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Welcome to the Pacific

2020-2021



Your guide to being stationed in mainland JAPAN & OKINAWA



Stars and Stripes Community Publication



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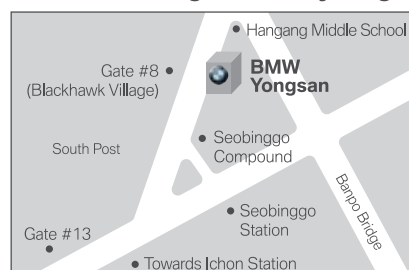
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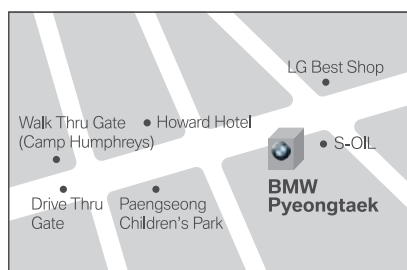
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Cover photo

Tanya Hemkes shot this photo of herself at Fushimi Inari Shrine in Kyoto, Japan. Hemkes is an Army vet and Marine Corps spouse. She and her family are currently enjoying life in Japan. "Japan is such an amazing place to be stationed due to the unique culture, kindhearted and gentle demeanor of the locals and its beautiful surroundings," Hemkes said.

Welcome to the Pacific

2020-2021

75 years of commitment to our troops

Every year, our staff at Stars and Stripes undertakes a quest to gather all the information important to you as you begin your journey to your new overseas post. We look for updates to new laws, base policies and rules so you don't have to go about it on your own. And, every year, for the last couple of decades, we have compiled this guide you're holding for quick reference. We know you have questions and concerns, but we want you to know that we have your back.

This year is an exceptionally special one as Stars and Stripes marks its 75th year in the Pacific Theater. This is a big one for us as we mark decades of history and this labor of love our current staff and those who have come before have worked on for 75 years. This is a year of celebration, but also one that only reinforces how Stars and Stripes' mission to support you is not over. YOU are the reason why we work hard to compile this magazine every year, the newspapers every week and update the websites every day. This is, after all, YOUR magazine, YOUR newspaper, and YOUR websites. We are here to support you and the mission. Without you there is no us.

Every day, we hope to reinforce our commitment to you with the work we do and the publications we bring you. You'll see it in these pages, as we highlight the talent of members of your community through the wonderful photographs they've contributed. Check out Tanya Hemke's stunning cover photo and the carefully composed shot Hazel Ann Imperial submitted on Page 74.

Beyond the beautiful photos used throughout the magazine, you'll find all the information you're looking for. Worried about where to get a car? Flip to Page 40. Curious about the laws in Japan regarding riding a bike? Head over to Page 52.

And for everything else not covered in this intro guide, don't forget to pick up copies of Stars and Stripes Japan or Okinawa on base or visit our websites, stripesjapan.com, stripesokinawa.com, where there's plenty more to discover! Want to try some traditional Okinawan fare? Visit our website for all the local spots to get your hands on some nakamijiru, a local delicacy. Count on our writers, Hiro Takiguchi and Shoji Kudaka (learn more about them on Page 10) to bring you great restaurants to try, museums and attractions to visit, as well as the 411 on the local culture.

And, anything else they haven't covered—they're always open to suggestions from you. So, pick up the phone, give us a call, or send us an email, we love feedback and story ideas.

On that note, we'd love to tell your story! Are you a volunteer at the local orphanage or is your spouses' group working on a cool project? Do you know of an exceptional military child who deserves to be spotlighted? Is travel photography and/or writing your hobby? Send us your stories, photographs or ideas and we'll make you famous!

As you navigate your new home, do not forget Stars and Stripes is with you every step of the way. Join us on Facebook as we continue to bring you the latest information you want to know as well as fun travel and food stories you won't want to miss.

As we look toward the next 75 years and beyond, our mission will be to continue to seek out and adapt to the needs of our servicemembers, military families, DOD civilians and staff in the Pacific. We are here for you!

Thanks for reading and as they say here in Japan: いらっしやい!

Denisse Rauda
 Publishing and Media Design Editor
 Stars and Stripes

Background photo

Marion Salaun Fairbanks took this photo at the Celestial Festival on the top of Mount Mitake, in Ome, Japan.



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STARS AND STRIPES

Culture
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 Transportation
 Private vehicles
 Base breakdown
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There's never been a better time to join Stars and Stripes!

The mission of Stars and Stripes is to provide news and information to active-duty servicemembers, veterans, government civilians, contractors and their families. Stripes award-winning journalists file reports from military bases around the world on topics the matter most to our audience.

Stars and Stripes' mission relies on the support of its many readers. In order to provide the most valuable content, we count on members to read, share and contribute – that's how we know what matters most to our military community at home and abroad.

Members enjoy an array of products to access the content only Stars and Stripes can provide. However you want to be informed, we have a product that's right for you. Through print, digital and mobile apps, you can have the content you value most in the format you prefer.

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Updated 24/7 by reporters stationed around the globe, you can count on Stars and Stripes for up-to-the-minute coverage on everything that affects the military community at home and abroad.

NEWSLETTERS



Stars and Stripes offers free email newsletters on a variety of topics of interest to the military community. Sign up to receive Stripes headlines of the

day, a weekly wrap-up of our top stories, or newsletters on opinion, veteran news and military history. Sign up for one or all and get Stars and Stripes delivered right to your inbox.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Living here presents many opportunities to explore and experience the diverse Pacific region. To help you make the most of them, Stars and Stripes brings you a wealth of information about travel, culture, restaurants and local happenings. Our local military community news and information

publications arrive weekly in Guam, Japan and Okinawa, and biweekly in Korea. You can pick up your free copy at one of the 800 locations throughout the Pacific region: just look for the bright blue Stripes boxes located on base.

You can also contribute – whether in the form of stories, reviews, suggestions or comments. Much of this incredibly useful information is captured in special publications such as Best of the Pacific and Destination Paradise and Welcome to the Pacific, published in three separate editions for Guam, Japan and Korea.

Companion websites are updated regularly and include useful stories and commentary from community members. We invite you to join in the discussion! Website access is free.

Stars and Stripes Guam - [guam.strips.com](https://www.guam.strips.com)

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2. I'm not sure what services I need. What does DOCOMO PACIFIC offer? What is unique about DOCOMO PACIFIC?

a. As the region's leader in innovation, telecommunications & entertainment, DOCOMO PACIFIC offers a variety of products and services, including mobile, internet, TV, and telephone. Our customers rated us Guam's best Mobile, Internet and Cable Provider 4 years in a row (Pika's Best 2016-2019) and best Cellphone Service Provider for 3 years (Pacific Stars & Stripes 2014, 2016, 2018). Global Wireless Solutions, a network benchmarking company who rates national carriers, also named DOCOMO PACIFIC Guam's most reliable and fastest network with the best coverage! For our service members, we are happy to offer exclusive mobile plans and quad-play bundles.

3. Do you offer any special discounts?

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4. I need more information about DOCOMO PACIFIC. Where can I go?

a. For our Army & Air Force customers, our store is conveniently located within the exchange at Andersen Air Force Base. For our Active Duty Navy customers, our closest store is located at Agana Shopping Center. For more information on store hours and other locations, please feel free to visit docomopacific.com.

5. I still have some questions before I make a decision. Who can I speak with?

a. DOCOMO PACIFIC is dedicated to delivering an unmatched customer experience 24/7. If you have any questions, we are just a quick phone call away! Contact us at 671-688-CARE or email: customercare@docomopacific.com.

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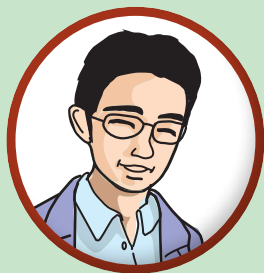


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Better Together

HISAI!

(Greetings in Okinawan dialect)



I am Shoji Kudaka, a native Okinawan who has been writing for Stripes Okinawa for more than 4 years. I'm here to share with you what our beautiful islands have to offer.

Have you relaxed on Emerald Beach or tried Okinawan soba noodles topped with pork ribs and seaweed? If you haven't, no need to worry. I will bring you up to speed with reports that will cover the best of Okinawa and take you on journeys you have never experienced.

Starting with basic information on where to dine and shop, my reports include in-depth coverage of what's happening in the local scene, focusing on up-to-date information on emerging businesses, products and people.

If you go out in Okinawa, it won't take long to note that there are a lot of new things happening across the prefecture each and every day, with many new restaurants, shops and cafes opening every year.

It's time to go out and feel the Okinawan vibe, folks! Oh wait, let me remind you one thing: Although it is good to

chase up-to-date scenes, traditional culture is still big. Festivities like our Dragon Boat races, tug-of-wars and Eisa dance date back hundreds of years, but still attract huge crowds. And the art of making Yachimun pottery and dyeing clothes in the traditional Okinawan Bingata way are still passed down from generation to generation.

Of course, Okinawa can also proudly show off its beautiful nature. Scuba diving. Whale watching. Fishing. Hiking in the mountains. You can enjoy it in so many ways.

I am a native Okinawan who grew up passionately learning English, watching WWF, NBA games, and sometimes Star Trek on AFN Channel 6. My childhood love for American culture carries on today, which was a motivator for me applying for this job. But this time around, my job is about another kind of love: my love of Okinawa.

KONNICHIWA!!

I am Takahiro Takiguchi from Yokosuka City in mainland Japan. I have worked with Stars and Stripes for seven years.



With four seasons, the Land of the Rising Sun is blessed with countless natural attractions. My Filipina wife and I enjoy taking day trips and longer excursions to explore the beauty and uniqueness of my country.

We cherish being showered by cherry blossom petals, picking sunflowers in a large field, sampling hot coffee while taking in the gorgeous colors of autumn, soaking in an outdoor onsen bath as snow falls, and taking a midnight walk to a Shinto shrine to wish for a happy new year on oshogatsu.

While viewing majestic Mount Fuji and strolling along the Gion streets in Kyoto illustrate the elegance of Japan, discovering the "Hidden Christian" ruins in Hirado give you a peek into how our Japanese ancestors lived through years of oppression.

My countrymen are known for their splendid architecture craftsmanship throughout the ages. The shrines, temples and castles dotting the Japan land-

scape will amaze you.

Having worked 18 years in the public affairs field on Yokosuka Naval Base, I observed how its historical shipyard built by the Japanese empire now accommodates the cutting-edge naval vessels of U.S. Seventh Fleet.

My country offers a lot of opportunities to enjoy sports, music and arts. You'll never experience anything like the authentic Kabuki plays in Ginza, Tokyo. And, whether you are a baseball fan or not, you have to check out a professional Japanese baseball game. It's great baseball, but watching or being a part of the cheering sections and enjoying the Japanese take on ballpark food, is something you'll never forget.

So, during your stay in Japan, you have a mission: Get off base and explore!

Don't worry, you can count on me to be your guide!

Stories

Hacksaw Ridge

Cave Okinawa

3 islands, 3 days, \$300

Hiji Otaki



Videos

Naha Tug-of-War

Off-shore fishing



Stories

Japan's Hidden Christians

What is your blood type?

A trip to Yokosuka

Taste Japan's microbrews



Videos

Take me out to the ballgame in Japan

Fuji Five Lakes in pastel colors



The Japan way

A crash course in customs & etiquette

View of Mt. Fuji from Yamanashi, Japan.

Photo by Joni Ryan Abando

Every culture has its own rules regarding etiquette. In Japan, some of these rules are straightforward while others are more subtle. One of the basic concepts of Japanese society is to maintain social harmony by respecting how others might feel.

A subtle aspect of this is that Japanese often do not present their true feelings (“honne”) to avoid conflict. The appearances they may present are called “tatemaie” and are considered good manners.

A clear example is that Japanese often postpone what they want to do in order to support what others need to do. When you get lost, many Japanese are willing to take you to the right place regardless of their destination. If you ask for language support from your Japanese friends, most likely they will coordinate their schedule to help you right away.

Bear in mind, however, that this may be the result of tatemaie – their desire to be polite despite how it may affect them. Don’t take too much advantage of their kindness, and always show your appreciation – maybe with a small gift or by buying lunch.

Never be late or cancel an appointment with a Japanese friend that was set up to help your personal needs; it is considered very rude.

First encounters

When Japanese people meet for the first time, they say “**hajime-mashite**” and give their name followed by the word “**desu**” (e.g., John desu). Usually they’ll bow if the situation is formal or just nod their heads otherwise.

The degree of bowing depends on the formality of the situation

and the relationship between the people.

Business professionals exchange “**meishi**” (business cards) at the beginning of a meeting; make sure you have enough for everyone. Stand, bow slightly and use both hands to present your card with the Japanese side up and the text right-side up for your counterpart to read. The same rule applies when receiving a card from someone else.

Take time to review your counterpart’s card carefully. You can ask about correct pronunciation of his or her name, or for an explanation of a job title. You want to show interest in, and respect to, the other party. Never shove the card into your back pocket.

M e i s h i should be handled respectfully because they represents the person. If you are seated at a meeting, place the card gently on the table in front of you. If you are meeting more than one person and have received multiple cards, arrange them neatly in front of you.

When visiting someone’s home, it is polite to bring a gift, usually an inexpensive food item, which should be wrapped. When you visit a local home or office, you may be served green tea without asking. This custom is based on the idea that most people like green tea. If you don’t want it, it’s best not to refuse it, but say “thank you” and not drink it.

Every Japanese home has a

“**genkan**” (hallway) with a lower tiled floor right inside the door where you take off your shoes (and never step on without shoes) and the upper wooden floor where you should walk without shoes or with slippers on. Often, if you use the toilet, you’ll have to change slippers again. If you see slippers or sandals at toilets in hospitals or other offices, you should use them. It is a sanitary custom.

In order to thank someone, e.g. for an invitation, one often presents a gift (“**temiyage**”) such as sweets or drinks. Similarly, when a Japanese person returns from a trip, he or she is supposed to bring home souvenirs (“**omiyage**”) to friends, co-workers and relatives.

Eating out

Most restaurants provide an “**Oshibori**” a moist hand towel for cleaning your hands before eating.

Before eating, it is customary to say, “**itadaki-masu**” (“I gratefully receive”) before eating and, “**gochiso-sama deshita**” (“Thank you for the meal”) after finishing the meal. It’s not impolite to ask for a knife, fork or spoon if you have trouble with chopsticks. Some restaurants may not have them, but those serving Western food always do.

Chopsticks should not be used for anything other than putting food in your mouth; not for pointing at someone or moving dishes around the table. And they should not be stuck into

a bowl of rice – as it resembles a funeral practice. When eating noodles, such as soba or ramen, it is okay to slurp loudly. In fact, they say it improves the flavor!

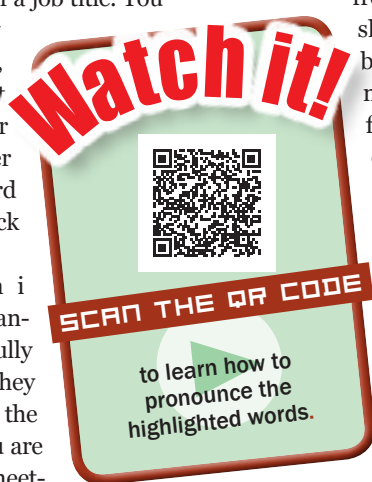
Many restaurants in Japan display plastic or wax replicas of their dishes at the entrance. They usually look very similar to the real dishes.

When you enter a restaurant, you will be greeted with the expression “**Irasshaimase**” (“welcome”), as you will find in any Japanese store as well. Waiters and waitresses are generally trained to be extremely efficient, polite and attentive.

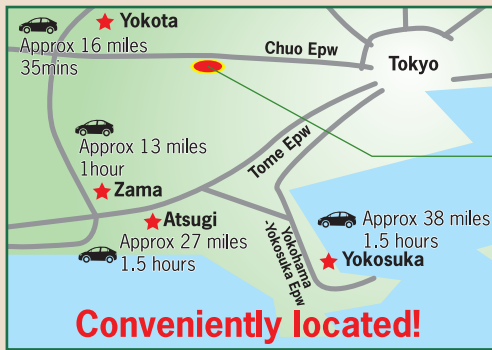
While a majority of restaurants in Japan are equipped exclusively with Western-style tables and chairs, restaurants with low traditional tables and cushions for sitting on the floor are also common. Some restaurants feature both styles side by side. In case of a traditional Japanese interior, you are usually required to take off your shoes before stepping onto the seating area or even at the restaurant’s entrance.

It is common in private households and in certain restaurants to share several dishes of food at the table rather than serving each person an individual dish. When eating from shared dishes, move food from the shared plates onto your own with the opposite end of your chopsticks or with serving chopsticks that may be provided for that purpose.

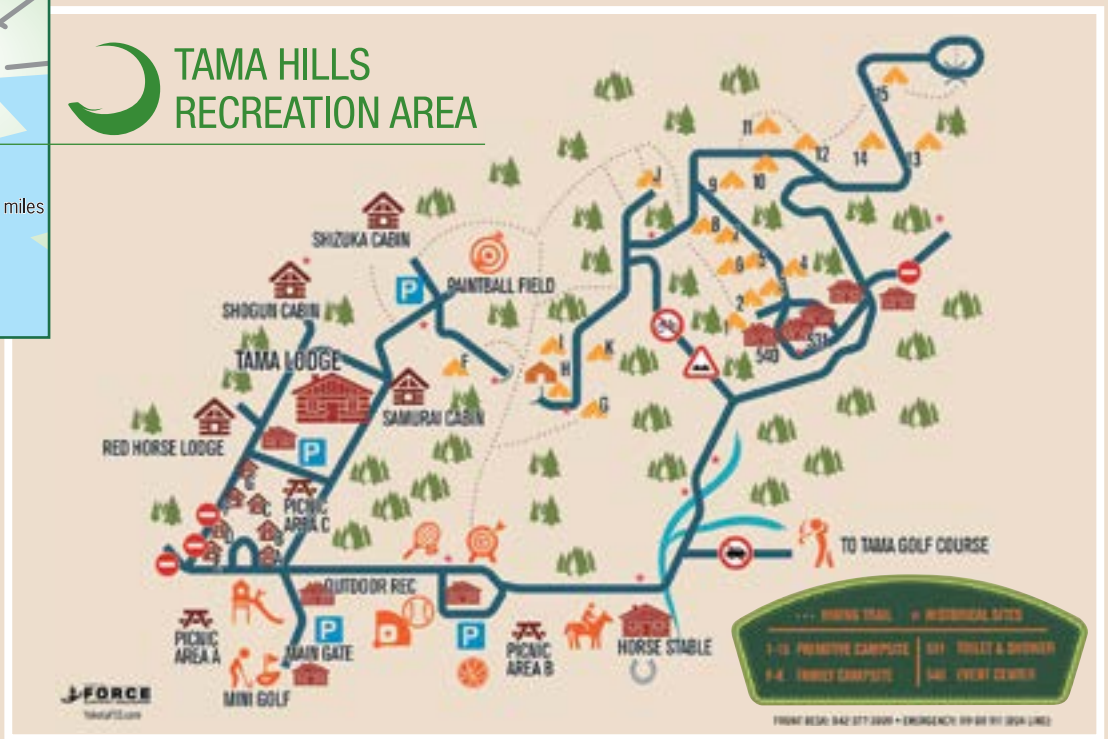
See *CUSTOMS* on Page 14



For more on chopsticks
SEE PAGE 26



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 Tue Closed
 Wed/Thu 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Fri 10 a.m.–8 p.m.
 Sat/Sun 8 a.m.–8 p.m..

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 Wed–Thu 4–9 p.m. Fri/Sat 1–11 p.m. Sun 1–9 p.m.

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Traditions unique to Okinawa

Okinawan society and culture have survived hundreds of years. The island may have evolved from an agrarian and trading culture to a modern business and tourism frontier, but many ancestral traditions remain. In addition to Japanese etiquette, Okinawans also adhere to their own cultural practices.

The elderly still have an exalted place in Okinawan society and should be shown respect.

Okinawan family life revolves around the household of the eldest son. Each new generation is obligated to the welfare of all the others. While the family is basically a male-dominated unit, women hold a respected status.

As a result of contact with China, Korea, mainland Japan and the West, Buddhism, Shintoism and Christianity have been introduced, but native animism remains the primary religion. Characteristics include a female priestess (Noro) and the worship of the spirit of things such as fire, rice, water and ancestors.

You will find many “utaki,” or sacred places, on the island. In the center of a grove of trees, for instance, you may observe a small grouping of stones near a larger “ibe,” a stone which marks sacred spots. Located at higher elevations in many cases, utaki are believed to be places where gods descend. Okinawans offer prayers at these stones, which should be treated with great respect.

Okinawans have intertwined the cultures of the Chinese and Japanese into their own, producing a multitude of colorful holidays

and festivals. A popular festival is “Naha Oo Tsunahiki.” This October celebration takes place in Naha, Okinawa’s capital city, featuring a giant tug-of-war between the East and West teams. Everybody is welcome to join either team.

During this event, people in traditional costumes of Ryukyu Kingdom ride two huge ropes down the main street coming from opposition directions. When the two sides meet, the ropes are joined. Thousands of festival participants pull on each end of the rope in a great tug of war.

Dragon Boat races and Eisa dance festivals are also a big part of local festivities on the island. Every year in May, the Naha Dragon Boat Race is held. This dynamic competition between teams from across the island, including those from the U.S. military, is quite the spectacle. Thirty-six crewmembers crammed into long, colorful and traditional boats rowing in unison. It’s fun to watch. Even better to participate!

Eisa is a traditional dance through which Okinawan’s culture and emotions are dramatically and effectively displayed. Styles of dress and hairdos provide an insightful record of the distant past. Performance of classical and semi-classical island dances frequently highlight local festivals. There are dance organizations that welcome Americans. Taking advantage of such opportunities and learning from Okinawans is one of the best ways to enjoy and experience local customs and culture.

— Shoji Kudaka



Okinawa’s famous shisa dog.
Photo by William Edward Jones IV

CUSTOMS continued from Page 11

On the other hand, At restaurants that serve “set menus,” bowl dishes (e.g. donburi or noodle soups) or Western-style dishes, each person usually orders and eats one separate dish. When you are ready to order, you can call the waiter/waitress by saying, “sumimasen” or excuse me. The bill will be given to you when the dishes are brought to your table or after the meal. In most restaurants, you are supposed to bring your bill to the cashier near the exit when leaving in order to pay.

Some restaurants, especially cheaper ones, have different systems for ordering and paying. At some, you may be required to pay right after ordering; at others, you have to buy meal tickets at a vending machine near the

store’s entrance. In restaurants in Japan, you are not expected to tip. When leaving, it is polite to say “gochisosama deshita”(It was quite a feast).

Drinking

The Japanese are known for being reserved; but like most of us, they can also shed their customary social inhibitions when drinking – and many appreciate the opportunity to do so. Going drinking with friends or coworkers is almost a ritual in Japan. It is considered the best way to break down barriers and cement relationships. Behavior can get pretty rowdy. But all – within reason – is forgiven and forgotten the next day.

It is considered polite to pour other people’s drinks then hold your own glass while your host or friend fills it. Having other

people constantly fill your glass can lead to a lot of alcohol disappearing very quickly! The Japanese toast is “Kampai” (literally, “dry glass”). At “izakaya,” local pubs, where you usually drink and share dishes with your friends, it is common to divide the bill regardless of how much you ate or drank. Most bars (with the exception of Western-style pubs) have a tab system. The bill is paid when you leave.

Miscellaneous

As a general rule, it’s considered impolite to speak very loudly in public. Public displays of romantic affection are also frowned upon, as is eating on the street and commuter trains or buses (but not their long-distance counterparts). However, these days it’s not uncommon to see any of these behaviors.

The Japanese study English in junior high school for three years, yet most don’t speak it, and some may feel embarrassed about their ability to speak it. On the other hand, many people will understand English if you write it in block letters.



A place to eat and drink in Sapporo.
Photo by Gaye Perera



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Say it like a local

Japanese language guidelines

Japanese is not an easy language to master, but getting familiar with it can make a world of difference when getting around off-base. Many locals you encounter will be familiar with some English (its basics are a required subject in schools), and will try to communicate even if they do not fully understand you. Returning the linguistic effort will win you a wealth of appreciation.

Tips to get you started

Kanji are adopted Chinese characters used in modern

Japanese writing with hiragana and katakana. Sometimes Roman letters, or “romaji,” are also used. There are literally thousands of kanji used in Japanese (several tens of thousands in Chinese). Learning the much-simpler hiragana and katakana alphabets can be useful during your tour of Japan.

Hiragana is a phonetic alphabet like English whose symbols stand for sounds. It is the first alphabet learned by Japanese children, allowing them to write the language without having yet learned kanji. Hiragana is

generally used with kanji for grammar.

Katakana is a phonetic alphabet using the same sounds as Hiragana. It’s used to write foreign words and in some official documents. Since there are many English words incorporated into modern Japanese (though most are pronounced differently), learning katakana allows you to understand most words written in this alphabet.

When Japanese is written using Roman letters, the rules for

pronouncing vowels differ from English. “A” is always short, like “ah” (but never like “bat”); “E” is always short, as in “get”; “I” is always short, like the “ea” in “eat”; “O” is always long, like “old”; and “U” is always long, like “tube.”

Also, “AI” indicates the long “I” sound, while the consonant “R” is somewhere between an “R” sound (at the start) and an “L,” with the tip of the tongue hitting the roof of the mouth (near the end). Unlike English, most multi-syllable Japanese words are pronounced with equal emphasis on each syllable.



ARIGATO!
(THANK YOU!)

Celebrating Shichi-go-san in Kanagawa.
Photo by Joshua Lashbrook

HIRAGANA

あ	a	い	i	う	u	え	e	お	o
か	ka	き	ki	く	ku	け	ke	こ	ko
さ	sa	し	shi	す	su	せ	se	そ	so
た	ta	ち	chi	つ	tsu	て	te	と	to
な	na	に	ni	ぬ	nu	ね	ne	の	no
は	ha	ひ	hi	ふ	fu	へ	he	ほ	ho
ま	ma	み	mi	む	mu	め	me	も	mo
や	ya			ゆ	yu			よ	yo
ら	ra	り	ri	る	ru	れ	re	ろ	ro
わ	wa							を	wo
ん	nn								

KATAKANA

ア	a	イ	i	ウ	u	エ	e	オ	o
カ	ka	キ	ki	ク	ku	ケ	ke	コ	ko
サ	sa	シ	shi	ス	su	セ	se	ソ	so
タ	ta	チ	chi	ツ	tsu	テ	te	ト	to
ナ	na	ニ	ni	ヌ	nu	ネ	ne	ノ	no
ハ	ha	ヒ	hi	フ	fu	ヘ	he	ホ	ho
マ	ma	ミ	mi	ム	mu	メ	me	モ	mo
ヤ	ya			ユ	yu			ヨ	yo
ラ	ra	リ	ri	ル	ru	レ	re	ロ	ro
ワ	wa							ヲ	wo
ン	nn								

SOME USEFUL JAPANESE PHRASES

My name is~.
Watashi no namae wa ~ desu.
Wah-tah-shee noh nah-ma-eh wah ~ dehs.
What’s your name?
Anata no namae wa nandesuka?
Ana-tah noh nah-ma-eh wah nan-de-sue-kah.
Thank you.
Arigato (informal)
Air-ee-gah-toe.
Thanks.
Domo (very casual)
Dough-moe.
Nice to meet you.
Hajimemashite.
Ha-gee-meh-mash-ee-teh.

Thank you very much for everything.
Domo arigato gozaimashita (formal)
Dough-moe air-ee-gah-toe go-zah-ee-mash-ee-tah.
You’re welcome.
Doutashimashite.
Dough-tash-ee-mash-ee-teh.
What time is it now?
Ima nanji desuka?
Ee-mah nan-gee deh-sue-kah.
What is that?
Sorewa nan desuka?
Sore-eh-wah nan deh-sue-kah.
That’s ok.
Daijoubu desu.
Day-joe-boo dehs.

When?
Itsu?
Ee-tsoo.
What?
Nani?
Nan-ee.

DOKO?
(WHERE?)



Family time at Kinkaku-ji in Kyoto.
Photo by Casey Wilson

BASIC JAPANESE VOCABULARY

NOUN

Water	-----	mizu
Morning	-----	asa
Day	-----	hiru
Night	-----	yoru
Fire	-----	hi
Toilet	-----	toire
House	-----	ie
Mountain	-----	yama
River	-----	kawa
Soap	-----	sekken
Blanket	-----	moufu
Hospital	-----	byouin
Police	-----	keisatsu
Train station	-----	eki
Money	-----	okane
McDonalds	-----	Makudonarudo

ADJECTIVES

Light	-----	karui
Heavy	-----	omoi
Dirty	-----	kitanai
Clean	-----	kirei
Strong	-----	tsuyoi
Weak	-----	yowai
Deep	-----	fukai
Shallow	-----	asai

TIME REFERENCES

Today	-----	kyo
Tomorrow	-----	ashita
Day after tomorrow	-----	asatte
Yesterday	-----	kinou
Day before yesterday	-----	ototoi
Tonight	-----	konya
This month	-----	kongetsu
Next month	-----	raigetsu
Last month	-----	sengetsu
This year	-----	kotoshi
Next year	-----	rainen
Last year	-----	kyonen

MONTHS OF THE YEAR

January	-----	Ichigatsu
February	-----	Nigatsu
March	-----	Sangatsu
April	-----	Shigatsu
May	-----	Gogatsu
June	-----	Rokugatsu

July	-----	Shichigatsu
August	-----	Hachigatsu
September	-----	Kugatsu
October	-----	Jyugatsu
November	-----	Jyuichigatsu
December	-----	Jyunigatsu

SEASONS

Spring	-----	haru
Summer	-----	natsu
Autumn	-----	aki
Winter	-----	fuyu

DAYS OF THE WEEK

Monday	-----	Getsuyoubi
Tuesday	-----	Kayoubi
Wednesday	-----	Suiyoubi
Thursday	-----	Mokuyoubi
Friday	-----	Kinyoubi
Saturday	-----	Doyoubi
Sunday	-----	Nichiyoubi



Sapporo, Hokkaido. Photo by Renee H McNulty

Speakin' Japanese

Use the following phrases to introduce yourself in Japanese.

1. Hajimemashite.
How do you do!
This expression is only used when you meet someone for the very first time. In future encounters, you may greet that person with simply:
"Ohayo gozaimasu"
Good morning.
"Konnichiwa" = Good afternoon

2. Naha ni sunde imasu.
I live in Naha.
"ni sunde imasu" = "I live in."
"Kadana ni sunde imasu" = I live in Kadana.
"Suifu ni sunde imasu" = I live in Suifu.
"Miyako ni sunde imasu."

Check out our dozens of **Speakin' Japanese** segments at **StripesJapan.com** and **StripesOkinawa.com**

Could you please take me there?
Soko made tsuretette itadakemasuka?
So-co mah-deh zoo-reh-teh-the ee-tah-dah-keh-mass-kah.

Please drop me here.
Koko de oroshite kudasai.
Cocoa deh oh-roe-she-teh coup-dah-sigh.

Please follow me.
Tsuite kite kudasai.
Suite-teh kee-teh coup-dah-sigh.

I didn't know.
Shirimasendeshita.
She-ree-mass-end-esh-tah.

I don't understand.
Wakarimasen.
Wack-ari-mass-en.

See you tomorrow.
Mata ashita.
Mat-ah-shoe-tah.

Have a nice day.
Yoi ichinichi wo.
Yo-itchy-knee-chi woe.

How much?
Ikura desuka?
Ee-coup-rah deh-sue-kah.

What day is today?
Kyou wa nanyoubi desuka?
Kee-yo-wah nan-yo-bee deh-sue-kah.

I'm hungry.
Onaka suitea.
Oh-nah-kah suite-ah.

My ~ hurts.
~ ga itai.
~ gah eat-thai.

Help!
Tasukete!
Toss-sue-keh-teh!



GAMBATTE!
(GOOD LUCK TO YOU!)

A day at the park in Sasebo. Photo by Hannah Lewis

A valuable lesson

Knowing your yen

If you are new to Japan or Okinawa, local currency and the conversion between dollars and yen may leave you annoyed at the cash register.

“It’s 3,240 yen, sir.”

When the cashier tells you the price, you may have no idea whether it is expensive or cheap.

Well, the simple conversion is not hard if you remember the formula, \$1 = 100 yen.

The actual exchange rate as of March 2020 is \$1 = 106.6 yen, which indicates a dollar is more expensive than 100 yen. Considering the 8 percent consumption tax and handling charges in exchanging currency, however, one dollar is much closer to 100 yen than the rate. So, as long as you are in Japan and use yen cash for your personal shopping or service, the formula can give you a clear idea of the value in yen at shops or eateries.

So, according to the formula, that 3,240 yen tab is roughly \$32.40.

Bills

Now, take out all the local bills you have in your pocket and lay them out on the table to compare. Since there are only three bills - 10,000 yen, 5,000 yen and 1,000 yen - commonly in use, it’s easy to remember them. There is also the less-common 2,000-yen note and you can read more about that below.

While all the three bills have same height (76 millimeter), the width is different – a 10,000-yen bill is the widest at 160 mm, and at 150-mm, the 1,000-yen bill is the shortest. The colors are different, as well. 10,000 yen is dark brown, while that of 5,000 yen is dark violet and 1,000 yen is dark blue.

Interestingly, although \$100 and 10,000-yen bills are almost same in value, \$100 bills are not used nearly as much in daily shopping in the States as the 10,000-yen bill is in Japan. People often use 10,000-yen bills at the bar, flower shops and even taxis.

Among the three bills, 1,000 is the most useful for daily use. Most vending machines accept it along with coins. Many eateries offer a lunch set for 1,000 yen or

less, and most taxi rides within town can be managed with a 1,000-yen bill. So, I encourage you to possess as much yen cash in the form of 1,000-yen bills as possible for your convenience.

Different bills are used for different occasions in Japan. When you are invited to a wedding reception, you are supposed to wrap new and unfolded bills in red and white envelope to congratulate the new couple. On the contrary, when you attend a funeral or any memorial service, you can enclose rather old and not clean bills in a black and white envelope to the deceased family, so that they can use the bills without hesitation.

Coins

Now, let’s check out the local coins. There are six - 500 yen, 100 yen, 50 yen, 10 yen, 5 yen and 1 yen.

Among the six coins, the 100 yen coin is the most useful for various vending machines, coin laundries and parking lots. You may notice that there are many 100-yen shops near your base. But, be aware, when you buy a 100-yen item in the shop, you have to pay 118 yen at the cashier thanks to the 10 percent consumption tax.

When you visit Shinto shrines or Buddhist temples, be sure to bring coins for casting in front of the main halls. Japanese believe the sound of casted coins in the wooden box can remind gods of us and our wishes. A 5-yen coin is often cast, as it is pronounced “go-en” in Japanese, which is associated with good relations (goen) with gods or Buddha.

With its high value, the 500-yen coin is often considered a saving coin. Some people, including my wife, will always put the coin in a piggy bank whenever they find one in their supermarket change.

Save 200 of the coins, and you’ve got yourself a nice overnight package to a hot spring resort. So, make sure you check those couch cushions every once in a while – it’s probably worth your time.

– Takahiro Takiguchi

Behind the bill



1,000 yen

76 x 150mm, dark blue

Front: Portrait of Hideyo Noguchi, a medical scientist.

Back: Mt. Fuji and cherry blossoms.



2,000 yen

76 x 154mm, dark green

Front: Shurei-mon Gate of Shuri Castle (Okinawa)

Back: A scene from the Tale of Genji.

and portrait of its author, Murasaki Shikibu.



5,000 yen

76 x 156 mm, dark violet

Front: Portrait of Ichiyo Higuchi, a writer.

Back: Painting of irises by Kourin Ogata.

Speakin' Japanese

shopping

- “Kore wa Ikura desuka?”**
= How much is this?
Co-reh wah ee-cure-ah deh-sue-kah.
- “Kono ningyo wa ikura desuka?”**
= How much is this doll?
Cone-oh knee-n-gee-yo wah ee-cure-ah deh-sue-kah.
- “Chiketto wa ikura desuka?”**
= How much is a ticket?
Cheek-eh-toe wah ee-cure-ah deh-sue-kah.
- “___ wa arimasenka?”**
= Do you have ___?
___ wah air-ee-mass-en-kah.
- “Osusume wa nandesuka?”**
= What is your recommendation?
Oh-sue-sue-meh wah nan-deh-sue-kah.
- “Nandesuka?”**
= “What is ...?”
Nan-deh-sue-kah.
- “Kaado wa tsukae masuka?”**
= Can I use a credit card?
Cad-oh wah sue-kah-eh mass-sue-kah.
- “Kono kuupon wa tsukae masuka?”**
= Can I use this coupon?
Cone-oh coup-pon wah zoo-kah-eh mass-sue-kah.



10,000 yen
76 x 160mm, dark brown
Front: Portrait of Yukichi Fukuzawa, a philosopher and precursor.
Back: Statue of Phoenix in Byodoin Temple.

Giving gifts and tipping in Japan

For foreigners new to Japan, guidance toward tipping is usually pretty straightforward: You don't tip in Japan.

While this is a good general rule, the tipping situation in Japan is a bit more complex than that. There are a few circumstances when it is appropriate or expected to provide either a tip or some form of extra compensation in the form of gifts or treats. Travelers should keep in mind that, like in the U.S., local customs can change from prefecture to prefecture and there is no set-in-stone rule on tipping or compensation, just general guidelines. But remember, if you're at an on-base restaurant, you are expected to tip.

When to tip

It's common for Japanese staying at ryokans (Japanese-style hotels) to give a tip to the staff in advance of the service they provide. This is seen as providing your gratitude in advance for the service the staff will provide. This is known as “kokoro-duke” and should be somewhere around 1,000 or 2,000 yen. These tips should be provided in a somewhat discrete manner. The currency should be placed in some sort of paper or envelope and provided to the hotel staff after you are escorted to your room. If you're staying at a high end western style hotel, it's acceptable to leave some coins underneath your pillow after you check out of the room. But it's not expected.

Other situations where you might tip include receiving a massage at a spa or having someone bring bags to your room. Additionally, if you find yourself taking a taxi and the bill comes to somewhere around 800 or so yen, it's not uncommon to hand the driver a 1,000 yen note and tell them to keep the change. Again, this is not expected, but it is acceptable.

However, if your bill ever lists something similar to a “service fee”, then a tip has already been calculated into your bill. If you're ever in doubt, simply do not tip.

Tips in Japan are seen as more of an appreciation for service, unlike the U.S. where tips are often given to compensate workers for low wages.

Gifts of gratitude

Americans affiliated with the military often have questions regarding providing gifts or tokens of gratitude to Japanese people. The most common examples are usually neighbors, or workers from the Japanese moving companies who move household goods to or from the base. In these situations, it is acceptable to provide some sort of gift or treat but providing money would be a social faux pas.

Keep in mind, that while Japanese do appreciate gifts or treats from a foreigner's homeland, you should generally provide something that will go along with the Japanese taste pallet. For example, sugary lemonade is a common drink for Americans during the summertime. Japanese, however, typically do not like things containing a lot of sugar.

In the case of Japanese movers, leaving a tray of chocolates or cookies with some soft drinks or bottles of water would be acceptable and appreciated. If the weather is cold outside, coffee would also be a good treat. In the case of trying to give a gift to someone like a Japanese neighbor, good ideas include American beer (which is much cheaper on base) or packages of smoked salmon (which are also sold on base at a far cheaper price). Keep your gifts simple and thoughtful and they will be well received no matter what you decide on.

Watch it!



SCAN THE QR CODE

for a how-to video on buying flowers or cards as gifts in Japan.

- Culture
- Education
- Transportation
- Private vehicles
- Base breakdown
- Online
- Legal
- Food
- Leisure



Yokosuka

Internet café



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every extension ten minute	¥110	¥100
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Climate change

Weather in The Land of Rising Sun

The Japan Archipelago stretches nearly 1,700 miles from the northern mainland of Hokkaido to the southernmost islands of Okinawa, and the climate can vary widely depending on where you are stationed.

While the mainland – home to Misawa, Yokota, Yokosuka, Zama, Atsugi, Fuji, Iwakuni and Sasebo – has four distinct seasons, Okinawa, with its subtropical climate, doesn't show the clear seasonal changes. However, Okinawa does have a couple of chilly months and a rainy season.

Here is a breakdown of the climate in Japan and Okinawa below:

Spring (March.-April)

Splendid views of cherry blossoms highlight spring throughout the nation. With the rise in temperatures comes the color explosion at the end of March or beginning of April, finishing up near the end of April in Misawa. Temperatures range from 40-60°F.

Summer (June-Aug.)

Summer begins with the rainy season - cold northerly and warm southerly air masses collide to create 45 to 50 days of dreary weather,

dropping anything from drizzle to torrential downpours.

Heavy thunderstorms in July often precede the end of the rainy season. The steamy 80-90°F weather during the summer lead to many locals hitting the water or relaxing at cool resorts in mountainous areas.

Autumn (Sept.-Nov.)

Temperatures begin dropping in September, with light breezes and cooler temperatures around 55-65°F. Just as the cherry blossom is a symbol of spring in Japan, the autumn colors embody the spirit of fall, with the front moving across mainland Japan and finishing in Sasebo in early December.

Winter (Dec.-Feb.)

Winter in the Pacific coastal area is quite dry and sunny, with the temperatures rarely dropping below 30°F. Meanwhile, the northern and central regions experience snowfall and temps around 10°F colder. In fact, the Misawa area gets the most snow each year, while the other mainland installations are blessed with relatively mild temperatures and very little snow.

Okinawa

Although there are cherry blossom trees on Okinawa, they are different from those in the mainland and the warmer weather helps make the viewing season the earliest in Japan - usually January or February.

March and April are a nice 70-75°F, though it gets a little bit chilly in the morning and evening. This leads into Golden Week, which on Okinawa signals the start of the rainy season. Believe it or not, the island is known to experience the least amount of clear sunny days in the nation, so the end of the rainy season in June is met with joy and a sense of liberation. Then, summer continues July through September, with the annual highest temperature around 90-95°F. Temperatures begin to drop in October, but usually don't get below 60°F.

December through February are usually chilly, around 55-65°F, with sparse rainfall and occasionally strong winds. And it almost never snows on Okinawa.



Hamahiga Island. Photo by Vanessa Keating

	Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct
Aomori (Misawa)	29°F (7.2)	46°F (2.8)	70°F (4.0)	47°F (5.1)
Tokyo	40°F (2.2)	57°F (5.0)	77°F (5.0)	63°F (7.2)
Yamaguchi (Iwakuni)	42°F (3.2)	56°F (6.8)	78°F (11.6)	64°F (3.7)
Nagasaki (Sasebo)	44°F (3.2)	59°F (8.0)	80°F (12.4)	66°F (4.0)
Naha	64°F (4.7)	70°F (7.4)	83°F (7.6)	76°F (7.3)

– Takahiro Takiguchi

DID YOU KNOW?

Summer brings typhoons, as well. Tropical storms often hit Okinawa and the mainland causing serious damage between July and October, especially from August to September.

Land of earthquakes

An earthquake occurs when two tectonic plates slip over each other. Japan is situated at the intersection of three tectonic plates, making it highly prone to earthquakes and volcanic activity. So, unfortunately, it is highly likely that you will experience one.

Be aware: Tsunamis can follow a large-scale quake. It is recommended to keep an emergency earthquake kit available with the survival basics.



*degrees [°F] (precipitation [inch])

Typhoon season primer for those new to the Pacific



Only in Japan

You have to see it to believe it

When you think of Japan, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Mount Fuji? Cherry Blossoms? Those would be two that truly represent The Land of the Rising Sun, but there are many more lesser-known things that can be found in mainland Japan and Okinawa. Here's a look at 20 of the items you're sure to come across during your stay:

Onsen

Soaking in an onsen is about as Japanese as it gets. There are thousands of these bathing facilities near hot springs throughout the country, and if you want the true Japan experience, these are a must. Most don't allow tattoos, so check before going. And never wear a bathing suit. Naked people only!

Sumo wrestling

Japan's national sport is huge – both literally and figuratively. With six main events each year, sumo enthusiasts turn out in droves to watch these half-naked giants prove that you don't need to look fit to be a top-notch athlete.

Baseball

With rules almost identical to MLB, baseball on the field is similar in Japan. Off the field though, it's a whole different ballgame being played. From relentless cheering on offense to "beer girls" with mini-kegs on their backs, the fan experience

at a Japanese baseball game is worth the price of admission.

Mt. Fuji

Fuji-san, as the cool kids call it, is Japan's tallest mountain – well, volcano, but that's another story. As the symbol of Japan, Fuji can be found in art and photos all across the world, and on a clear day can be seen from many different regions in Japan. The climbing season typically runs from early July through August.

Vending machines

These things are everywhere. No, really – EVERYWHERE.



Vending Machine and Coffee from Convenience Store

year, over a quarter million people attend the October event. Equally as impressive as the size of the crowd is the weight of the rope – roughly 40 tons.

Stores from home

Just because you're half-way across the world from home, doesn't mean you can't get a good ol' taste of the U.S.A. every once in a while. Many places from the U.S. can be found here, including: Costco, IKEA, McDonald's, Denny's, 7-Eleven, TGI Friday's, Hooters, Gap, H&M and many more.

Whale watching

The winter months on Okinawa don't bring snow, but what they do bring are giant humpback whales. Every January through March, the whales migrate south to warmer Okinawan waters. There are many places that offer whale watching tours, so make sure to take advantage while you're there!

Depachika

When you think of department stores, you often think of the past, and you never think of food. In Japan, the department stores thrive and the basement floors hold the depachika – a magical food wonderland where you can find just about anything you want. Yakitori, sushi, salads? All there!

See ONLY on Page 24



Sumo tournament in Tokyo. Photo by Marion Salaun Fairbanks



ONLY continued from Page 23

Cherry blossoms

Every spring, the cherry blossom trees bloom in Japan and it's a BIG deal. The world-famous re-birth each spring draws massive crowds during peak blooming days, and many Japanese partake in hanami – a social eating and drinking party under the cherry blossoms. This is a must as far as Japan experiences go.

Cherry blossoms can also be found during springtime on Okinawa, although they bloom much earlier than those on the mainland.

Manga

If you haven't heard, comics are a "thing" here in Japan. And the word for Japanese comics is manga. People young and old alike read manga, whether by book or mobile device. Akihabara, known as the hotspot for Japanese pop culture, is home to the Tokyo Anime Center.

Pachinko

Although there are no casinos in Japan, there is Pachinko. There are many Pachinko parlors throughout Japan, so you're likely to see, or hear, many. They're loud and smoky, but if some gambling-style entertainment is what you're looking for, this is about it in Japan.

Karaoke

First off, this is not Tuesday

night karaoke at Bill's Saloon. In Japan, it's different, of course. Karaoke is something you do in a private room with your friends. You pay by the hour, get costumes, and get to limit your off-key singing torture to only your group of friends.

Dragon boat races

Each spring, around early May, Okinawa is invaded by dragons. Specifically, dragon boats in search of glory on the water. The Naha Hari Festival is host to the races, and the event as a whole is a great slice of true Okinawa. Members of each U.S. military branch row in the fiercely competitive boat races, which regularly draw a large crowd.

Animal/maid cafés

You've heard of the famous cat cafés, but in Japan, the animals-café mashup doesn't end there. Not a cat-person? Also offered in Japan are: owl, dog, bird, hedgehog and rabbit cafés. If you're not an animal-lover and prefer to be served by maids, there are maid cafés as well.

Shrines/temples

As many convenience stores as there are in Japan, there are three times as many shrines and temples combined. Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples are everywhere. From giant ones like the Meiji Shrine, to small ones you wouldn't even notice, there is definitely no shortage of

places for one to worship.

Blood type

In the U.S., there are astrological signs that many think determine your personality. In Japan, it's believed that your blood type is the determining factor. So, if you meet someone new and they ask what your blood type is, they're likely not a vampire. They probably just want to get to know you better.

Rest areas

These are not what most think of when they think of a rest stop. Big parking lots lead to shopping,

food and bathrooms – nice and clean bathrooms. Some even have hotel rooms for those looking for a place to literally rest. In Japan, the rest areas are not just stops, they are destinations.

Water sports

From scuba diving and snorkeling, to kayaking, parasailing, surfing and Flyboarding, there is no shortage of fun to be had in the waters of Okinawa. With year-round weather that is ideal for being outside, Okinawa makes it easy for the outdoorsy, water-lovers to enjoy their stay.



The Kadena Shoguns Women's Dragon Boat Team competes in Naha, Okinawa. Photo by Staff Sgt. Omari Bernard/U.S. Air Force.



A day at the Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium.
Photo by Jayme Linton

Celebrating holidays

There are 16 national holidays on the current Japanese calendar. While some of them are memorial days for the imperial family of Japan, others are related to historical events.

There are also local days of remembrance. For the people of Hiroshima, Aug. 6 is an important day to reflect back on the day the atomic bomb was dropped in 1945. Likewise, June 23 is a memorial day for Okinawans to commemorate the Battle of Okinawa, which ended that day the same year.

There are also Japanese holiday seasons and traditions to be noted. "Golden Week" marks a highlight of the first half of the year. From late April through early May, many people will travel during this time, which consists of multiple holidays.

Obon is another big holiday tradition. For several days in July or August (depending on the region), Japanese families get together to welcome the spirit of their ancestors and then send them off again. In addition to Obon, Okinawans also hold a family gathering called "See Me" in the spring.

New Years' Day (Jan. 1)

A day to celebrate the new year.

Coming-of-Age Day (2nd Mon. of Jan.)

Celebrate those who turned or are going to turn 20 in a given year.

National Foundation Day (Feb. 11)

The day when the first emperor is said to have assumed the position.

The Emperor's Birthday (Feb. 23)

The birthday of Emperor Naruhito.

Spring Equinox Day (Mar. 20 or 21)

A day which supposedly has equal day and night length. Also a day to adore nature.

Showa Day (Apr. 29)

Originally the birthday of Emperor Hirohito.

Constitution Memorial Day (May 3)

The current Japanese constitution took effect on this day in 1947.

Greenery Day (May 4)

A day to commune with nature and to be thankful for blessings.

Children's Day (May 5)

A day to adore children and appreciate mothers.

Marine Day (3rd Mon. of July)

(Observed July 23, for opening of Tokyo Olympics)

A day to appreciate ocean and celebrate Japan as a marine nation.

Mountain Day (Aug. 11)

(Observed Aug. 10, for closing of Tokyo Olympics)

A new holiday to show appreciation to mountains.

Senior Citizen Day (3rd Mon. of Sept.)

A day to pay respect to senior citizens.

Fall Equinox Day (Sept. 22 or 23)

A day which supposedly has equal day and night length. Also a day to commemorate ancestors.

Sports Day (2nd Mon. of Oct.)

The 1964 Tokyo Olympics kicked off on this day.

Culture Day (Nov. 3)

A day to promote culture and arts.

Labor Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 23)

A day to commemorate labor and production and give one another thanks.

- Shoji Kudaka

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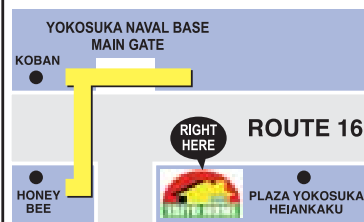
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Chopsticks and Japanese dining

Any meal in Japan is sure to include some form of chopsticks.

Since their invention in ancient China more than 3,000 years ago, chopsticks have been widely used in Asian countries. In Japan, chopsticks are called “*hashi*” and are used for cooking and eating all kinds of dishes, including rice, raw fish, vegetables, noodles, soup and desserts. At some restaurants, you’ll even catch locals using their chopsticks to eat French fries.

Being an important dining tool, us Japanese usually learn how to use chopsticks before we start walking. Japanese parents take teaching the skill to their children seriously, as it is considered one of the most important manners in society.

As a child, I remember not being allowed to eat unless I used my chopsticks. If I stuck my chopsticks vertically into a bowl of rice – a big no-no in Japan – my father would scold me severely because it is a funeral tradition to offer a bowl of rice in this manner

to the altar of our departed ancestors.

My wife and I also struggled in teaching our daughter how to use chopsticks. At first, she tried to grip it the same way she would hold a spoon, but eventually, with much persistence and patience, she became comfortable enough to pick up food with her chopsticks.

Despite chopsticks’ importance to Japanese culture and tradition, there are still some Japanese people that do not know how to use them correctly. According to a survey by the Cabinet Office (2010), only slightly more than half of Japanese over the age of 18 were deemed to be able to hold their chopsticks correctly. In fact, I often observe some young people using their chopsticks incorrectly and awkwardly.

In Japan, you’ll have plenty of opportunities to master the technique at restaurants or at the home of Japanese

friends. As Japanese food gains popularity globally, having chopsticks skills will come in handy when you enjoy sushi, soba noodles and other Japanese and Asian dishes.

Just as chopsticks are a unique, beautiful dining tool, a pair can also be an ideal souvenir for your friends and relatives. Many souvenir stores sell novelty pairs with Japanese animated characters like Hello Kitty or Gundam, but you can also find nicer ones made of lacquered wood or bamboo ranging from 1,000 – 5,000 yen (\$9–45).

At restaurants and convenience stores, you may encounter disposable chopsticks, called “*waribashi*.” These are made of wood or bamboo and are attached at the top, requiring them to be split apart before use.

As the

DID YOU KNOW?

Tatebashi is a ritual where a pair of chopsticks are stuck upright in a bowl of rice and presented as an offering to the newly deceased. Doing this at a table is frowned upon and is considered bad luck. Another blunder to be careful to avoid is passing food directly from one chopstick to another. Much like sticking your chopsticks into a bowl of rice, this also has to do with Japanese funeral rituals. In *hashiwatashi*, relatives of the deceased use chopsticks to pluck bones from the cremated remains, and then pass the bones from chopstick to chopstick until the remains finally reach the *kotsutsubo*, or urn.



Waribashi

saying goes, practice makes perfect. Though chopsticks may seem difficult at first, consistently trying to use them will go a long way in ensuring you enjoy authentic Japanese cuisine the authentic Japanese way.

– Takahiro Takiguchi



Chopsticks Talk

Asking for help with your chopsticks
 “Hashi no tsukaikata wo oshiete kudasai.” = Please teach me how to use chopsticks.
 (pronounced – hashee noh zookaheekah-tah woe ohsheeheyteh coup-dah-sigh)

“Doko wo nigittara ii desuka?” = Where can I grip?
 (pronounced – doughkoh woe neegeetahrah ee deh-sue-kah)

“Tadashii mochikata wo misete kudasai.” = Show me how to hold them right.
 (pronounced – tah-dahshee-ee moecheekah-tah woe me-set-teh coup-dah-sigh)

“Muzukashii desune?” = It is difficult, isn't it?
 (pronounced – moo-zoo-kah-shee de-sue-neh)

In a Japanese restaurant
 “Irraishaimase” = Welcome!
 (pronounced – ee-rah-shy-mah-seh)

“Waribashi wo kudasai.” = May I have a pair of disposable chopsticks, please.
 (pronounced – Wah-ree-bash-ee woe coup-dah-sigh)

“Fooku wo kudasai.” = May I have a fork, please.
 (pronounced – folk-oo woe coup-dah-sigh)

“Sumimasen. Hashi no tsukaikata ga wakari masen.” = I'm sorry, but I don't know how to use chopsticks.
 (pronounced – zoo-me-mass-en. Hashee noh zookaykah-tah gah wack-ari-mass-zen)

Shopping for chopsticks
 “Kono hashi ga hoshii desu.” = I want this pair of chopsticks.
 (pronounced – cone-oh hashee gah hoe-shee deh-z)

“Kirei desune?” = They are pretty, aren't they?
 (pronounced – kee-ray deh-z-neh)

“Ikura desuka?” = How much is it?
 (pronounced – ee-koo-rah deh-sue-kah)

“Kaado wa tsukae masuka?” = Can I use a credit card?
 (pronounced – kah-doe wah zoo-kai mass-sue-kah)

– Takahiro Takiguchi

How to use chopsticks

1. Use both hands when you pick up a set of chopsticks.
2. In the same manner you would hold a pencil, hold the chopsticks about one-third from the top.
3. Then, grip the upper stick with your thumb and index finger, while the lower stick rests on your middle and ring fingers.
4. Bend only the upper chopsticks up and down to make the ends of two chopsticks meet (The lower chopstick shouldn't move.)



Watch it!

SCAN THE QR CODE

to find a step-by-step video on how to use chopsticks.

Practice enables you to grip, divide, pinch and even scoop foods with your chopsticks. To hone your chopsticks skills, try picking up beans, shelled peanuts or rice grains when you're comfortable with your grip.

No-Nos with chopsticks

Because chopsticks have a 3,000-year history, various customs and traditions surround their use. Be sure to avoid the following no-nos as they are considered rude:

1. Don't pass food from one set of chopsticks to another.
2. Don't use only one stick to pierce any food.
3. Don't touch others' chopsticks with yours.
4. Don't use your chopsticks to move bowls or plates.
5. Don't suck on your chopsticks.



Watch it!

SCAN THE QR CODE

to learn about things you shouldn't do with chopsticks.

6. Don't stick potatoes or other foods with chopsticks. Instead, hold food by pinching up to help lift it or split the potato into small pieces with the chopsticks first.



Getting connected with a cell phone

So, you've just PCS'd to Japan, and now you need to get a new cell phone. Well, first off, they have those here, so you're in luck. Now, where do you start?

As you've likely already noticed, most bases in Japan already have a branch where you can get a phone without leaving your installation. There are definitely benefits to staying on base, but just because it's the easiest, doesn't mean it makes the most sense for your situation. There are plenty of off-base locations throughout the country, but if you do go this route, you might consider bringing someone who can speak Japanese.

In Japan, there are three main providers: Softbank, au and NTT DOCOMO. If you want to weigh your options and see all of what Japan cell providers have to offer,

here is a quick breakdown.

 **SoftBank**
softbank.japan/en/mobile

SoftBank has been one of the big boys on the block ever since it became a major player on the Japanese cell phone scene. It was the first provider to offer Apple's iPhone and iPad devices. SoftBank pioneered discount service plans, and currently has 12 locations on U.S. military installations throughout mainland Japan and Okinawa.

 **docomo**
nttdocomo.co.jp/english

Almost every major technological advance in the Japanese cell phone industry has come from the minds of the people from NTT DOCOMO, whose

Wi-Fi provider

Are you in need of quality Internet/TV/Phone services? Look no further than Allied Telesis as they continue to serve communities throughout mainland Japan and Okinawa. Find out more at : <http://atcc-gns.com/>



parent company, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation (NTT), is to telecommunications services in Japan what AT&T used to be in the U.S. So it is no surprise that NTT DOCOMO phones can receive signals just about anywhere in the country.

 **au**
au.kddi.com/english

Handsets made by au have had the distinction of getting the best signals on and around military installations. That's no small thing when you consider the proportion of calls that you make or receive on base. Being owned by KDDI, Japan's leading international telephone service provider, enables au to offer superior global roaming services for people traveling abroad.

SIGN UP TODAY!



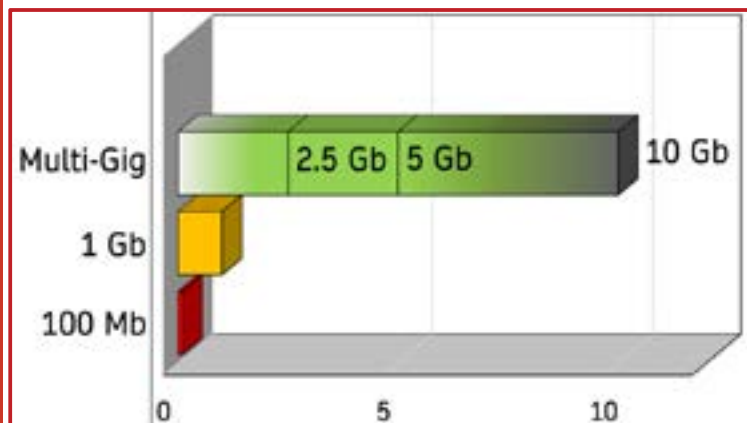
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My name is Thien and I am a 1st-term student at Lakeland University Japan. As a student veteran, I think I have a fairly unique background. I was born in Denver, Colorado, from immigrant Vietnamese parents and as I grew up, I learned to appreciate my heritage and wanted to begin my own legacy as an American.

I enlisted into the U.S. Marine Corps at the age of 17 and left home to boot camp right after high school graduation. Stationed in southern California, I served 4 years as a Field Wireman and deployed multiple times on Marine Expeditionary Units and Unit Deployment Programs.

Those deployments gave me the opportunity to explore many different countries, cultures, and cities throughout the Persian gulf and Southeast Asia. However, one country stood out to me from the rest during my enlistment and it was Japan.

Drawn in by the unique culture and people, I decided to return. During a rainy day in the chow hall line, I read about LUJ off of an advertisement in the Stars and Stripes Magazine. The school was an opportu-

nity for me to pursue a college education while experiencing Japanese culture. So I applied.

Now having parted from my friends and family state-side, I am studying and taking university level classes while creating new connections with locals, international students, and other fellow veterans. LUJ gave me a chance to utilize my G.I. Bill and experience the unique and robust lifestyle that is found only in Tokyo.



Do your DoDEA homework

The Department of Defense Education Activity is a K-12 American school system for U.S. military, DoD civilian dependents and other eligible families. DoDEA Pacific manages on-base schools in Guam, mainland Japan, Okinawa and South Korea.

schools may require records to be mailed. If so, send records via U.S. Postal Service Priority Mail to the military address of the receiving school. Sending priority mail to the Pacific usually takes about seven to 10 days, while other methods could take several months. The sending school can also ship records to the commercial address of the DODEA Pacific school. It is recommended that you confirm the current mailing address with the school.

Registration

Families can register online using the DoDEA Online Registration System (DORS). This system allows sponsors to complete required documentation and include uploads of required forms prior to arriving at the new duty location. A visit to the assigned school is necessary to verify eligibility and enrollment documents, and to finalize registration. Families may also complete their registration in-country upon arrival to the new PCS location. Contact the school website for office hours.

Enrolled students who are advancing to the next grade level will need to revalidate enrollment eligibility by providing a copy of orders or Letter of Employment verification along with any required and updated immunization records for each child.

Students preparing to enter kindergarten must be five years old by Sept. 1 of the enrolling school year. Proof of your child's age must be provided through documentation such as birth certificate or passport.

Some DoDEA Pacific schools offer a pre-kindergarten program called Sure Start. The program offers a comprehensive approach to early childhood education in the areas of education, health, social services and family involvement. Students must be four years old by September 1 of the enrolling school year. Contact the school directly to learn more about eligibility requirements and how to apply for Sure Start.

Records

Parents should hand-carry all academic, immunization and special education records if possible. Some

Student meal / free and reduced lunch program

All families with students enrolled in DoDEA Pacific schools are eligible to apply for the Free and Reduced Meal Program. Completing this application is an annual requirement for families, if eligible, to continue to receive either a free or reduced lunch. To find the correct Free and Reduced Meal Program point of contact for your family's school, please visit the DoDEA Pacific website.

To pay for school lunches, parents and sponsors will need to set up and fund a prepaid account with the agency that operates your school's lunch program. Contact your school for additional information.

School liaison officers

School liaison officers can help your family with transition issues. SLOs operate independently of DoD schools and have expertise in transition support.

Sites to visit

DoDEA registration information:
www.dodea.edu/registration-process.cfm



DoDEA-Pacific
www.dodea.edu/Pacific



Exchange Student Meal Program
www.aafes.com/about-exchange/school-lunch-program/



Exceptional Family Member Program
www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp



Tutor.com (Free online tutoring for military families)
www.tutor.com/military



Special needs children

If your child has special needs, be sure to research the available support options for your desired location. To the greatest extent possible, we follow an inclusion model and work to provide individualized support as needed.

However, overseas locations may not have the specialized medical or other support services necessary to fully meet your child's unique needs. Parents should consider how limited services may impact the growth and development of their special needs child. DoDEA Pacific staff members are available to help parents with special needs children make informed choices throughout the school year.

You can reach out to the District Special Education Instructional Systems Specialist (ISS) by contacting the DoDEA District Superintendent's Office in the location where you are considering your next assignment.

A very helpful source for information to families can also be accessed through the Exceptional Family Member Program.

Home school support

DoDEA-Pacific schools offer auxiliary services to eligible military families who choose to home school their children. Auxiliary services include use of academic resources, access to the library of the school, after hours use of school facilities, and participation in music, sports, and other extracurricular and interscholastic activities.

Eligibility is limited to students who are designated as space-required (mainland Japan, Okinawa and South Korea) or DoD dependent students eligible to enroll in Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (Guam) on a tuition-free basis. Home schoolers using or receiving auxiliary services must also meet the same eligibility requirements as dependents enrolled in DODEA schools who use or receive the same auxiliary services. Eligible home schoolers are not required to attend a specific number of courses to receive auxiliary services, including participating in extracurricular and interscholastic activities.

DoDEA encourages DoD sponsors who wish to home school their dependents to communicate the desire to their commanders in order to determine if there are any command policies or other rules ensuring that home schooling practices meet host nation, state, commonwealth, or territory requirements. Sponsors are responsible for complying with applicable local requirements. Contact your local School Liaison Officer or command representative to learn more.

Celebrate April's Month of the Military Child with us!

Each year, Stars and Stripes teams up with DODEA to give our wonderful military brats a platform to be heard. Kids of all ages from across Pacific bases submit stories, drawings and photos about what life is like as a military child. These run in our community newspapers in mainland Japan, Okinawa, Guam and Korea in April. They are also published at <https://militarychild.stripes.com/>. We hope you and your children join in on the fun.



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Take advantage of on-base colleges



The Defense Department has contracted colleges and universities to provide in-resident college and graduate programs on military installations in mainland Japan, Okinawa, South Korea and Guam.

The current contracted institutions are:

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University



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University of Maryland Global Campus



UMGC is one of 11 regionally accredited, degree-granting institutions in the University System of Maryland (USM). The university brings quality higher education wherever the military needs it, with cutting-edge degree programs and classes offered both online and

on-site at military installations worldwide. As the first university to serve military overseas, UMGC has earned a global reputation for excellence. Headquartered in Adelphi, Maryland, UMGC has on-site classroom locations in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Offering both undergraduate and graduate degree programs, UMGC Asia's mission is to provide top quality education and services to U.S. military communities in Asia and the Pacific.

Troy University



The University proudly counts some 60 flag officers among the ranks of its alumni, has a presence on or near over 30 military installations worldwide and participates in online learning programs with all service branches. For generations, Troy University has understood the needs of the military student and has built a military inclusive institution offering a broad range of high quality, very affordable undergraduate and graduate academic programs supported by outstanding student services. Contact your education center to learn what in-residence and distance-learning programs are available on your base.

Education Centers

Mainland Japan

- | | |
|---|---|
| Yokota Air Base
Bldg. 316, Rm. 244
DSN: 225-7337 | MCAS Iwakuni
Bldg. 411, Rm. 127
DSN: 253-3855 |
| Yokosuka Naval Base
Bldg. 3008
DSN: 243-5058, 8131 | Misawa Air Base
Bldg. 653, Rm. 203
DSN: 226-4201 |
| Sasebo Naval Base
Bldg. 155
DSN: 252-3511 | Camp Zama
Bldg. 278
DSN: 263-5068 |
| NAF Atsugi
Bldg. 987
DSN: 264-3280 | Camp Fuji
Bldg. 110
DSN: 224-8353 |

Okinawa

- | | |
|---|---|
| Torii Station
Bldg. 216, Rm. 239
DSN: 644-4954 | MCAS Futenma
Bldg. 407
DSN: 636-3036 |
| Kadena Air Base
Bldg. 59
DSN: 634-1500 | Camp Hansen
Bldg. 2339
DSN: 623-4376 |
| Camp Foster
Bldg. 5679
DSN: 645-7160 | Camp Kinser
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A way to see the world

Space Available travel offers a way for Armed Services personnel, their dependents, retirees and others who support the mission to see the world on a budget... if the timing is right. Below is what you need to know about this great privilege:

What is Space-A?

It is a program that allows authorized passengers to occupy surplus seats after all cargo and space-required duty passengers have been accommodated.

Who can fly Space-A?

Uniformed services duty personnel, their dependents, Red Cross personnel, USO personnel who also support the mission, and veterans. Passengers may not use the flights for personal gain, in relationship to employment, to find a house or for other prohibited activities.

What do I need to qualify?

- Qualified travelers must have completed the proper procedures and have the required documentation for travel.
- Active duty must be on leave before they can register for Space-A.
- Dependents of active duty flying unaccompanied need an Unaccompanied Command Sponsorship from his or her spouse's commander. The letter is valid for one round trip travel via military aircraft, describes the reason for travel and the category of passenger travel.
- Also mandatory for travel: military ID cards, passports, social security numbers and emergency contact information at the final destination.

How much does it cost?

Most flights offered through

the Air Force's Air Mobility Command (AMC) or the Navy and are usually free of charge.

Patriot Express flights are commercial, so a small tax (usually under \$30) is charged per seat and per leg.

Where can I go on Space-A?

Common destinations include the Continental U.S. states, Hawaii, Alaska, Germany, England, Spain, Italy, Japan and South Korea. In spring of 2020, flights between Seattle and Guam were added on a bi-weekly, proof-of-concept basis. Flights may even go to South and Central America, Africa and Australia.

When is the best time to fly?

The best time to obtain seats is when DODEA schools are in session.

Because the program is a privilege, it is imperative to understand the circumstances may change due to mission mobility. Flying exactly where you want to go at the time or day you want to fly is not always possible. So, if you have a specific itinerary for your destination or your return, you may want to reconsider using Space-A for those travel plans. This program is designed for those who have enough available leave, time and flexibility to wait or change their schedule.

Where can I register?

There are many ways. In-person registration can be completed at the terminal's helpdesk or self-help kiosks. You can also register via email, fax or online through www.takeahop.org. Registration is allowed for up to five departure airports and five countries of destination.

The website also offers a smartphone app where, for a couple of dollars, users can

quickly sign up for the flights and destinations. Also, save time by monitoring terminal activity via the phone app.

What happens after I register?

Once registered, your information remains active for either 60 days, or for the duration of your leave orders or authorization of flight, whichever occurs first. Print a copy of your registration to keep on hand at the terminal. The time and date stamp of your registration determines your position and priority within your Space-A category.

On flight day, decide which terminal you think would be the best chance for Space-A departure and head out. It helps to phone the terminals that you requested for departure and to monitor recent schedules. Check online and on Facebook for your favorite Space-A terminals' information. Available seats are now identified between two to five hours prior to departure but being at the terminal early will help you vie for seats. Be "travel-ready" with the proper luggage, any dependents and paperwork, your car parked or rental returned, etc. If your name is called and you are not physically present to hear the roll call, your name will be put at the bottom of your category list, and you may not make that flight.

What are the categories?

Each passenger is assigned a passenger category for travel. These categories designate the order by which you may be boarded on Space-A flights. The following list is generalized:

Category I – Emergency travel on a round-trip basis in connection with serious illness, death, or impending death of a member of the immediate family.

Category II – Environmental Morale Leave (EML) and dependents.

Category III – Active duty ordinary Leave and dependents; convalescent leave; permissive TDYs; Unaccompanied

dependent of deployed servicemember for more than a year.

Category IV - Unaccompanied dependent of deployed servicemember on EML status.

Category V – Unaccompanied military dependent of non-deployed servicemember.

Category VI – Retirees, Reservists.

What baggage can I bring?

- Two pieces of checked baggage; 70 lbs each; up to 62 linear inches in size. (families can pool baggage allowances)
- Carry-ons must fit in overhead bins (if available) or under your seat
- Travel light as baggage weight could be restricted for your flight.

What else should I know?

If your flight ends up being via military plan, be aware that accommodations and services are different, from fold-down jump seats along the wall, cargo in front of you and a plane that is either pretty warm or cool, depending on the time of year of travel and location.

- Wear appropriate footwear, bring jackets, blankets, snacks, bottled water and things to keep you busy, like books, games or electronic devices.
- Available plugs for charging are along the walls.
- Remember to stay flexible. Travel during off-peak seasons (stay away from summer break and major holidays).
- Sometimes travelers attempt to catch a hop at neighboring base terminals to maximize chances of getting on a flight.
- For your return flight, you could wait several days for available space. Or, you could even be dropped off in another country to wait for a flight.
- Remaining calm, positive and being flexible will help.
- When flying Space-A, be ready for anything.

PACIFIC LOCATIONS

OKINAWA KADENA AB

733 AMS, Unit 5145 Box 10
Phone: 634-5806 / 098-962
6487
Facebook.com/AMCKadena

GUAM

ANDERSEN AFB

Bldg. 17002 Unit 14008
Phone: 671-366-5165

MAINLAND JAPAN MISAWA AB

Bldg. 943
Phone: 315-226-2370/2371
Commercial: 011-81-176-77-
2370/2371
Facebook.com/
MisawaPassengerTerminal

NAF ATSUGI

Bldg. 206
Phone: 0467-63-3118
Facebook.com/AtsugiTerminal

MCAS IWAKUNI

Bldg. 727
Phone: 315-253-5509
Facebook.com/
IwakuniPassengerTerminal

YOKOTA AB

Bldg. 80
Phone: 315-225-5660/5661/
5662
Facebook.com/
YokotaPassengerTerminal

KOREA

OSAN AB

Bldg. 648
Phone: 315-784-6883
Facebook.com/
OsanABPassengerTerminal

KUNSAN AB

Bldg. 2858
Phone: 063-470-4666

Quick links to ease travel

Make reservations on
the AMC Space-A
Travel page:



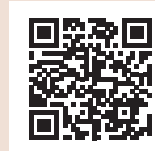
Additional PE travel
information can be
found here:



MC Pet Travel Site:



Travel site for military,
DOD & veterans:



Cable television
Overall household
users

NO.1



Over 100 & Multi-language
channels^{*2} support



*The Walking Dead Season9™ THE WALKING DEAD™ & © 2018 AMC Network Entertainment LLC. All rights reserved. *Discovery Channel "How the Universe Works" Credit: Discovery Communications *Disney Channel "Mickey Mouse!" ©Disney

English support
Call center staff
Shop staff

J:COM NET Stress-free
Wi-Fi Internet /

J:COM Shop Yokosuka-chuo Branch

11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (Closed Wednesdays) The Tower Yokosuka Chuo LIDRE 2F, 2-6, Otakichou, Yokosuka-shi, Kanagawa-pref.

• Take the train to Keikyu Yokosuka-chuo Station and walk in the direction of the U.S. military base. The branch is located on the second floor of The Tower Yokosuka Chuo LIDRE.



J:COM Kanagawa Central

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays) 1-11-5, Yamato-higashi, Yamato-shi, Kanagawa-pref.

• Ten minute walk from the Odakyu Yamato Station



0120-989-989 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
(Open 365 days a year)

Note: The navigation menu is set to Japanese by default. Please press 2→1.
If your phone is set to avoid displaying your number when making a call, dial 186 before dialing 0120.

*1: As of the end of January 2019.
*2: Service for J:COM TV standard Plus, which includes digital terrestrial television broadcasting and BS digital broadcasting. Notes: Numbers are current as of the end of December 2018. (Portions excluded). May not be useable due to circumstances related to the house or building. Company names, product names, or service names are registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective holders. Includes some trademarks pending registration.

Going out & about

Mass transit in The Land of the Rising Sun

Unless you are on Okinawa (see page 38), you'll likely find the U.S. military base you are assigned to in Japan is somewhat out of the way of the big-city bustle that can make overseas assignments exciting. It is an unfortunate reality, but there are, literally, ways to "get around" it.

All it takes is a little initiative. While in **Misawa, Sasebo and Iwakuni** (see page 37), taxis may be your best bet for getting around just outside the gates. You can navigate Japan's train and subway systems to get where you want to go throughout the Kanto Plain and to many points beyond.

Planning and paying

First, plan before you go. Want to check out that hot new club you've heard about, a restaurant serving delicious food, or a great place to bring the kids, go online to HyperDia (www.hyperdia.com/en/) or Jorudan (world.jorudan.co.jp/mln/en/), two English-language information sites providing detailed train times and travel directions.

Just type in your starting point, destination and, if desired, time of departure or arrival. This will give you train times, as well as cost, travel time and, if applicable, alternate routes. To return home, simply reverse the direction you are traveling and input a new departure or arrival time. Both sites also have nearby hotel and map information for each station. HyperDia even has a Chinese-language option, though its maps are entirely in Japanese. Jorudan's maps are in (limited) English and Japanese, and its travel searches will include any applicable bus routes and times as well as trains.

Second, go high-tech to avoid ticket

purchasing hassles each time you go somewhere by train or bus. Instead of repeatedly standing somewhat foolishly in front of the fare maps at train stations figuring out how much to pay, purchase a Suica prepaid electronic card issued by East Japan Railway (JR East).

For 2,500 yen (about \$22.80), including a 500 yen refundable deposit, you can buy your first 2,000 yen worth of fare credits for your next trip. Suica cards can be purchased from machines at JR East stations or from the station clerk, and can be recharged in denominations of 1,000, 2,000, 4,000, 5,000 and 10,000 yen at a time, up to a maximum of 20,000 yen.

With trains to Tokyo costing around 800-1,000 yen one way from almost every base on the Kanto Plain, it can be a while before you have to recharge, depending on the amount of credits you choose to purchase.

Map out
mass transit trips at:
HyperDia or Jorudan



To use a Suica card, simply place it over the scanner when you pass through the ticket gate at the beginning of your journey. When you reach your destination, pass the card over the scanner one more time and a screen built into the gate automatically tells you how much has been deducted from the card and the amount remaining.

The card can also be used in subways, public buses and the Tokyo monorail, which connects Haneda Airport to Tokyo. Moreover, it can be used as money in many convenience stores, station kiosks and other shops, as well as to make purchases from many vending machines and to rent coin lockers at stations.

JR East and the Tokyo Metro subway, which issues the PASMO card, accept each



Ikura desuka?

I'm going to [station].
(...eki ni) mukatte masu.
(...eh-key knee) moo-kat-the mass.

Where do I go?
Doko yuki desuka?
Doe-coe you-key de-sue-kah

Where is [train line]?
[train line]-sen wa doko desuka?
[train line]-zen wah doe-coe de-sue-kah

other's card, making travel in the Tokyo area virtually seamless. Suica and PASMO can also be used on railways in other parts of Japan, such as JR Hokkaido, JR Central in the greater Nagoya area, JR West in the Greater Osaka, Okayama and Hiroshima areas, JR Kyushu in the Fukuoka area as well as the Fukuoka City Subway. But while such cards can be used inside many metropolitan areas, they are still not accepted for travel on the "shinkansen" (bullet train) and some other long-distance trains.

Mainland maneuvering

Equally as important as planning and paying, is how to get around on those trains, especially the ones that serve your local train station.

Fortunately, the trains operated by JR East in the Tokyo area – as well as their routes on train maps – are color-coded:

The Yamanote Line, the workhorse of the system, is green. It runs in a 35-kilometer (22-mile) loop, in both directions around central Tokyo, passing through stations in popular shopping and entertainment areas such as Shinjuku, Shibuya and Harajuku.

Chuo Line trains are orange and run east to Tokyo and west to Hachioji and Mt. Takao. At Tachikawa, the Chuo links up with the Ome Line, which goes to **Yokota Air Base's** nearby Fussa Station, before continuing on to Mitake and Ome. (Alternately, JR East competitor Seibu has a line of the same

Culture
Education
Transportation
Private vehicles
Base breakdown
Online
Legal
Food
Leisure



Sea Side Liner (Sasebo - Nagasaki)



Does this train stop at [station]?
 (...eki ni) tomari masuka?
 (...eh-key knee) toe-mary mass-sue-kah

How much? (price)
 Ikura desuka?
 Ee-cure-ah de-sue-kah

How do I get to Tokyo Tower?
 Tokyo Tawaa niwa douyatte ikimasuka?
 Tokyo ta-wah knee-wah doe-yeah-the
 icky-mass-kah



name running from Seibu Shinjuku Station that stops at Seibu Tachikawa Station, a brief hike or taxi ride to Yokota's East Gate, before ending at Haijima Station.)

The yellow Sobu Line runs local service parallel to the Chuo Line from Mitaka to Ochanomizu, in central Tokyo, before it peels off to go to Akihabara, the electronics mecca, and into nearby Chiba Prefecture, home to Tokyo Disney Resort.

The Keihin Tohoku Line is blue and operates from Omiya in Saitama Prefecture to areas south of Tokyo, where it connects with the Keikyū, Negishi, and Yokohama lines. This ultimately links with the Yokosuka Line, which goes to **Yokosuka Naval Base** as well as the Ikego and Negishi housing areas.

The Keihin Tohoku Line stops at Tokyo Station, a major hub for these and other lines, including Shinkansen bullet trains with connections to **Misawa**, **Sasebo** and **Iwakuni** stations.

Camp Zama's

nearest station is Sobudaimae, which is serviced by Odakyu Railway, a large privately owned transit system. The line runs directly to Shinjuku, one of the major stations in Tokyo, or riders can get off at the shopping town of Machida, where they can change to the Yokohama Line for

travel elsewhere.

The Sotetsu Line stops at Sagamino and Sagami Otsuka stations, nearest to Naval Air Facility Atsugi; taking about 30 minutes from Yokohama.

The Tokyo Metro subway, which mainly serves central Tokyo inside the Yamanote loop, is one of the most efficient in the world. Similar to JR East, its train map routes are color-coded, and its stations have numerical designations in addition to names, making them easy to navigate.

Station names are rendered in English as well as Japanese, and most other important signs are also in English or internationally understood symbols.

Navigating Kyushu & northern Honshu

Misawa Station is about three miles from **Misawa Air Base**. The Aomori Railway Line stops at Hachinohe Station (15 minutes south of Misawa), where you can connect with the Tohoku Shinkansen bullet train for 580 yen (\$5.25). Aomori (City) Station is about an hour north of Misawa by train

(1,830 yen). Misawa Airport is a 15-minute bus ride from Misawa Station (400 yen).

Kichi Taxi in building 14 on Misawa Air Base, provides taxi service with the ability to pick up and deliver passengers both on and off the installation. Call: 0176-53-6481

JR Iwakuni Station is less than two miles from **Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni**. Buses leave the train station every 5-15 minutes in the direction of Kintai-kyo Bridge, Iwakuni Castle and other local attractions; it takes about 20 minutes and costs about 250-300 yen (\$2-\$2.50). The JR Sanyo Line travels between Iwakuni Station and Hiroshima (City) Station in 50 minutes (760 yen). To Hiroshima Airport, it takes just under two hours and cost roughly 2,000 yen.

In addition to on-base shuttle buses, MCAS Iwakuni has taxi stands at Strike Zone Bowling Center, across from Crossroads Mall and several other locations. You can also call Iwakuni Eki Konai Taxi at 082-721-1111 or Daiichi Kotsu Taxi at 082-731-5151 for taxis with on- and off-base access. A blue sticker on the left side of the windshield indicates a taxi is authorized to drive on base. The fare is about 1,200 from MCAS Iwakuni to Iwakuni Station.

JR Sasebo Station is just over one and a half miles from **Sasebo Naval Base**. Rapid Liner trains get to Nagasaki in just over 90 minutes for about 1,600 yen (\$14.50). The

See TRANSIT on Page 38

Train (and other) travel made easy

When traveling within mainland Japan, the two most common transportation cards are PASMO and Suica. Both cards allow you to use most of the trains and buses within Japan. Picking up one of these cards will make your traveling life that much easier in Japan. The alternative to using one of these cards is purchasing a ticket from the machine each time you take the train. This can take time and often is confusing to someone new to Japan travel.

Either of the cards can be purchased at most train stations and



require a 500-yen deposit. Both also offer cards for child fares available at select train stations. Ask the gate attendant for assistance to obtain one of the cards designated for child use.

When you make the initial purchase of the card, you choose how much you want to put on it. Once you run out of your initial deposit, you just recharge the card you've already purchased. Recharging is as simple as inserting your card, pressing the amount you want to put on it,

and inserting the matching amount of yen. While the process may seem intimidating at first, it is actually very simple and easy to understand. There is even a button to change the language to English.

Both cards also can act as money at vending machines and at some stores, as well as some taxis. They work the same as a credit card that you just place over a reader.

As a note, although the vast majority of rail lines and buses will accept one of these cards, it is not 100%.

For more information, visit:
www.jreast.co.jp/e/pass/suica.html
www.pasmo.co.jp/en/

Let's go!

1. Press the PASMO/SUICA button (press English).
2. Press Purchase new PASMO/SUICA.
3. Select the type of PASMO/SUICA you want to buy.
4. Select the initial deposit amount to put on your PASMO/SUICA.
5. Insert the selected amount into the machine.
6. Take your PASMO/SUICA and receipt.



Midori Limited Express goes to Hakata Station in Fukuoka City in about one hour and 45 minutes (3,870 yen). From there, a one-mile subway ride takes you to Fukuoka Airport (260 yen).

There is also a shuttle bus between the base and Fukuoka Airport for authorized personnel with reservations, military ID and orders. Call: DSN 315-252-3627 or 001-81-956-50-3627. Public buses from Sasebo Station to Nagasaki Airport take about an hour and 45 minutes (1,400 yen).

Most taxis have base access. A green sticker on the left side of the windshield indicates a taxi is authorized to drive on base. It costs about 700 yen from base to Minato Town, and 1,000 yen to Sasebo Station. Call King Taxi at: 09-56-22-4136 or Kokusai Taxi at 09-56-31-5931.

Exploring Okinawa Bus service

Buses are the only public transportation on Okinawa, except for the Okinawa Monorail in and around central Naha. The bus network is quite extensive, but finding the right bus to take can be complicated. The frequency of service also differs between lines. It is, however, a relatively inexpensive way to travel.

There is a number assigned to each line. When riding a line between No. 1 through 19 plus 105, enter from the front and exit the rear door except No. 7, 8, 10, 12; the fare is usually paid when entering. For line No. 20 and above, enter from the front and pick up a ticket. You also usually exit from the front. Fares will be displayed on the front monitor with numbers that match those on tickets. For No. 7, 8, 10, 12, 94, enter from the rear door, and exit the front door.

Buses No.1 through No. 19 cost a fixed 230-yen fare (approx. \$2.10) for adults and 120-yen (approx. \$1.10) for minors, except No. 8 and 10, whose fare are either 230 or 150 or 100 yen. Fares for buses No. 20 and above change depending upon distance, with the exception of No. 95 and No. 105, which have fixed rates of 250 yen for adults and 130 yen for minors (No. 95), and 160 for adults and 80 for minors (No. 105)

Comprehensive, English-language, printed schedules and route maps are a rarity. Although detailed bus information is available in English online, locating the line you need can be daunting. Listed below are some of the lines that can be used around each U.S. military facility.

1. Camps Schwab: No. 22, 27 (These lines run between Nago and Uruma, and Nago and Naha respectively, going by Camp Schwab and Camp Hansen. No. 27 goes all the way to Naha Bus terminal going by Kadena Air Base, Camp Foster, MCAS Futenma, and Camp Kinser)

2. Kadena Air Base: No. 20, 21, 23, 27, 31, 63, 77, 80, 90, 110, 112, 113, 123, 127, 331, 777 (No. 20 runs between Naha and Nago. The other lines run between Naha Bus terminal and Goya, which is near Gate 2 of Kadena Air Base. No. 113 and 123 stop at Naha Air Port)

3. Camp Foster: No. 20, 25, 60, 92, 93, 96, 125 (No. 20 runs between Naha and Nago. The other lines connect Aeon Mall RYCOM Okinawa and some locations on the island. No. 25 and 92 go to Naha Bus Terminal. No 60 goes to Awase area, No 93 to Yakena near White Beach, 96 to Chatan. No 125 goes to Naha Air Port making a stop near Shuri Castle.)

4. Camp Kinser: No. 20, 31, 32, 63, 99, 110, 223, 227, 228, 263 (No. 20 runs between Nago and Naha. 31 between Awase and Naha. 32 between Convention Center and Naha. 63 between Naha and Gushikawa near Camp Courtney. 99 between Naha Air Port and Convention Center. 110 between Naha and Gushikawa near Camp Courtney. 223, 227, 228 shuttle between Shintoshin (Naha) and Gushikawa.near Courtney, Yakena near White Beach, and Yomitan near Torri station respectively. 263 runs between Shintoshin and Gushikawa as well.

5. Torii Station: No. 28, 29, 62, 228. (28 and 29 run between Naha and Yomintan. 62 between Sunabe near kadena Air Base and Yomitan. 228 between Shintoshin (Naha) and Yomitan.

6. White Beach: No. 27, 93, 127, 227, 777 (27 runs between Naha and Yakena near White Beach. 93 between Aeon Mall and Yakena. 127 between Naha and Yakena. 777 is an express between Naha and Yakena.

7. Camp Courtney: No. 21, 23, 24, 63,

90, 110, 112, 113, 223, 263 (113 runs between Gushikawa near Camp Courtney and

Naha Air Port. The other lines connect Gushikawa and Naha or Shintoshin) Okinawa Urban Monorail, or Yui Rail, is another way to get around in Naha. It runs from Naha Airport to Tedako Uranishi (Urasoe City) in about 37 minutes, and costs between 230 yen to 370 yen. A one-day pass is 800 yen and two days is 1,400 yen. Information on routes, schedules and fares is available online in English.

Taxi service

Taxis are widely available and inexpensive. The initial drop on the meter is 560 yen for the first 1.75 kilometers and then 70 yen for every additional 372 meters. When traffic slows down to 10 km/h or below, 70 yen will be charged additionally for every 2 minutes and 15 seconds. There is an additional 20 percent surcharge from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.

There are large taxis which charge more than a regular taxi.

The doors are automated, meaning that the driver pulls a lever inside the door to open the cab and hits it to shut the door. There is no tipping.

Note that some taxi companies are authorized to go on U.S. military bases, so you can get all the way home and not just to the front gate. Such cabs have a written sign on the sign saying "Authorized on Base."

There is also another type of taxi service available on Okinawa as well as mainland Japan. Known as "daiko," it is used by people who can't drive due to alcohol.

Two drivers and a taxi will be sent to the location, with the customer riding home in the passenger seat and the other driver taking the customer's car home. The two drivers will then return in the taxi.

The Exchange offers service to connect customers with this service. For taxi call 645-8888 on base and 098-970-8888 off base. For daiko, call 098-932-4035.

Yui Rail



CONTACT INFO

Bus Map Okinawa



Okinawa Urban Monorail





Getting behind the wheel

Buying, registering and driving a vehicle

Driving in Japan can be likened to how one comedian once described red lights here – “optional.” Like everyone, however, SOFA-status drivers would do well to stop, not only for red lights, but to consider what is involved in purchasing and registering a vehicle here.

In addition to the usual considerations for purchasing a vehicle, service personnel must choose whether to buy from another service member or the equivalent, a local resident or a car dealer.

A fourth option is Military AutoSource. This last option is ideal for those who can afford it. Vehicles come with import licenses, bill of sale, warranty, U.S. specifications and an English-language manual. Just because someone can afford such a purchase, however, does not mean they can afford to ship the vehicle back home or to their next duty station.

So whether one’s “follow-on” orders are likely to include vehicle shipment is one thing to stop and consider with this option. The chances of selling the

vehicle for its true value before PCSing out are not likely to be high.

Many people opt for buying used vehicles from military or civilian personnel PCSing out. The ritual usually begins with a visit to the base’s so-called (sometimes figuratively, sometimes not) “lemon lot” for a few rounds of tire kicking and/or haggling. It is possible to find one’s ideal vehicle in near-perfect shape. The only guarantee, however, is that there are no guarantees.

People with short tours tend to do minimal maintenance, and a vehicle may have had more than one short-term owner. Analyze any defects and consider the repair costs. Without any warranty, the risk is significant.

Also, bear in mind that regulations vary between military installations, requiring different steps for vehicle transfers between bases, import vehicles and motorcycles. Check with the appropriate offices before making any plans or purchases.

An off-base dealer is probably the safest bet for getting a quality pre-owned vehicle. There are

likely to be hundreds of cars to choose from.

The registration process isn’t difficult and many dealers offer direct finance plans. Since local law and custom dissuade locals from owning older vehicles, reasonably priced cars with low mileage are not hard to find.

If the dealer has a garage for maintenance, that’s a bonus. Minor repairs can be taken care of before and after you select your car. If you have access to a base auto hobby shop, and you like working on cars, you can save a lot of money.

Always insist on a warranty when buying a car from a dealer.

Note that the auto skills centers on many bases offer inexpensive courtesy inspections of used cars that a servicemember is considering purchasing. This covers most of the points that the Japanese Compulsory Insurance inspection does.

Now that the hard part is over, it is time to talk about mandatory expenses. Japanese Compulsory Insurance, or JCI, is the big one. All cars on the road in Japan must pass inspection every two years. (Certain

makes and models must be inspected annually.) Strict government requirements must be met in order to pass the JCI inspection. The process is cumbersome. Either you get used to it and do the paperwork, or you have someone do it for you.

Another cost is road tax. The amount you must pay for the annual road tax, which is due in May, depends on the size of the vehicle’s engine. Please see page 41 for more information on road tax amounts and how and where to pay.

You are also required by law to purchase personal-liability insurance, or PLI, in case of an accident.

It can be purchased from a Japanese insurance agency and some car dealers. (The minimum amount required by U.S. Military Law is 30,000,000 yen for bodily injury and 3,000,000 yen for property damage, according to the U.S. Marine Corps website.) People can save some money by paying an annual fee instead of making quarterly or otherwise divided payments.

To register your vehicle, contact your base’s Pass and ID Office, Vehicle Registration Office or the equivalent thereof. You must have liability insurance before reporting to the office. Some car dealers near military bases may be able to do much of this footwork for you.

Car sales for the military community



There are many car dealers in Japan anxious for U.S. military business, one of which is even located on base. Military AutoSource offers Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram, Ford, Lincoln and Harley-Davidson vehicles to military personnel, U.S. government civilians and civilian contractors who are entitled to unlimited Exchange privileges, are stationed or assigned abroad for at least 30 days, and are authorized to have a Privately-Owned Vehicle at that assignment. MAS has independent sales representatives on or near U.S. bases throughout Japan. www.militaryautosource.com

There are others with close connections to the military overseas. Among them are U.S. Military Sales (usmilsales.com), which sells Volvos at discounted prices, and BMW Military Sales (www.bmw-special-sales.com/en/topics/military-sales/overview.html),

If you are not looking for a new luxury car but want something a cut above what can be found on a base lemon lot, here are some dealers near U.S. bases that cater to SOFA personnel.

Camp Foster

B. C. Used Cars in Chatan has English-speaking staff and accepts payment in U.S. dollars. <http://www.pitstopcars.jp> or 098-932-6651

Johnny's Used Cars, outside Foster's Legion Gate, offers a one-year limited warranty, zero-interest financing for up to 24 months and a no-down-payment program. www.johnnys-cars.com 098-982-0312

Pit Stop Used Car Sales is in Ginowan City, about 600 yards south of Foster's Commissary Gate on Highway 58. pitstopcars.jp 098-898-4061

Camp Shields

B. C. Used Cars (Garage) has English-speaking staff and accepts payment in U.S. dollars. www.bc-used-cars.jp or 098-932-6651

Kadena Air Base

B. C. Used Cars, outside Gate 2, has English-speaking staff and accepts payment in U.S. dollars. www.bc-used-cars.jp or 098-932-6651

bc-used-cars.jp or 098-932-6651
Johnny's Used Cars, just outside Gate 1, offers a one-year limited warranty, zero-interest financing for up to 24 months and no-down-payment program. www.johnnys-cars.com 098-921-7318

Car Produce M3: All Their cars come with 2-year JCI and 1 year Warranty. They also do auto repair, body repair and much more. To get there, exit gate 3 on Kadena Air Base and go straight past the Chibana Family Housing area. Their shop will be on the right-hand side. For more information, you may call 098-894-4800. Their website is: <http://www.m3carsokinawa.com/>
Koza Used Cars is located just outside Kadena Air Base. They have a translator available Mon-Fri, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. To get there, take the first left outside Kadena Air Base Gate 2. Koza Used Cars will be on your left side after a 1-km drive. For more information, you may call 098-938-8651. Their website is: <http://www.okistyle.com/usedcars/koza/>

Payless Motors, just a 5-minute walk from Kadena's Gate 2, boasts serving Okinawa's U.S. military community for three decades. It has a huge selection of used cars, trucks and vans to choose from, English-speaking staff and an 18-month payment plan with zero-percent interest. 098-933-2685 or www.payless-okinawa.com

MCAS Iwakuni

Kaz Used Cars, near the main gate, has English-speaking staff and all vehicles are warrantied with registration included in price. They also provide repair/junking and JCI services. 0827-35-4917 or visit them on Facebook at **Kaz Used Cars Iwakuni**.

Iwakuni Auto Sales, is located near Iwakuni base and has used cars available with warranty and loan services. Call 0827-88-0166.

Orange Stage, offers domestic and foreign vehicles for sale near Iwakuni base. **Visit them on Facebook** or call 0827-35-6606.

AUTOREC, serving the Iwakuni community with a nice selection of vehicles and reasonable prices that includes registration and JCI.

Contact them at 0567-56-6111 or visit their web site at www.autorec.co.jp/iwakuni.php

Misawa Air Base

A-1 Used Cars 0176-57-0483
Lucky's Used Car Center, just outside the base's Falcon (POL) gate, offers a 60-day warranty and 6-month engine transmission warranty. 0176-53-5959

New Tokyo Used Car Center is near Misawa Air Base. 0176-53-5581

NAF Atsugi & Camp Zama

Gravity Auto operates a location on Route 51. It specializes in luxury cars, including Mercedes-Benz, Jaguar, BMW and Audi, as well as those with U.S. specifications that can be shipped to the U.S. www.hanamaru.co.jp or 046-738-0276

Muratomi Used Car Shop is a one-minute drive from Zama's Gate 7 accepts U.S. credit cards for payment. 042-767-5666

Wellcham Used Cars is a two-minute walk from Atsugi's main gate. It offers a 30-day guarantee and will handle all paperwork to register the vehicle. 0467-77-5427

Phoenix Used Cars: Offers a wide range of used cars. Call 050-3538-8456 or visit www.japanesecartrade.com/phoenix/

Araliya Trading Company (ATC) has built a reputation of quality service and reliability. Call 080-4328-8025 or visit atc.zama.com

Sasebo Naval Base

Sasebo Car Resale on Facebook is an unofficial virtual lemon lot for the Sasebo Naval Base community with more than 1,500 members.

Tamie's Auto offers a 2-month warranty, payment plans and vehicle registration is included in the price. JCI, repair and junking services available, so call for a pick up/drop off from the gate at 090-9478-0227 or visit www.sasebo-y-post.com/

Yamaguchi Auto prices include registration and they're English friendly. They also offer a pick-up service from the gate. 080-4694-5290

Yokosuka Naval Base

Minato Motors is conveniently close to Yokosuka Naval Base. The

Tips for used-car shopping

- Bring a trusted mechanic to inspect the vehicle.
- Use a checklist.
- Check exterior for signs of repair.
- Check interior for rust and body work.
- Check hoses and fluid levels.
- Warm up engine and check for smoke or noise.
- Check high-mileage vehicle's timing belt.
- Ask to see car maintenance log.
- Go to your base auto hobby center for a pre-purchase inspection at rates starting around \$20.

company is known for its reasonable, reliable and smooth transactions and specializes in fully inspected JCI-certified Japanese and European cars. Pick-up service at Kamiooka Station via Keikyū line. Contact them at 090-9150-6227 or visit www.minato-motors-japan.com

Yokota Air Base

Japan Auto Ltd. located outside the Yokota East Gate, they offer many cars in stock, but will also search vehicle auctions Japan-wide. The dealer accepts most trade-ins and offers a variety of payment plans. Call for free pick up from Yokota Air Base to our shop at 090-1052-2964 or visit japanautoonline.com

Kelly & Kelly Auto Sales is located near Yokota's Terminal Gate. Kelly & Kelly has been serving the military community for over 50 years. With an inventory of at least 35 vehicles, they offer a warranty on all purchases with a variety of payment plans. For free pick-up on base, call 042-551-0556 or visit them at <http://kellyandkellyjp.com/>.

M Trading is located near Yokota and offers used cars. Call 090-6934-9559

Real Speed Auto is a 5-minute drive from Yokota's Fussa Gate and offers free pick-up service. They provide a full 90-day warranty and free vehicle registration. English and payment plans okay! Call 042-513-3593 or see cars in stock at www.realspeed.jp.

Car junking

24 Express will pick up from any base in the Kanto area and pay to junk your used car when you are scrapping your car, at PCS or any other time. Call 090-7123-7100 for more details or visit www.24express.jp



While Japan is known for its impeccable public transportation, a personal vehicle will help you get around base and even help you explore attractions near and far.

When you arrive, buying a vehicle may very well be one of the first things you do after checking into your new base. The following words and phrases will help you negotiating a Japanese car dealer outside of the gate.

- "Kono kuruma wa ikura desuka?"** = How much is this car?
 ("kono" = this, "kuruma" = car, "ikura desuka" = how much is..?)
 (Pronounced: cone-oh koo-roo-mah wuh eekoorah desookuh)
- "Doru wa tsukae masuka?"** = Can I use dollars? (Do you take dollars?)
 ("doru" = dollar, "wa tsukae masuka" = can I use..?)
 (Pronounced: dough-roo wuh zookah-ey mass-oo-kah)
- "Yasuku narimasenka?"** = Can you give me a discount?
 ("yasuku" = cheaper, "narimasenka" = can you make...?)
 (Pronounced: ya-zoo-koo nah-ree-mass-en-kah)
- "Kono kuruma wa nannen-sei desuka?"** = What year is this car?
 (How old is this car?)
 ("nannen-sei" = ..year made)
 (Pronounced: cone-oh wuh nahn-nehn-say desookuh)
- "Shuurireki wa arimasuka?"** = Does the car have any repair history?
 ("shuurireki" = repair history, "arimasuka" = is there..?)
 (Pronounced: shoo-ree-reh-kee wuh are-ee-mass-kah)
- Hoken wa doko de kakeraremasuka?"** = Where can I insure the car?
 ("hoken" = insurance, "doko" = where, "kakeraremasuka" = insure/take)
 (Pronounced: Ho-ken wuh dough-koh deh kah-keh-are-eh-mass-kah)
- "Donna hoshoo to shiharai hoochoo ga arimasuka?"** = What kind of warranties and payment plans do you have?
 ("donna" = what kind of, "hoshoo" = warranty, "to" = and, "shiharai hoochoo" = payment plans)
 (Pronounced: dough-nah ho-show toe she-hair-eye ho-ho-o gah are-ee-mass-kah)

- Takahiro Takiguchi

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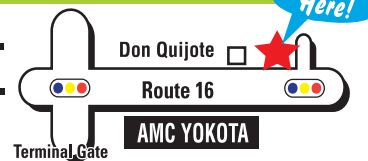
<http://kellyandkellyjp.com/>

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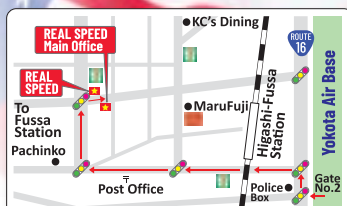
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www.realspeed.jp



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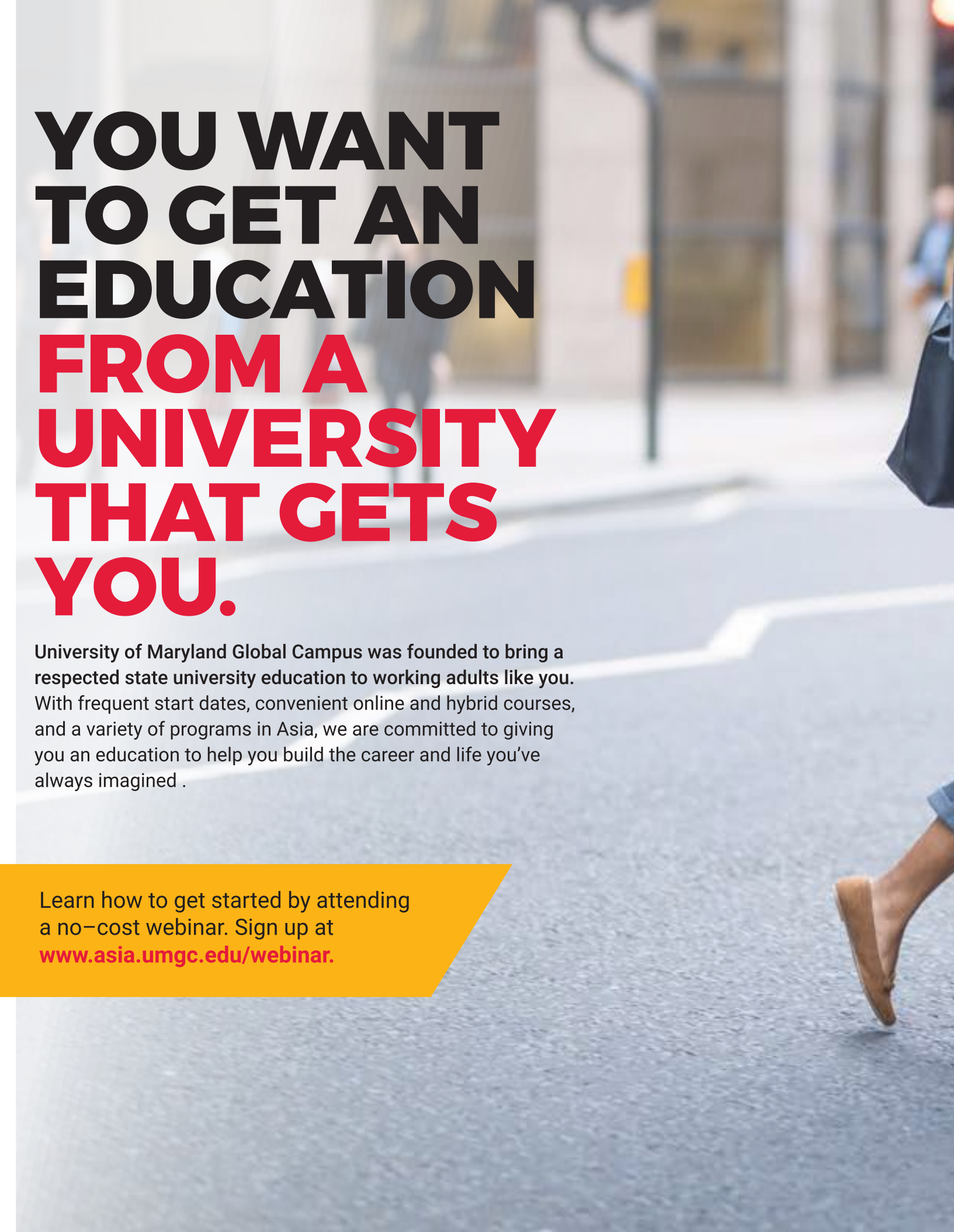
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Anne Isomoto 090 9150 6227

anneisomoto@gmail.com

Website: www.minato-motors-japan.com





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Road wage

Ah, spring, when a young servicemember's attention turns to ... road taxes? Yes, it's time to pay your annual road taxes, which are mandated by Japanese law based on vehicle engine size. Luckily, most of you can pay them on base, where Japanese tax officials will be setting up collection

stations to process payments. Remember that payments must be made in yen.

All Department of Defense personnel are required to pay their road taxes in order to receive new base vehicle decals for 2020. Payments must be made by May 31 (the end of April on NAF Atsugi), either on base or at

the local Japanese tax office, and new 2020 USFJ decals obtained by June 1. Vehicles without new decals will not be allowed to be driven on or after June 1, depending on the base.

Unless you are in Okinawa, bring your vehicle's paperwork to the base Vehicle Registration Office (VRO) for issuance of a 2020 decal. In Okinawa, bring it to the Joint Service Vehicle Registration Office (JSVRO). If

you own more than one vehicle, all of them must be registered at the same time.

Anyone can pay road tax for deployed or absent vehicle owners, but a power of attorney may be required for anyone other than a spouse to obtain a base decal. In mainland Japan, contact your base VRO for more information. On Okinawa, contact the Joint Service Vehicle Registration Office at 645-7481/3963.

What to bring?

Drivers must provide the following items when paying road tax on base:

- Military ID card
- Military vehicle registration
- Base driver's license
- Japanese Compulsory Insurance (JCI)
- Liability insurance policy

Drivers must provide the following items when paying road tax off base:

- Last year's road tax receipt
- Japanese title

Drivers must provide the following items to receive a new decal:

- SOFA ID Card (registered in DBIDS)
- Last year's road tax receipt
- Japanese title
- Base inspection sheet
- JCI insurance
- Liability insurance
- Parking certificate with current residence
- Driver's license
- Expired USFJ Base Vehicle Decal

How much?

Road taxes are determined by the number shown on top of each vehicle's license plate, which identifies the vehicle's engine size. Of course taxes, like all charges, are subject to change; here are last year's tax rates. Check with your on-base registration office for 2020 rates and where you can to pay on base.

Vehicle plates and taxes:

- 40/400 and 50/500 plates: 7,500 yen
- 33/300 plates (4.5 liter engines and below): 19,000 yen
- 33/300 plates (4.6 liter engines and above): 22,000 yen
- 11/100 and 88/800 plates: 32,000 yen

Minicar and Motorcycle taxes:

- Minicars: 3,000 yen
- Motorcycles 126 cc and above: 1,000 yen
- Motorcycles 125 cc and below: 500 yen

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Email at: j@auto.office.ne.jp



<https://www.facebook.com/japanautoonline>



Electronic toll

Japan's ETC (Electronic Toll Collection) system not only saves drivers time by letting them pay without stopping at an expressway tollgate, it also saves money due to discounted tolls for users during certain times and on certain days.

The catch is that it requires a credit card issued by a Japanese financial institution and most credit card companies here require an alien registration card from foreigners. Defense Department personnel in Japan under the Status of Forces Agreement, however, are not issued alien registration cards. There is an alternative.

ETC:

www.go-etc.jp/english/

JapanETCcard:

www.japanetccard.com

JapanETCcard offers a service for SOFA members that allows them to use their U.S.-issued credit card to get an ETC card.

They are able to process U.S. credit cards in such a way that is accepted by Japan's ETC system.

The company sends customers monthly bills detailing their ETC charges in English. The service starts from 989 yen (about \$9) per month.



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2

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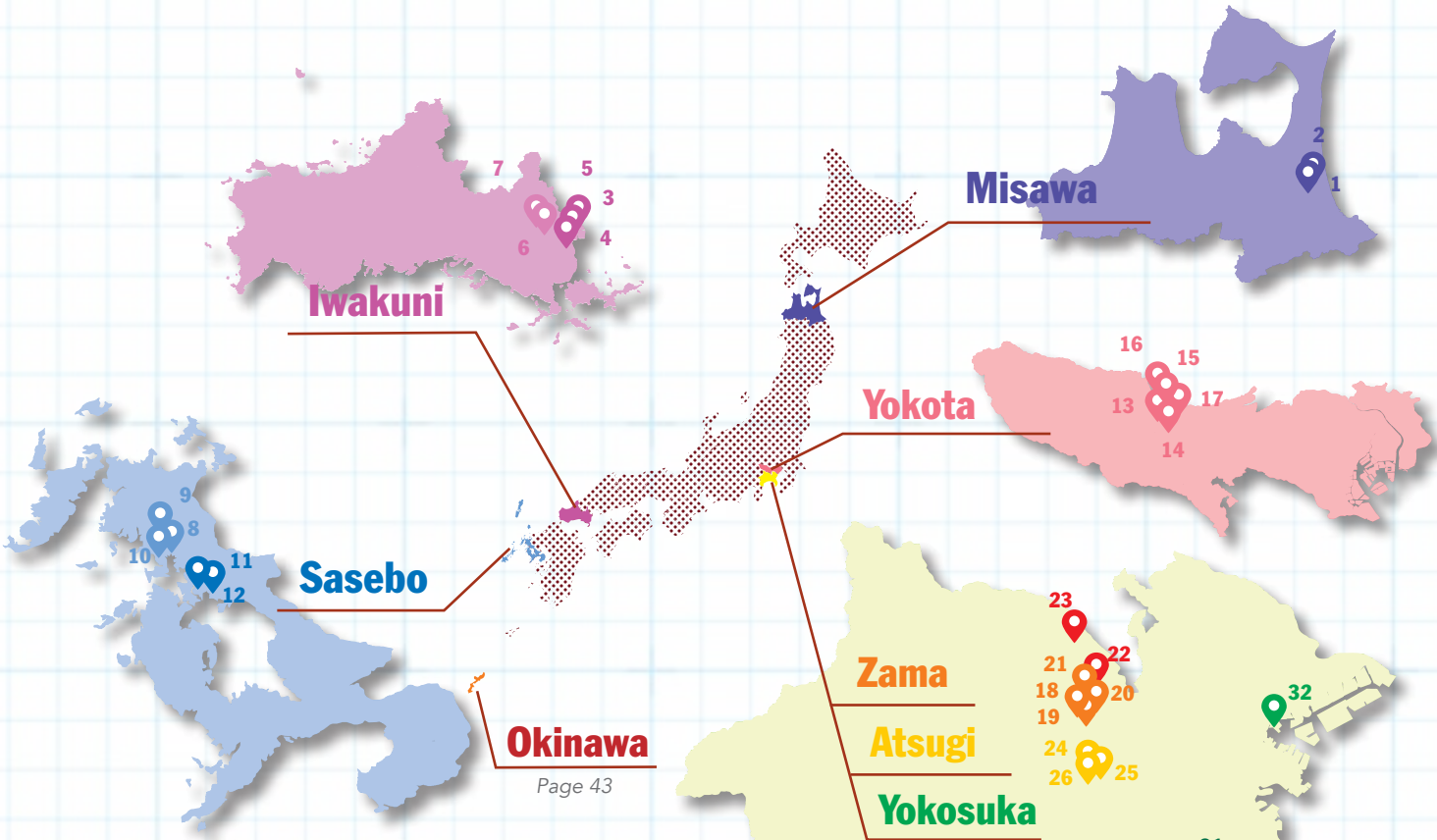
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- OKINAWA
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Camp coordinates

Travel base to base

Thanks to GPS, getting lost is nearly a thing of the past. Unfortunately, with military bases, and their many entrance gates, finding your exact destination via GPS can often prove harder than it should. Below, you'll find the exact latitude and longitude coordinates for many of the gates located in mainland Japan. Need to find the gate near the golf course at Camp Zama? Just input the coordinates below (35.512045, 139.398548) into your GPS device of choice, and you're sure to make that 7 a.m. tee time.



Page 43

Misawa

- 1. Main Gate
40.686775 (latitude), 141.365019 (longitude)
- 2. Falcon Gate (POL Gate)
40.697657, 141.378100

Iwakuni

- 3. Main Gate
34.151401, 132.221583
- 4. Monzen Gate
34.142617, 132.216083
- 5. North Gate
34.160040, 132.231432
- 6. Atago South Gate
34.146353, 132.198865
- 7. Atago North Gate
34.153012, 132.190980

Sasebo

- 8. Main Gate
33.167834, 129.714322
- 9. Back Gate
33.166635, 129.710680
- 10. Main Base Housing
33.171236, 129.712608
- 11. Hario Village, Main gate
33.085021, 129.778988
- 12. Hario Village, Back Gate
33.082211, 129.782040

Atsugi

- 24. Main Gate
35.458549, 139.433604
- 25. East Gate
35.459981, 139.456402
- 26. West Gate (Temp.use)
35.446332, 139.433673

Yokota

- 13. GATE #2 Fussa Gate
35.742366, 139.338172
- 14. GATE #5 Supply Gate
35.733211, 139.341582
- 15. GATE #12 Terminal Gate
35.753318, 139.340621
- 16. GATE #15 West Gate
35.75386, 139.339696
- 17. GATE #17 East Gate
35.740102, 139.370531

Zama

- 18. GATE #1
35.492070, 139.397175
- 19. GATE #2 (Limited Hours)
35.491804, 139.397191
- 20. GATE #4
35.499372, 139.403387
- 21. GATE #7 (Zama Golf Course)
35.512045, 139.398548
- 22. Sagamihara Family Housing GATE #1
35.520506, 139.420027
- 23. Sagami Depot GATE #1
35.577465, 139.378625

Yokosuka

- 27. Main Gate
35.282663, 139.666174
- 28. Womble Gate (Navy Hospital)
35.283573, 139.668523
- 29. Daiei Gate
35.284076, 139.662341
- 30. Ikego Housing Main Gate
35.304129, 139.590343
- 31. Ikego Housing Jinmuji Gate
35.306486, 139.593520
- 32. Yokohama North Dock Gate1
35.471618, 139.642627

Culture
Education
Transportation
Private vehicles
Base breakdown
Online
Legal
Food
Leisure

Okinawa



Okinawa

- 33. Camp Schwab Main Gate**
26.52662, 128.036532
- 34. Camp Hansen**
Gate #1 26.454877, 127.916203
Gate #2 26.459154, 127.92819
- 35. Camp Courtney**
Gate #1 26.390155, 127.857496
Gate #3 26.386004, 127.860215
Gate #12 26.389576, 127.851371
The Gate is currently closed,
Due to Renovation.
Gate #13 26.384978, 127.850379
Commissary Back Gate is open
- 36. Camp McTureous Main Gate**
26.382011, 127.846498
- 37. White Beach Main Gate**
26.304794, 127.915098
- 38. Torii Station**
Gate #1 26.385087, 127.739276
Gate #3 26.374517, 127.745633
Gate #4 26.370649, 127.735737
Gate #5 26.384708, 127.732663
- 39. Kadena Air Base**
Gate #1 26.331742, 127.752068
Gate #2 26.33849, 127.794243
Gate #3 26.361554, 127.79403
Gate #5 26.332647, 127.779516
- 40. Camp Lester Main Gate**
26.314377, 127.761763
- 41. Camp Foster**
Gate #1 26.29815, 127.780819
Gate #3 26.305143, 127.772459
Gate #4 26.30763, 127.766314
Gate #5 26.295444, 127.760969
Gate #6 26.297284, 127.777738
Gate #7 26.290722, 127.773361
Gate #8 (Plaza Housing)
26.316074, 127.791781
Gate #10 26.307031, 127.776536
- 42. MCAS Futenma**
Gate #1 26.276305, 127.748613
Gate #3 26.28631, 127.77656
- 43. Camp Kinser**
Gate #1 26.246127, 127.696131
Gate #2 26.253794, 127.705299
Gate #2 26.253794, 127.705299
Gate #4 26.269236, 127.708723
The New Gate #4 is closed, but it will be reopen soon, the renovation is finished.
Gate #5 26.248568, 127.691443
The Gate is closed.
- 44. Camp Shields Gate #7152**
26.368009, 127.803037
- 45. Chibana Housing Main Gate**
26.363976, 127.79717
- 46. Naha Port Gate #1**
26.204525, 127.670788

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Base breakdown

A look at U.S. installations

Culture

Education

Transportation

Private vehicles

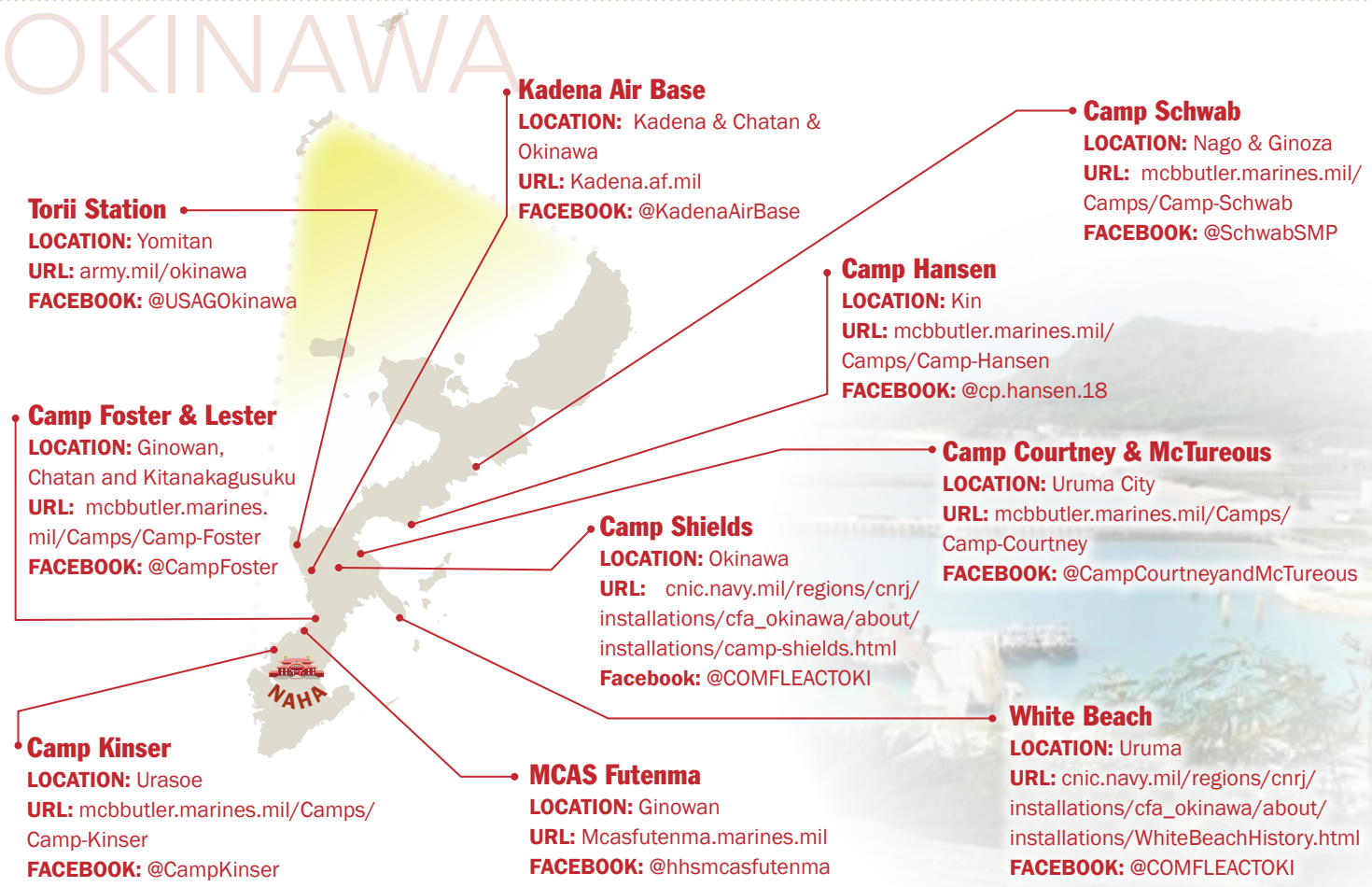
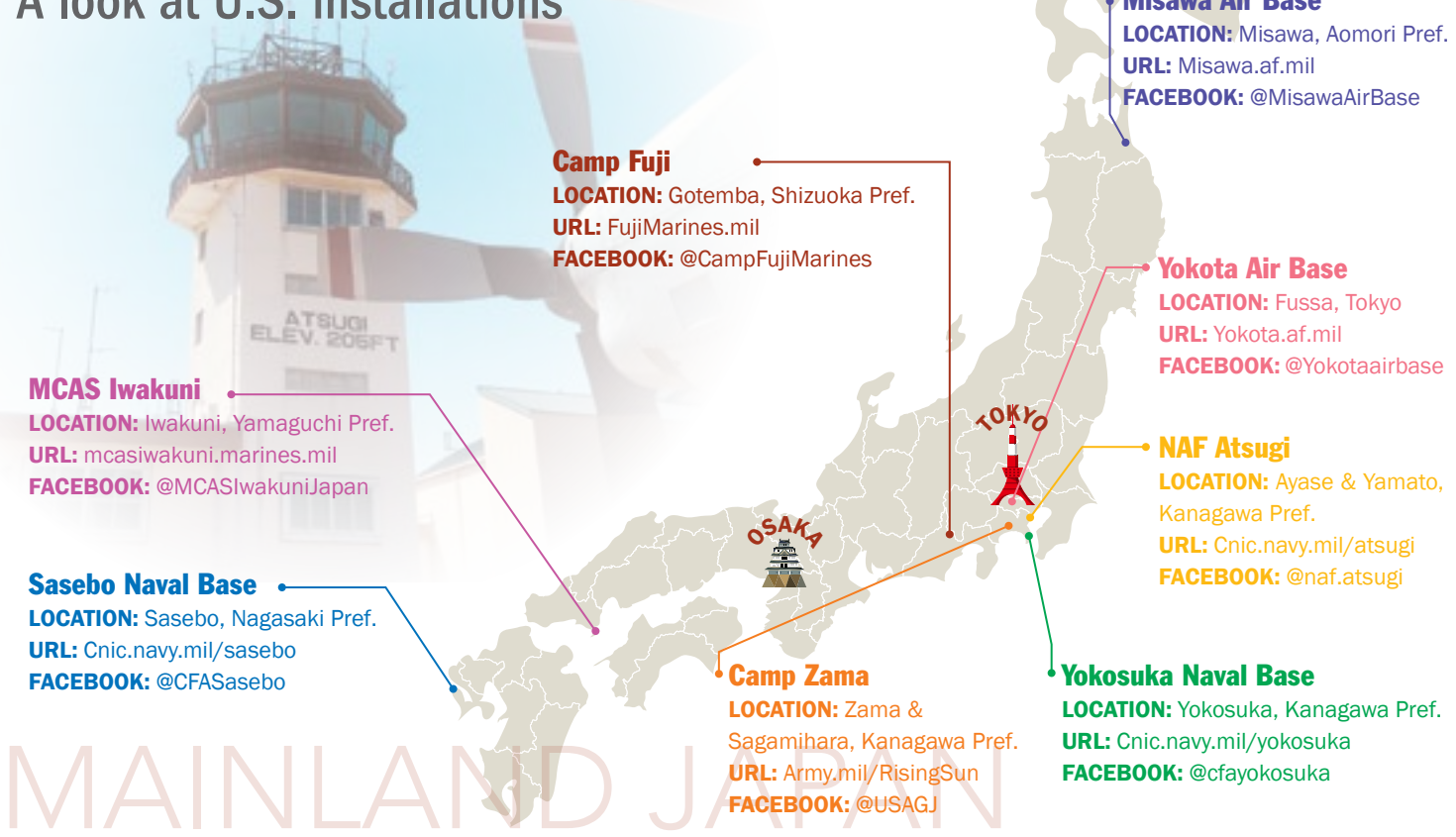
Base breakdown

Online

Legal

Food

Leisure



Beach day at US Naval White Beach, Okinawa.
Photo submitted by Cynthia Birch

Just a click away

Websites worth bookmarking

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Stars and Stripes and Stripes Japan are the best sources for military and local military community news, respectively. Stripes.com and Japan.Stripes.com

The website of Japan Times, the country's main full-fledged English daily newspaper, offers the traditional range of coverage – national and local news, sports, business, op-ed and entertainment. www.japantimes.co.jp

Popular with the expat crowd in Tokyo, the online version of Metropolis magazine offers a wealth of info – from local fashion, sports and travel to music, the arts and feature articles. metropolis.co.jp

FOOD

This site enables users to find local restaurants according to general locale, cuisine or price. Results come with contact information, maps, average costs and details about the food and venue. www.gnavi.co.jp

This site lets you explore a wide range of Japanese cuisine through pictures and simple explanations. Easy to follow recipes are also included. www.bento.com

This site is the go-to platform for foreigners in Tokyo who share a love for Japanese food. www.byfood.com

COMMENTARY

Operated by a naturalized Japanese citizen originally from the U.S., this site monitors legal, social and political issues that may be important. www.debito.org

JAPAN BLOGGING

The perfect blog for someone located in Japan that wants to know where to go. Updated frequently, the site is full of beautiful photos and writing that is chock-full of info that has you in mind. Best of all, it's written by a U.S. military spouse. www.travelswithnano.com

TRAVEL

A for-the-traveler, by-the-traveler website, this community travelogue is continuously updated with first-hand accounts and tips on sites, both popular and obscure, to see;

adventures to be had; and even places to eat – all over the country. en.japantravel.com

SKIING/SNOWBOARDING

This site for skiing and snowboarding in Japan covers almost every aspect of getting to the slopes. www.snowjapan.com

TOKYO SPOTS

Focusing its gaze on Japan's capital, this site offers word-of-mouth reviews to help readers discover cool and traditional spots they can't find in travel guidebooks. The site is ideal for locating various interesting aspects of Tokyo life. www.sunnypages.jp

KITCHEN SINK

A great site that covers a wide range of topics regarding Japan, especially learning the language. www.tofugu.com

Provides details about museums, restaurants, historical sites and pop culture spots in the Tokyo area. www.timeout.jp/en/tokyo

CLASSIFIEDS

A convenient no-frills classifieds page largely for the Yokota community, the site enables users to browse, search by one of several different categories, or post about an item. www.yokotaads.com

With more than 5,000 members, the Facebook page, "Yokota Swap Page" is a testament to its success. Competing Facebook page "New Yokota Swap" also tops 5,000 members. The "Yokosuka Resale" page also has an impressive 5,000+ membership, searching the name "Yokosuka resale" on Facebook will reveal at least two others. "Misawa Web Sale 2.0" is home to more than 4,000 members, while "Camp Foster Yard Sale" sports more than 2,800.

Okinawan sites

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Call us biased, but Stripes Okinawa is the best sources for local restaurants, travel spots and everything Okinawa. Okinawa.Stripes.com

With a host of regular contributors, this site

Useful Apps



Stars and Stripes

Get all of the U.S. military news you need on the device you use most. Enjoy a free preview of the front page top stories..



AFN-360

AFN-360 provides information such as weather, exchange rate, traffic, and gas prices.



HYPERDIA

Hyperdia is a website and app, which can be used as a guide to any city/town/village in Japan. It's available in English.



GuruNavi

An app for those who like to eat. It's an easy to use restaurant finder app that searches for places to eat in your area.



Liberty MCCS OKINAWA

Helps you locate your favorite places, as well as provides information such as transportation schedules.

is chock-full of info such users would want to know: off-base eatery reviews, on- and off-base school resources – including homeschooling – and an army of active forums and blogs. okinawahai.com

GENERAL INFO

Okinawa Lab is a site with useful information to tourists on the island in categories such as "sightseeing", "knowledge", "play-experience", and "gourmet." <https://okinawa-labo.com/en/>

The site is geared towards tourists to the island, which makes it perfect for someone just arriving and planning on staying for a few years. www.beokinawa.jp

GUIDES

Courtesy of the Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau, this searchable, user-friendly site has a detailed destination guide and summaries of topics. Visitokinawa.jp

On this website, you can enjoy photos and articles on tourist stops and activities on the island. okinawaclip.com/en

Information on morale, welfare, and recreation for each branch of service is available at www.mccsokinawa.com/, www.kadenafss.com/, www.navymwrokinawa.com/, www.torii.army.mwr.com/

Ride out the storm with Dave

Dave Ornaer has been with Stars and Stripes since 1981, and one of his first assignments as a beat reporter in the old Japan News Bureau was "typhoon chaser." Pacific Storm Tracker is designed to take the technical weather lingo and simplify it for the average Stripes reader. www.stripes.com/blogs/pacific-storm-tracker





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Keeping up with the law

While in Japan, all U.S. military and civilians under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between Japan and America are subject to both U.S. and Japanese laws. While many Japanese laws are similar to those back home, some may catch you off guard. Your base chain of command or legal office should be the first place you go with legal questions, but here are a few local laws and legal customs you might want to consider.

Cell phone laws

- In Japan, as of Dec. 2019 penalties were toughened for drivers caught talking on cellphones or holding them while looking at their screens behind the wheel.

- \$912 or up to six months imprisonment with hard labor maximum.

- Drivers who pose a danger to traffic or cause an accident while using a mobile device, face a \$2,736 fine and risk having their licenses suspended.

- On-base: Some bases in Japan and on Okinawa operate on a point system. Talking or texting on a cellphone while operating a motor vehicle will get drivers 3 points on their driving record and a one-week driving suspension.

- 1st offense- 1-week suspension and 3 points

- 2nd offense – 1-month suspension and 3 points

- 3rd offense – 1-year suspension and 3 points

- Additionally, drivers on base who accumulate 12 points in a year or 18 points in two years will have their driving permit suspended for six months.

Driving under the influence

- In Japan, drinking-and-driving laws are deadly serious. **The legal limit in Japan is 0.03, on and off base!**

- Japan's traffic law also goes after passengers who knowingly ride with intoxicated drivers – and anyone who provides alcohol or a vehicle to someone that subsequently drives drunk.

- Three months confinement and 500,000 yen for refusing a blood alcohol test.

- Penalties for drunk driving include up to:

- 10 years confinement and 1 million yen (\$9,000) for a hit and run while under the influence of alcohol.

- Five years confinement or 1 million yen for a blood alcohol content of 0.25 milligrams per liter (0.05 percent) or more – or for providing the driver with the vehicle; and three years or 500,000 yen (\$4,500) for providing alcohol to, or riding with, the driver.

- Three years confinement and 500,000 yen for a blood alcohol content between 0.15 and 0.25 milligrams per liter (0.03 and 0.05 percent) – or for providing the driver with the vehicle; and two years or 300,000 yen (\$2,700) for knowingly providing alcohol to, or riding with, the driver.

- A recent U.S.-Japan agreement also put measures in place to ensure SOFA civilians, as well as military, cannot avoid prosecution – either here or in the U.S. – if they are caught driving while intoxicated in Japan.

- Civilians can also lose their SOFA standing if found driving under the influence of alcohol.

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Carrying a knife

- Double-edged blades or switchblades longer than 2.2 inches (5.5 cm) as well as spears, single-edge knives and swords with blades longer than 6 inches (15 cm) are not to be carried without permission. Violators could face up to three years im-

prisonment or a fine of up to 500,000 yen (\$4,500).

- Exceptions for knives with blades longer than 2.4 inches are for home cutlery. The penalty for carrying knives larger than this is up to two years imprisonment or a fine of up to 300,000 yen (\$2,700).


- There are exemptions for blades used for cooking, fishing and other utilitarian purposes, as well as for someone with special authorization, (e.g. for use in an art or sport).

- For genuine or antique sword souvenirs, check with customs before making a purchase. Some items may be deemed cultural treasures that can't leave the country; if so, they may be confiscated at airports.

Child custody disputes

- When it comes to divorce, Japan's family courts do not issue joint custody of children. Sole custody is usually granted to the mother.

- In April 2014, the 1980 Hague Convention on Aspects of International Child Abduction went into effect after decades of Japanese government's refusal to sign on. Now, authorities must help foreign spouses locate their children. However, the new law, which is not retroactive, only applies when the child was a resident of the foreign country before the abduction and their return is not guaranteed – only a ruling on the matter in a Japanese court.

- In cases that the Hague convention does not cover, such as when an international family resides in Japan and the Japanese spouse flees with the child elsewhere in country, her or his counterpart has very little, if any, legal recourse. For all intents and purposes, the parent who already has the child has de facto sole custody, 



Can you help me?

Tetsudatte kuremasenka?

(Tet-zoo-dat-eh coup-reh-mass-zen-ka)

I have SOFA status.

(Watashi wa) Beigun kankeisha desu.

(what-ashy wuh) bey-goan can-kay-shaw deh-sue.)

I'm sorry.

Sumimasen.

(Zoo-me-mass-zen)

I need to make a phone call.

Denwa wo kaketaino desuga.

(Den-wuh woe khaki-tay-no deh-sue-gah)



➔ even if it has not been legally granted. Authorities usually will not treat such incidents as abductions.

Saying you're sorry

• Apologies and cash payments play an unofficial – yet very important – role in Japan's legal system when it comes to civil disputes and criminal cases.

• “Jidan” is an informal out-of-court settlement for damages and/or to express remorse, is sometimes used in civil disputes such as fender-benders, damage claims or altercations. It is best to get the terms and finality of such agreements in writing. You may want to consider foregoing jidan and get the local authorities involved.

• “Gomen nasai” (I'm sorry) money is a payment made with an apology paid to the alleged victim. This can affect whether you are arrested, released into U.S. custody or prosecuted. (An apology needn't be an admission of guilt, but condolences for the alleged victim's hardship.) Japan's conviction rate is high, so it's not in your best interest, no matter how innocent you may be, to get indicted.

• A letter of apology to an alleged victim from the accused can impact that decision (submit copies of the letter). Apologizing to, paying the alleged victim (usually a lot) and getting them

to write a letter on your behalf carries even more weight. Even if you are convicted, an apology prior to indictment – in word and monetary deed – may impact sentencing significantly.

Working off base

• As in the U.S., proper visas and/or permits are required for foreigners to legally work in Japan.

• SOFA allows some exceptions for military and civilians who fall under it. However, they are responsible for paying Japanese taxes on income earned on the Japanese economy.

• USFJ also has rules that apply to SOFA personnel. With the exception of teaching English as a foreign language, according to USFJ instruction 36-1001, all SOFA personnel must apply for permission from their chain of command to work off base. Those teaching English, however, should notify their chain of command.

• Review USFJ instruction 36-1001 for the full details.

• SOFA individuals are also prohibited from commercial activity. This includes ownership of, interest in, or private employment at a business that is, detrimental to the best interest of the United States, or affiliated with drugs, trafficking or prostitution. SOFA persons also may not:

• Work in an establishment

whose primary service is the sale of alcohol to the Japanese public.

• Work in a business that is in anyway connected with gambling or making/trafficking weapons.

• Sell real estate, stocks, bonds, insurance, securities or mutual fund shares unless licensed by an appropriate U.S. authority and comply with Japanese law.

• Appear in any commercial media, stage plays or make recordings for publication without prior approval.

• Wear military uniforms or refer to their service affiliation while working off base if they are active-duty.

Biking laws

One thing you'll notice is that Japan has a large amount of bicycle traffic. Locals commute to work, go grocery shopping and transport their kids to school on their bikes. There are strict laws in Japan regarding bicycles, but in reality, you will find there are more than a few riders who break them. Here are a few tips to make sure you abide by local biking laws:

• Don't ignore traffic signals or ride in prohibited areas.

• Ride on the left side of the street. Bicycles are classified as vehicles.

• If you live on base, you

must register your bike at your Pass & ID office. If you buy a bike in Japan, the bike shop will help you register it with the local government if you live off base.

• Do not ride on sidewalks unless the areas are marked for shared space with pedestrians. (Children under 13 and adults over 70 years old are permitted to ride on sidewalks)

• Stop at crosswalks and if you need to turn, you need to follow crosswalks (do not go into traffic/turning lanes for vehicles).

• Don't ring bicycle bells at pedestrians. Pedestrians are given priority and cyclists are expected to dismount if necessary.

• After dark, you must have a front light on your bicycle.

• Do not use umbrellas or talk on your cellphone while riding.

• Children must wear a helmet if under age 13 or if under the age of six in a designated child seat.

• On base, riders must wear a helmet at all times.

• Only park your bike at designated bike parking areas. Parking in prohibited areas will get you a warning ticket or it could be impounded.

• Be aware of pedestrians, vehicles and other cyclists while you're on the road and follow safety rules at all times.



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STARS AND STRIPES



Protecting your pets in a new country

Most pet owners will tell you their dog or cat are not pets, but family members. And, when it comes down to it, finding the right doctor for your pet in a new country can be just as hard as tracking down the perfect pediatrician for your child. With that in mind, here are a few pointers to help get you started:

Finding a vet

When looking for your new vet, look for one that's local. This will not only be convenient for the regular checkups, but any emergency care needed will be that much less stressful. Walking distance is ideal. **Ask neighbors where they take their funny friends.** Also, many Japanese vets do not speak English, but that doesn't mean they're not out there. Ask around to see who around

you know of an English-friendly vet. Many pet clinics offer pre-registration, which is a good idea if emergency services are needed.

Rabies shots

There has not been a recorded case of rabies in Japan since 1957. In order to keep the country rabies-free, **you are required by Japanese law to get your pets a rabies shot.** The shots can be administered at a veterinarian's office, or even at certain public schools.

Once your pet gets the shot, you'll receive a sticker showing they are inoculated. The sticker should be displayed in front of your home, for example, on your door, door frame, or mailbox.

Filariasis medication

Vets will also recommend pills for filariasis ("firaria" in Japanese)

and ticks. These are mostly for those dogs that take walks in wooded areas, where fleas, ticks, and other parasites are prevalent.

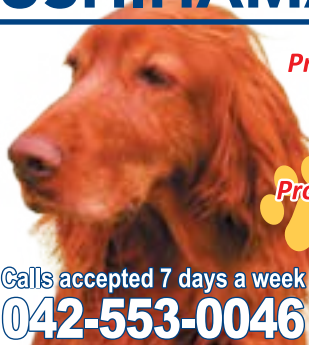
Bringing a pet into Japan

The Animal Quarantine Service oversees bringing pets into Japan. Pets from the U.S. entering the country need to follow proper vaccination procedures in order to avoid being quarantined. The timeframe for being quarantined can range all the way up to 180 days if needed.

DID YOU KNOW?

One of Japan's favorite dogs is Hachiko, the faithful Akita dog who waited for his human, Professor Eizaburo Ueno, to return to Shibuya Station every day, even after Ueno's death. You can visit Hachiko's statue outside the station, which is considered one of the country's unofficial landmarks.

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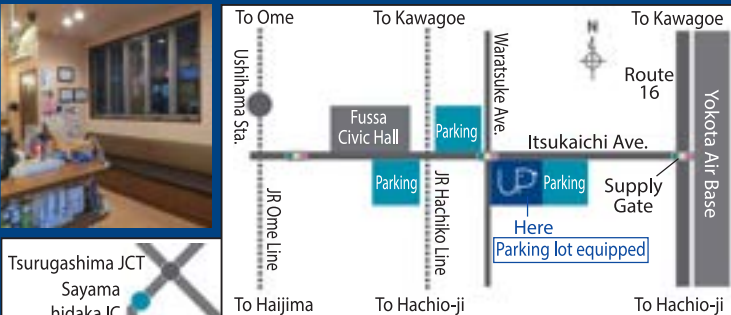


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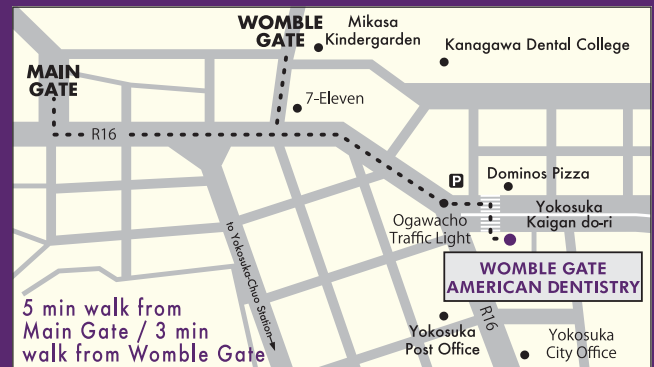
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Know where to park or pay the price

You are stationed in Japan for the first time. You just got your government driver's license, purchased a car at the lemon lot, filed all the proper paperwork and paid road taxes.

And now you're revved up to drive off base and explore Japan.

But before you put it in gear, have a plan on where you are going to park. Seriously. Parking can be a problem in Japan if you're not prepared, or don't bring enough yen.

You may think that you can get away with parking your car anywhere for a couple of minutes. Unfortunately, that is wrong. Most public roads in Japan are "no parking" zones unless there are signs that say so.

Parking police

It is very common to see parking enforcement officers (generally two people in green uniforms) walking the sidewalks and backstreets looking for cars illegally parked. And they have no mercy on you. They'll photo-

graph your illegally parked car, and post a ticket on the windshield within a minute. They're like ninjas.

If the green-uniformed parking police don't get you, look out for mini police cars trolling about. Police officers will periodically drive around looking for parking violators. If they find a car illegally parked, they mark a wheel of the car and the road with chalk and come back in five to 10 minutes. When they return to discover the car is still there, they'll issue a ticket.

But beware, a ticket is not the worst thing that can happen. In many cases, especially on congested streets, the police will put a lock on the wheel well of an illegally parked car and call a tow truck. The owner of the car is responsible for paying the tow truck fee and parking ticket, as well as the cost of storage from where

you pick up your car after it's towed. This can run you close to \$400.

Now that I've made it quite clear not to park illegally on the street, don't think for a second that it's okay to park in unmarked spaces in various parking lots found outside apartment complexes and in neighborhoods. These are reserved spots paid for by car owners.

In Japan, you can't register your car until you have proof that you have a parking spot for that particular car. So if you live out in town and have a one-car garage and two cars, you have to pay for another parking spot. These can run anywhere between \$100-\$200 a month or more depending on your location.

— Takahiro Takiguchi



How to use coin lots

1. To park:

When there is a vacant parking space, the main parking sign will read "vacant" (空) or (空車). If all the spaces are occupied, it shows "full" (満車) or (満), often in red letters.

Remember that you pay the fare when you leave the parking lot. After confirming that the locking flap is lowered, enter slowly into the parking space. Park your car within the lines of the parking space, ensuring that the wheels are in contact with the stopper.

The locking flap will automatically rise approximately 3 to 5 minutes after you parked the car.

2. To leave:

Make sure to get the right number of your parking spot, then go to the automated fare adjustment machine and press the number. Press the fare payment button and insert the ap-

propriate amount of yen. After confirming that the locking flap has lowered, exit the parking space within 3 minutes. Remember, the locking flap will rise again automatically after 3 to 5 minutes. If you have any problems, contact the call center by using the handy phone installed on the automated fare adjustment machine.

— Source: Japan Parking Business Association



When wanting to park, look for blue or yellow signs with a capital "P" on them.

Supermarkets, shopping malls, restaurants, government buildings and some leisure facilities usually have their own parking spaces. While some are free, many will issue you a card when you enter the parking lot. If you use the facility or shop at the department store, you get credit for your purchases, resulting in a couple hours of free parking. You simply pay at the automated fare adjustment machine located in the lot.

If you can't find free parking, you're going to have to fork over some yen. Like in the U.S., there are parking meters on city

streets. But, especially in Tokyo, these spots fill up quickly.

But there are many different types of facilities to park, including towers. A lot of foreigners are amazed at the cutting-edge technology used in these parking towers. Your car is driven to the front of the tower, where it is loaded on an elevator and moved electronically. Some of these car towers are 10-15 stories tall and have automated plate-number recognition and cashless payment systems.

There are also parking lots that are underground. You simply drive up to the spot and a car attendant will take your car down on an elevator.

Parking on Okinawa

In Okinawa, many facilities such as shopping malls, restaurants or beaches offer free parking spaces to their customers. Given the fact that we don't have trains in Okinawa, having large parking lots is important for local business owners to draw customers. (We do have a monorail, but it runs only in and around Naha city.)

However, if you go to Naha or Okinawa City, the two most populated municipalities in the prefecture, pay parking lots are common. You can usually find them a block or so off the main streets. On Saturday and Sunday, you will see many rental cars with "Wa" or "Re" number plates filling these parking lots, indicating that tourists are having a good time shopping at fashionable stores, or discovering unique local goods in a maze-like market.

So, if you are planning to ex-

plore local scenes in Naha or Okinawa City, especially in areas near Kokusai Street or Gate 2 street by Kadena Air Base, make sure you have Japanese yen to pay for parking. Rates vary from parking lot to parking lot, but 400 yen for an hour (100 yen for 15 minutes or 200 yen for 30 minutes) is the average in Naha.

In Okinawa City, 200 yen for an hour is a common rate. The fees increase every 15, 30 or 60 minutes. Some of the parking lots offer discounts if you shop or eat at specific places.

You also want to pay close attention to where you park. Busy roads like Route 330 have many cars parked on the side, causing traffic congestion. It is a commonplace to see people just pull over their cars to shop at stores. There are places like Gate 2 Street that have parking meters on the side of the road, but it



is not common. Most streets in Okinawa don't have space to park your car legally.

Realistically, there are cases when you need to park your car on the side of the road, but please make sure to do so in a location where it doesn't cause traffic problems. Use common sense and avoid parking on the side of a road for a long time, especially if you are on a busy street or in urban areas where there isn't much parking. This will also help you avoid getting a dreaded parking ticket.

– Shoji Kudaka

Don't get caught in Okinawa's bus lanes

Did you know Okinawa has certain driving lanes that at certain times only allow buses to use?

These bus lanes are those that can only be used by public buses during certain times of the day. And the penalty for violation can be 6,000-7,000 yen.

This law is an important one to know, and should be covered anytime someone is new to Okinawa. If you've been here for a while, you likely have heard of this many times.

There is nothing difficult about understanding the rule.

To put it simply, it is a lane designated for buses, most likely the lane you would see on the far left. But it may require special attention to note an actual bus lane when you get behind the wheel.

Although some bus lanes are colored green, some are not. Drivers need to note what time of day it is, because the rule only applies certain times of the day – typically 7:30-9 a.m. in the morning and 5:30 – 7 p.m. in the evening.

– Shoji Kudaka



You'll also find small 100-yen parking lots throughout cities. A lot of these lots are owned by individuals and only have 2-10 parking spots. This self-service coin parking is easy to use and usually open 24 hours a day.

According to Yoshio Yamamura, managing director of Japan Parking Business Association, when you use these parking lots, it is important to know the hourly fares before you actually park your car. Most parking lots only take yen, although some of the latest models accept credit cards and IC cards. But be prepared, if you don't have enough yen, you won't be able to drive off.

– Takahiro Takiguchi

Check out
for more on Okinawa's bus lanes



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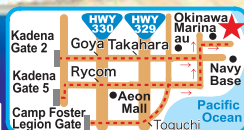
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Any woman 18 years or older who can prove lineal, bloodline descent from an ancestor who aided in achieving American independence is eligible to join the Daughters of the American Revolution.

If you believe you are eligible for membership and would like to join our chapter, we can have a genealogist assist you with your papers.

If you are already a member of DAR and would like to transfer to our chapter or join us as an associate member, we would be delighted to welcome you.

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Get a taste of Japanese cuisine

What is Japan's favorite food? Japan has been cooking for thousands of years. As an island nation, it tends to go its own way. As a result, Japanese food evolved into a unique culinary tradition. Beyond tradition, Japanese food is a living part of the culture. It's always growing which has led to countless Japanese dishes.

The following are a few foods that all Japanese know well.

1. Makizushi



Makizushi is sushi that's rolled into long cylinders. It may be cut into shorter pieces before being served. The word makizushi can be translated "sushi roll."

It's often simply called maki. It usually has nori on the outside but can also be wrapped with leaves such as shiso. Maki is filled with sushi rice and ingredients such as raw fish, cooked fish and vegetables.

2. Miso Soup

In Japan, miso soup is as important to breakfast as coffee. It's a hearty soup of dashi, miso and tofu. It often includes a variety of vegetables, seafood and meat. A good miso soup balances ingredients that float with ingredients that sink.



3. Yakitori



Yakitori can be literally translated "grilled chicken." It's a category of Japanese cuisine that includes dozens of items that are grilled on thin bamboo skewers, including every imaginable part of the chicken as well as other meats, tofu and vegetables.

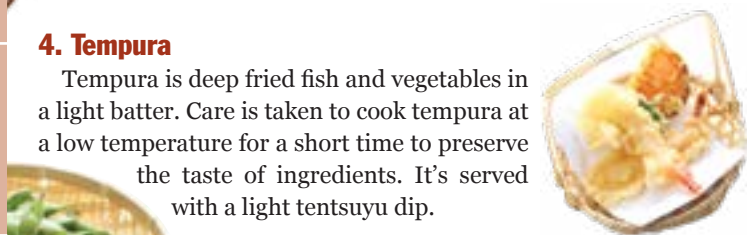
4. Tempura

Tempura is deep fried fish and vegetables in a light batter. Care is taken to cook tempura at a low temperature for a short time to preserve the taste of ingredients. It's served with a light tentsuyu dip.



5. Edamame

Young soybeans cooked in their pod in salty water. Most restaurants serve frozen edamame, but they taste infinitely better fresh from the farm.



6. Ramen

Hot Chinese-style wheat noodles in a meat, fish, miso or soy sauce broth. It's an inexpensive, filling, easy-to-find snack. Despite the fact that ramen is cheap, there's a big difference in quality from one shop to the next. A shop that earns a reputation amongst ramen aficionados will regularly have long lines, while a shop just next door may be empty.



7. Mochi

A sticky variety of Japanese rice known as mochigome that has been pounded into a paste, toasted and eaten directly. It's also used in a variety of Japanese dishes and desserts.

8. Okonomiyaki

A type of savory Japanese pancake that was traditionally prepared to use up leftovers. Okonomiyaki restaurants let you customize your order, and in many cases, you can cook your own. There's an intense okonomiyaki rivalry between Osaka, Tokyo and Hiroshima.



9. Sashimi



Raw sliced fish or meat. Freshness and aesthetics are important to sashimi dishes. Otherwise, it's just chunks of fish.

10. Oden

Oden is a Japanese hotpot that is ordered item-by-item. It's a popular street food, konbini food, winter food and drinking food.



11. Soba

Thin Japanese buckwheat noodles served chilled with a dipping sauce or in a hot broth. Whichever you choose, it's perfectly polite to loudly slurp your noodles.



12. Natto



A type of fermented soybean. It's stinky and slimy with a challenging taste, but Japan likes it anyway.

13. Onigiri

Onigiri is any rice that's designed to be eaten by hand. It's the Japanese equivalent of the sandwich.



14. Japanese curry rice



A Japanese curry that's based on British Navy Curry. The curry spread from the navy to Japan's civilian population in the Meiji era. Over the years, it has adapted to local tastes. It's incredibly bland for a curry. Nevertheless, it has become one of Japan's most popular dishes.

15. Udon

Thick wheat flour noodles served hot in a soup, or chilled with a dipping sauce of dashi, mirin and shoyu. Udon is a staple of the Japanese diet and is easy to find in Japan. It's a somewhat thick noodle that's served with dozens of different toppings, including tempura, meat, tofu, seafood or vegetables.



See TASTE on Page 63

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TASTE continued from Page 60

16. Kaiseki

Kaiseki is a type of multicourse Japanese meal. It's fine cuisine that can include 5-16 courses. Each course is small and aesthetically pleasing with seasonal ingredients. Kaiseki is the creation of a chef, so there are no standard kaiseki dishes. Instead there are categories of dishes that are traditionally served.



17. Yakiniiku

Yakiniku, literally "grilled meat," is Japanese-style barbecue. Yakiniku restaurants typically feature a coal grill built into the table. You order from a selection of bite-sized raw meats and vegetable plates and you cook the food yourself. If you're not skilled at grilling, you may accidentally cause a great deal of smoke and flame, which the staff may help you put out. Yakiniku restaurants are the smokiest places in Japan.



18. Takoyaki

Ball-shaped savory Japanese pancakes with a piece of octopus in the middle. Optionally topped with beni shoga, katsubushi, nori flakes, mayonnaise and takoyaki sauce, a sweet soy sauce based condiment.



19. Yuba

Yuba is Japanese tofu skin. It can be enjoyed raw with a light dipping sauce. Fresh yuba has a texture that's similar to mozzarella cheese.

20. Sukiyaki

Sukiyaki is a Japanese stew that's typically cooked in a hotpot on your table as you dine. It consists of thin-sliced beef, vegetables and tofu in a fairly thick broth of soy sauce, sugar and mirin. Sukiyaki is often served with raw eggs as a dipping sauce. It's a winter food that's thought to warm you up.



21. Shabu Shabu

A hotpot of thinly sliced beef or pork prepared at your table by submerging a single piece of meat in a hot broth and swishing it around until it's cooked. The term shabu-shabu is a Japanese onomatopoeia, or sound-effect word, that imitates a swishing sound. It could be literally translated as "swish-swish."



– John Spacey



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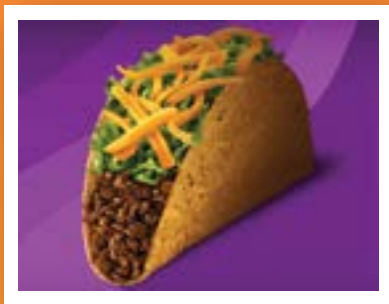
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Our "grand daddy," the Armed Forces Radio service, began May 26, 1942. In the years since, America's military broadcast network has operated under many different names, following servicemembers wherever they serve, to include war zones and U.S. Navy ships at sea. Today, the overseas military audience we serve knows us simply as "AFN."

While millions of Americans serving overseas have tuned in to AFN for popular entertainment over the years, the network has

served an equally crucial role for commanders, helping them reach the force and their families, both on and off military installations. From mobile radio vans communicating to American forces advancing in World War II, to crucial force protection messaging via radio and social media during terrorist attacks, typhoons and emergencies, AFN remains a trusted source for real-time information.

Today's AFN stations enjoy advantages unimagined generations ago. Once a single channel, radio now offers a dozen different audio services and streams over the Internet. Visit www.AFNPacific.net/AFN-360 or install the AFN Pacific mobile app on your Apple iOS or Android device. AFN Eagle radio also broadcasts over the air in Japan and

Korea.

A single channel of AFN television was a huge morale boost a generation ago. Now, the network offers shore-based audience members eight TV services, all in high definition. Sailors afloat in the Pacific receive three: a sports, news and entertainment TV service.

What hasn't changed since 1942 is that AFN continues to provide the most deserving audience in the world with real-time force protection updates and the very best radio and TV entertainment, news and sports. Let us know what you think. Give us feedback at myafn.net. Click on the contact us tab!

— George A. Smith



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05 Women divers(Haenyeo)

Haenyeo from Jeju have been making a living by diving for abalone, conch, and octopus. They never use any breathing equipment. Haenyeo are able to dive up to 65feet under the sea, holding their breath for as long as two minutes at a time. Haenyeo are well-known for their diving skills and devotion to their family.

MUST-VISIT

01 Mt. Hallasan

Mt. Hallasan, which rises 1,950m above sea level, is the highest mountain in South Korea. Here you'll find Baengnokdam, the crater and lake located at the peak of Mt. Hallasan, and about 40 oreums, a beautiful sight of steep and fantastic rock cliffs are designated as Nature Monument and National Park. As the peak of Mt.Hallasan is made of diverse volcanic characteristics, depending on the angle of one's view, one can feel its uniqueness.

02 Seongsan Sunrise Peak(Seongsan Ilchulbong Peak)

On the east coast of Jeju is situated the 182m Seongsan Ilchulbong which looks like a grand old castle. It was formed 5,000 years ago by an underwater eruption on the shallow sea bed. With a background of sun rising in the east beyond the horizon, the beauty of Seongsan Ilchulbong is beyond words description. That is why many people gather in this places on New Year morning to sea the sun rise.

03 Hyeopjae Beach

Hyeopjae Beach is one of the most popular places in the summer. The water is relatively shallow but beware of rip tides. The white sandy beach has extra fine sand mixed with shells that glitter with silver, and the emerald-colored water is crystal clear.

04 Jeju Fire Festival

The Jeju Fire Festival is one of the world's greatest fire festivals. It reinterprets the cattle farming traditions of Jeju. The highlight of the event is the moment when a crater is set ablaze. The flames rise to the top of crater in spectacular fashion. This festival is one of the most popular attractions in Jeju, drawing more than 300,000 visitors each year.



MUST-EAT

06 Black Pork BBQ (Heuk Dwaegi Gogi)

Heuk Dwaegi Gogi is from the island's domestic pig, the Jeju Black Pig. Grilled to perfection on top of burning charcoal, wrapped in vegetables together with rice.

07 Pork Noodles (Gogi Guksu)

The most common delicacy on Jeju is Gogi Guksu. It is noodle soup made by skimming pork bones until a cloudy broth forms.

08 Abalone Porridge (Jeonbokjuk)

Jeonbokjuk is a nourishing porridge. It is well-loved for its chewy texture of abalone and its subtle flavor.

09 Grilled Sea Bream (Okdom)

Okdom is a small red fish that is known for its delicate taste and texture. It is usually served broiled. One fish will feed 1-2 people.

10 Tangerine (Gyul)

Jeju Tangerines are very high in sugar content and less sour than most varieties, so they taste better. They are good for dieting and help absorb calcium. They are rich in vitamin C, which is good for skin beauty and fatigue.

UNESCO in JEJU



- Biosphere Reserve(2002)
- World Natural Heritage Site(2007)
- Global Geopark Network(2010)
- Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity(2016)

Inquiries

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How to get there

The easiest way to visit Jeju Island is by air. All domestic airports, including Gimpo, can get you there within an hour's flight time.

- Gimpo/Busan/Daegu/Gunsan etc. → Jeju: within 1 hour
- Tokyo → Jeju: 2 hours 30 mins | → Osaka → Jeju: 1 hour 40 mins



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Ocean Expo Park

Located on the beautiful west coast of the Motobu Peninsula, Ocean Expo Park is home to such major tourist attractions as Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium and Tropical Dream Center, featuring an exhibition of approximately 2,000 orchids, as well as Tropical & Subtropical Arboretum, Native Okinawan Village and Oceanic Culture Museum with its planetarium and sea turtle and manatee pools. Also located on the grounds are Dolphin Lagoon and Oki-chan Theater, where a group of lovable dolphins perform a spectacular show for visitors.



A Tropical Dream Center

Exotic botanical garden

Featuring over 2,000 orchids displayed throughout the year in three individual greenhouses, the vast six-hectare grounds of Tropical Dream Center include the Cluster Gallery, the Observatory Tower, the Fruit Tree Greenhouse and the Victoria Greenhouse, all of which welcome visitors into a tranquil setting in which they are surrounded by beautiful, fragrant flowers and exotic fruits and plants. Visitors can borrow an audio guide for free at the counter located in the entrance hall. The audio guide explains in detail each of the major displays in English, Korean or Chinese.



Hours: October-February 8:30-17:30 *Last entry 17:00; March-September 8:30-19:00 *Last entry 18:30
Admission: ¥760 for high school students and up, free for junior high school students and under
*A half-price entry discount is offered to Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium ticket holders.
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B Oceanic Culture Museum (Planetarium)

Experience one of Okinawa's largest planetariums

The Oceanic Culture Museum features a planetarium that allows you to explore the night sky with millions of twinkling stars and an exhibition through which you can learn how the ocean plays an important role in people's lives in the Pacific Ocean area including Okinawa.



Hours: October-February 8:30-17:30 *Last entry 17:00;
March-September 8:30-19:00 *Last entry 18:30
Admission: ¥190 for high school students and up;
free for junior high school students and under

*The following planetarium shows can be enjoyed in English:
The Great Voyage of Poy and His Friends
Okinawa's Chura (Bushi) (Beautiful Stars)

C Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium

Okinawa's No. 1 tourist attraction

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D Oki-chan Theater

Oki-chan Theater features a dolphin performance by a park idol, Oki-chan, and her friends. The show's stars will fascinate audiences with their dynamic high jumps and humorous, impressive dance routine. The theater is located right next to the aquarium building.



Admission: Free
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E Native Okinawan Village

Get a taste of old Okinawa

This is the re-creation of an old community of the 17-19th centuries where visitors can explore traditional houses and high-bayed storehouses, get a glimpse into the old-fashioned lifestyle of Okinawa entertainingly presented by local staff and also enjoy complimentary tea and sweets between 10:00-16:00. Audio announcements are set each houses in English.



Hours: October-February 8:30-17:30;
March-September 8:30-19:00 / Admission: Free

海洋博公園
OCEAN EXPO PARK

For more information

Ocean Expo Park Management Center
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Tel: 0980-48-2741 Fax: 0980-48-3339

<http://oki-park.jp/kaiyohaku/en>

Hours: October-February 8:00-18:00; March-September 8:00-19:30
Ocean Expo Park is closed on the first Wednesday and the following Thursday of December for maintenance.

OCEAN EXPO PARK

Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium

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- Admission is free for children under 6.
- School groups are eligible for discount. For elementary / junior high / high school activities only. Applications must be made in advance.
- Persons who are designated as physically or mentally disabled are eligible for free admission. Please show your certificate at the ticket counter. Escort (1 person only) is also admitted for free.
- After 16:00, admission fees become uniformly discounted. School and Group discounts become void after 16:00.
- Annual Passport holders can enter Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium as many times as they like for 12 months.

Open Hours

	Open	Last admission	Close
Oct. - Feb.	8:30	17:30	18:30
Mar. - Sep.	8:30	19:00	20:00

- Ocean Expo Park opens at 8:00.
- Closed on the first Wednesday of December and the following day (the same as Ocean Expo Park).
- No Food or Drink inside. ● No Smoking inside.
- No Pets inside (Except for guide and service dogs).

Tropical Dream Center

Admission Fees	General	Group (20 or more)
Adult / high school	760yen	550yen
Junior high / elementary	Free	

*A half-price entry discount is offered to Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium ticket holders. (Discounted price: ¥380 for high school students and up)

Oceanic Culture Museum (Planetarium)

Admission Fees	General	Group (20 or more)
Adult / high school	190yen	80yen
Junior high / elementary	Free	



Tropical Dream Center | 8:30-17:30 (Oct.-Feb.)
8:30-19:00 (Mar.-Sep.)



Oceanic Culture Museum (Planetarium) | 8:30-17:30 (Oct.-Feb.)
8:30-19:00 (Mar.-Sep.)

海洋博公園
OCEAN EXPO PARK

<http://oki-park.jp/>

*Hours for the peripheral area of Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium
8:00-19:00 (Oct.-Feb.) / 8:00-20:30 (Mar.-Sep.)
Closed on the first Wednesday of December and the following day

For more information

Ocean Expo Park Management Center
424 Ishikawa, Motobu-cho, Kunigami-gun,
Okinawa 905-0206
Tel: 0980-48-2741 Fax: 0980-48-3339





Enjoying Nirai Beach on Okinawa.
Photo by Hazel Ann Imperial

Don't miss out on these Okinawa musts

Okinawa may not be the biggest island, but it sure has a long list of fun things to do. Sometimes, though, you just need to know where to go. Here is a look at some of the island's highlights. Let the adventure begin!

LOCAL FESTIVALS

Naha Dragon Boat Race

The major event in May draws around 200,000 people every year. Each heat features three teams that sail side-by-side for 2,000 feet. Rowers' stamina, teamwork and ability to make a smooth turn makes a difference between winners and losers in this physically challenging race. Among the many matchups scheduled for the event, the rivalry among men's and women's teams from the four service branches of the U.S. military attract much of the attention.

Naha Tug-of-War

This event is huge – literally. Known for its exceptional scale, the giant rope of the event was recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's largest rice straw rope used in a tug-of-war. Annually, 285,000 Okinawans, Americans, and tourists show up and either pull the rope or root for one side or the other.

Shuri Castle Festival

The age of the Ryukyu Kingdom is brought back to life in this autumn event. Traditional ceremonies, parades, and dance/music performances are presented with authentic

costumes at Shuri Castle. At night, the venue is illuminated with candles.

Eisa and beer festivals

From August through September, many festivals take place that present Eisa, an Okinawan style of dance. Choreographed dancers perform as a group to audiences at a venue, or march through local communities with their drumbeats marking the season of the dance. The Okinawa Zento Eisa Matsuri, the biggest among all the Eisa festivals on the island, is now combined with a beer festival.

Cherry blossom festivals

In Okinawa, cherry blossoms begin blooming in late January. The early bloomers draw many people at places such as Yaedake Mountain, Nakijin Castle and Nago Chuo Park. Unlike those on the mainland, the petals on Okinawa don't dance in the wind, but their vibrant pink color still dazzle countless visitors.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Marathons

On Okinawa, many marathons take place from fall through spring. Each race

provides unique challenges and attractions. In Ayahashi Kaichu Road Race, runners will hop around islands as they cross bridges overlooking the water. In Kourijima Magic Hour RUN, people can enjoy a beautiful view of the ocean during the sunset. There is also Iheya Moonlight Marathon where runners can enjoy different scenes from sunset well into the night. Naha Marathon and Okinawa Marathon are the two major races on the island and are very popular among runners.

Snorkeling/diving

There are many diving/snorkeling spots in Okinawa. At Sunabe Seawall, people can enjoy spotting colorful tropical fish and soft coral. At Maeda Point, a stunning view of the Blue Grotto welcomes divers and snorkelers. If you travel to Kerama Islands, you can even swim with sea turtles.

Beaches

Beaches in Okinawa offer all sorts of fun. Water obstacles at Manza Beach draw many Japanese and American kids during the summer. At Moon Beach, people can enjoy new water activities such as Flyboard and Hurricane Disco. Some military facilities

Places for kids



Round 1 Stadium is an amusement center where kids can enjoy various arcade games, bowling, karaoke, batting cages and more. At **Kukuru Yomitan Circuit**, kids can get behind the wheel of a go-kart. At **Owls Adventure Park**, they can put the birds of prey on their arms just like Harry Potter.

have beautiful beaches on site. On White Beach, there are cabins and pavilions lined up along the coast for parties on the beach. At Torii Beach, people can enjoy water activities such as ocean kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding. Kadena Marina is home to many water activities such as scuba diving, jet skiing and sailing. Plus, the beautiful Okuma Beach is a perfect destination for a getaway.

Trekking/hiking

There are places in Okinawa where people can enjoy trekking/hiking in the northern part of the island. At Mt. Yonahadake or Mt. Nagodake, routes are well maintained for mountain climbers. At Daiseikirinzan, people can see unique rock formations or tropical trees and plants. Around Hiji Falls, there is camping area as well as a route for trekking.

Theme parks

Although Okinawa may not have Disneyland or Universal Studios, there are theme parks that offer unique fun. At Expo Park, you can watch dolphins pull off acrobatic stunts or a large whale shark swim in a giant water tank. At Okinawa World, people can explore caves like a spelunker or catch a habu snake show at Habu Museum Park.

At Doki Doki Yambarunture, an exhilarating ride on an ATV is available. Okinawa Zoo & Museum near Kadena Air Base has 150 kinds of animals and creatures.

Cultural sites

Places like Nakagusuku and Katsuren Castles offers an opportunity to learn the history of the Ryukyu Kingdom. At Tsuboya Pottery Street or Yomitan Pottery Village, view and purchase some of the signature products of Okinawa. There are opportunities for people to watch craftsmen working on their pottery, or even get hands-on experience making their own. Places like Okinawa Peace Memorial Park, Hacksaw Ridge (Urasoe Castle Ruins) or the Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters provide learning opportunities about the Battle of Okinawa.

SHOPPING & DINING

Shopping areas and a big mall

AEON MALL Okinawa Rycom near the Plaza Housing Area is the biggest shopping mall on the island. This is the place to go if you are looking for U.S. brands such as American Eagle or the Gap. Kokusai Street in Naha is crowded with tourists looking for local souvenirs and foods. Heiwa Dori off of Kokusai Street is also



Fun on Okinawa.
Photo by Jayme Linton

poplar with many shops lined up in a maze-like arcade. American Village near Camp Foster and Kadena Air Base offers all sorts of different dining experiences.

Noodle joints

Okinawa soba noodles are one of the popular foods that the prefecture proudly presents. There are countless places where you can enjoy them. Chiruguwa Mihama and Hamaya are notable soba joints near Camp Foster and Kadena Air Base. There are many ramen noodle restaurants on the island, as well.

Chain ramen restaurants such as Tenkaippin or Hayatemauro are popular among servicemembers.

Steak houses

Okinawans love steak. And because of that, there are many steak houses on the island. Jack's Steak House serves up

one of the rarest steaks you'll find on the island. SAM's restaurants are very popular for sirloin steak, and Four Seasons near Kadena Air Base is popular among service members.

Old American brand

On Okinawa, there are many examples of "good 'ol America." One example of that is A&W restaurants. While it is becoming difficult to find them in the States, there are 40 of them on the island. Some even feature carhops with roller skates bringing food to your vehicle. Foremost Blue Seal Ice Cream is another example of "born in America, raised in Okinawa." The ice cream maker was originally established by USA-based Foremost Ltd. Now, the ice cream maker is recognized in Okinawa as a major brand along with Baskin Robbins.

- Shoji Kudaka



Beautiful view from
Okinawa's Sunabe Seawall.
Photo by Romney A. Somera

首里城公園

SHURIJO CASTLE



The Shurijo Castle in Shuri, Naha City, is the symbol of Okinawa and a registered UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2000. Its main building, Seiden, is the most prominent building of the Ryukyu Kingdom and unique fusion of Japanese and Chinese architectural styles. Although its first construction date is unknown, by 1427, its appearance was the same as today. It housed the royal residence and the headquarters of the government for nearly 450 years. The Shurijo Castle was the center of culture and arts, spawning gorgeous Ryuso clothing and exquisite Ryukyu court food. It has several gates, including the Shureimon and Sonohyan-utaki Ishimon. The sunsets from the hill are breathtakingly beautiful. Many seasonal and cultural events take place at the castle. A fire on October 31, 2019, destroyed some facilities, including Seiden, but there are still many attractions, and it remains a place to enjoy the Ryukyu culture.



Opening ceremony

The sound of a gong and the voice of "Ukaiju" signal the opening of the gate inviting you into the castle. Please enjoy this special ceremony (morning only). 7: 55-8: 15 every day except holidays

※ The ceremony could be canceled due to inclement weather.
Location: In front of Kankaimon



Sanshin experience

An easy and fun lesson on Sanshin, the traditional instrument of Ryukyu. Every Saturday, Sunday and public holidays (except when overlapping with other events)

※ First 5 people / No reservations / For persons 13 years of age or older: 11: 40/14: 40 Venue: Genealogy seat, (Keizusa, Yotsumoza)



Looking over the city from the Iri-no Azana, the sunset and night views are gorgeous.



As the sun goes down, the castle walls are lit up creating a fantastic, expansive scene.



You can enjoy Okinawa soba and traditional Ryukyuan confectionery at the restaurant. Shops also sell goods available only at the Shurijo Castle Park, such as popular T-shirts and towels.



Apr.-Jun. 8:00-19:30
Jul.-Sep. 8:00-20:30
Oct.-Nov. 8:00-19:30
Dec.-Mar. 8:00-18:30

Regular holiday: First Wednesday and Thursday of July

* Please check the website for the latest information and details.

<http://oki-park.jp/shurijo/en>

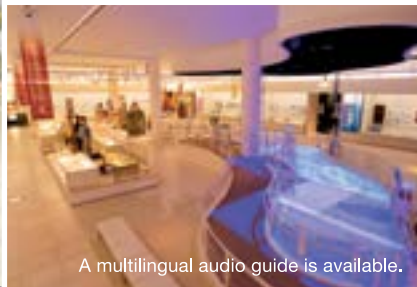
〒903-0815 1-2 Shuri Kinjocho, Naha City
Tel: 098-886-2020

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OKINAWA PREFECTURAL MUSEUM and ART MUSEUM

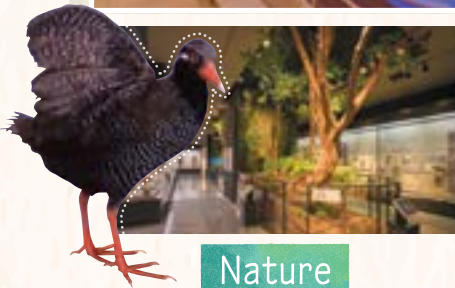
Enjoy the nature, history, culture, and art of Okinawa at one place.



A multilingual audio guide is available.

Museum

The permanent exhibition introduces Okinawa's history and culture nurtured by its unique nature and climate. The exhibition room is composed of a comprehensive display showing the history of Okinawa and five themed exhibition rooms (Nature, Archeology, Arts and Crafts, History, and Folklore), where visitors can experience the account from the past through the present.



Nature

Under the theme "Creatures Tell the Story of 200 Million Years of Okinawa" using dioramas and specimens, the exhibition introduces the origins of the Ryukyu Islands and the world of creatures that evolved here independently.

Ryukyu Kingdom

The Ryukyu Kingdom existed in the Ryukyu Islands for about 450 years from 1429 to 1879. The exhibition introduces the history of the Kingdom, which prospered as a trading nation conducting intermediary trade between China, Japan and Southeast Asia.

The Bell of the State Hall at Shurijo Castle

A bell that once hung in the Shurijo Castle. Its engraved inscriptions tell about the prosperity of the Ryukyu Kingdom, which flourished as a maritime trading nation.



Living

The "Ethnic traditions and living" exhibit in the ethnic section introduces the lifestyle and culture of the Okinawan islands. Exhibits with the theme "watching," "listening," and "examining" focus on the structure of the village, religion and festivals, clothing, food and shelter.



Okinawa after the war

The Pacific War severely damaged Okinawa, which was returned to Japan after a 27-year period of American rule. The exhibition introduces the history of Okinawa from that turbulent era through today.

Art Museum

This exhibition focuses on modern and contemporary art such as oil paintings, watercolors, sculptures, prints, photographs, and videos that were created in the Okinawan environment.

A multilingual audio guide is available.



3-1-1 Omoromachi, Naha City

Tel: 098-941-8200 <https://okimu.jp>

Hours: 9:00-18:00; Fri & Sat until 20:00

*Entry permitted up to 30 minutes before closing time

Closed: Mondays; for cleaning and maintenance June 29-July 7; New Year's holiday Dec. 28-Jan. 4

Admission	Adults	high school and university students	children 6-15 of age	preschool age children
Museum	¥530	¥270	¥150	free
Art museum	¥400	¥220	¥100	free

*Admission allows entry to the permanent exhibition only.

Japan at a glance

There are so many places worth seeing while you're stationed in Japan. To fit them all in this space would be impossible. So, here's a look at some of the most popular cities to visit while on the mainland and Okinawa, and a few of the hotspots within Tokyo.

Kyoto



The former capital of Japan, countless tourists visit the city to enjoy numerous temples, shrines and traditional houses.

Kiyomizu Temple, Gold Pavilion and Arashiyama district are some of the top attractions. If you are lucky, you might see **maiko dancers** in traditional attire strolling on the **Gion** or **Yasaka** district.



Try kimono rental at Higashiyama District in Kyoto, Japan.
Photo by Hannah Lewis



Hiroshima

Often called the City of Water, six large rivers flow through the center of Hiroshima, which has countless bridges, fountains and water monuments. Hiroshima, of course, will always be remembered as the first city to have the atomic bomb dropped on it. **Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima Castle**, along with **Itsukushima Shrine** on the **Miyajima Island** are must-see attractions.

Niigata



Facing the Sea of Japan, the city is a relaxed elegant port town with traditional streets, famed sake breweries and quaint attractions that draw about 17 million tourists annually. A bullet train connects it to Tokyo via a two-hour commute. The 1,000-foot-long, six-arched **Bandai Bridge** over Shinano River is the city's de facto logo.



Nagasaki

The peaceful port city of hills filled with Western-style buildings is often called "the San Francisco of Japan." It is the first port to open to the world after the nation's closed-door policy, and is the city that met atomic devastation alongside Hiroshima. **Ooura Catholic Church, Glover Garden** and **China Town** are some of the popular attractions.



Osaka

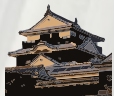


The largest city in the Western part of Japan functions as a business and commerce hub. It was the nation's former capital for brief times in the seventh and eighth centuries. **Osaka Castle, Dotonbori Street** and **Universal Studios Japan** are popular attractions. The city offers various tasty foods, including takoyaki (octopus ball) and kushikatsu (deep fried pork cutlet and onion).



OKINAWA

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Matsuyama

The largest city in the mainland of Shikoku offers various tourist attractions, including the magnificent **Matsuyama Castle** and Japan's oldest **Doogo Onsen** hot spring. You can enjoy your soak in the hot spring at a 130-year-old wooden public bathhouse. Shikoku region is famous for the pilgrimage to the **Eighty-Eight Sacred Temples**.

Sapporo



Since it hosted the winter Olympics in 1972, the capital of northern mainland of Hokkaido is known as the center of winter sports. The **Snow Festival** in February, which features giant sculptures carved from packed snow, draws more than 2 million tourists from all over the world. The city is home to **Sapporo Brewery**, miso-based ramen noodles and tasty Mongolian BBQ restaurants.



TOKYO

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Sendai

Zelkova trees line the central streets of Sendai, which is often referred to as the City of Trees. The city offers various tourist attractions, including **Sendai Castle**, Rinnoji Temple and the **Matsushima Gulf** with its 260 pine islands. While the lines of trees are decorated with thousands of lights for the Pageant of **Starlight** during wintertime, **Tanabata** (star festival) is celebrated with colorful street decorations in mid-summer.



Kamakura, Kanagawa
Photo by Sarah Hodge



Kamakura

The city is home to magnificent **Big Buddha** and various prestigious shrines and temples. Since it is located only 31 miles southwest of Tokyo, it offers great one-day sightseeing destination. Kamakura offers surfing and other marine sports on the beaches, as well.



Yokohama

The second largest city in Japan, Yokohama is a nice day-trip for many installations in the Kanto Plain. With a beautiful bay area, the city has plenty of picturesque views to go along with attractions that include: **Chinatown, Cup Noodle Museum, Red Brick Warehouse** and a giant **Ferris wheel**.

Culture
Education
Transportation
Private vehicles
Base breakdown
Online
Legal
Food
Leisure

Tokyo



7 Ginza
Known for its luxury shopping, all the top stores can be found here.

Check out Kabuki in Ginza



6 Odaiba
An artificial island in Tokyo Bay is full of entertainment and views of the water.

5 Asakusa
A very traditional district of Tokyo with lots of tourists, food and a giant shrine and temple.

1 Shinjuku
A very busy part of Tokyo full of skyscrapers and the world's busiest train station.

Enjoy a panoramic vista of Tokyo in Shinjuku



2 Harajuku
With countless boutiques and cafes along the main Takeshita-dori Street, the town is sanctuary for teenagers.

3 Shibuya
Home to the Meiji Shrine, Shibuya is a top stop along the Yamanote Line.

4 Roppongi
The trendy area has many shops and eateries and is the main entertainment district of Tokyo.

New Sanno, Hardy Barracks great options when visiting Tokyo



View of Tokyo Skytree, the world's tallest tower. Photo by Jennifer Kekich

TOKYO

OKINAWA



Okinawa

1 Naha
The most populated city in Okinawa has many shopping areas and tourist spots. Kokusai Street, the city's main street, is lined with many souvenir shops, old markets and night life spots. Many festivities, old and new, take place in this capital of Okinawa - home to the island's main airport and seaport.

How to hop around Okinawan islands on the cheap



2 Nago
The gateway to the northern part of Okinawa's main island, Nago is known for its large forest and beautiful beaches. The city hosts many unique attractions such as Pineapple Park, Underwater Observatory, Sweets Palace, and a brewery. It's also known for a cherry blossom festival and fireworks.

Marine life at Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium. Photo by Mathew Routt

3 Motobu
This town in a large peninsula in the northern area is rich in nature. At Churaumi Aquarium and Ocean Expo Park, two of the most popular tourist spots in Okinawa, you can see large sharks and rays cruise in a giant water tank. In winter, cherry blossoms at Yaedake Mountain draw many visitors.

Fukugi streets: A stroll through Okinawa's good-luck trees

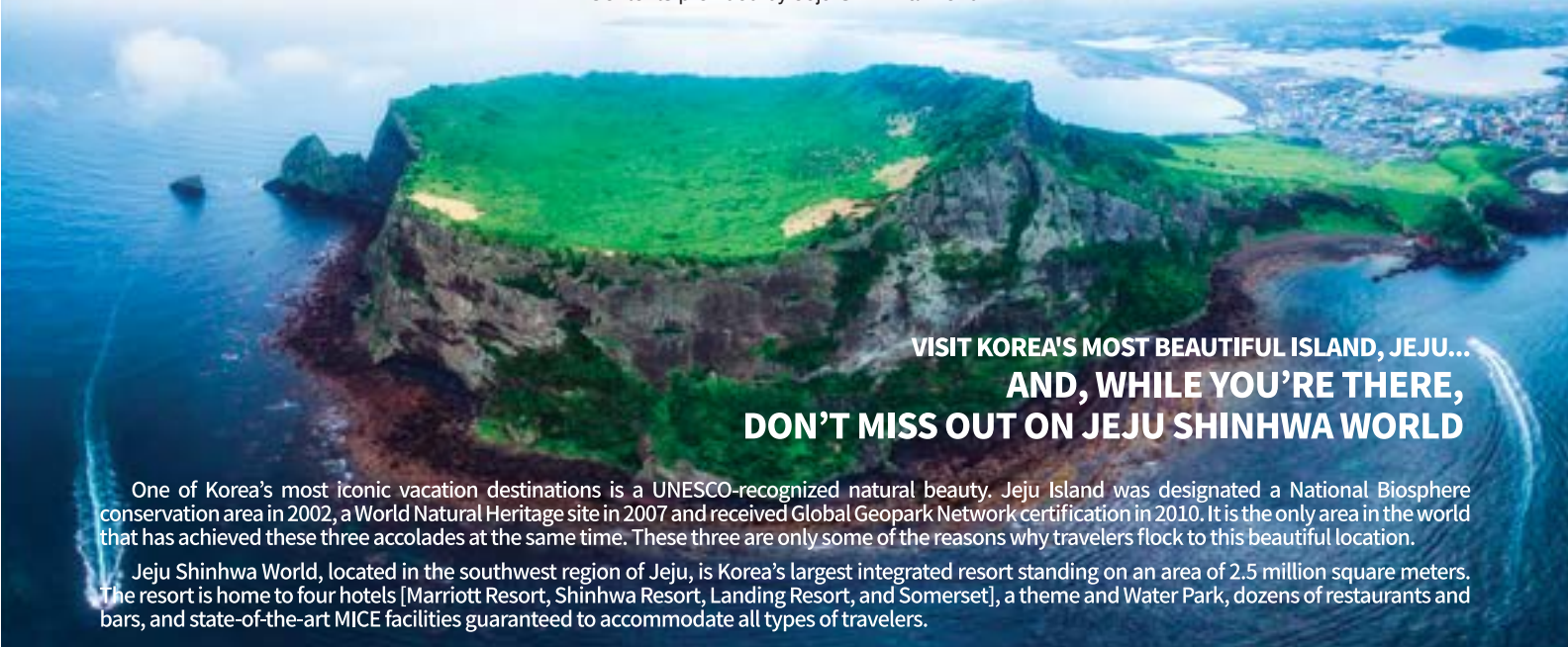


4 Chatan
The host municipality of Camp Foster and Camp Lester has many shops and restaurants along the coast. In American Village in Mihama, you can enjoy various cuisines, buy souvenirs, or even partake in a cosplay go-kart ride. Seawall Street to the north of American Village is also popular among servicemembers.

Taco rice is all the craze on Okinawa



5 Ishigaki
This remote island with beautiful nature is a one-hour flight from Naha. Among its many natural attractions such as a river with mangroves, Sunset Beach and a limestone cave, Kabira Bay would be the most famous for its iconic view. Ishigaki beef, a signature brand of the island, is popular across the country.



**VISIT KOREA'S MOST BEAUTIFUL ISLAND, JEJU...
AND, WHILE YOU'RE THERE,
DON'T MISS OUT ON JEJU SHINHWA WORLD**

One of Korea's most iconic vacation destinations is a UNESCO-recognized natural beauty. Jeju Island was designated a National Biosphere conservation area in 2002, a World Natural Heritage site in 2007 and received Global Geopark Network certification in 2010. It is the only area in the world that has achieved these three accolades at the same time. These three are only some of the reasons why travelers flock to this beautiful location.

Jeju Shinhwa World, located in the southwest region of Jeju, is Korea's largest integrated resort standing on an area of 2.5 million square meters. The resort is home to four hotels [Marriott Resort, Shinhwa Resort, Landing Resort, and Somerset], a theme and Water Park, dozens of restaurants and bars, and state-of-the-art MICE facilities guaranteed to accommodate all types of travelers.

**UNRIVALED
NATURAL BEAUTY
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Jeju Shinhwa World is just a short drive away from some of the island's most beautiful attractions including coastal areas carved from volcanic activity dating back millions of years and Gotjawal, volcanic symbiotic forests you can only find in Jeju.



Make sure to stop in at the "Mosil" Clubhouse at Jeju Shinhwa World Marriott Resort, inspired by Jeju's famous Seongsan Ilchulbong Peak, one of 12 UNESCO World Global Geoparks. Another must-see is Somerset Jeju Shinhwa World, enveloped by the lush Gotjawal forest, one of the most pristine forests in the world.

**TAKE YOUR PICK FROM
JEJU SHINHWA WORLD'S
FOUR UNIQUE HOTELS**

Jeju Shinhwa World has four hotels and condos to choose from to fit any of your travel needs.

Marriott Resort awaits international travelers seeking the comforts and services only the Marriott name can provide. At the Marriott's "Mosil" Clubhouse, soak in the heated outdoor pool year-round, and treat yourself at the spa featuring 8 private treatment rooms. The resort also offers easy access to Landing Casino, the largest foreigners-only casino in Jeju.



Traveling with your family? Somerset Resort offers three-bedroom suites equipped with two bathrooms, a spacious living room, and a kitchen stocked with smart home appliances including a refrigerator, dishwasher, washing machine and even a wine cooler.

Smaller families and couples will fall in love with Shinhwa Resort's junior suites that can connect to other rooms. This resort offers an outdoor, year-round Sky Pool and the island's largest Sony Playstation Zone.

On a girls' trip or relaxed couples' trip? Landing Resort is also a great choice those who just want to relax and enjoy the island without any unnecessary frills.

**GREAT GOURMET BROUGHT TO YOU
BY WORLD-RENOWNED MASTER CHEFS**

At Jeju Shinhwa World, know you'll not only get a relaxing experience but also a delicious one! Enjoy authentic Cantonese cuisine served by award-winning star chef Alan Chan at Le Chinois. Savor some classic family favorites such as Beijing Duck, or embrace variety with Dim Sum Brunch including a selection of more than 20 juicy xiaolongbao buns and dumplings.

There are more bars and restaurants to check out including handcrafted Korean restaurant Jeju Seon offering amazing dishes using only the freshest of local ingredients. Steak lovers will want to try SKY on 5 Dining.



**FUN-FILLED
THEME PARK AND WATER PARK**

Thrill and adventure-seekers will want to head to Shinhwa Theme Park, which offers fun rides for all ages, performances and shows throughout the day. In the winter, enjoy the ice-skating rink or in the summer, a refreshing



bumper car ride. The park also has a 4D theater and VR zone. Also in the summer months, enjoy Jeju's largest water park at Shinhwa with 13 different types of waves, slides and pools including two slides that stretch 230 meters long, the first of their kind in Asia. 🌈

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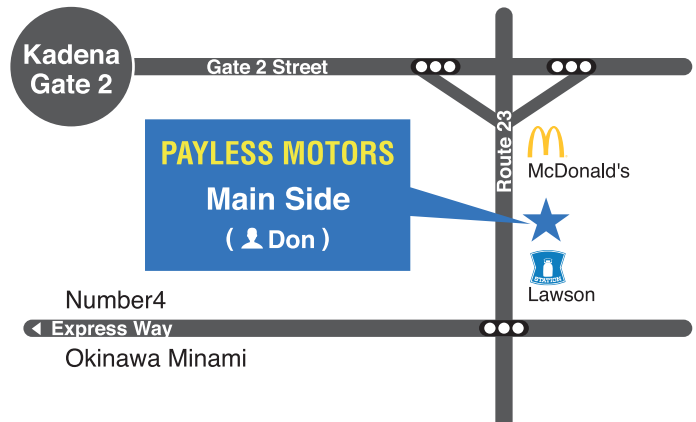
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