THE MYSTERY IN SHIKOKU

Traveling Dates: Nov 4 – 12, 2019 (9 Days)

Cities covered: Kobe, Awaji Island, Tokushima, Kochi, Matsuyama, Takamatsu, Shodo Island, Himeji & Osaka

Tour Package Includes

* International Flight from HONOLULU
* Extensive Island Tour
* Shodo Island and Awaji Island
* Deluxe Hotel Accommodations (Based on Double Occupancy)
* Admissions and 18 Meals as Stated
* 3 Nights at a Natural Hot Springs Ryokan
* Hands-on Experience:
  * Udon Making
  * Tosawashi Paper Making
* UNESCO World Heritage Site: Himeji Temple
* O-Naruto-Kyo Bridge & Whirlpools Sightseeing Boat
* Local Specialties & Regional Delicacies:
  * Onsen Kaiseki, Tataki Sashimi, Sanuki Udon & Kobe Beef
* Bottled Water & Wireless Head Phone System
* Gratuities for Tour Guides & Drivers

Price per person: $3,588
Incl: Tax & Fuel Charge
Single Supp: $850
Day 1**Nov 4  Honolulu → Kansai
We begin our journey by boarding an international flight to Kansai Airport, the gateway to Osaka. Meals and snacks will be served on the plane.

Day 2**Nov 5  Kansai – Kobe
Arrive at Kansai International Airport. We will meet with an Air and Sea Travel representative who will escort us to our hotel in Kobe.

Day 3**Nov 6  Kobe – Awaji Island – Tokushima – Kochi (B, L, D)
After breakfast, we will drive to Awaji Island, the largest island in the Inland Sea. Upon arrival, we will head to Naruto. The biggest attraction in Naruto is the Whirlpools in the Naruto Strait. This phenomenon occurs when opposing currents from the Seto Inland Sea and the Kii Channel meet in the Naruto Strait with a water level difference of as much as 1.5 meters made by the ebb and flow of the tide. During high tides from spring through fall, huge whirlpools rotating at 20 kilometers an hour and exceeding 20 meters in diameter occur. A Whirlpools Sightseeing Boat allows us to take in a really spectacular view of the roaring whirlpools and surging currents. O-Naruto-kyo Bridge is a suspension bridge on the route connecting Awaji Island and Tokushima. We will go to Tokushima in the eastern part of Shikoku. Tokushima is an old castle town known for its passionate Awa-odori dance in the summer. The Awa-odori Dance is a traditional dance with sounds of 'shamisen' (Japanese guitar), gongs, and drums. We can experience this fun atmosphere at Awa-odori Hall. Then we will transfer to Kochi, the capital of Kochi Prefecture on the southern coast of Shikoku. The city is small and friendly, with a casual atmosphere and a dose of southern flair. Upon arrival, we will transfer to our Onsen Hotel where we can enjoy our dinner followed by a relaxing Hot Spring Bath.

Day 4**Nov 7  Kochi – Matsuyama (B, L, D)
After breakfast at our hotel, we will visit the Tosawashi Kogeimura Craftwork Village (craftwork village). Japan is well known for paper productions. In Kochi, the Tosa brand is a very high quality of Washi paper and has a history of more than 1,000 years. It has been designated by the central government as traditional craftwork and is being produced in areas including Tosa City and Ino Town. At Tosa Washi Kogeimura Craftwork, we can experience papermaking, and create our own original postcards and paper fans, among other items. After lunch, we will visit Towel Museum Ichihiro to learn about the long history of producing towels in Imabari, Ehime. Then, we will transfer to Matsuyama, the capital city of Ehime Prefecture on Japan’s Shikoku Island. We will transfer to our hotel and overnight.

Day 5**Nov 8  Matsuyama (B, L, D)
Matsuyama, it’s known for its central Dōgo Onsen Honkan bathhouse. First, we will transfer to Matsuyama Castle, one of Japan's twelve "original castles". We will take the Ropeway to the top for a panoramic view of Matsuyama City. The castle was completed in 1627 and is one of the few castles in Japan that has been preserved in its original condition. After walking through the castle, we will transfer to Dōgo Onsen Hot Spring Main Building. Dōgo Onsen is the oldest hot spring in Japan (3,000 years old). The Main Building is the symbol of Dōgo spa resort, which was completed in 1894 and has been designated as an Important Cultural Property. The three-storied timber structure is said to be a model of the bathhouse of the gods in the film "Spirited Away" by Hayao Miyazaki. Then we will take a walk to the Dōgo Onsen Station and Houjyoen where we can enjoy a relaxing Foot Bath. After lunch, we will stop by the Botchan Gizmo Clock (Botchan Karakuri Tokei), located beside Dōgo Onsen Station at the entrance of the shopping arcade. The clock chimes on the hour and on the half hour. The clock was completed in 1994 to commemorate the 100th year of the last reconstruction of the Dōgo Bathhouse, and the animatronics that emerge during the musical interlude depict special scenes from the novel. We also have the chance to board the Botchan Express (Botchan Ressha), a diesel-powered replica of a small-gauge steam locomotive installed in the city of Matsuyama in 1888 as the original Iyo Railway. Not only was it the first railway in Shikoku but it was also the third private railway in Japan. Tonight, we will enjoy the Hearty Buffet Dinner in the hotel.
Day 6**Nov 9
Matsuyama – Takamatsu – Shodo Island  
(B, L, D)

After having a leisurely breakfast at the hotel, we will explore Kotohira Shrine, one of the most revered Shinto shrines in the country. The main shrine stands halfway up Mt. Zozusan. The approach to the shrine is a long flight of granite steps – 785 in all. Before lunch, we will have a hands-on opportunity to Make Udon at the Udon School. Ritsurin Garden is a must see attraction. It is one of the most famous and beautiful historical gardens in Japan. There are various bridges, footpaths and small hills which offer stunning views of the garden and the surrounding scenery. Afterward, we will transfer to Takamatsu Port to take a ferry to Tonoshō Port, one of the entrances of Shodo Island. On the way to Takamatsu Port, we will pass by Dofuchi Strait, the narrowest strait acknowledged by the Guinness Book of World Records. On the ferry ride, we will experience the beauty of the Seto Inland Sea. Shodo Island (Shodoshima) is the second largest island in the Inland Sea (Seto Naikai), and is well connected with Shikoku. Upon arrival, we will transfer to our hot spring hotel and enjoy Onsen Kaiseki.

Shodo Island Open air hot spring: We can enjoy the natural beauty and therapeutic benefits of the onsen. Japanese onsans are extremely beneficial for one’s health because of their mineral compositions. Different minerals provide different health benefits, which gives us a relaxing effect on our body and mind.

Day 7**Nov 10
Shodo Island  
(B, L, D)

In the morning, we will visit the Marukin Soy Sauce Museum. Soy sauce has been very famous in Shodo Island for many years. We will learn the history of soy sauce and how soy sauce was made in ancient times. Besides tasting soy sauce, we will have Soy Sauce Ice Cream at the museum. Soy sauce ice cream is a mixture of salty and sweet. After enjoying a special Shodo Island Teishoku for lunch, we will enjoy the Olive Park, a working olive grove. Shodo Island is the birth place of olive cultivation in Japan. Then, we will visit the Kankakei Gorge (SamuKasumiKei), a nationally-designated Place of Scenic Beauty on the island. Kankakei Gorge is ranked as one of Japan's three most beautiful gorges and is particularly spectacular during the autumn season, which usually takes place in the second half of November. On Kankakei Ropeway, we will experience the stunning views of the Kankakei Gorge and the Inland Sea (Seto Naikai). Then we will head to Choshikei Monkey Park where we can observe the monkeys or feed them from a special feeding area. After a 15 minute walk beyond the monkey park, we will be able to have a beautiful view of the island and the Seto Inland Sea.

Day 8**Nov 11
Shodo Island – Himeji – Kobe  
(B, L)

After breakfast, we will transfer to Fukuda Port to board a ferry to Himeji Port. Himeji, originally a castle town in Japan, is home to Himeji Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, also known as the "White Heron" Castle and the largest castle in Japan. Himeji Castle is famous not only for its main tower but also for its highly effective and complicated defense design. Afterwards, we head out to Kobe, the capital of Hyogo Prefecture. Our lunch today features Kobe Beef. Then, we will enjoy stunning terraced gardens and heated greenhouses at the Kobe Nunobiki Herb Garden & Ropeway. We will also visit the Kobe Mosaic Mall, a popular shopping mall with beautiful scenic views of the city of Kobe. We can enjoy our dinner in this mall.

Day 9**Nov 12
Kobe – Osaka – Kansai  
(B)

After breakfast, we will proceed to Osaka. First, we will transfer to Kuromon Ichiba, a lively covered market which stretches for 580 meters in Osaka’s Chuo Ward. One reason for the market’s popularity is that many stalls will prepare, cook and serve their food to you right on the spot. This makes it an excellent venue for strolling, sampling, and snacking on a delicious variety of fresh market foods. We will enjoy our own lunch here. After that, we will enjoy our shopping in Shinsaibashi, the largest and best known shopping area in Osaka where many boutiques and specialty shops attract local people and visitors. The Shinsaibashi evolved from the arcaded streets “Shinsaibashi Shopping Street”. With a history of 380 years, it was already an established shopping area in the Edo Period. Shops of all kinds and for all ages line the street, a roofed arcade 600 meters long. Dōtonbori is another principal tourist destination in Osaka. One of the area's most prominent landmarks is “The Glico Man”, a billboard for confectionery company Glico displaying the image of a runner crossing the finish line and is an icon of Osaka within Japan. After a long day, we will transfer to Kansai International Airport for our return flight to Honolulu, taking with us lasting memories of this wonderful trip.

We wish you a safe journey and have many wonderful memories to share with family and friends! ☺

B: Breakfast | L: Lunch | D: Dinner
**Remarks:**

- Fares are per person, USD based on double occupancy and include all airline taxes and fees
- Escorted tour with a minimum of 20 passengers
- Local English speaking tour guide service
- All transfers and sightseeing by air conditioned coach
- Refer to “General Condition of Air & Sea”
- We reserve the right to modify the itinerary to ensure smooth operation
- Gratuity for tour guides & drivers is included
- Tour price is subject to change according to any airfare increase, increase in government taxes, additional fuel charges and fluctuation of the rate of exchange between U.S. and foreign currency
- Tour price is based on the current exchange rate of 1 USD = 110 JYP.
- Tour price includes fuel surcharge & government taxes and fees. The tour price shown is current at time of listing and pricing on Feb 14, 2019

**Payment Policy:**

CHECK OR CASH PAYMENT ONLY. A deposit of $ 350 per person is required at the time of application. The balance of payment is due **70 days prior to departure**. In case balance of payment is not made within the required time period, Air and Sea Travel Center reserves the right to cancel reservations and charge a cancellation fee.

**Cancellation Policy:**

Written notice is required for any cancellation. Within 70 days before departure, the cancellation fee will be as follow:

**69-31** days prior to departure, **50%** of total price plus any other service fee caused from the cancellation;

**30** days prior to departure or withdrawing during the tour shall be regarded as willingly giving up all rights concerned, **100%** of total price, and request for other services as a substitute shall not be accepted.

*** We strongly recommend purchasing travel insurance when you make a reservation ***