

Shine on!

OKAYAMA

Japan's beautiful land of sunshine.



Okayama Tourist Guide

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Okayama Tourist Guide



MAP-1 Hiruzen Kogen Highlands



MAP-2 Mt. Ojigatake



MAP-3 Okutsukei Valley



MAP-4 Nagi Museum of Contemporary Art
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MAP-5 Ibara Railway



MAP-9 Bitchu Matsuyama Castle (the Castle in the Sky)



MAP-10 Fukiya Furusato Village



MAP-6 Okayama Korakuen Garden & Okayama Castle



MAP-8 Asahi River Sakura Road



MAP-7 Inujima Island

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MAP-0 Please see P17-18 for a map of the featured tourist attractions.



MAP-11 Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter



MAP-12 Kasaoka Bay Farm Roadside Station



MAP-13 Seto Inland Sea & Seto Ohashi Bridge

Shine on! OKAYAMA TOUR

Introducing a classic route of the must-see spots in Okayama Prefecture.

Our recommended 3-day, 2-night trip includes a customizable third day for you to enjoy a personalized experience.

day 1

Okayama City (Downtown Area)

10:00 Okayama Korakuen Garden

One of the Three Great Gardens of Japan.
Japan's Foremost Daimyo Garden, Rated
3 stars in the Michelin Green Guide Japan

Built in 1687 during the Edo period, the Korakuen Garden is the most representative daimyo (feudal lord) garden in Japan. Cherished by the successive daimyo of Okayama Domain, the 140,000 square meter garden offers breathtaking scenery throughout the year. You absolutely won't want to miss this site of scenic beauty!



Feel the Seasons as You Stroll Through the Garden

Your perception of the garden will change as you move through it, so be sure to explore the scenery at your own pace. The small islands decorating the pond and the man-made hill are especially worth seeing! Cherry blossoms in spring, bamboo in the summer, colorful autumn leaves, and winter-blooming camellias are just some of the seasonal beauty you can find year-round.



Enjoy a Quiet Cup of Tea with a Pleasant Breeze

You can admire the scenery from a teahouse while taking a break from your walk. Sampling the seasonal menu is highly recommended.



11:30 Peach Boat Ride

Take a Ride in a Cute Peach Boat
Followed by Lunch with a View

How about a boat ride on the Asahi River, which flows in between Korakuen Garden and Okayama Castle? The view of the castle from out on the water is exceptional. Then take it slow as you relax at a local café or restaurant.



14:00 Look out Over the City From the Top of Okayama Castle



Admire the Gently Flowing Asahi River and Korakuen Garden from the Observation Deck

The inside of Okayama Castle has been transformed into a museum showcasing the history of Okayama and traditional works of art. Step into the shoes of a feudal lord and enjoy a commanding view of the city from the top floor of the castle keep.



15:00 Okayama Bizen-yaki Pottery Studio Bizen Ware Clay Working Experience

4



Experience the Charm of Bizen Ware
Pottery Hands-On, One of the Six Ancient
Kilns Designated as Japan Heritage

Made without glaze or paint, Bizen ware is simple pottery with a history of over 800 years. It closely resembles the original roots of pottery in Japan. Spin the potter's wheel to create your own one-of-a-kind piece of Bizen ware!



17:00 A Glassful of Bliss

5

Time to Relax After a Long Day
with Flavorful Cuisine

The area around JR Okayama Station offers a variety of restaurants, from Japanese to Western and Chinese, serving dishes made with fresh local ingredients. Many places have locally brewed sake or craft beer on the menu as well.

Discover the delicious options!
Restaurants Near JR
Okayama Station



donburako!

Spend the night in
Okayama City



9:30 Kimono Stroll Around the Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter 6

Visit a Traditional Neighborhood with Around 400 Years of History

White plaster walled storehouses, wooden merchant homes, and more. Tourists from all over the world are drawn to this townscape that embodies Japanese culture. Kimono rentals are also available, so you can re-enact your favorite scenes from movies or anime.



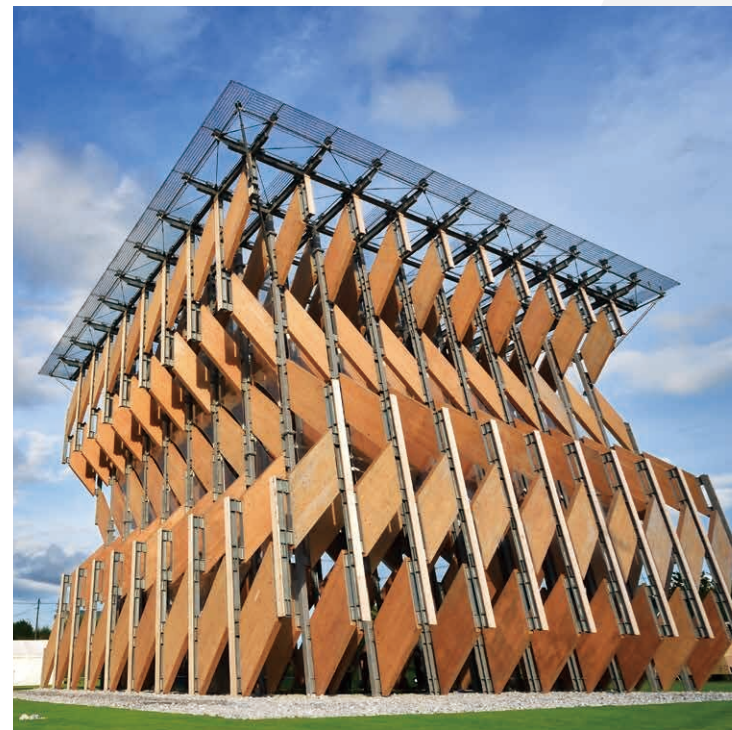
11:00 Enjoy a Fruit-Filled Parfait 7

Have a Taste of Premium Seasonal Fruit from Okayama

Okayama Prefecture is one of the leading fruit producers in Japan, so why not treat yourself to a parfait full of fresh, high quality fruit? The menu changes with the seasons and offers new delights each time you visit.

Brimming with fruits and sweets!

Cafés in Kurashiki



15:00 GREENable HIRUZEN 8

A Sustainable Landmark Designed by World-Famous Architect Kengo Kuma

Designed by architect Kengo Kuma for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, the must-see CLT Pavilion was previously dismantled and rebuilt in its current location. This monument made of local timber from Maniwa is a symbol of sustainable efforts in the region, featuring an adjacent museum and tourism information center.



16:00 Hiruzen Jersey Land 9

Leisurely Admire the Scenic Nature of the Hiruzen Kogen Highlands, Home to the Largest Stock of Jersey Cattle in Japan

Watch the Jersey cows grazing at the foot of the majestic "Three Peaks of Hiruzen", or participate in hands-on experiences such as milking and dairy production. Jersey beef and dairy products are also available in the nearby restaurant shop.



Taste the Rich Flavor of Jersey Dairy at Its Source

Fresh Hiruzen Jersey milk is delicious to drink on its own, but it's also turned into richly flavored cheeses, yogurt, and sweets. We definitely recommend trying the exquisite soft serve ice cream!



Taste the local flavor Featured Cuisine

Hiruzen Yakisoba

A Specialty of the Hiruzen Area

The traditional noodle dish of the Hiruzen Kogen Highlands. The noodles are loaded with savory chicken and locally grown cabbage. The rich, salty-sweet flavor of the secret miso-based sauce is nothing short of addictive.



Hiruzen Winery

Making Precious Wine from Native Japanese Yamabudo Grapes

The birthplace of Hiruzen Wine, made from Yamabudo mountain grapes grown in the Hiruzen Kogen Highlands. Inside the winery you'll find a shop where you can taste a variety of wine to find your favorite, and a café where you can enjoy a meal.



day3

The Okayama In-Depth Experience

A Program Tailored to Your Preferences

A variety of attractions await you within Okayama Prefecture, from sites of cultural significance that tell of the region's history, to picturesque scenery that will take your breath away. That's why for the third day of the program we have prepared two different themed courses for you. Pick the course that appeals to your own interests and enjoy an original trip!

courseA

Explore Japanese Culture

Setouchi City

Bizen City

courseB

Immerse Yourself in Art

Okayama City

Tamano City

Bizen Osafune Sword Museum 10

Learn About the History and Techniques of Japanese Sword Making at the Bizen Osafune Sword Village

Osafune in Setouchi City has been one of Japan's leading centers for sword making since the feudal era. At any given time, the Bizen Osafune Sword Museum has about 40 swords of various types on display. On the second Sunday of every month, a public forging event is held where you can watch swords being made the old-fashioned way.



"Yamatorige" Tachi Long Sword, a National Treasure



Ancient Swordsmithing Techniques on Display

Bizen Ware Pottery 11

Tour around a Town Famous for Its Pottery and Encounter Nearly 800 Years of Local History

The streets of Imbe in Bizen City are lined with numerous pottery studios and gallery shops. The many brick chimneys and old earthen walls remaining in the town add to its unique charm. No two pieces of Bizen ware are identical, so why not find your own special piece?



Bizen Ware Café

Bizen ware pottery is said to make coffee taste mellow. Try it out yourself by enjoying a coffee from a Bizen ware cup!

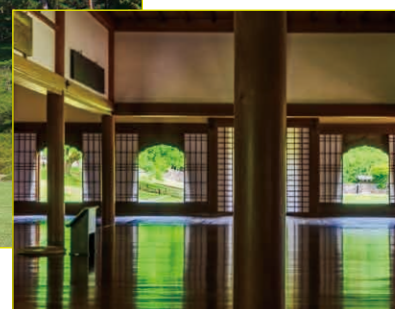
Former Shizutani School 12

Marvel at the Distinctive Bizen Ware Tile Roof of the Lecture Hall, a National Treasure

The oldest existing school for commoners in the world, its signature point is the roof of the lecture hall, which is covered in Bizen ware tiles. Normally, the interior is not open to the public, but participants in the reading of Confucius' Analects are given special permission.



The lacquered floor of the lecture hall reflects the beautiful scenery surrounding it.



Inujima Island Area 13

Art in Tune with Nature, and So Much of It!

Inujima Island in the Seto Inland Sea is one of the venues for the Setouchi Triennale, a contemporary art festival held every three years. The island is full of things to discover even outside of the festival season, including the Inujima Seirensho Art Museum, which was built out of the remains of a century old copper refinery, the Inujima "Art House Project", and the "Inujima Life Garden".



Inujima Seirensho Art Museum Photo: Daichi An



Inujima "Art House Project" A-Art House Beatriz Milhazes "Yellow Flower Dream" 2018 Photo: Yoshikazu Inoue



A Quick Trip from Uno Port

Naoshima Island

A 20 minute ferry ride from Uno Port in Tamano City, Naoshima Island is known around the world as "Art Island" for the many works of art on display, such as outdoor sculptures by Yayoi Kusama or the Chichu Art Museum designed by Tadao Ando.



"Red Pumpkin" ©Yayoi Kusama, 2006 Naoshima Miyunoura Port Square Photo: Daisuke Aochi

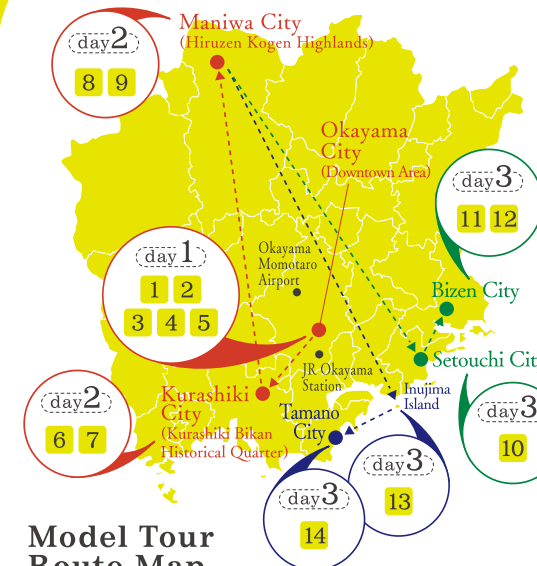
Uno Port Area 14

Unique and Original Artwork Adorns this Gateway to the Archipelagos of the Seto Inland Sea

Uno Port in Tamano City, right at the southern tip of Okayama Prefecture, is both a venue for the Setouchi Triennale and a point of departure for the ferries crossing over to Naoshima and the many other islands of the Seto Inland Sea. Scattered around the port area you will find various works of art brimming with individuality, such as "Chinu".



"Chinu" - the Black Sea Bream of Uno Yodogawa Technique



Model Tour Route Map

Okayama Prefecture has many fascinating attractions to offer, such as seasonal fruit-picking in one of Japan's leading areas for fruit production, pottery workshops focused on the ancient Bizen ware, hands-on jeans making experiences using world renowned Okayama denim, and national parks overflowing with natural beauty.

Shine on! Experiences

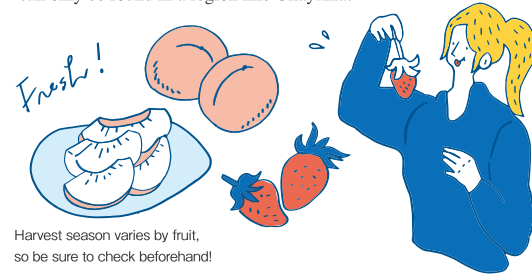


Photos provided by: Banbi Hsu

Fruit Picking

White Peaches, Grapes, Strawberries

Okayama Prefecture is blessed with a temperate climate, making it a treasure trove of high-quality fruits such as white peaches, grapes, and strawberries. The joy of handpicking fruit, the delicious taste of a fresh harvest; enjoy a special experience that can only be found in a region like Okayama.



Harvest season varies by fruit, so be sure to check beforehand!

White Peach Picking



Grape Picking



Strawberry Picking



Cycling

Okayama Prefecture is a cyclist's paradise, with low rainfall and gentle elevation changes. Plus, an extensive network of bicycle rentals makes renting a breeze. Along the sea or over plateaus, feel the wind as you enjoy a bike ride at your own pace.



Whether you are a beginner or an expert, there is a route for everyone in Okayama. Find yours!



Pottery Workshops

Experience the creation of Bizen ware hands-on, the oldest of Japan's Six Ancient Kilns with a more than 800 year history. Made without glaze or paint, differences in the final product are a result of the properties of the clay and the firing temperature alone, producing durable pieces with a charm that deepens through use. The seasoned staff will carefully guide you through the process to ensure a smooth experience for everyone.

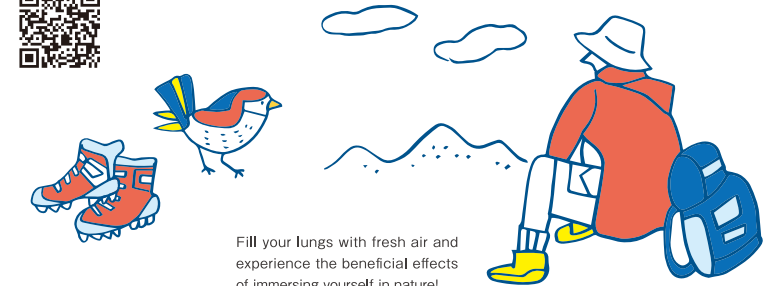


The pattern on each piece is unique, changing with the strength of the flame. Make your trip one to remember by bringing home your own original Bizen ware.



Trekking

Surround yourself with lush greenery, the sound of running streams, and chirping birds. Okayama is full of places where you can enjoy trekking through beautiful mountain scenery, no matter your available time or individual stamina. Hiking tours with local guides are also available.



Fill your lungs with fresh air and experience the beneficial effects of immersing yourself in nature!



Jeans Making

Kojima Jeans

Kojima in Kurashiki City is the birthplace of domestically produced jeans in Japan. Try your hand at riveting or dyeing in the studio of an esteemed denim maker such as Betty Smith.

MAP-14

Betty Smith Jeans Museum



Learn all about the history of jeans in Japan and its manufacturing process at this jeans museum.

Create your own one-of-a-kind, made-to-order jeans!

Snow Activities

In winter, the northern part of Okayama Prefecture is a popular location for skiing, snowboarding, snowshoe trekking, and other activities. The exhilaration of carving through a field of snow or the soothing silence of the winter landscape, visitors to this white wonderland are sure to get a taste of the extraordinary.



Rentals are readily available, so there's no need to bring your own gear. From care-free playing in the snow to full-fledged ski slopes, there's something for everyone to enjoy.



A showcase of Okayama's seasonal attractions and tourist spots, as well as some of western Japan's most atmospheric hot springs.

Shine on! Seasons



Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter



MAP-15 Tsuyama Castle (Kakuzan Park)



MAP-16 Gaisen Cherry Trees

There are many famous spots for cherry blossom viewing in Okayama. The nearly 1,000 cherry trees at Tsuyama Castle form a sea of flowers, while the Gaisen Cherry Trees are a walkable tunnel of cherry blossoms nestled in a historic town. Both of these must-see destinations rank among the top 100 sites for cherry blossoms in Japan.



MAP-17 Ushimado Sea Kayaking



MAP-18 Nishigawa Green Road Park

In summer, water activities on the beautiful sea or rivers provide a welcome escape from the heat. Renting a yukata (casual summer kimono) for a nighttime stroll through illuminated city streets will lead to some unforgettable memories.



MAP-19 Ukankei Valley



MAP-20 Former Shizutani School

Enjoy the beautiful colors of fall in Okayama. Many of the best spots to see the autumn leaves are illuminated at night, producing magical scenes completely different to what you can experience during the day.



MAP-1 Hiruzen Kogen Highlands



MAP-21 GREENable HIRUZEN

The snowy landscapes of northern Okayama are the highlight of winter. From full-fledged winter sports to casually playing in the snow, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Soaking in an open-air hot spring overlooking the snow is highly recommended.

Onsen

The Three Hot Springs of Mimasaka

A Healing Journey to Warm Both Body and Soul!



Yubara Onsen, Okutsu Onsen, and Yunogo Onsen in the northern parts of Okayama Prefecture are commonly known as "The Three Hot Springs of Mimasaka", one of the most famous hot spring areas in western Japan. Enjoy staying at an onsen (hot spring) hotel known for its soothing and plentiful hot spring water while on a healing journey to nature-blessed northern Okayama Prefecture.



Yubara Onsen

MAP-22

A hot spring resort famous for western Japan's top-ranked open-air bath "Sunayu", a hot spring formed naturally out of a riverbed, where visitors can enjoy the bountiful stream of hot water while in the midst of nature.



Okutsu Onsen

MAP-23

A quiet hot spring in the mountains near Okutsukei Valley, famous for its autumn colors. The pure alkaline spring water is said to do wonders for the skin, resulting in a beautifying bath that will leave your skin feeling smooth and vibrant.



Yunogo Onsen

MAP-24

This hot spring boasts a history of more than 1,200 years and is said to have been discovered when a white heron used it to heal its injured leg. The waters of the hot spring feel like a gentle, warm embrace and are said to have beautifying properties.



Shine on! Momotaro

Japan's Greatest Hero! In the Footsteps of Momotaro

One of the most famous stories in Japan is the folk tale "Momotaro". It's about a boy born from a peach who ventures out to vanquish a group of marauding ogres. Okayama Prefecture is said to be the birthplace of the legend, and you can find many places closely associated with the story. Why not visit some while you're in Okayama?



Shrines Dedicated to Kibitsuhiko no Mikoto, the Inspiration for Momotaro



Kibitsujinja Shrine MAP-25

The main hall, a designated National Treasure, is built in a special style that can only be found here at Kibitsujinja Shrine. A unique divination ceremony is performed here, where good and bad fortune are determined by the sound produced when heating an old-fashioned cauldron.



Kibitsuhihojinja Shrine MAP-26

The shrine is filled with a majestic atmosphere created by the harmony between the traditional Shinto architecture and the lush greenery of the surrounding trees. Built on a mountain revered as a site where the gods descend to earth, the shrine is full of spiritual power and the main hall has been designated as an Important Cultural Property by the Prefecture.



◀ Ceramic peach-shaped fortunes are very popular here.

The Legendary Stage Where Momotaro Defeated the Ogres



Kinojo Castle MAP-27

The birthplace of the "Legend of Ura", said to have been the origin of the tale of Momotaro. An ancient mountain fortress and the stronghold of the ogre Ura, Kinojo Castle was built atop the 400-meter-high Mt.Kinojo, surrounded by stone and earthwork fortifications. The walking trails are well maintained and offer spectacular panoramic views.



The Momotaro Hands-On Experience



Momotaro Karakuri Museum MAP-28

This museum offers fun for all ages, from collections of woodblock prints and other historical materials, to a mini-theater showing old animated renditions of Momotaro, a trip through an ogre's spooky cave, and various optical illusions.



There are many more "Momotaro spots" waiting for you in Okayama!

How many can you find?



Kibi Dango, a Key Element of the Story



During his journey Momotaro used this treat to befriend a dog, a monkey, and a pheasant. Even today, Kibi Dango is a famous Okayama sweet that comes in a variety of flavors and packages, such as chocolate or Muscat grape. Find your favorite!



Okayama's Big Event



Momotaro Festival

This is a major summer festival held in Okayama City. The main event, the Uraja dance, is based on the Legend of Ura. The dancers all paint their faces to imitate ogres, and the audience is invited to join in for the grand finale, making for a sight to behold.



Shine on! Arts&Culture



Meet Art That Brings Color Into Your Life

The Islands of Inujima & Naoshima

Inujima Island MAP-7
Naoshima Island MAP-29

Inujima Island is the only inhabited island in Okayama City and is home to the Inujima Seirenshe Art Museum, a museum occupying the site of a 100-year-old copper refinery. Art by both Japanese and international artists is scattered around the island in an exhibition called the Inujima "Art House Project". Naoshima Island, a world famous spot known as a holy land for contemporary art, is also easily accessible from Uno Port.



"Red Pumpkin"
©Yayoi Kusama, 2006
Naoshima Miyaura Port Square
Photo/Daisuke Aochi



Ohara Art Museum

MAP-30

Located in the heart of the Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter, this was the first private museum in Japan to have a permanent exhibition of Western art. Today it houses a collection of about 3,000 national and international works, including masterpieces by Monet and Picasso.



Images provided by
the Ohara Art Museum



"The Annunciation"
El Greco

Uno Port MAP-31

One of the venues for the Setouchi Triennale. "Chinu" and many other unique and original works of art adorn the area around Uno Port, the gateway to the archipelagos of the Seto Inland Sea.



"Chinu - the Black Sea Bream of Uno" Yodogawa Technique

Nagi Museum of Contemporary Art MAP-4

In a world first, art, architecture, and the entire museum grounds were constructed together, creating a museum where art and facility are semi-permanently fused into one. The cylindrical exhibit "Sun", a work by Japan's leading modern artist Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, can be appreciated in a curiously inclined space.



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the Reversible Destiny Foundation

Experience the Magic of Traditional Japanese Culture



Bizen Pottery

As one of Japan's Six Ancient Kilns, Bizen ware boasts a history of more than 800 years. Made without glaze or paint, it is an extremely refined and simple form of pottery. The uniquely handcrafted expression of the finished product gives it a charm that only deepens with use.



Former Shizutani School MAP-20

Founded by Mitsumasa Ikeda, feudal lord of Okayama Domain, this is the oldest existing school for commoners in the world. The roof of the lecture hall, a designated National Treasure, is made of Bizen ware tiles. Many of the other buildings on the site have been designated as Important Cultural Properties, and the entire site was declared Japan Heritage in 2015.



Bizen Osafune Sword Museum MAP-32

The Osafune area has been a major center for the production of swords since the Kamakura period (late 12th century to early 14th century). It is rare to find a museum specializing in swords even within Japan. This one also includes a forge and workshop, allowing visitors to watch the swordsmiths in action while listening to their explanations.



Whether it's fruit cultivated in a favorable climate, or seafood from the premiere fishing grounds of the Seto Inland Sea, Okayama's award-winning local cuisine is a must-try! Sake made from Okayama's Omachi rice, well known confections, and other local goods also make for popular souvenirs.

Shine on! Food & Souvenirs

Fruit Parfaits

In Okayama, delectable fruit is harvested all year round. Lavish amounts are used to make jello and mousse, or as a topping for gelato. Colorful, fruit covered parfaits provide the perfect photo op for your favorite social media!



Kasaoka Ramen

Thanks to its background as a thriving region for chicken farming, Kasaoka is now well known for its ramen. Firm chicken chashu (seasoned, braised meat) is paired with a clear broth made from chicken stock and soy sauce to create an amazing bowl of ramen!



Okayama Bara-zushi

This classic local dish is a feast for the eyes, created by carefully preparing and arranging a variety of seasonal produce to showcase the bounties of both the land and sea.



Chiyagyu Beef



Chiyagyu beef is the ancestor of all other wagyu brands, such as Matsusaka, Omi, and Kobe beef. With a history tracing back to the Edo period, a process of continuous improvement has made Chiyagyu what it is today: a top-class beef known for perfect marbling and color. The flavor and tenderness are truly exquisite!



Demi-katsudon

Sweet demi-glace sauce is poured over pork cutlets and cabbage on a bed of rice. The exact recipe and flavor of the signature sauce varies by restaurant.



Tsuyama Horumon Udon

The distinctive, rich flavor of the offal paired with a home-made sauce is a perfect match with udon noodles.



Hinase Kakioko

This Hinase approach to okonomiyaki includes a topping of juicy steamed oysters, rich in both flavor and minerals from the Seto Inland Sea.



Misaki Tamago Kake Gohan

A simple dish comprised of locally grown rice, freshly laid eggs, and an original soy sauce. The flavor of the fresh, raw egg is something you have to try for yourself!



Sake

With its mild climate and rich soil, Okayama is the ideal place to produce sake, fulfilling the three main requirements of great water, great rice and great skill. In particular, locally grown Omachi sake rice is known for producing some of the best quality sake, highly valued both in Japan and abroad.



Souvenirs



Made from ingredients and raw materials harvested in sunny Okayama, take home something you can only find here!

MAP-33
Okayama Prefectural Local Products Hall



Food & Drinks



Kibi Dango



Ohte Manju



Murasuzume



Fruit-based sweets



Local beer

Goods



Masking tape



Denim



Tatami-beri (tatami mat hem)



Bizen ware pottery (pictured: momo tama)



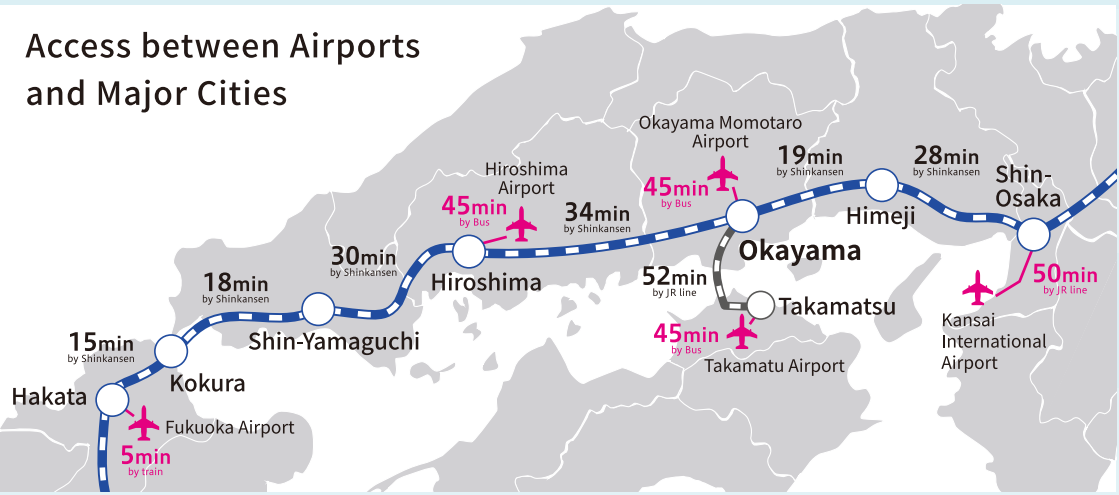
Kurashiki hampu(canvas)



Okayama Area Map



Access Guide



Haneda Airport	30min by train	Tokyo	3h 9min by Shinkansen	Okaya ma
Kansai International Airport	1h 15min by train	Kyoto	1h by Shinkansen	
	50min by train	Shin-Osaka	44min by Shinkansen	
		Himeji	19min by Shinkansen	
Takamatsu Airport	45min by bus	Takamatsu	52min by train	
Hiroshima Airport	45min by bus	Hiroshima	34min by Shinkansen	
Fukuoka Airport	5min by train	Hakata	1h 37min by Shinkansen	

*Indicated times are approximate.

Information | Railways, Expressway Pass & Accommodation |

Railways
JR WestJapan



Expressway Pass
NEXCO-West



Accommodation



Tourism Division,
Department of Industry and Labor,
Okayama Prefecture

〒700-8570
2-4-6 Uchisange, Kita Ward, Okayama City
Tel.086-226-7383 Fax. 086-224-2130
E-MAIL kanko@pref.okayama.lg.jp

Okayama Prefecture
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