



# Air & Sea Travel Center

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## Heritage of Okinawa The Kingdom of Ryukyu



**Traveling Dates: Oct 20 - 30, 2019 (11 Days)**

**5 Islands: Okinawa, Ishigaki, Iriomote, Yubu & Taketomi Island**

Ocean Expo Park



Ryukyu Mura



Gyokusendo Cave



Water Buffalo Cart

**Price per person:**

**\$ 3,888**

**Incl: Tax & Fuel Charge**

**Single Supp: \$ 900**

### Tour Package Includes

- \* International Flight from HONOLULU
- \* R/T Airfare to Ishigaki Island
- \* Deluxe Hotel Accommodations
- \* Admissions and **21** Meals as Stated
- \* **5** Islands – Okinawa, Ishigaki, Iriomote, Yubu & Taketomi
- \* UNESCO World Heritage Site: Shuri Castle
- \* Ocean Expo Park & Peace Memorial Museum

- \* Ferry Rides & Water Buffalo Cart Rides
- \* Gyokusendo Cave at Okinawa World
- \* Awamori Liquor Tasting
- \* Local Specialty Meals: Okinawa Soba, Palace Cuisine, Japanese Yakiniku, Ishigaki Beef, Yubu Style Teishoku.
- \* Gratuity for Tour Guides & Drivers





**Day 1 \*\* Oct 20**

**Honolulu → Taipei**

We begin our journey by boarding an international flight to Taiwan. Meals and snacks will be served on the plane.

**Day 2 \*\* Oct 21**

**Overnight at Taipei**

Upon arrival at Taipei, we will proceed to immigration & customs. Then we will board a shuttle bus to an overnight hotel near Taoyuan Airport.

**Day 3 \*\* Oct 22**

**Taipei → Naha (Okinawa Island) → Ishigaki Island**

**(D)**

In the early morning, we will transfer to Taipei Airport and fly to Naha, Okinawa Island. Okinawa, known as Ryukyu historically, is situated between Taiwan and Kyushu. This popular vacation destination is famous for its natural beauty, including its blue skies, sunshine, ocean, an endless coastline, red hibiscus blossoms and a unique landscape that is a fascinating combination of Chinese and Japanese cultures. Upon arrival in Okinawa, we will board a short flight to Ishigaki Island that lies west of Okinawa Island and the second largest island of the Yaeyama Island group. The island functions as the business and transport center of the archipelago. Tonight, we will try the Ishigaki Beef. Not many people know about Ishigaki beef, which is a Wagyu Brand. The most important characteristic of Wagyu is its marbling of fat throughout the meat. It is said the Ishigaki Beef is tender and juicy and has a pure flavor.

**Day 4 \*\* Oct 23**

**Ishigaki Island – Iriomote Island – Yubu Island – Ishigaki Island**

**(B, L, D)**

Today's highlight is to visit Iriomote Island, the largest island of the Yaeyama Island group. 90% of the island is covered by dense jungle and mangrove swamps, which are either part of state lands or National Park area. In the morning we will take a 40-minute Ferry Ride to Ohara Port. Upon arrival, we will ride a sightseeing boat on Nakama River. This area is considered to be the Amazon Jungle of Japan. The river cuts a path through mangrove forests, large sakishima-suo trees, and thick jungle plants. There is also a wide variety of creatures that call this area home such as Mud Crabs, Shirenashijimi, Barred Mud Skippers and of course the famous Iriomote Wild Cat. We will make a short stop and walk to see the largest and oldest mangrove tree. You can look for the Iriomote Wild Cat, an endangered native cat living on this island. There are only 100 cats remaining in the wild. A visit to the Yamaneko Museum will offer an opportunity to learn about the cats and view a video to observe this rare breed. Next, we will ride a Water Buffalo Cart to Yubu-jima (Yubu Island) where we will have a Yubu Style Teishoku lunch. The water that divides Yubu Island from its larger neighbor is so shallow that it can be crossed on foot. Occasionally cars and trucks can be seen driving through the water as well. After that, we will return to Ishigaki and take a bus back to the hotel or shopping at the arcade.

**Day 5 \*\* Oct 24**

**Ishigaki Island – Taketomi Island – Ishigaki Island**

**(B, L, D)**


This morning we will take a 10-minute Ferry Ride to Taketomi-jima, about 2.5 miles southwest of Ishigaki Island. On this small island, traditional Okinawan life still flourishes with red tile roofed houses surrounded by handmade stonewalls. There are two Spectacular Beaches on the southern coast of Taketomi: Hoshizuna-no-hama, a beach covered with Star-Shaped Sand Crystals, and Kondo Beach, a beautiful beach with shallow water. After returning to Ishigaki, we will visit the Emerald Blue Kabira Bay, Ishigaki Island's most scenic view. Ishigaki and Iriomote are the only two cultivation sites of black pearls in Japan. Coral reefs provide great snorkeling and diving sports, but we can see beautiful colorful tropical fish and coral reefs without getting wet by taking a Glass Bottom Boat Ride.

**Day 6 \*\* Oct 25**

**Ishigaki Island → Naha – Yomitan**

**(B, L, D)**

Today, we will fly back to Naha, the capital city of Okinawa Prefecture. Upon arrival, an excursion is set to Churaumi Aquarium (Okinawa Churaumi Suizokukan), located within the Ocean Expo Park. It is one of the world's largest aquariums that will dazzle you with the exotic tropical fish, manta rays, sharks, and whale sharks. The park also offers dolphin shows at the outdoor Okichan Theater. Today we will enjoy a Lunch Buffet with the animals at Ocean Expo Park. Then we will go back to Zanpamisaki Royal Hotel, located at one of the best sunset viewing points in Okinawa where the sun and the blue sea spread out in front of us. The large hotel (13 floors above ground and 477 guest rooms) is surrounded by a beautiful ocean and offers many amenities and activities.

 *Zanpamisaki Royal Hotel has a special onsen that is an open-air rock bath. The rock from the onsen was formed in the deep sea. Japanese onsens are extremely beneficial for one's health because of its mineral compositions. Different minerals provide different health benefits and help relax our body and mind.*

**Day 7 \*\* Oct 26**

**Yomitan**

**(B, L, D)**

After breakfast, we will visit Ryukyu Mura, an authentic re-creation of an ancient Okinawan village. Old Ryukyuan homes were brought from all over the islands and reassembled here to preserve the heritage of the Ryukyu Kingdom.

The park was created in the hope that this unique heritage could be shared by all who visit. Some of the staff wears traditional Okinawan folk costumes, providing the perfect photo opportunity. Inside the village we will find examples of Okinawan crafts on display and for sale, including bingata, pottery and sugarcane products. These are all made using traditional methods, handed down from generation to generation. We can join the Michijune (Parade) for dancing “Kachashi”, a form of festive Ryukyuan folk dance and enjoy the simple Okinawan style Tea Ceremony. If time is permitted, we will stop at Michi-no Eki, just outside the base of Kadena Air Base (KAB), the hub of American airpower in the Pacific, and home to the US Air Force’s largest combat wing – the 18th Wing. Nearly 18,000 Americans and more than 4,000 Japanese employees and contractors make up Team Kadena. This is a four story building with shopping venues, a picture museum, and an observatory deck. From the observatory deck, we can see many kinds of Military Aircraft, including reconnaissance and surveillance planes.

**Day 8 \*\* Oct 27** **Yomitan – Naha** **(B, L, D)**

After breakfast, we will enjoy some free time for shopping at Koshin Pearl Shop. Then we will go to Gyokusendo Cave at Okinawa World Park. The primary Gyokusendo Cave was discovered in 1967 and it is one of the largest underground stalactite caves in the Far East. Besides being one of the most popular tourist destinations in Okinawa, it has also been used as a film location for various movies. The best known movie internationally is the 1974 monster classic *Godzilla vs Mecha Godzilla*. Within the park, there is a snake museum, Sanshin making, and glass blowing. The main attraction is the dynamic and colorful Eisa Dance (Traditional Okinawan Taiko Dance) in the outdoor auditorium. Afterwards, we will go to Naminoue Shrine, literally “Above the Waves Shrine”, the primary Shinto shrine in Okinawa Prefecture. Our next stop is Fukushuen (Fuzhou Garden), completed in 1992 in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the sister city relationship between Naha and Fuzhou in China. The Kume neighborhood where the garden is located, previously known as Kumemura (Kume Village), was the center of Chinese culture and learning in the Ryūkyū Kingdom for centuries, and a symbol of the significant role of Chinese cultural influence in Okinawan history. Most of the building materials were imported from Fuzhou. Tonight, enjoy the “all you can eat” Yakiniku Dinner, a Japanese style of cooking bite-sized meat (usually beef, pork & chicken) and vegetables on griddles over gas/electric grills.

**Day 9 \*\* Oct 28** **Naha** **(B, L, D)**

After breakfast, we will visit Shuri Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It was the palace of the Ryūkyū Kingdom and cultural center of the Ryukyu Island until 1879. It was almost completely destroyed in 1945 during the Battle of Okinawa. In 1992, it was reconstructed on the original site based on photographs, historical records, and memory. One might be in for a surprise as the architecture of the castle is very different from other Japanese castles. We will have Handmade Okinawan Soba for lunch. The noodles are different from buckwheat noodles (also known as soba) made in the rest of Japan. The thick wheat noodles resemble udon, while the soup is more similar to ramen. It is served in a broth flavored with kombu (edible seaweed), katsuobushi flakes and pork. One of Okinawa’s most famous products is its Hard Liquor, Awamori. It is distilled from rice, considerably more potent and less sweet than sake; not found on the mainland and only brewed here. Some varieties made offshore of Okinawa Main Island have the highest alcoholic content. Awamori has a venerable history going back 500 years, when the Ryukyu Kingdom had extensive trade with Southeast Asia. It was first introduced to the islands from Thailand. Awamori is still made from Thai rice because its long grains give a higher alcoholic yield and it is not as sticky as Japanese rice. We will sample some Awamori at Masahiro Awamori Factory. The devastating effects of the war had a profound impact on the Okinawans, and there are a number of monuments and museums relating to that period throughout Okinawa Island. We will visit the Peace Memorial Park. Its main attraction is the Peace Memorial Museum, which gives an overview of the battle and the reconstruction of the island. Other notable sites include the Clock Tower, the Path to Peace Hill, and the Cornerstone of Peace. Tonight’s Farewell Dinner features Okinawan Palace Cuisine. During the reign of the Ryukyu monarchs, when the kingdom flourished through trade with surrounding Asian countries, elaborate feasts were hosted nightly for visiting envoys. Carefully selected ingredients are painstakingly prepared, with the resulting fare as delightful to the eye as it is to the palate.

**Day 10 \*\* Oct 29** **Naha** **(B)**

Full day at leisure. “Shop till you drop; eat till you overflow!” Enjoy this free day opportunity to shop around the city and eat whatever looks interesting.

**Day 11 \*\* Oct 30** **Naha → Taiwan → Honolulu** **(B)**

After breakfast, enjoy your last minutes shopping in Naha. We will transfer to the airport for our return flight to Honolulu via Taiwan in the afternoon. This will end our fantastic trip to Okinawa.

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

B: Breakfast | L: Lunch | D: Dinner

# Welcome to Okinawa



## Remarks:

- ✦ Fares are per person; USD based on double occupancy and includes 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 and 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 JPY.
- ✦ Tour price includes fuel surcharge & government taxes and fees. The tour price shown is current at time of listing and pricing on Mar 6, 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\*\***