himeyuri

This memorial is dedicated to the Himeyuri Students, also known as the Lilly Corps, young women who were mobilized as nurses during the Battle of Okinawa. Many of them were killed. At the Himeyuri Peace Memorial Museum there's a full-scale diorama of the Himeyuri Cave where gas bombs took many lives.

► 671-1 Ihara, Itoman
Phone: 098-997-2100



10 Minutes-drive

7 Minutes-drive



One Stop for History, Culture, and Art

① Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum

Designed to resemble Okinawa's castles (gusuku), this museum boasts the largest collection in the prefecture. Their Fureai Experience Room where you can actually hold some of the items is popular with children.

► 3-1-1 Omoromachi, Naha
Phone: 098-941-8200



10 Minutes-drive or
30 Minutes-walk

The Treasures of Naha

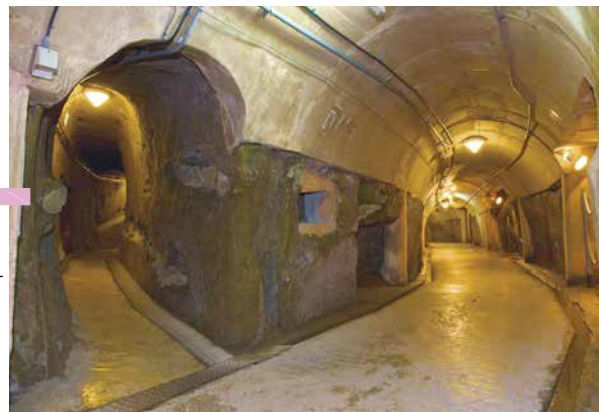
② Naha City Museum of History

The venue features a large collection of donated art, crafts, and historical materials, including National Treasures tied to the Ryukyu Kingdom's Sho Dynasty. The special exhibit showcases the National Treasures as well as other items from the Ryukyu Kingdom period, and the permanent exhibit has displays on the island's aristocratic culture.

► Ryubu Department Store 4th Floor, 1-1-1 Kumoji, Naha
Phone: 098-869-5266



13 Minutes-drive



A Maze of Passages

③ The Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters

This tunneled subterranean base was dug by the Japanese Navy in 1944 to withstand US bombardment and prolong Japan's war efforts. It accommodated about 4,000 troops during the Battle of Okinawa. About 300 meters of tunnel have been restored around the Commander's Office.

► 236 Tomigusuku, Tomigusuku
Phone: 098-850-4055

Okinawa's Largest Glass Studio

⑦ Ryukyu Glass Village

Stop here to see the 1,300-degree kilns and glass artisans working before your eyes. Anyone from adults to children can try making their very own Ryukyu glassware. There is also a shop and an exhibition hall featuring the work of master craftsmen.

► 169 Fukuji, Itoman
Phone: 098-997-4784



Easy Access to the Sites of Central Okinawa Nakagusuku wan Port

This natural harbor is located on the east coast of south-central Okinawa Island. The area is dotted with tourist attractions including a large shopping mall, a botanical garden, a theme park, and the Katsuren Castle Ruins, part of Okinawa's UNESCO World Heritage. In 2018 the West Pier was completed. It accommodates large 16-ton vessels and is becoming an increasingly popular landing point. As the number of taxis is limited, we recommend taking an excursion tour for this route.

● About Nakagusuku wan Port

The brochures for local tourists available in the container. No free Wi-Fi. There is a free local shuttle. A shopping mall is just 5 minutes by taxi.

Powerful Bullfights

② Ishikawa Multipurpose Dome

See bulls exceeding a ton in weight battling it out in the ring. The bullfights have a ferocity that will leave you breathless. Consider yourself lucky if the bullfighting is held during your stay.

► 2298-1 Ishikawa, Uruma
Phone: 098-923-7612
(Schedule and Other Info)
<https://www.city.uruma.lg.jp/sp/iina/2394>



18 Minutes-drive



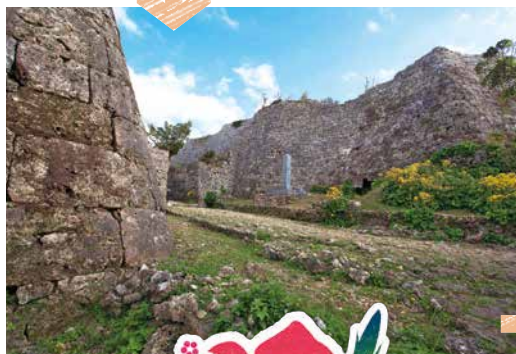
30 Minutes-drive

Superb Stone Craft

③ Nakagusuku Castle Site

This venue's excellent stonemasonry is reflected in the gracefully curving castle walls that skillfully incorporate the surrounding terrain. The main castle was destroyed in the Battle of Okinawa, but there are still many highlights like its elaborate arched gate.

► 1258 Tomari, Nakagusuku, Nakagami County



A Great View of the Pacific Ocean and the Castle Walls

① Katsuren Castle Ruins

This is the oldest of the 5 castle venues registered as Okinawa UNESCO World Heritage Sites. It's famous for being impregnable, incorporating the cliffs surrounding the castle as part of its defense. It was the castle of the feudal lord Amawari, who brought prosperity to Katsuren through foreign trade in the 15th century. There's a terrific view of the castle's elegantly curving ramparts and the sparkling blue Pacific Ocean from the top.

► 3908 Katsurehaebaru, Uruma

20 Minutes-drive



Also don't miss it



Japan's First Real Mall

Plaza House Shopping Center

Japan's first shopping mall opened in 1954. It has 36 different shops dealing in authentic items like European clothes, Asian goods and furniture, and Okinawan and Japanese crafts.

► 3-1-12 Kubota, Okinawa City
Phone: 098-932-4480



25 Minutes-drive

An Evolving Entertainment Resort Complex

④ Mihama American Village

A great spot to enjoy shopping and gourmet cuisine. We also recommend The Bokunen Art Museum, which displays the work of the print maker Bokunen Naka. Take in the vivid, dynamic collection and then purchase unique merchandise based on his work as a souvenir.

► Mihama American Village, Chatan
Phone: 098-926-5678

Tons to See and Do

⑤ Southeast Botanical Garden

Divided into Water Garden and Botanical Garden areas, it has various activities like walking tours and animal encounters. There's also a street lined with Alexander palm trees that you can see only here in Japan.

► 2146 Chibana, Okinawa City
Phone: 098-939-2555



The Bokunen Art Museum



Amazing Scenery and Crystal Seas

Motobu Port

The gateway to northern Okinawa Island, this area is known for its natural beauty, with coral reefs, crystal-clear seas, and precious flora and fauna. The easy access of the wide port entrance has made it popular with large ships. Various tourist facilities in the port area will help you explore Okinawa's history and culture. It's about a 15-minute drive to Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium.

About Motobu Port

Tourist counter and free Wi-Fi are available. A gift shop is a 3-minute walk. Local shopping facilities are 10 minutes by taxi. A passenger terminal building is scheduled to open in 2021.

Find Happiness on Fukugi Lane

② Bise Fukugi Tree Road

The coastal road facing the sea is lined with Fukugi, sometimes called "Happiness Trees." A windbreak that has long protected the nearby small village, some of its trees are over 300 years old. Feel the sun filtering through the dark green leaves and be embraced for the wind from the sea.

► Bise, Motobu



7 Minutes-drive



A Food and Farming Wonderland

③ Denku-no-Eki Haso Park

This farming and food themed park is fun both for kids and grown-ups as well. They have programs that let you try harvesting produce and a petting zoo for up-close encounters with goats and other animals. They also sell fresh local vegetables and eggs, specialty items, and daily necessities.

► 1334 Gushiken, Motobu Phone: 0980-48-3835

A Castle famous for its Cherry Blossoms

④ Nakinjin Castle Ruins

Also known as Kitayama Castle, this is one of Okinawa's World Heritage sites. It has beautifully curving ramparts and is widely considered as Okinawa's finest castle. In the 14th century, it was the residence of Hokuzan royalty who ruled before the establishment of the Ryukyu Kingdom. This is the first spot in Japan to see the nation's famed cherry blossoms. They bloom from late January through early February.

► 5101 Imadomari, Nakijin, Kunigami County Phone: 0980-56-4400



Nakinjin Gusuku Cherry Blossom Festival



Discover the Mysteries of the Okinawan Sea

① Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium

This venue provides an extensive encounter with Okinawa's marine environment. Bathed in sunlight, the Coral Sea tank nurtures 800 coral colonies. Stop by the gigantic Kuroshio Sea tank to see whale sharks, the world's largest fish, as well as reef manta rays, the first ever been bred in captivity. The aquarium's Deep Sea section recreates that mysterious world.

► 424 Ishikawa, Motobu Phone: 0980-48-3748

5 Minutes-drive

15 Minutes-drive

25 Minutes-drive

Get a Local Souvenir



An Intriguing Space Where New Meets Old

Motobu Municipal Market

This market has lots of restaurants where you can eat local food, like a sashimi shop and an old-school Okinawa soba shop. The younger generation drawn by the market's atmosphere also runs stores here, creating a unique feel that blends the old and the new.

► 4 Toguchi, Motobu



Full of Things Made in Motobu

Motobu Kariyushi Market

This market is jam packed with items from Motobu. These include fresh picked local fruits and vegetables, prepared Motobu specialties, Motobu crafts, folk art, and more.

► 881-1 Ohama, Motobu



The Most Popular Sorbet Around

⑤ Acerola Fresh

Acerola cherries grown in Motobu are a super-food with beautifying and health-giving properties, including the Vitamin C of 5 lemons in each little fruit. Try their sorbet, which has been selected as Japan's finest treat.

► 52-2 Namizato, Motobu Phone: 0980-47-2505

The Heart of the Yaeyama Islands

Ishigaki Port

(Ishigaki-jima Island)

The natural diversity here ranges from the stunning sea of Kabira Bay to limestone caves and groves of yaeyama palm trees. Located at the center of the Yaeyama Islands, the island is also a haven of traditional crafts and local food. It takes about 40 minutes by car to Tamatorizaki Observatory, the first stop on this route. There are highlights across the island, so we recommend you to plan in advance. Excursion tours from the port are available. You can also extend your trip from here to remote islands like Iriomote and Taketomi.

Coral Reefs in the Sea

① Tamatorizaki Observatory

This popular scenic spot has a great view of the aquamarine sea. You can reach the top of the observation deck in just a few minutes. Take a walk first and enjoy the beauty of Ishigaki island.

► Ibaruma, Ishigaki



26 Minutes-drive

The Most Beautiful Palm Trees in the World

② Yonehara Palm Grove

Yaeyama Palm Trees are an endemic species that only grow in Ishigaki island and Iriomote island. The variety has been designated a National Natural Monument. The largest even reaches 25 meters high. Take a walk absorbing the healthful negative ions of the forest and you'll see that Ishigaki's more than just the sea.



Minsah Traditional Textiles Up Close

④ Minsah Kogei Kan (Craft Center)

The woven Minsah textile of the Yaeyama Islands is durable and elegant. This hall has an exhibition room as well as a studio where you can watch the Minsah weaving process. They hold hand weaving workshops and you can purchase products made of the cloth, too. A Minsah bag is a great choice to use on board or when walking about a port of call.

► 909 Tonoshiro, Ishigaki
Phone: 0980-82-3473



6 Minutes-drive or 20 Minutes-walk

Japan's Southernmost Shopping Arcade

⑤ Euglena Mall

This shopping street has over 100 stores, selling great Ishigaki souvenirs. You can also snack and walk about, trying delicious local specialties like sata andagi Okinawan doughnuts and kamaboko fish cakes.



Take a 10 Minute Ferry

Head to a Remote Island

⑥ Taketomi Island

Just 10 minutes from the Euglena Ishigaki Ferry Terminal, Taketomi island has a traditional Okinawan atmosphere of red tiled roofed homes lining on white coral sand roads. You might try exploring the village while riding in a water buffalo cart.



Local Fare Not to Miss

On an island with incredible nature, you'd expect to find a treasure trove of local food. You'll definitely want to try **Ishigaki beef** while you're here. The deep-fried fish product known as **Yaeyama kamaboko** is great to snack on while strolling about. For liquor lovers, try a local beer or a glass of awamori spirits, or get also some pineapple or other tropical fruits as to take with you.

● About Ishigaki Port

There's a tourist information center, and free Wi-Fi is available.
A shuttle bus fare is 200 yen for one way
The city center is 15 minutes by bus, 10 minutes by taxi



Ocean and Islands: One of Japan's Top 100 Views

③ Kabira Bay

Take a glass bottomed boat to view the amazing diversity of colorful coral in the water below. Although swimming is prohibited, there are tours to visit uninhabited islands in the bay. The color of the sea often changes depending on the time you visit.

18 Minutes-drive

30 Minutes-drive



● About Hirara Port

Medium-sized passenger ships often enter at Shimozaki Wharf. Larger boats anchoring offshore and a tender brings passengers to the third wharf. There is a simple tourist information center and free Wi-Fi at the Marine Terminal. The city center is a 10-minute walk from the Marine Terminal and a 7-minute taxi ride from Shimozaki Wharf.

A Walk Starting at Hirara Port

Highlights
Near the Port

Miyako Shrine



Poll Tax Stone



Tomb of Nakasone
Tuyumya



Painagama Beach



There are a number of highlights to see within walking distance of Hirara Port. **Miyako Shrine** is the southernmost Shinto shrine in Japan. The grounds are covered in lawn, and the main hall's roof has Okinawa's typical reddish tiles. **The Poll Tax Stone** testifies to the history of economic exploitation at the hands of the Satsuma Domain and the Ryukyu kings. The blend of Miyako and Okinawa Island stonework visible at **the Tomb of Nakasone Tuyumya** is interesting to see. West-facing **Painagama Beach** is a great place to watch the sunset.

One of the best beaches in Japan

Hirara Port (Miyako-jima Island)

Hirara Port is Miyako's only navigable harbor and is seeing more ships arriving year by year. On Miyako you'll find beaches with crystal clear water across the island, and it's as beautiful as that of Caribbean. Irabu-Ohashi is the nation's longest toll-free bridge and the gorgeous water below will take your breath away. The natural wonders of Japan's southern islands also await with mangrove forests, underwater parks, and more.



A Natural Arch Formed
by a Raised Coral Reef

① Sunayama Beach

A huge arch-like rock formation carved by the erosion of the waves and the white sandy beach creates a singular scenic beauty. The beach's fine sand makes it perfect for a stroll. Spend a healing moment amidst the wonders of nature, with the blue sky the cobalt sea, the white sand, and the arch.

18 Minutes-drive



The Sea Forest, an Ecological Treasure ② Shimajiri Mangrove Forest

This is Miyako-jima's largest mangrove forest, and the local administration has designated it a Natural Monument. Known as the Sea Forest for its unique and thriving ecosystem, it evokes a sense of wonder in its visitors. A boardwalk is well-developed and it makes an exploration on foot easy.

10 Minutes-drive



Where Snow-Like Salt is Made ③ Yukishio Museum

The fine, snow-like salt known as Yukishio is a Miyako-jima specialty. Here you can take a tour to learn about it, starting with the manufacturing process. A guide will lecture you the best way to use it while take you around the museum. Reservations are not required. There is also a gift shop.

► Karimata-191 Hirara, Miyako-jima
Phone: 0980-72-5667



15 Minutes-drive



Underwater Exploration Fully Dressed ④ Miyakojima Marine Park

Here you'll encounter Miyako-jima's thriving ocean environment. At the main underwater observation facility, you'll get a peek into this colorful realm from 24 acrylic panel windows.

► Karimata-2511-1 Hirara, Miyakojima
Phone: 098-074-6335

30 Minutes-drive



Japan's Longest Bridge
Island Connecting the Islands

⑤ Irabu Bridge

This bridge linking Miyako-jima and Irabu-jima was opened to traffic in 2015. At 3,540 meters, it's the longest toll-free bridge in Japan. People passing over it says you feel like you're driving on the sea.



Points to Keep in Mind when Sightseeing in Okinawa from the Ports

* The sun beam can be strong at times so bring a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Be especially careful when traveling to open natural areas and be sure to hydrate yourself frequently.

* Winter can be chilly, and it rains frequently then. Don't forget to bring warm clothes and rain gear.

* At some places, they have more than two ports where serving the cruise ship and ferries / high speed boat to outer islands. If you just say "Bring me to the port," taxi drivers won't know where you want to go. Be sure to check which terminal/wharf your ship is accommodated to and tell them to your driver.

* On Okinawa Island there can be heavy traffic, particularly in Naha in the evening. When returning to port, be sure to have enough time.



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