

# 福岡

## JET GUIDE TO LIFE IN FUKUOKA



2006-2007 EDITION

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# INTRODUCTION

Lying in the northwest of Kyushu and with a population of some 5.4 million people, Fukuoka is one of the most diverse and beautiful prefectures in Japan. The bulk of the population comes from the two main cities, Fukuoka 福岡市 and Kitakyushu 北九州市. With a population of over 1.3 million, the capital city of Fukuoka is the hub of Kyushu and the fourth largest economic zone in the country. Recently rated as one of the world's top ten hottest cities by US magazine *Newsweek*, it combines a bustling mercantile atmosphere, innovative modern architecture and a vibrant entertainment district, while remaining a very manageable city to get around.

The wealth of natural beauty provided by rivers, mountains and the coastline of the Ariake Sea offers a pleasant and varied environment to live in. The climate averages at a temperature of 16°C, although temperatures can soar to 40°C and above in the summer, and plunge to below 10°C in the winter. The relatively mild weather makes Fukuoka perfect for growing azaleas and ume (plums), the two symbols of the prefecture, which can be seen growing in abundance in late and early spring, respectively. However, every season has its glory; there is always something colorful to be marveled at, growing in gardens and streets across the prefecture.

As well as having excellent transportation within the prefecture, Fukuoka is well served by rail, road, air, and sea to Honshu, the rest of Japan, and the rest of Asia. Historically, Fukuoka has played an important role in bringing Korean and Chinese cultures to Japan, and this is reflected in the cuisine and cultural assets that can be seen today, such as Dazaifu Shrine. In addition, many Fukuoka crafts such as textiles and ceramics have developed through this international link and are celebrated in local festivals held throughout the year.

Fukuoka has much to offer. In the year or more that you'll spend here there will always be places still to visit and new things to do, whatever you're into. It's home to the biggest hotel, longest bar, largest cinema complex, and most advanced baseball stadium in Japan. Looking to get out of your small town and get some city action or culture? Dying for fresh air and the great outdoors? It's all here. This guide aims to introduce as many of Fukuoka's sights, sounds, and experiences as possible. Let's enjoy Fukuoka together!

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide has been written in a style similar to that of major travel guide – think Lonely Planet: does Fukuoka! It is divided into six sections as follows: General Information, Chikugo, Chikuho, Fukuoka, Kitakyushu, and Kyushu and Beyond. Use the maps, contents lists, and index to figure out what is available in your town and the surrounding area. Restaurants are price-coded with ¥ signs based on a meal and a drink:

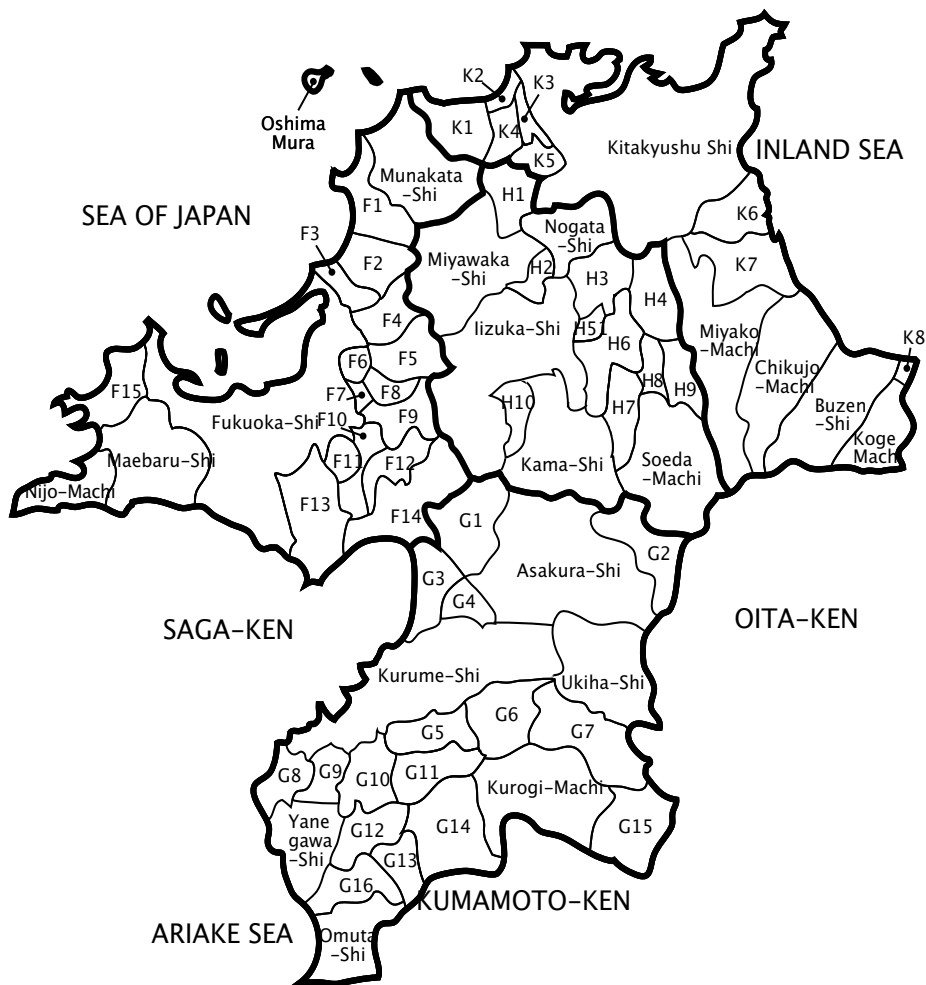
¥	under 1000 yen
¥¥	1000 - 2000 yen
¥¥¥	2000 - 3000 yen
¥¥¥¥	over 3000 yen
🌿	Vegetarian Friendly
LO	Last Order Time

If you are traveling within the prefecture, the guide is your friend – don't leave home without it! Whilst every effort has been made to keep the guide up-to-date, shops, bars, and eateries do change frequently, the information included in this edition is current as of May 2006.

# GENERAL INFORMATION



# FUKUOKA PREFECTURE 福岡県



## SIMPLE GEOGRAPHY VOCAB

city	shi	市
town	machi	町
village	mura	村
prefecture	ken	県
north	kita	北
south	minami	南
east	higashi	東
west	nishi	西

### CHIKUGO 筑後

Asakura-Shi	朝倉市	*
Kurume-Shi	久留米市	*
Omuta-Shi	大牟田市	*
Ukiha-Shi	うきは	*
Yanagawa-Shi	柳川市	*
Chikuzen-Machi	筑前市	G1
Toho-Mura	東峰村	G2
Ogori-Shi	小郡市	G3
Tachiarai-Machi	大刀洗町	G4
Hirokawa-Machi	広川町	G5
Joyo-Machi	上陽町	G6
Hoshino-Mura	星野村	G7
Okawa-Shi	大川市	G8
Oki-Machi	大木町	G9
Chikugo-Shi	筑後市	G10
Yame-Shi	八女市	G11
Setaka-Machi	瀬高町	G12
Yamakawa-Machi	山川町	G13
Tachibana-Machi	立花町	G14
Yabe-Mura	矢部村	G15
Takata-Machi	高田町	G16

### CHIKUHO 筑豊

lizuka-Shi	飯塚市	*
Kama-Shi	嘉麻市	*
Nogata-Shi	直方市	*
Soeda-Machi	添田町	*
Miyawaka-Shi	宮若町	*
Kurate-Machi	鞍手町	H1
Kotake-Machi	小竹町	H2
Fukuchi-Machi	福智町	H3
Kawara-Machi	香春町	H4
Itoda-Machi	糸田町	H5
Tagawa-Shi	田川市	H6
Kawasaki-Machi	川崎町	H7
Oto-Machi	大任町	H8
Aka-Mura	赤村	H9
Keisen-Machi	桂川町	H10

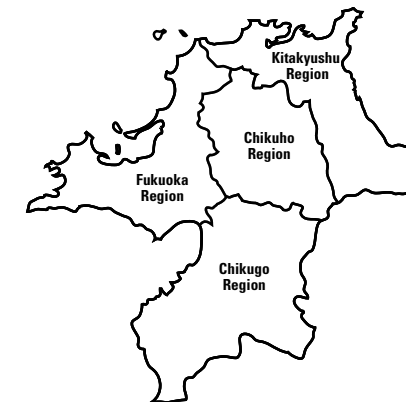
### FUKUOKA 福岡

Fukuoka-Shi	福岡市	*
Maebaru-Shi	前原市	*
Munakata-Shi	宗像市	*
Nijo-Machi	二丈町	*
Fukutsu-Shi	福津市	F1

Koga-Shi	古賀市	F2
Shingu-Machi	新宮町	F3
Hisayama-Machi	久山町	F4
Sasaguri-Machi	篠栗町	F5
Kasuya-Machi	粕屋町	F6
Shime-Machi	志免町	F7
Sue-Machi	須恵町	F8
Umi-Machi	宇美町	F9
Onojo-Shi	大野城市	F10
Kasuga-Shi	春日市	F11
Dazaifu-Shi	太宰府市	F12
Nakagawa-Machi	那珂川町	F13
Chikushino-Shi	筑紫野市	F14
Shima-Machi	志摩町	F15

### KITAKYUSHU 北九州

Buzen-Shi	豊前市	*
Chikujo-Machi	築上町	*
Kitakyushu-Shi	北九州市	*
Kokura	小倉	
Moji	門司	
Tobata	戸畑	
Wakamatsu	若松	
Yahata	八幡	
Miyako-Machi	みやこ町	*
Koge-Machi	上毛町	*
Okagaki-Machi	岡垣町	K1
Ashiya-Machi	芦屋町	K2
Mizumaki-Machi	水巻町	K3
Onga-Machi	遠賀町	K4
Nakama-Shi	中間市	K5
Kanda-Machi	苅田町	K6
Yukuhashi-Shi	行橋市	K7
Yoshitomi-Machi	吉富町	K8



\*These locations are labelled on the map.

# GETTING STARTED

Welcome to Fukuoka! Chances are you've only been here for a couple of weeks, and things still seem a little overwhelming. Don't worry—this guide will help you get started. Things in Japan are often very different from the world that most JETs come from, and it can take a little time to adjust. Initially, you may find yourself more dependent on others than you were at home, but you'll get used to it quickly, learning new things along the way. The following information will help you with the practicalities of day-to-day living and help you explore what Fukuoka has to offer.

## WHAT THEY'RE ACTUALLY THINKING...



### What's a futon? Is it always this hot?

Find out how best to tackle the seasons and furnish your home in **Living** on page 12.

### Learning the language

Looking for a Japanese teacher? Need to know how to ask for a return ticket? Then head to **Language** on page 16. You'll be *pera pera* in no time!

### How do I use the ATM?

From using the ATM to paying your bills and sending money home, it's all covered in **Financial Matters** page 19.

### Planes, trains and automobiles

Everything you need to know about domestic and international travel, from buying a car, to leaving the country and making sure they let you back in again! See **Transport & Travel** on page 23.

### Anyone know a good doctor?

For a comprehensive list of doctors, counselling services and information about medical insurance, see **Health & Well-being** on page 34.

### How do I phone home?

If you need to make an international call, set up a phone line to your apartment, find an internet cafe or post a parcel, check out **Communications** on page 37.

### Shopping – a how to

Trying to find books in your native language, a hairdresser who knows how to cut Western hair or where to get tickets for a concert can be tricky – **Shopping** on page 43 can help.

### I have no idea what I'm buying at the supermarket – help!

Taking the mystery out of shopping for food in Japan, **Food** on page 46 will give you the low-down on eating and drinking, whether you're a meat eater or vegetarian.

### Religion

Looking to practice your faith in Japan or find out about a new one? **Religion** on page 56 has information on a variety of centers of worship in Fukuoka.

### A life of leisure

**Leisure** on page 59 gives you all the information on art museums, Japanese theater, sports and more, whether you're looking to take up a hobby or have a day out in Fukuoka.

### Things to do and see

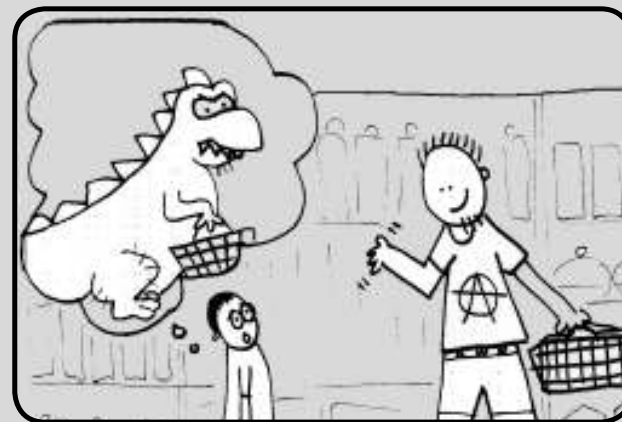
Believe it or not, you can hike, surf and snowboard in Fukuoka! It has a host of great *onsen* (hot springs) and there are plenty of sights worth taking a day trip to. Take a look at **Out & About** on page 69.

## “GAIJINZILLA”

### How can I learn more about Japan?

Japan is a fascinating place; **Getting Involved** on page 76 recommends some useful books, films and websites to help you make sense of your new surroundings.

Turn the page...



# LIVING

## HOME

JET accommodations range from sprawling houses to cement blocks called *kyoshokuin jutaku* (public teacher housing), so you may find that the last place you lived in is a little different from the one you are now calling home. It always takes a little time getting settled into a new place, but it won't be long before you have it looking the way you want it. This section offers a few tips to make the transition a bit easier.

## SURVIVING THE SEASONS

### SUMMER

Arriving in Fukuoka in the middle of the Japanese summer can be a bit of a shock to the system. It's a sweaty affair to be sure, but arm yourself with a bottle of water, don your sandals and take advantage of the chilled summer evenings. With the summer sun though come some downsides and the humidity means you will have to make some changes around the house. Here's how:

**Mold** can be a problem, so put demoisurizers (*kansozai* or *shikkatori*) in your cupboards, drawers, and closets to help combat any nasty smells or black spots. They come in sheet, box, and hanger forms. A popular brand name is Dorai-petto ドライベツト (Dry Pet). To remove the mold patches on walls and other surfaces, use a mold remover (*kabitori*) or the more economical and environmental solution of vinegar and water.

**Futon** sets consist of a mattress (*mattoresu*), an under-futon (*shikibuton*), an under-sheet (*shikifu*), a terry cloth blanket

(*taoruketto*), ordinary blankets (*mofu*), and a duvet (*kakebuton*). Pillows (*makura*) filled with buckwheat chaff (*sobagara*) are designed to keep the head cool. To keep your *futon* and blankets smelling sweet, air them out on sunny days to kill mold and anything else that might be living in your bed. After airing, beat the dust out with a *futon tataki*. Store your *futon* away during the day on the top shelf of your cupboard (*oshiire*). De-moisurizers will help too. *Futon* can be purchased at home stores, such as Daiei, Nafco, and Home Wide.

### INSECTS

Bugs are numerous and hardy due to the humidity. Here are a few types you may encounter and tips for getting rid of them:

**Centipedes** (*mukade*) are poisonous and their bites cause nasty swelling and are occasionally fatal. They're most common in ground floor apartments. Spray them with cockroach spray or catch them, wrap them in paper, and burn them.

**Cockroaches** (*gokiburi* & *abura-mushi*) are around no matter how clean your apartment is. You should not squash cockroaches, as they supposedly spread their eggs when they splatter. Cockroaches are probably the biggest insect issue you will face, but there is a variety of ways to remove them. Products like *gokiburi supurei* (cockroach spray) or roach motels will help relieve you of the problem.

**Ticks** (*Dani*) are little insects that live in tatami, and their bites leave red marks resembling that of a mosquito. Insecticides available include *dani no sachuzai* (a mini bomb that you let off under your *tatami*) and *tatami ni sasu sachuzai* (a spray with a nozzle that pushes through *tatami*).

**Mosquitoes** (*ka*) are familiar to us all, but they really come out in full force in Japan. Repellents include *katori senko* (green incense coils with almost no odor), *mushi yoke supure* (basic mosquito repellent spray), and *denki katori* (electric or battery operated devices with liquid repellent). Remember to change the liquid inside about every month or two. Costco sells citronella candles and tiki torches for outside (patio) use. They are great for keeping mosquitoes away.

## INSECT CONTROL TIPS

**Commercial products** such as *gokiburi supurei* (spray) seem to work on most insects.

**Sujo/hosan dango** are small disks you put in the corners of your room. The roaches eat from them, go back to their den, and die there. The other roaches eat the dead roach and ingest the poison.

**Gokiburi hoi hoi** (cockroach motels) are small cardboard structures with sticky floors and bait in the middle. The cockroach climbs in and dies. Look for the ¥100 version, which comes complete with pictures of flowerpots and curtains on the side.

**Gokiburi no barusan** are mini chemical bombs that you set off before leaving your house. This will eliminate most insects for about six weeks.

**Beer** is popular with everyone in Japan. Place a cup of beer on the floor overnight. Cockroaches love beer so they'll climb in and drown. They don't like any other kind of alcohol, so don't try this trick with a bottle of 100 proof rum!

## AUTUMN & SPRING

Autumn and springtime weather in Japan is beautiful and mild for the most part, so you shouldn't have many household worries to bother with. During these times of year it is a good idea to have a big cleanout of things

accumulated over the past few months. Swap summer gear for winter in readiness for the cold months ahead in autumn, and vice versa in spring.

### WINTER

Winter can get very cold and central heating is a concept relatively unheard of. At times it may seem to be colder inside your home than outside! Here are some ways of keeping warm:

**Kotatsu** is a low table with an electric heater attached below the tabletop. Two blankets are used to help sandwich in the precious warmth created by the heater. First a *kotatsu jiki* is spread flat over the floor like a carpet, with the table resting on top. Then a *kotatsu futon* is placed between the table frame and the detachable tabletop. *Kotatsu* are relatively safe if used properly, though sleeping under them is often blamed for catching colds, and unattended *kotatsu* are a major cause of household fires. *Kotatsu* can be bought at department stores like Daiei or Nafco. Depending on the store, they may even be able to deliver it to you for a small charge.

**Sekiyu sutobu** are freestanding kerosene heaters. Older types are lit with matches. Newer versions are equipped with electric starters and fans to disperse the heat. Despite the fact that the kerosene used and the fumes emitted from the heaters make them smelly, *sutobu* are widely used as they are cheap to run. All *sutobu* are designed to put themselves out if they are moved, tilted, or shaken. Newer versions put themselves out when there is not enough oxygen in the room. Make sure to keep your window open a crack while using a *sutobu*. The kerosene used is called both *sekiyu* and *tayu* and can be purchased at any gas station. Most rice stores sell and deliver kerosene oil. Containers for kerosene (*pari yoki*) and *yoki* siphons (*kyuyu pompu*) are sold at most supermarkets and hardware stores. Put a kettle on top of your *sutobu* to put moisture back into the room (also convenient for a nice cup of tea). Like *kotatsu*, you can purchase *sutobu* at most home stores and also electronics retailers such as Yamada

Denki, DeoDeo, and Best Denki, where you can also arrange for delivery.

**Pocket warmers** come in two forms. One type is reusable and takes fuel refills. The other type (*tsukai sute*) is normally activated by shaking and is thrown away after use. This type is generally called *hokka hokka kairo* or *hyaku en kairo*. These can be bought at drug stores and ¥100 shops such as Daiso.

**Others** are electric blankets (*denki mofu*), electric carpets (*denki kapetto* or *hotto kapetto*), electric foot-warmers (*kapetto anka*), and anka hot water bottles (*yutanpo*).

## REFUSE DISPOSAL

**Refuse** from private households is usually divided into four main categories: burnable garbage, non-burnable garbage, glass/aluminum and PET bottles. If refuse collection is made at night, put refuse out on the evening of the collection day at the designated collection place. Don't put raw garbage (*nama gomi*) out before the pick-up day, especially in the summer, as it smells bad and attracts animals. The collection day is designated according to district. Check with your neighbors or office/school about collection schedules and separation rules. When you get your alien registration card (*gaikokujin toroku shameisho* 外国人登録証明書), refuse disposal information may also be given to you, as each municipality has its own system for collection. In many smaller towns, you have to buy specific plastic bags with different colors for each type of garbage: combustibles, non-combustibles, and others (such as chemical waste and batteries). The price of the bags covers the cost of collection. The garbage collector only picks up garbage that has been put in these bags. Ask your supervisor or neighbors about where to buy them and which refuse to put in each bag. It is important that you are aware of and follow the correct procedure.

**Other refuse**, such as that accumulated by house moving and cleaning up, should be disposed of personally or by an authorized disposer who will charge a fee. Disposers

authorized by the City Government are: Fukuoka City Business Transport Union, Tel 092-741-5517; and Kitakyushu City Environment Bureau, Public Cleansing Affairs Section, Tel 093-582-2180.

**Large electric items** incur a per-item fee depending on the item. For example, disposal of TVs, air conditioners, and electric ovens will cost ¥3000 apiece. Unfortunately, this has caused the number of broken TVs in JET apartments to increase. Ask your supervisor for details on disposal procedures and where to get the appropriate disposal stickers. Items left by your predecessor can be taken to the Big Garbage Day in your community.

## RECYCLING

**Chirigamikokan** is a tissue/toilet paper exchange truck that drives around collecting bundled newspapers, magazines, books, and miscellaneous papers. When you hear his call for paper over his PA system, flag him down, and he will give you tissue or toilet paper in exchange for your paper items. Neighborhood groups and schools also have recycle drives. In many areas, recycling for cans and bottles occurs on a weekly basis, with paper collection once or twice a month. Again, find out what the procedure is for your area by asking your supervisor, other JETs, or a neighbor; it may be a good way to strike up conversation with those around you.

**Market Recycle Bins** Some grocery stores like A-Co-op, F-Co-op, Green Co-op, and sometimes even your local supermarket have recycle bins for papers, milk cartons, and Styrofoam. Check to see which days recyclable items are accepted.

**City Recycle Bins** Each ward office in Fukuoka City has collection bins for cans, bottles, and paper cartons. Milk and juice cartons should be washed, cut open flat, and dried before delivering. Glass items are separated into bins for white, green, and brown glass. Rinse out glass before disposing of it. The machines taking up to 500ml cans dispense

tickets. Two hundred of these tickets can be exchanged for a ¥100 book certificate. You get one ticket per aluminum can, two tickets per steel can. The collection bins are only open rather inconveniently from Mon-Fri 9am-5pm.

## FURNISHING YOUR HOME CHEAPLY

Make a list of what you need and want and make it known to your office or school. You may be surprised by your co-workers' generosity. They may also be able to suggest somewhere to get stuff cheap (be clear about specifying that you want something inexpensive). Also, try one of the one-man-shop-type furniture stores. Often people leave their old furniture with the store when they buy new stuff. You may be able to get things at a discount or even free. Recycle stores or discount home stores like Nafco, Nakai and Goo-Day are also worth checking out as they often have bargains just waiting to be found. See the shopping section on page 32 for further tips on places to get household essentials.

## CLOTHESCARE

### WASHING MACHINES

Japanese-style washing machines do not contain an agitator, so often you will find your clothes in one big ball at the end of the washing cycle. To prolong the life of your clothes, put everything into mesh laundry bags that can be bought at most supermarkets, drugstores, or 100 yen shops.

### DRY-CLEANING

Hand-washing or dry-cleaning your delicate items is recommended. Payment for dry cleaning is made when you drop off the clothes. Ask around to see if there is a 100 yen dry cleaning shop in your area.

### STORAGE

Make sure to air out winter clothes well before storing them for the summer, and be sure to store them with many de-moisturizers to avoid damage during storage.

## I CAN, YOU CAN, MIKAN...





# LANGUAGE

Getting involved in the community is a great way to learn about Japanese customs and culture, as well as settle in. One of the best ways to start this is by learning Japanese. There are many different kinds of classes offered throughout the prefecture. The international organizations have lists of available classes. Also check with your office or school. Someone may be able to give you an introduction. Usually, terms begin in September and in April. Applications should be made during August or March.

Some recommended language courses are:

**Fukuoka Shiritsu Seinen Center** 2-6-46 Daimyo, Chuo-ku, 810 Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-712-2947.

**Fukuoka YWCA** 8-15 Maizuru 2-chome, Chuo-ku, 810 Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-741-9251.

**Genki Japanese and Culture School** is run by the wife of an ex-JET here in Fukuoka. It offers both language and cultural classes at reasonable rates. Lessons focus on oral communication and are based around a flexible but structured curriculum. 9F Neo Heights, 1-15-7 Daimyo, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-716-8673. Web: [www.genkijacs.com](http://www.genkijacs.com). Email: [info@genkijacs.com](mailto:info@genkijacs.com).

**IRIS** 5F IMS Bldg. Chuo-ku, 810 Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-781-1031.

**Community College** 14F Center Building, 14-8 Tenjin 2-chome, Chuo-ku, 810 Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-781-1031.

**Mainichi Culture Center** Mainichi Fukuoka Kaikan, 5F, 16-1 Tenjin 1-chome, Chuo-ku, 810 Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-781-5766.

## Japanese Language Proficiency Test

Japanese Applications for the internationally recognized Japanese Language Proficiency Test (Nihongo noryoku shiken 日本語能力試験), also known as the JLPT, can be purchased at Kinokuniya and Maruzen in Tenjin, and Quest in Kurosaki and Kokura. Practice tests and study guides are also sold at these bookstores. The exam takes place on the first Sunday in December and registration closes in early September. The application costs ¥500 and the test ¥5400. The official website is [www.jees.or.jp/jlpt/en/index.htm](http://www.jees.or.jp/jlpt/en/index.htm). The Meguro Language Center in Tokyo offers some study materials online that can help with test preparation, including kanji and vocabulary lists, at [www.mlcjapanese.co.jp/Download.htm](http://www.mlcjapanese.co.jp/Download.htm).

## JETRO Test of Business Japanese

The JETRO Business Japanese Proficiency Test measures Japanese proficiency in business-related situations. The test is in two parts: a listening and reading comprehension test, and an oral communication test. Passing the first test at the J1 (530 points) level qualifies you to take the oral communication test. The test is held twice a year in June and November. The application period is from late February to late April for the June test, and early August to early October for the November test. The test application and guidebook are available from Kinokuniya in Tenjin and the test fee is ¥7000. It is possible to apply online and pay either by credit card or furikomi. Web: [www.jetro.go.jp/en/jetrotest/](http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/jetrotest/).

## USEFUL PHRASES

### Greetings

Good morning.  
Good afternoon.  
Good evening.  
Goodbye  
Excuse me/I'm sorry.  
I'm sorry.  
Please.  
Thank you.  
No, thank you.

*Ohayō gozaimasu.*  
*Konnichi wa.*  
*Konbanwa.*  
*Sayōnara.*  
*Sumimasen.*  
*Gomen nasai.*  
*Onegaishimasu.*  
*Arigatō gozaimasu.*  
*lie, kekkō desu.*

### Shopping

How much is this?  
Do you have \_\_\_\_?  
Please give me this/that.  
I'm just looking.

*Kore wa ikura desuka?*  
*\_\_\_\_ wa arimasuka?*  
*Kore/sore o kudasai.*  
*Miteiru dake desu.*

### Getting Around

Please take me to \_\_\_\_.  
Where is \_\_\_\_?  
Where is the restroom?  
How much is the fare to \_\_\_\_?  
Does this (train, bus, etc) go to \_\_\_\_?

*\_\_\_\_ made onegaishimasu.*  
*\_\_\_\_ wa doko desuka?*  
*Otearai wa doko desuka?*  
*\_\_\_\_ made ikura desuka?*  
*Kore wa \_\_\_\_ e ikimasuka?*

### Let's Eat!

We humbly partake (before eating).  
What a feast! (when finished).  
No, thank you (declining more food or drink).  
What do you recommend?  
Cheers!  
Please bring the bill.

*Itadakimasu.*  
*Gochisōsama deshita.*  
*Mō kekkō desu.*  
*Osusume wa nani desuka?*  
*Kampai!*  
*Okanjo o onegaishimasu.*

### Accommodation

Do you have any vacancies?  
single room  
double room  
twin room  
Japanese-style room (tatami mats & futons)

*Aiteru heya wa arimasuka?*  
*shinguru rumu*  
*daburu rumu*  
*tsuin rumu*  
*washitsu*

### Health

I don't feel well.  
It hurts here.  
I'd like to see a doctor.

*Choshi ga warui desu.*  
*Koko ga itai desu.*  
*Oisha-san ni mite moraitai desu.*

### Emergencies

Help me!  
Call the police!  
Call an ambulance!

*Tasukete!*  
*Keisatsu o yonde kudasai!*  
*Kyukyusha o yonde kudasai!*

**ONOMATOPOEIA**

Japanese onomatopoeia is much more diverse than its English counterpart and people often use it to express themselves.

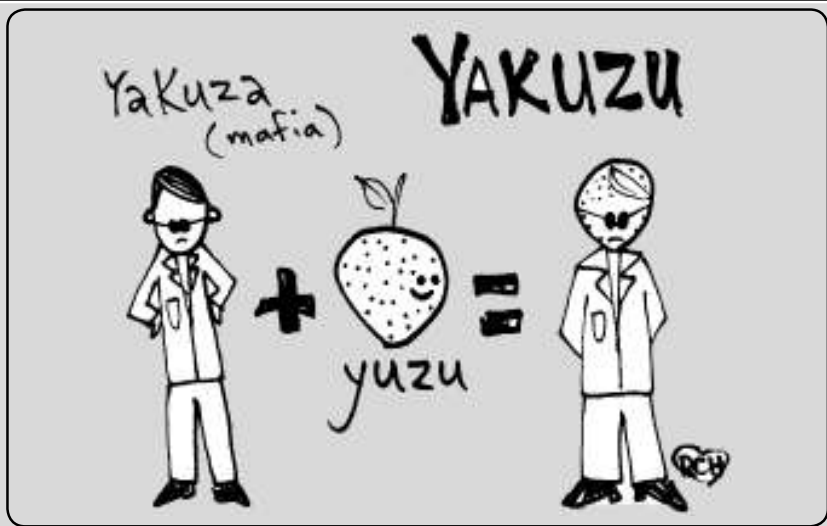
sticky (from sweating, etc)  
 heartbeat (excitement/nervousness)  
 just in the nick of time  
 building up of, progression of events  
 frustrated or angry  
 scratching your head in puzzlement  
 joyous excitement  
 stomach rumbles  
 gobbling (where Pac-man came from!)  
 heavy rain  
 messy hair  
 fluent in a language

*beta beta*  
*doki doki*  
*giri giri*  
*don don*  
*ira ira*  
*kari kari*  
*waku waku*  
*gū gū*  
*paku paku*  
*zā zā*  
*basa basa*  
*pera pera*

**GESTURES**

beckon with palm down  
 arms in an X crossed above your head  
 arms above your head in a circle  
 peace sign  
 two fingers slapped into the other palm  
 pretend to eat from a bowl  
 stick your thumb up  
 make bull horns with your index fingers

*"Come here"*  
*No good, absent, bad, no score*  
*OK, present, good, score*  
*playful gesture when posing for snapshots*  
*Sushi*  
*"Let's eat"*  
*father, boss or superior*  
*oni [goblin]; indicates an angry person*

**NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU SQUEEZE,  
HE STILL WON'T TALK...****FINANCIAL MATTERS****BANKS**

The largest local bank in Fukuoka prefecture is Fukuoka Bank. It is used by many public organizations, so it is likely that you will open an account here. Other local banks include the Nishinippon City Bank and the 18 Bank. There are also branches of major national banks, MTBC, SMBC, Mizuho, and UFJ in Fukuoka, Kitakyushu, Kurume, and Izuka. If your office uses the automatic deposit system for your salary, it may be best to use the same bank as your office. If your office doesn't use this system, your salary will be paid directly to you in cash.

**ATMS**

ATM machines in Japan are not open 24 hours a day. Operating hours vary, and 5pm on weekends is not an uncommon time for bank machines to stop dispensing money. Thankfully, many convenience stores have ATMs that are open later. Despite this, your bank may cease access to your funds after a certain time. You will be charged for using the ATM outside of business hours (normally 9am-6pm, Mon-Fri) and if you use a machine that does not belong to your bank. Once a machine runs out of cash, it will not be refilled until the next working day. Before holidays, the machines are emptied and therefore close quickly. Remember to beat the rush.

**SAVINGS ACCOUNTS**

You can open a savings or investment account at a bank or the Post Office. You will need your *inkan* (personal seal), identification (passport or alien registration card are best), and at least ¥100 for an initial deposit. Ask for a cash card when you open a savings account. You must create an *anshobango* 暗証番号 (Personal Identification Number) to use cash machines. The Post Office publishes a very good guidebook in English. It is available at most offices and is a great resource. Interest on savings accounts ranges, with the best rate being offered by the Post Office. However, the interest rates offered at the present time are often less than 1% so don't go expecting bumper interest payments. When you open a savings or investment account, you will be asked if you would like to keep the interest or donate it to a scholarship fund for the needy. If you don't indicate a preference, the interest will be automatically donated for you.

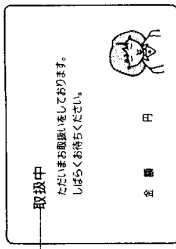
Some handy terms and kanji to remember:  
 お預け入れ *ozukeire* (deposit money)  
 お引き出し *ohikidashi* (withdraw money)  
 お振込み *ofurikomi* (transfer money to another account holder)  
 お振り替え *ofurikae* (transfer money between your accounts)

Cards from one bank can generally not be used in another bank's machine. To get around this, especially if traveling domestically, consider opening an account with the Post Office. Nearly all ATMs nationwide accept Post Office cards. Likewise you can use your Fukuoka Bank, Nishi Nippon City Bank, and many major banks' cards at Post Office ATMs.

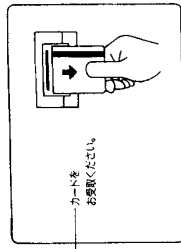
**FOREIGN CARDS**

If you want to relieve your account back home of some funds, the best place to go is your local post office. Postal ATMs will accept

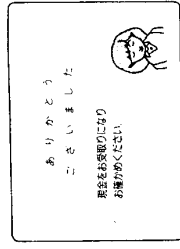
## ATM: How To



Please wait a moment.



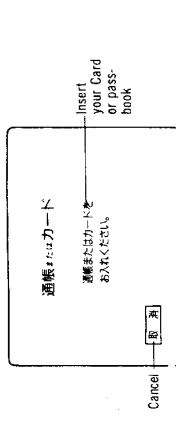
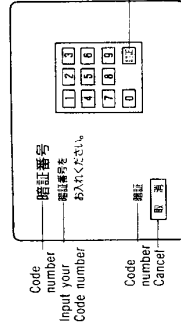
Take your card.



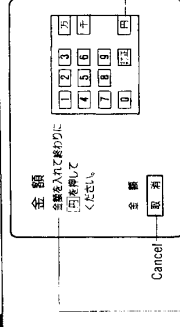
Thank you very much.

Take and confirm the bills and the statement.

\* In case of difficulty, touch the Cancel mark [X] and start again from step 1

Insert your card into the Card Insertion Slot  
カード挿入口 (Insert in the direction of the arrow on your card.)

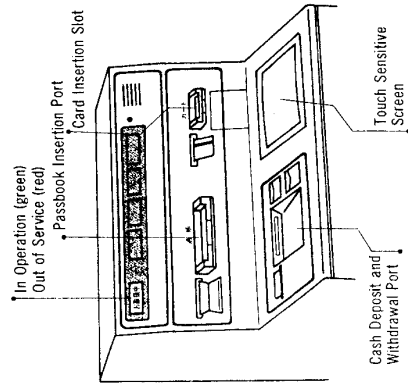
Touch the figures of your secret 4-digit code number.



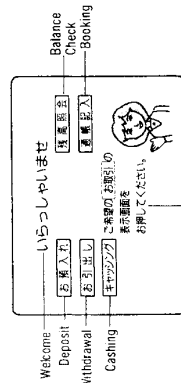
Input the amount finishing with the Yen mark.

Touch the figures of the amount that you wish to withdraw, then you touch the Yen mark [円] on the display screen.

To withdraw 25,000yen, touch mark 2 → 万 (ten thousand) → 5 → 千 (thousand) → 円 (yen)



## To Withdraw



Touch the screen to choose

the transaction you need

Touch the withdrawal mark [おろし] on the display screen.

foreign ATM cards (Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus, Plus, etc). ATMs accepting foreign cards are also located at the Fukuoka International Airport, Tenjin Shintenchō 2F, and outside Hakata Station (take the Chikushi exit and it's near the Hotel Centraza, open 6am to midnight). The Citibank branch in Tenjin also has international ATM services.

## CREDIT CARDS

All banks carry at least one major credit card that you can apply for. Major department stores often have their own credit cards as well. You can also use your credit card from home (Visa is most widely accepted, followed by MasterCard, American Express, and Diners' Club). You will incur currency fees from your provider, but if you don't have any cash on you it can be a real lifesaver. You may be asked whether you want to pay the money off in one, two, or even three payments. With Japanese credit cards you can choose, but with foreign cards, you have to pay the balance in one go (*ikkaibarai*).

## BILLS

You can pay bills in several ways. The most convenient is by *jidōkōza* (automatic withdrawal). Once you are registered, utility costs are deducted automatically from your personal bank account. To register you need your *inkan* (personal seal), bank account number, address, and account number (on your statement). A supervisor or a Japanese friend can help you to register. Usually, you can do this when you register for service or when your first bills come.

Other ways you can pay are at the bank or post office *furikomi madoguchi* (payment counter) before 4pm, to a collector (*shukunin ni shiharau*), or at a convenience store (e.g. 7-Eleven or Lawson) if the bill is bar coded. Note that most companies give only one warning notice before shutting off service.

## TAXES

For information on local taxes, contact the Fukuoka Regional Taxation Bureau (Fukuoka Kokuzai Kyoku Kanrika), Tel 092-411-0031, ext. 2375 or 2376. Kitakyushu Tax Bureau Tel 093-921-3331. The General Information Handbook also has information on the tax liabilities that you may have from home as well as contact details for various countries' tax agencies.

## SENDING MONEY HOME

There are many ways to do this, but the cheapest method is through the Post Office. A postal money order is made out to a third party back home (money orders can't be made out to the sender). Compared to banks, which can charge you huge fees, the post office will only take out a small percentage of what you send. For example, it will cost you about 1000 yen to send back 60 000 yen. Note that not all countries (including Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa) can have money sent home via the Post Office, so it pays to check in advance before visiting.

If you're short on time, Lloyds TSB offers a service for sending money directly into your home account. Lloyds charges a 2000 yen fee, but your Japanese bank will add on a *furikomi* fee and your bank at home may also charge a fee to receive the money. The transaction is done via ATM and the money is wired on the same or following business day. Check out their website for more details: [www.lloydstsb.co.jp/](http://www.lloydstsb.co.jp/). Tel 03-3589-7745.

## FOREIGN EXCHANGE

Most banks can exchange western foreign currencies into yen, but it can be hard to find banks that will change your yen into foreign currency. Larger cities in the prefecture have

several authorized foreign exchange banks, so check your local area for the branch nearest you. Fukuoka Bank has currency exchange services conveniently located at Fukuoka Airport, International Terminal 2F. They can change your yen into most major currencies and also have currency exchange

machines to beat the teller queues.

Please note that in most cases when traveling abroad, especially to other parts of Asia (such as neighboring Korea) you cannot reconvert your foreign currency into yen when you return to Japan.

## TIPS FOR SENDING MONEY HOME

If sending money every month, ask the Post Office assistant to print you several forms. If you send money via Lloyds, get a *furikami* card/passbook made with your details on it to use at the ATM. This will save you a lot of time and frustration in the future.

At the post office sending ¥1 costs the same as sending ¥100 000 home, whether by Certified Check or Wire Transfer : ¥2500 (though your bank may charge you a nominal fee for a wire transfer). So be smart: send the maximum allowable home per transaction. And by the way, waiting for the most profitable exchange rate only makes for bad party anecdotes. No one can predict Wall Street. Good night and good luck.

¥...\$

## HE FORGOT TO LAYER UP...



# TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

While on JET, you will no doubt have the chance to travel both domestically and internationally as well as exploring all that the prefecture has to offer. Starting with ways to commute and travel locally, this subsection will aid you in your adventures. No one should be without guides to where they are going, especially for domestic travel, as Japan has so much to offer. Lonely Planet Books are on sale at Kinokuniya and Maruzen as well as online at retailers such as [www.amazon.co.jp](http://www.amazon.co.jp). They are also available for reference at the Kitakyushu International Association (KIA) in Kitakyushu, at the Kokusai Hiroba in the ACROS building and at Rainbow Plaza in the IMS Building in Tenjin. See Appendix A for a Fukuoka transportation map and *kanji/kana/romaji* train guides.

## BICYCLES

Joining the throngs of dangerous cyclists on the streets of Japan is a popular way to get around. Although it is actually illegal to cycle while using a keitai (mobile phone) or holding an umbrella, both are common practice, so beware. It is legal to cycle on the pavements/sidewalk, though it seems no rules apply! Cars often park, and sometimes drive, on the pavements too, so look where you're going. If you have not inherited a bike from your predecessor, there are lots of options when trying to obtain a free or incredibly cheap second-hand bike. Your school is a good place to check. You could go to your local police station for information on the next bicycle auction of abandoned, lost, stolen, and impounded bikes. Prices are determined by silent auction. All enquiries regarding the date and time of auctions should be addressed to each particular ward office or police station. Alternatively, you could buy it new or used from a cyclist's

shop or department store. Make sure to register your bike. Registration can be done at any bicycle shop or at the local police station.

Designated bicycle parking areas are available for about ¥100 to ¥200 per day. It is advisable to use designated areas, as illegally parked bicycles are removed and taken to the nearest bicycle impound lot. There is a fee to get your bicycle back. Suggested bicycle parking areas in Fukuoka City include the airport subway terminal, behind IMS in Tenjin, and near Hakata Station. If you do decide to park just anywhere, use common sense and don't park in places that may impede pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.

Buy a good lock (maybe two). If you leave your bike unlocked, it will be stolen. Theft insurance is a good idea especially if you have a mountain bike. It's usually a one-time fee of about ¥2000 and a ¥10 000 deductible if your bike is stolen. Insurance is available for new bicycles only. Ask at the bike shop when you purchase your bike.

## CARS

To buy a car you will need your *gaikokujin tōroku shōmeisho, inkan, inkan tōroku shōmeisho* (印鑑登録証明書 personal seal registration certificate), and an official letter from the realty company in charge of your building, complete with two maps: one of your neighborhood area, including the streets around your apartment and your apartment building's location, and a second of your apartment building and parking spaces, with your own parking space clearly marked. You will have to submit both of these maps to the police station as part of the required paperwork when buying a car. If your realty

company does not give you both maps, be prepared to hand draw your own, anything will do. You can ask a Japanese neighbor to help label the streets and write your address in kanji. When buying a car with a yellow plate, the maps and letter are not always required, so check in advance what is needed. You will also need an International Driver's License and your home country license, or a Japanese license.

Your car must have a valid *shaken* 車検 (the official government inspection for all automobiles and motorcycles larger than 250cc in Japan) before you may legally drive in Japan. Cost varies depending upon the weight of your vehicle (usually ¥80 000 to ¥150 000). It lasts for three years if you buy a new car and two years for a used car. Cars over ten years old often have high *shaken* costs, due to required repairs. The time remaining on the *shaken* of a used car can greatly affect its value, so be sure to check before you buy. In addition, you will have to pay road tax each May, which ranges from ¥10 000 to ¥70 000. The tax depends on the engine size of your car.

## DRIVER'S LICENSES

For a list of countries whose driving licenses are valid in Japan, please check the JET General Handbook. If your country is not named, you must get an International or Japanese Driver's License. Depending on your home country, you may be able to apply for an International Driver's License over the Internet or at home through your national driver's advisory board (AAA, Motor League, etc.).

An International Driver's License is valid until one year after your arrival in Japan; afterwards you must apply for a Japanese license. Depending on where you are from (country and state/province), you may be able to get a Japanese license without taking a test. The rules are quite strict. Make sure that you understand them and have the correct paperwork (including a translation of your home driving license) before testing.

The Japan Automobile Federation (JAF) will translate your valid, non-Japanese license for ¥3000, if applying by post an additional fee of ¥290 applies. You must present your driver's license, your passport, and your alien registration card. Tel 092-841-7676. Embassies may also be able to do the translation though it may take longer and cost more than JAF. For ¥1000 plus postage, you can request a copy of the rules of the road in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Persian, Chinese, or Hangul.

If you need to take the Japanese driver's license test, you must pass all three parts of the test: written, practical, and physical. The fee for a Japanese driver's license is a minimum of ¥4100. There is a special test for obtaining a motorcycle license. All driving schools in Fukuoka prefecture only offer courses in Japanese. The tuition starts from 210 300 yen for daytime courses and from 234 300 yen for evening courses. The term of enrolment is, at minimum, just over one month for daytime courses and about 2 months for evening courses. Driving school is not mandatory, though statistics show that you have a much higher chance of passing the test if you have taken driving school.

Before visiting the testing center to test for a license or to convert a foreign license, be sure to call to confirm whether you will need someone with you who speaks Japanese. Some of the offices only deal with foreign licenses for a short period of time each day (1-1.30pm in Fukuoka and Kitakyushu, for example) so it is important to confirm times and whether an appointment is necessary before arriving at the Center. Even if you have been driving for years, the test is tricky and taking it two or three times is sometimes required! Depending on your contracting organization you may have to take *nenkyū* (annual paid holiday) to get it done.

For additional information on obtaining a driver's license in Japan visit the Fukuoka JET website [www.fukuokajet.com](http://www.fukuokajet.com). If online practice tests are what you need, check out [www.japandriverslicense.com](http://www.japandriverslicense.com).

## TEST CENTERS

There are five *Jidōsha Unten Menkyo Shikenjo* (自動車運転免許試験所) in the prefecture.

**Chikugo Driver's License Test Center.** 1135-2 Oaza-Hisatomi Chikugo. Tel 0942-53-5208.

**Chikuhō Driver's License Test Center.** 23-21 Aza-Tateishi Oaza-Niho Shonai-machi, Kaho-gun. Tel 092-565-5109.

**Fukuoka Driver's License Test Center.** Go to the second floor. You must arrive and register between 1 and 1.30 pm. You will be able to get your license at 4pm after taking exams and classes. Endorsements will take longer. Open Monday to Friday. 4-7-1 Hanahata, Minami-ku, Fukuoka. Tel 093-961-4804.

**Kitakyushu Driver's License Test Center.** You must arrive and register between 1 and 1.30 pm. Open Monday to Friday. It is also open on the first and third Saturdays of each month, but closed on the 2nd, 4th and 5th Saturdays. 2-4-1 Hinode-machi, Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-961-4804.

**Kurume Driver's License Test Center.** 13-15 Yamakawa Noguchi-machi. Tel 0942-43-1193.

## CAR INSURANCE

To apply for "optional" car insurance, hassle-free, contact Larry Mojumdar at Mojumdar & Co. Insurance Brokers. You won't need a bit of Japanese, as it's all done in English! Tel 03-3281-2119. Website: [www.mojumdar.com](http://www.mojumdar.com). E-mail: [larry@gol.com](mailto:larry@gol.com).

## ENGINE SIZE

Kei cars have a yellow license plate (660cc or smaller). The positives of having a small engine are lower insurance fees, road taxes, and toll road fees, and less gasoline is needed. The negative is that safety (at higher speeds) is sacrificed for low prices. Also as the petrol tank and car itself are quite small,

this can mean you have to make more trips to the gas station or are unable to carry large amounts of people and luggage at once.

Normal cars have a white plate. They are usually safer than kei cars at high speeds and are better for traveling long distances, but running costs such as insurance and taxes like *shaken* are more expensive.

## CAR RENTAL

**Budget Rent-A-Car** The reservation center handles calls for all 17 Budget offices in Kyushu. 20% discount with a VISA IDEX card. Reservation Center Tel 092-281-0543. Hakata Station Tel 092-473-0543. Ohashi Tel 092-561-0543. Kokura Tel 093-512-0543. Kurosaki Tel 093-622-0543.

**Eki Rent-A-Car** Hakata Station near Grain d'or Bakery. Tel 092-431-8775.

**Nissan Rent-A-Car** You can rent by the day for unlimited kilometers unless you're going to Hokkaido or one-way to Narita or Haneda Airports. Pamphlets in English. Hours 8am to 8pm Hakata Station Tel 092-451-4123. Fukuoka Airport Tel 092-474-3223.

**Japan Rental Car and Lease** If you lease a car over 1500cc, they give you a 20% discount. Kokura Tel 093-531-3900. Kurosaki Tel 093-622-3900.

**Nippon Rent-A-Car Kogasaki** Tel 092-721-0919. Kitakyushu Tel 093-521-8571 or 093-642-8244.

**www.tocoo.com** offers discounted car rental rates and handles reservations across Japan. The site is a good resource to find local car rentals as well as for traveling in other parts of the country.

## SCOOTERS

To register your scooter, go to your local *yakusho* (public office) and pick up a form called *joto mōshikomi*. The person who sold you the scooter will need to fill out parts

of this form as well. You will need to take the scooter's *nanbapurēto* (license plate) so that they can exchange it for a new one. Compulsory insurance can be paid at the Post Office and you can get optional insurance starting at around ¥20 000 a year. You will have the option of paying it all up front or paying in monthly installments, which is a little more expensive. Buy a *yuko kigen* (validation sticker) to stick on your license plate. They are sold at the insurance office. It is good for one year and costs ¥7000. A two-year sticker costs ¥9500. Note: you need either an international motorcycle license or a Japanese license to operate a scooter of any size in Japan.

## BUSES

### LOCAL

Local buses are boarded via the middle doors. As you get on, take a numbered ticket or insert your bus card. The board at the front shows the fare for each number. As you get off the bus, put your exact fare in the fare box or your card into the reader. It is possible to get change and buy bus cards on board the bus. Many bus operators offer one-day bus passes and single, couple, family, or group passes.

**Nishitetsu** is the biggest bus operator and offers services in most parts of the prefecture. Schedules are color-coded and are posted at all stops. Weekdays are green; Saturdays are yellow or orange; Sundays/holidays are pink. Nishitetsu also has convenient 100 buses that operate in the downtown areas of Fukuoka and Kitakyushu. Web (Japanese): [www.nishitetsu.co.jp/bus/](http://www.nishitetsu.co.jp/bus/).

**Nishitetsu bus cards** are convenient, have no expiration date, and can save you a little money. Bus cards can be purchased at convenience stores, at bus centers, or on the bus. Just ask the bus driver when he comes to a stop. Bus cards are sold in amounts of ¥1000 (with ¥100 bonus), ¥3000 (with ¥400 bonus), ¥5000 (with ¥750 bonus), and ¥10 000 (with ¥1500 bonus).

### HIGHWAY/EXPRESS

Highway buses offer an alternative to train travel over long distances within Kyushu and several cities on Honshu. They are cheaper but slower alternatives to trains. Reservations are sometimes required on various lines or at peak times. Not all highway buses have toilets, though longer distance ones often do or will stop at a service area along the way. It is not recommended to take buses during peak travel season (for example Golden Week) as they can get caught in traffic and be several hours late.

**Nishitetsu Highway Bus** reservations can be made by calling the following numbers: Fukuoka 092-751-6231, Kitakyushu 093-551-1181, Chikuho 0942-33-2231, and Chikugo 0948-22-3001. You can also use bus cards on services within the prefecture to save some money. Travel from Fukuoka/Fukuoka Airport to Kitakyushu, or Fukuoka Airport to Kurume is ¥1000, with Fukuoka Airport to Omuta costing ¥1500. Web (Japanese): [www.nishitetsu.co.jp/bus/](http://www.nishitetsu.co.jp/bus/).

**Overnight buses** are a cheap mode of long distance travel as they save you a night's accommodation and get you to your destination in the morning. They are comfortable and smoking is available on some. Contact Nishitetsu Bus Lines, Fukuoka 092-714-0611 and Kitakyushu 093-522-5588. The main stations are Tenjin, in Solaria Stage, Hakata Transport Center, and Sunatsu in Kitakyushu. Of particular value is the Tenjin/Hakata to Tokyo service that leaves Tenjin at 7pm arriving at Shinjuku Station at 9.30am the next morning for ¥15000.

## TRAINS

There are four types of train that operate in Fukuoka Prefecture:

**Local** (*futsu*/普通) stops at all stations. Many of the smaller, private lines only run this kind of train.

**Rapid/Express** (*kaisoku/kyūkō* 快速/急行) skips the smaller stations. These cost the same as the local trains above.

**Limited Express** (*tokkyū* 特急) only stops at the major stations. On JR lines you have to pay an additional Limited Express charge. On Nishitetsu lines these cost the same as other trains.

**Bullet Train/Super Express** (*shinkansen* 新幹線) is operated by JR and is best suited for fast, long distance travel. Within Fukuoka prefecture you can board the *shinkansen* at Kokura or Hakata. The trains can reach speeds of up to 300 kilometers per hour. In addition to the standard ticket cost, a Super Express charge is payable. Whether a train is listed as being *noborisen* (上り線) or *kudarisen* (下り線) on the timetable is determined by where it is traveling in relation to Tokyo station. Trains traveling towards Tokyo station are called *noborisen* and those traveling away from Tokyo station are *shinkansen*. As a general rule in Kyushu, north or eastbound trains are *noborisen*. This practice holds true on expressways as well.

### Fare Exchange

If you are late for a train or change your mind on your destination, you can buy a ticket from the conductor on the train or get a fare adjustment before you leave the station.

### JR Lines

JR Kyushu operates the major train lines in Kyushu. The main lines are the Kagoshima Line, which runs from Mojiko to Kagoshima via Hakata and Kumamoto, and the Nippo Line, which runs from Kokura to Kagoshima-chuo via Oita and Miyazaki. Other important lines include the Chikuho Line from Orio to Haruda via Nogata and Izuka, and the Sasaguri Line from Keisen to Yoshizuk. Web: [www.jrkyushu.co.jp](http://www.jrkyushu.co.jp).

## SHINKANSEN

There are two shinkansen lines that are operated in the Kyushu area.

**Sanyo/Tokaido** This is the main shinkansen line and runs from Hakata to Tokyo via Hiroshima, Osaka, Kyoto, and Nagoya. Along this line three types of trains operate:

**Kodama** *こだま* is the slowest *shinkansen*, like a local train, it stops at all stations. With a seat reservation you can sit in the Green (first class) car, and generally all other cars are usable without a seat reservation.

**Hikari** *ひかり* skips the fastest *shinkansen* stations on its run from Hakata to Shin-Osaka. At Shin-Osaka, Hiroshima, and Okayama you can transfer to Tokyo-bound *hikari* services.

**Nozomi** *のぞみ* is the fastest *shinkansen* service. Trains depart regularly from Hakata bound for Tokyo between 6:25am-6:26pm. The journey takes just under five hours. A small extra *nozomi* charge is payable and visitors using a JR Pass cannot use the *nozomi* services.

**Kyushu Shinkansen** This service partially opened in 2004 between Shin-Yatsushiro and Kagoshima-chuo with full completion due around 2011. At Hakata you board a *Relay Tsubame* リレーつばめ limited express and transfer to the actual *Shinkansen Tsubame* service at Shin-Yatsushiro. From Hakata to Kagoshima-chuo takes two hours and ten minutes.

On all *shinkansen* services, reservations are advised at peak holiday times, especially during Golden Week, New Year's, and school holidays. You must pay a little extra for reserved seating. On the Sanyo/Tokaido Line, a reservation is advised on all services to Hakata or Kokura, although as these are the first two stops it is often possible to get a non-reserved seat and not have to stand on the outbound journey.

## JR DISCOUNTS

**Kaisuken** are discount tickets that generally offer a 10% discount: six for the price of five, or 11 for the price of ten. They are for use between two designated stops. They expire in one month or three months, respectively.

**Teikiken** are commuter passes for use between two designated stops. Passes are valid for one, two, or three months. You can get on and off anywhere between the two designated locations on your chosen route. If you use the same route more than 20 times

a month, a *teikiken* is worth buying.

**Nimai/Yonmai Kippu** are two/four pack discount tickets for limited express/Kyushu Shinkansen trains. They are a fantastic way to get about quickly and cheaply, taking you to places all over Kyushu with validity of one month for *nimai kippu* and two months for *yonmai kippu*. In the prefecture this is most commonly used for travel between Kokura and Hakata, where the *yonmai kippu* gives you cheaper and faster travel per ticket than the regular fare! If you are traveling to and from the same place on a limited express then you can save money with this deal.

**Wai Wai Card** is not discounted, but handy if you ride both the Fukuoka City subway and the JR. ¥3000, ¥5000, and ¥10 000 cards available.

**Nice Going Card** allows the user to receive a 40% discount on JR tickets within Kyushu on weekends. This trip must be over 100km, one-way. The card also provides discounts at participating merchants, but you must be between 16 and 29 years old to receive this card. Annual membership fee is ¥500. Web [Japanese]: <http://ngc.e-fukuoka.co.jp/>.

**Orange cards** are prepaid ¥1000 or ¥3000 train cards that enable users to buy tickets without coins or cash. They do not offer discounts, only convenience.

**Seishun 18 Kippu** Sold three times a year for use during the school holidays, this is the budget conscious traveler's delight! For ¥11 500 you get five tickets that are valid for travel on local/rapid/express [not limited express or *shinkansen*] trains for one day. Five people can use the tickets for one day, one person for five days, or any combination you wish.

#### Nishitetsu Lines

Nishitetsu trains operate on two lines within the prefecture. The Miyajidake Line runs between Fukuoka/Kaizuka and Tsuyazaki. The Tenjin-Omuta Line runs between Fukuoka/Tenjin and Omuta with a branch line to Dazaifu and another branch line to Amagi. There are local, express, and limited

express trains operating on these lines. All trains cost the same and can sometimes be cheaper than using JR. Web [Japanese]: [www.nishitetsu.co.jp/train/](http://www.nishitetsu.co.jp/train/).

#### Nishitetsu Discounts

**Kaisuken and Teikiken tickets** are available for Nishitetsu trains and work the same way as for JR. In addition, the Yoka Net card can be used on Nishitetsu buses and trains, as well as the subway. These are sold in amounts of ¥3000 (with ¥200 bonus) and ¥5000 (with ¥500 bonus).

## FUKUOKA CITY SUBWAY

Three lines operate within the city: The Kūkō Line runs from Fukuoka Airport to Meinohama, the Hakozaki Line runs from Nakasu-Kawabata to Kaizuka, and the recently opened Nanakuma Line runs from Tenjin-Minami to Hashimoto. To transfer between the Kūkō or Hakozaki lines and the Nanakuma line, exit Tenjin station through the green ticket gates and walk down to Tenjin-Minami station. All subway trains stop at every station with Kūkō Line services continuing from Meinohama on the JR Chikuh Line to Karatsu. The subway operates from 5.30am-midnight. Web [Japanese]: [www.subway.city.fukuoka.jp](http://www.subway.city.fukuoka.jp).

## FERRIES

#### DOMESTIC

For budget travelers, ferries are a fantastic way to see Japan. Services from Fukuoka, Kokura, and Moji go to destinations all over Japan, including Osaka, Tokyo, Shikoku, Okinawa, and Kobe. They are cheap and comfortable, but long distance ferries can be time consuming. For example, the ferry from Shin Moji to Osaka costs about ¥6000 and takes 12 hours, while the *shinkansen* from Kokura takes two-and-a-half hours and costs just over ¥14 000. The overnight ferries have places to sleep, restaurants,

vending machines, baths, and some even have karaoke rooms. Within the prefecture there are quicker services offering local connections to the islands and across harbors.

#### WITHIN FUKUOKA

**Konominato - Oshima** A ferry service runs from Konominato in Munakata to Oshima, the largest island in the prefecture. Buses to the ferry terminal leave from JR Akama and Togo stations. Tel 0940-72-2211.

**Meinohama - Nokonoshima** Buses to the ferry terminal run from Hakata Bus Center (#1 or #300) from Gate 5. Get off at Nokotosenjo stop. You can also take the subway to Meinohama and walk ten minutes.

**Hakata Futo - Uminonakamichi (MarineWorld) - Otake - Shikanoshima** Buses to Hakata Futō leave from Gate 8 in Hakata Bus Center (#63). Boats to Uminonakamichi also depart from Marizon. Trains go to Uminonakamichi on the JR Kashii Line.

**Wakamatsu - Tobata** This ferry is an alternative to the bus over the harbor between these two parts of Kitakyushu. Tel 093-861-0961.

#### WITHIN JAPAN

**Hakata Futo - Goto Island - Hirado (Nagasaki)** Departs at midnight for Goto Island off the western coast of Kyushu before continuing onto Hirado on the western tip of Kyushu. There are a range of tickets available starting from ¥1500.

**Hakata Futo - Okinawa** No cars are carried on the 26-hour journey to Okinawa. There are three sailings a week and a one-way ticket will cost you ¥13 330. Tel 092-281-0831.

**Hakata Futo - Iki Island and Tsushima Island** These small islands are part of Nagasaki prefecture and half-way between Fukuoka and Korea. Services run from Hakata four times a day. The trip is two hours and costs ¥3780. Tel 092-281-0831.

**Kokura - Shimonoseki** For people wishing to cross the Kanmon Strait and take their car on the ferry, this is the best option. Ferries leave from Higari Port in Kokura and arrive in Shimonoseki near the JR Station. Tel 093-551-1181.

**Mojiko - Shimonoseki** A 5-minute journey across the Kanmon Strait connects Mojiko with Shimonoseki. The Mojiko terminal is near the JR station, and the Shimonoseki terminal is in walking distance to the Kaikyokan Aquarium and Karato Fish Market. Tel 093-551-1181.

**Mojiko-Matsuyama (Shikoku)** Seamax Ferry runs between Mojiko and Matsuyama and takes two-and-a-half hours by boat followed by a 30-minute bus ride to the city. There are two ferries per day, 10.40am and 6pm. A one-way ticket is ¥7500. Tel 093-322-2222. Web [Japanese]: [www.ishizakikisen.co.jp](http://www.ishizakikisen.co.jp). There is also an overnight ferry service that costs ¥3700 one-way for people and ¥14 000 for cars. It leaves Kitakyushu at 9.55pm and arrives at 5am; however you are not allowed to disembark until 7am. If you plan to make the trip more than once, consider getting a membership for ¥1000 that cuts the price down to ¥2500. Tel 093-521-1419. Web [Japanese]: [www.kanki.co.jp/index.htm](http://www.kanki.co.jp/index.htm).

**Shin Moji - Osaka** Meimon City Line Ferry leaves twice every evening at 5.40pm and 8pm and takes 12 hours to Osaka. Accommodation on this new ferry include a cafeteria, showers, clean toilets, a bath with an ocean view, shared bedrooms, an outside deck, televisions, a convenience store, bar, game room, and lounge area. One-way tickets start from ¥6000 per person, but if you book one week in advance you get 20% off. You can also buy tickets at Lawson, then call to make a reservation. There is a free bus from the north exit of Kokura Station to the ferry port that leaves at 3.40pm and 6.40pm. Tel 093-481-1780. Web: [www.cityline.co.jp/index2.html](http://www.cityline.co.jp/index2.html).

**Shin Moji - Osaka/Kobe** Hankyu Ferry runs three overnight ferries, two to Osaka (5.30pm and 8.30pm) and one to Kobe

[6.30pm]. Accommodation is similar to the Meimon City Line. Women can ask for sleeping accommodation in the "Ladies' Room." Free shuttle to/from the ferry port operates from JR Kokura/Moji stations. Prices start from ¥6400. Reserve your ticket online (and pay at the port) for a 20% discount. Tel 093-481-6581. Web [Japanese]: [www.han9f.co.jp](http://www.han9f.co.jp).

**Shin Moji - Tokyo and Tokushima** Ocean Tokyu Ferry runs between Shin Moji and Tokyo. It takes two days and one night with a brief stop in Tokushima. Prices start from ¥12 600 to Tokyo and ¥6090 to Tokushima.

#### Buying Ferry Tickets

Generally, buying tickets at the ferry port is the easiest option. However, if there is a large group of people traveling or you are traveling during the holidays, it is advisable to phone and make reservations first. Some companies also offer special discounts of up to 20% for tickets booked in advance or on the internet, so this can help save money.

#### International

There are ferry services to South Korea and China from Shimonoseki, Kokura, and Hakata. A ferry to South Korea has an overnight ride for about ¥6800, while a trip to Tsingtao, China costs around ¥34 200 return. International services are operated by a combination of slower ferries and the faster hydrofoils that speed from port to port.

**Hakata - Pusan** JR Beetle links Fukuoka with South Korea and takes three hours. It is much faster and more comfortable than the ferry, but costs more: round trip ¥24 000 for weekday departures. Nice Going Card holders are eligible for discounts and sometimes you can get discounted package deals with a hotel included. Check with your travel agent. Tel 092-281-2315. Web [Japanese]: [www.beetle.jrkyushu.co.jp](http://www.beetle.jrkyushu.co.jp).

**Kokura - Pusan** Ocean Flower is a high-speed hydrofoil ferry that runs from Kokura once a day, leaving at 3pm and arriving at 7.45pm. The return ferry leaves Pusan at 9am and

arrives in Kokura at 1.30pm. Tickets start from ¥12 000 one-way and ¥20 000 round trip.

**Kokura - Ulsan (South Korea)** Dolphin Ferry runs between Kokura and Ulsan in about three hours. It leaves Kokura at 9.30am and arrives at 12.30pm. The return ferry leaves Ulsan at 1.50pm and arrives at 4.50pm. Ferry services are available on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. On Tuesday the ferry leaves Kokura and returns on a Thursday. There are no services on Wednesday. Tickets start from ¥12 000 for a one-way trip and ¥20 000 for a round trip.

**Shimonoseki - Pusan** Kampu Ferry leaves daily at 7pm and arrives in Pusan at 8.30am. Prices start from ¥6800 per person. The ferry terminal is a ten minute walk from JR Shimonoseki Station. Kampu Ferry Company. Tel 0832-24-3000.

**Shimonoseki - Tsingtao (China)** Orient Ferry runs from Shimonoseki to Tsingtao about three times every two weeks. Round trip tickets start from ¥34 200.

#### BUYING FERRY TICKETS

Like domestic ferries, you can purchase most tickets at the port, though it is always best to pre-book your tickets, especially in peak seasons. Kampu and Camellia have agreements with Korea about ferry prices. Ferry tickets are the same price, no matter which country you buy them in. However, Jet Foil tickets are slightly cheaper if you buy your return ticket in Korea. To combat this, Jet Foil on the Japan side offers discounts and specials throughout the year, which often end up being slightly cheaper than buying a return ticket in Korea.

#### AIR TRAVEL

Air travelers are served by two airports in the prefecture. Most departures leave from Fukuoka and there are often many good deals to be had, especially to South Korea and cities in Southeast Asia served by direct flights.

#### AIR TRAVEL TIPS

There are many ways to make your travel cheaper. As prices tend to be more expensive around peak times, you can sometimes save a lot of money by bringing your departure a day or two forward or returning on a different day than the masses. Likewise, if there is a special deal from one of the three major airports in Japan, see if it's cheaper to buy a ticket from there and purchase a connection from Fukuoka separately, rather than buying your international flight departing from Fukuoka.

**Airline Alliances** offer the chance to earn miles from more than one carrier. By flying using carriers that can earn you miles on your favorite airline, you can soon be traveling for free! For example, Air Canada, Air New Zealand, BMI, and United members can earn miles on carriers such as ANA and Singapore Airlines, as they are all part of Star Alliance. Likewise, American Airlines, British Airways, and Qantas members can do the same on Cathay Pacific via the oneworld grouping.

**Birthday Flights** Both ANA and JAL offer these great value fares. For ¥12 000, you and up to three friends can travel on any single flight anywhere in Japan during the seven days either side of your birthday. See [www.jal.co.jp/en/](http://www.jal.co.jp/en/) or [www.ana.co.jp/eng/index.html](http://www.ana.co.jp/eng/index.html) for more information.

**Special Discount Fares** are offered by ANA and JAL. ¥7000-17 000 gets you a seat on any single flight in Japan. Visit <http://www.japan-saver.com/promotion/jlbb.htm> for specific dates and details.

**Kitakyushu Airport** (新北九州空港 Shin Kitakyushu Kūkō) opened in March 2006, replacing the airport in Kokuraminami ward. It is the first airport in Japan to operate 24 hours a day and is located three kilometers offshore in the Suo Nada area of the Seto Inland Sea in South Kitakyushu. There are five JAL-operated flights to and from Tokyo Haneda airport each day, while StarFlyer also plan to have 12 flights per day to Haneda starting at 5.30am. These will begin operating this year. If driving, the airport can be reached via a toll-free bridge connected to the Eastern Kyushu Expressway, or from one

of five bus routes from across Kitakyushu.

**Fukuoka Airport** has a wide range of domestic and international flights, including connections to the three gateway airports: Narita, Kansai, and Chubu. There are three domestic terminals, with Terminals 1 and 2 for departures and Terminal 3 for arrivals. The outbound terminals are split depending on which carrier you are using. International flights arrive and depart from a separate terminal, but free shuttle buses will take you between the two. Be sure to leave about 30 minutes to transfer between the terminals.

To get to the airport, take the Fukuoka City Subway Kūkō Line to Fukuoka Airport, which will take you straight to the domestic terminal, from which you can catch a bus to other terminals. You can also reach the airport by Nishitetsu bus; both highway and local services operate. If driving, both Route 3 and the Fukuoka Urban Expressway go to the airport.

#### TRAVEL AGENTS

Never accept an agent's first price—get several estimates and shop around. Sometimes booking your flight from home can be a lot cheaper than from Japan. Try to make your arrangements as early as possible to ensure flight availability, departure times, and seating. Booking in the summer for a New Year's trip is advisable. Following is a list of travel agencies that JETs have found in the past to offer good deals and service.

#### FUKUOKA CITY

**ACROS** Ask for Yoshimura. Good English and very helpful. ACROS building, 1-1-1 Tenjin. Tel 092-725-9090.

**Asahi Travel Agency** Ask for Miss Nakamura. Daiei Fukuoka Eigyo-sho. Tel 092-713-1561.

**Hello Ticket Tenjin** Ask for Becky-san who understands English. Tel 092-712-8686.

**I.L.S.** Ask for Miss Yurabe. Friendly service and decent English. Tel 092-715-2940.



**Map Tours** (A'Cross Traveller's Bureau). Very cheap. Consultants speak basic English. Near Iwataya Z-side in Tenjin.

**No. 1 Travel** Caters especially to foreigners; all staff speak English. They are also very efficient and friendly. 3F ACROS building, 1-1-1 Tenjin. Tel 092-761-0957.

**Sankei Tourist Inc.** This travel company deals mainly in wholesale, so can often find you the cheapest ticket prices. Ask for Miss Fukuyama who is very friendly and speaks excellent English. No.3 Hakata Kaisei building, 10F 1-3-6, Hakataeki Minami. Tel 092-4751678.

**Out Trip** Very cheap. Tel 092-524-7051.

### KITAKYUSHU

**HIS** in Kokura and Kurosaki both have English speaking agents and are very helpful. The Kokura branch is located on the left hand side of the monorail, past Isetan as you exit Kokura Station. Tel 093-533-2737. The Kurosaki branch is located on Route 3 opposite Izutsuya. Tel 093-622-8661.

**IACE Travel** Ask for Haruko Fujita. Good English, very personable. Located on the 6F, Kondo-Kaikan, Kokura. Tel 093-541-6680.

**JTB**, Kokura Tel 093-521-2152.

JR Kyushu Joy Road, Moji Tel 093-381-7056.

**Kinki Nippon Tourist Co**, Kokura Tel 093-551-4891.

**Nippon Travel Agency**, Kokura Tel 093-521-0800.

**Nishitetsu Travel**, Kokura. Tel 093-521-1951.

**Overseas Travel Club Date**, Kokura. Tel 093-951-1076.

**Tobu Travel**, Kurosaki. Tel 093-621-1738.

### TRAVEL HEALTH

Before heading for tropical climates, especially those of South East Asia, consult your doctor about which vaccinations you need. These may include tetanus (five year booster), cholera, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, rabies, yellow fever, and Japanese encephalitis. Malaria pills are unavailable in

Japan, but some international clinics are able to provide them. Details of where to get vaccinations can be found in Rainbow Plaza. Call before you go. They can order almost any vaccination available. An overseas medical consultant (Japanese only) is available on Mondays. Tel 045-563-3858.

### RE-ENTRY PERMITS

You must get a re-entry permit if you plan to leave Japan or you will not be allowed back in. It is recommended that you get this done as soon as you can; in an emergency the last thing you want to be worrying about is returning to the country. During summer vacation there is a lot of down time, and you may be able to convince your supervisor to let you go without taking *nenkyu*. Bring your passport and your alien registration card when you go to the Immigration Bureau to get the permit. There are two offices, one at Fukuoka Airport Domestic and the other at Kokura Godochosha (the Kokura office is not as busy as the Fukuoka one).

At **Fukuoka Airport** the Immigration Bureau is hidden away at the far end of Domestic Terminal 3. The three terminals are in a line. Terminal 3 is at the end of the airport, closest to the expressway. Walk past Terminal 3 and the window selling bus tickets, turn left around the corner of the building, and there will be a small sign on the left a little way down saying Immigration. Go in that door and follow the signs.

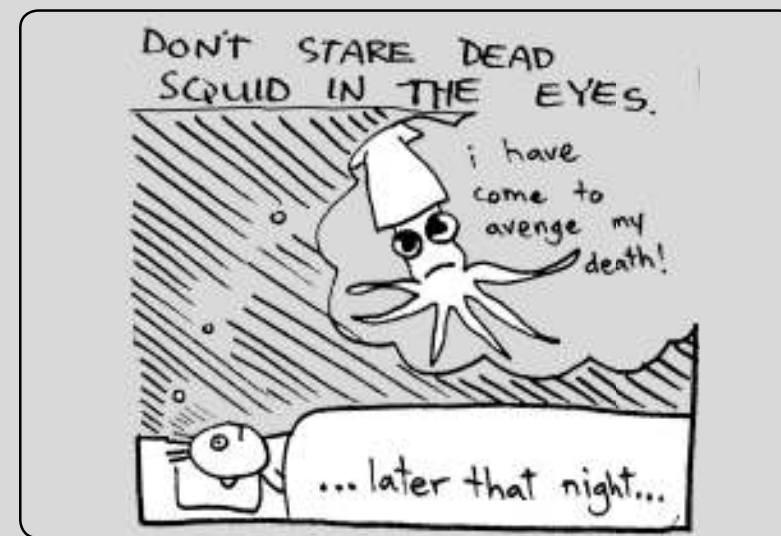
Inside that room, there's an information counter on the left and the main counter on the right. Ask at the information counter for a re-entry permit application form: "*Sainyūkoku kyōka mūshikomishō onegai shimasu.*" Fill it out (English is OK). There will be a space on one of the forms to stick a money stamp. It's ¥3000 for a one-use re-entry permit or ¥6000 for a multiple-use permit (good until your visa expires). These money stamps are not available there. To buy one, go back into the airport and find a convenience store. The closest store to the Immigration Office, just inside Terminal 3 (it has a Post Office logo outside the shop), sells these stamps.

Ask for a "*sanzen en inshi kudasai*" (¥3000 version) or a "*rokusen en inshi kudasai*" (¥6000 version). Stick it on the form you get. Clever folk will get the stamps first to save a little time!

Back at the Immigration Bureau, go to the rightmost window of the windows on the right, explain why you're there ("*sainyūkoku kyōka no mōshikomi ni tsuite nan desu ga...*") and you'll be given a number. Wait for your number to be called (this can take a very long time, sometimes in excess of one hour), then go and give them your completed forms, passport, and gaijin card. When they've processed your request (about 15 minutes), they'll call you back and give you your passport with the relevant stamp and/or paperwork inside. You're done! Open Mon-Fri, 9am-12pm and 1-4pm. Tel 092-623-2400. Because of the time this process can take, leave enough time so as not to be late if you plan on going before a meeting in Yoshizuka!

**Kokura Godochosha Immigration Bureau** 小倉合同庁舎 From Nishi Kokura Station walk straight out, away from the tracks, for a few blocks. After passing the castle on your left, you'll cross one last intersection and will see the Bureau on your right. It's the white building on the right-hand side of the street, beside the Police Station and directly across the street from Kitakyushu Central Library. The Immigration Bureau is on 3F and the counter to buy the revenue stamps on 2F. The procedure is the same here as at the airport, but takes less time. Note: it takes a week to obtain a visa renewal from this branch. Office opening hours are 9am-12pm and 1-4pm. Kokura Godochosha 3F, 5-3 Jonai Kokurakita-ku, Kitakyushu-shi. Tel 092-582-6915 ext 6931.

### REVENGE OF THE BEAST FROM 20 000 FATHOMS



# HEALTH & WELL BEING

## MEDICAL TREATMENT

What may be standard practice in our own countries is not necessarily the same in Japan. Keep in mind that privacy can sometimes be hard to come by. It is not uncommon to find yourself being treated in front of nurses and other patients or having the details of your case discussed or explained in front of others, or even passed on from medical staff to someone you know. Informed consent is still not a prevalent concept and little time is given for explanations. Ideas about women's health issues are also very different. If you feel you need a certain service, do not be shy about asking for it. The idea of treatment as a contract between patient and doctor has a legal base, but little authority in practice.

Outpatient medicine is readily prescribed. It is usually given out at the hospital or clinic rather than a separate pharmacy. Hospitalization and treatment periods are generally much longer in Japan than in the West.

## DOCTORS

**Dr. Schlemper** is extremely nice and speaks fluent English. He has a western style of practicing medicine, which makes you feel comfortable and safe. Take the subway to Tojinmachi, then exit 1, turning to the left. It's about 100 meters away from the station. International Clinic Tojinmachi, Jigyo 1-4-6, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-717-1000. Web: [www.internationalclinic.org](http://www.internationalclinic.org). Email: [schlemper@internationalclinic.org](mailto:schlemper@internationalclinic.org).

**Dr. Mariko Katayama** is a dermatologist based in Munakata. Her office is open everyday except Sunday and Thursday. Get there before 4.40pm and expect to wait for

a long time, as she is well known. The staff there are very friendly and they speak a little English. You don't need an appointment. Coming from JR Akama Station, exit the front entrance and come out to the main road. Turn left and walk about five minutes until you reach Otanidori South intersection. Turn left here and make your first right at the next intersection, Kagi Bridge. You'll be next to a small river. Look straight across the rice field; you'll see a two-story concrete building – that's it. You can follow the narrow road that veers to the right. It leads straight to her place. 449 Tsuchiana, Munakata. Tel 0940-32-3269.

**Nanakuma Shika Clinic** has a female, English speaking dentist. Mon-Fri 10am-7.30pm; Saturday 10am-5pm. Fukuoka Shoppers' Plaza Center Building, 7F. 4-4-11 Tenjin, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-762-8841 or 092-762-8851.

**Nishihara Dentist** Take the subway to Maidashi Kyūdai Byōin-mae. The office is opposite the police headquarters and Kencho. 9.30am-1pm and 2pm-6.30pm. Tel 092-632-8866.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH

**Dr. Ota at Kurume University Hospital** trained for a year in Barcelona. He speaks English and some Spanish. He also works at a private clinic that distributes birth control. Tel 0942-35-3311.

**Miharu Kanemaru** This gynecologist has been recommended and speaks good English. Tel 092-738-3033.

**Hamaguchi Women's Clinic** Dr. Hamaguchi can speak good English as he attended

school at UCLA in the US. Birth control, STD testing, prenatal care, check-ups, and PAP smears are available here. Seeing a gynecologist in a foreign country may be a little more uncomfortable than usual so it is a good idea to bring a friend along. His office is located in Kitakyushu City, Kokura Kita Ward, Kiyomizu 2-14-24, near JR Kokura Minami station. Nishitetsu Bus #4 passes directly in front of it. For an appointment and more information call 093-561-0776. Open Monday-Saturday.

## MEDICAL INSURANCE

All JET participants are covered by Sampo Japan Overseas Travel Accident Insurance. For more info refer to the JET General Information Handbook. The Fukuoka service center is located at 2-5-17 Hakataeki-mae, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-481-5355.

## H.I.V. TESTING

### FUKUOKA & KITAKYUSHU

HIV tests can be carried out anonymously and free of charge at the public health centers in each ward in Fukuoka and Kitakyushu Cities. Information in English (including the application form for the test) is provided at each health Center and tests are given between 9 and 11am at the following locations:

#### Mondays

- Nishi Public Health Center  
Tel 092-882-3231  
HIV hotline 092-891-0391
- Yahata-higashi Public Health Center  
Tel 093-681-3855
- Tobata Public Health Center  
Tel 093-871-4527

#### Tuesdays

- Higashi Public Health Center  
Tel 092-651-3831  
HIV hotline 092-651 8391
- Minami Public Health Center  
Tel 092-541-2231
- Moji Public Health Center

Tel 093-321-1122

- Kokura-kita Public Health Center  
Tel 093-571-0522
- Kokura-minami Public Health Center  
Tel 093 921-2185
- Wakamatsu Public Health Center  
Tel 093-761-4043
- Yahata-nishi Public Health Center  
Tel 093-631-4451

#### Wednesdays

- Jonan Public Health Center  
Tel 092-831-4261  
HIV hotline 092-822-8391
- Sawara Public Health Center  
Tel 092 851-6400  
HIV hotline 092-846-8391

#### Thursdays

- Hakata Public Health Center  
Tel 092-641-6661  
HIV hotline 092-441-0023
- Chuo Public Health Center  
Tel 092-761-7361  
HIV hotline 092-712-8391

**Dr. Schlemper** at the International Clinic (see Recommended Doctors) also provides comprehensive STI/HIV testing for around ¥4500.

## COUNSELING

Japan can be a stressful place for even the calmest people, and culture shock can sometimes lead to other problems. If you are feeling down, remember that you can always call your PA (Prefectural Advisor) or one of the other ALTs or CIRs in your area. It's very likely that they have had similar feelings themselves. However, if it is a more serious matter, you can always call these numbers:

**AJET Peer Support Group** is staffed by JETs and is a completely confidential listen and referral line. Available 365 days a year from 8pm to 8am. Tel 0120-437-725.

**CLAIR JET Line** Calls are answered in English by Programme Co-coordinators. Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.45pm. Tel 03-3591-5489.

**Rainbow Plaza** offers legal and personal (couple, family, and individual) counseling services to foreigners in English and Japanese (call for availability for Korean or Chinese). The conference room at Rainbow Plaza is used for sessions. No interruptions. Confidentiality guaranteed. Call ahead to make an appointment. Counseling is available on Wednesdays and Fridays from 1pm to 6pm, and on Saturdays from 10am to 2.45pm. Legal counseling is available on the first and third Saturdays from 1pm to 4pm, IMS Building 8F, Tenjin. Tel 092-733-2220.

**Tokyo English Life Line** is answered in English by professional counselors offering advice, referrals, and information. It operates from 9am-11pm daily. Tel 03-5774-0992.

## PSYCHIATRISTS & PSYCHOLOGISTS

Several professional psychiatrists and psychologists practice in Fukuoka Prefecture. Telephone counseling is also available. Insurance coverage varies. For information on doctors in your area who speak English, please contact your PA or the CLAIR JET Line. For additional information, please see the inside back cover of the JET Programme General Information Handbook.

**Dr. Kohei Horikawa** at Horikawa Hospital is a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst (IPA member). 510 Nishi-machi, Kurume-shi. Tel 0942-38-1200. Fax 0942-35-6187.

## HOLY STRANGE OLD ROOTS, BATMAN!



# COMMUNICATIONS

## TELEPHONES

Talking on the phone can be an easy way to empty your wallet in Japan, with tempting *keitai* (mobile phones) that do nearly everything except slice and dice vegetables. Thankfully, there are a number of ways to save on calling friends and family.

## LANDLINES

**Landline (Home) Telephone** If you don't have a home telephone and would like one, you can either buy the telephone line rights for ¥36 000 from NTT ([www.ntt-west.co.jp/index\\_e.html](http://www.ntt-west.co.jp/index_e.html)), which is transferable or re-sellable if you move, or you can rent the telephone line for a standard fee of ¥250 per month. On top of line rental, NTT's basic telephone charge is ¥1750 per month. Other providers are also available; KDDI and Japan Telecom offer monthly rental at similar or slightly lower costs than NTT and do not charge the line rights fee. If buying line rights, be on the look out for people selling theirs when moving.

**Domestic and International** calls are made through your default provider unless you dial an access number. Be careful that you have dialed the code or listened for the beeps to tell you it's going through the company you want; if your call defaults back to NTT, that hour you spent on the phone to your family back home can cost ¥4500 rather than the ¥1000 you thought it would. A list of access codes for service providers can be found at the back of the JET diary.

**Line Ownership** Find out who owns the line rights in your apartment. You will need this information for things like signing up for internet. If making changes on your phone account, you may need your school/BOE's permission to do so if they own the line.

**Internet (IP) Telephone** A lot of cable and ADSL Internet service providers offer a fantastic IP phone service. It takes advantage of unused capacity on your line and routes calls over the internet to give you a quality low cost communications service. Yahoo BB! Is well known for its service, which offers ¥2.5 per minute calls to landlines in Japan and all phones in the US.

**World Link Discount Telecom** is a reputable company with low domestic and international rates that caters to JETs. This company requires payment by credit card. Contact the offices for more info. 4-17-26 Maeharacho, Koganei-shi, Tokyo 184-0013. Tel 042-388-5958. Fax 042-388-1918. Web: [www.j-call.jp/eng/default/index.html](http://www.j-call.jp/eng/default/index.html).

**International calling cards** If you want to cut out the middleman, buy international calling cards at your local *konbini* (convenience store) or on the internet. The rates vary depending on the country that you call and the type of phone you use (keitai versus landline). The per-minute phone charge is included in the price of the card, so you do not have to pay extra to NTT or your keitai company. One such option is the MCI Prime Card for ¥3000. It offers cheap rates, ¥9.2 per minute to the USA from landline or mobile and can be bought online (Japanese only) at [www.tel.bestup.net/prime.html](http://www.tel.bestup.net/prime.html).

**Rechargeable calling cards** such as Brastel, Moshi Moshi, and Y and B are a variation on cards like MCI Prime. You purchase payment coupons for these cards and recharge them at the konbini. They often offer a variety of rates with line quality varying or whether NTT charges are included or not. Brastel has some of the lowest international rates, starting from ¥8 per minute to the USA and is a favorite with JETs. Web: [www.brastel.com/Pages/eng/main/](http://www.brastel.com/Pages/eng/main/)

## KEITAI

### Cell phones, mobiles, handy phones.

Call them what you want, the cultural phenomenon of *keitai*, sported by young and old in Japan, simply cannot be ignored. These handy gadgets are requisite apparel for every savvy JET-setter and are inexpensive to obtain—phones start from 1 yen! To apply you need your alien registration card, *inkan*, and credit card/bankbook depending on how you are going to pay. Bilingual models are offered by the three major companies: Docomo ([www.nttdocomo.com/english/](http://www.nttdocomo.com/english/)), Vodafone ([www.vodafone.jp/english/](http://www.vodafone.jp/english/)), and AU ([www.au.kddi.com/english/](http://www.au.kddi.com/english/)). Prices vary depending on the services you desire, which range from the basics to those with onboard cameras with optical zoom, video calls, and Internet services. Some newer phones, like Vodafone 3G models, can be used overseas and receive text messages from overseas phones, though replying can be expensive.

## KEITAI TIPS

When calling a *keitai*, it is often cheaper to call from another *keitai* than from a landline. Talk to the people around you and see what they use—there are often discounts available to frequently called/mailed numbers on the same network.

Be careful when receiving a call from a number you don't recognize, especially if it has a Tokyo area code (03). If you answer the call or call back the number, you may be hit with an enormous fee on your next bill. Don't fall for this scam! Also, make sure to read through your billing statements for any extra charges. Be wary of one ring calls. The "one ring *giri*" scam is one of the oldest, but continues to trick people into calling back to expensive pay content lines.

## POST

The **JET Diary** has detailed information on the procedures and costs for sending mail within Japan and overseas. For more information visit your nearest major Post Office or the Fukuoka Central Post Office

in Tenjin. Website: [www.yuibinkyoku.com/english/index.html](http://www.yuibinkyoku.com/english/index.html)

If you are out when a parcel is delivered to your home, you will receive a non-delivery notice (*fuzai Haitatsu tsuchi*). The item must be picked up before the date specified on the form or else it will be sent back to the main office and then returned to the sender. You can ask the Post Office or courier to send the item to a friend or to your office. When in doubt, show your supervisor the notice. When shopping online it is often a good idea to get parcels delivered to your school, as there will always be someone who can sign for it on your behalf.

## T.V. & RADIO

**Foreign films** are shown frequently on television in Japan. TV Asahi, for example, has a Western Movie every Sunday at 9pm. International news from the BBC and CNN is shown on NHK Broadcast Satellite (BS) One. The NHK bilingual news is on NHK General at 7pm and 10pm daily, except on Sundays when it is only shown at 7pm. The English (or original language) and Japanese soundtracks are broadcast simultaneously. In order to hear the English (or original language) soundtrack, your TV, video system, or audio system needs a bilingual switch (音声切替 *onsei kirikae*).

**All TV owners** are required by law to pay the NHK license fee of ¥1300 each month, whether they watch the station or not. You can save ¥50 per month by having the fee automatically deducted from your account. For those with a satellite capable of receiving the NHK BS channels the fee is higher.

**Subscriber TV** is also widely available in Japan. SkyPerfectTV ([www.skyperfectv.co.jp/en/guide/index.html](http://www.skyperfectv.co.jp/en/guide/index.html)) is the most popular service and works using a satellite dish mounted on your apartment. The dish and tuner costs about ¥40 000, but if you are purchasing a new TV you can sometimes get the dish and tuner for free. Installation costs a minimum of ¥5000 if it can be done with minimal work; otherwise it can cost up

to ¥20 000. Cable TV is another option and can be bundled with high-speed internet and phone services at a discounted rate. However, it is available only in certain areas. Call 0120-210-277 Toll-free or 092-771-1700 to find out more about cable in your area.

**Kyushu Headline News** Tel 092-762-2505 (in English).

**Radio Love FM** (Fukuoka 76.1, Kitakyushu 82.7) has programming in English and other foreign languages.

## DVD & VIDEO

**DVD and video rental stores** are all over the place. Like in most countries DVD is the most popular format for new releases, though there are some older movies that are only available on VHS. DVD is especially helpful for language learning, both for students learning English and for JETs learning Japanese, as you can switch subtitles on and off and change languages. However, not all Japanese DVDs have the English option, and some foreign movies in languages other than English may not have this language option either.

**DVDs** Like Europe, Japan is part of DVD region 2. However, it uses the NTSC system of encoding so DVDs encoded in the PAL system will not work unless you have a special player. DVD players are rarely advertised as being region-free unless you are shopping somewhere like Costco or The Flying Pig ([www.theflyingpig.com](http://www.theflyingpig.com)). The Flying Pig has a selection of region free DVD players available, the most comprehensive being an LG model (DVP-S500) that is not only region free but also plays PAL DVDs, for ¥12 579 plus shipping.

**Videos** Most video stores are well stocked with English and other foreign language videos. When you rent a movie, check to see if it is subtitled (*jimaku* 字幕) or dubbed (*fukikae* 吹替). Sometimes the same movie will have copies in both formats if you want

to play videos from home and you're from Europe, Australia, or New Zealand, the PAL encoding for video means they are incompatible with the NTSC system that is used in Japan. If you want to play PAL tapes, you might consider buying a VCR that's both PAL and NTSC compatible, though given the increasing numbers of DVD systems, these are becoming very hard to find.

**DVD rental clubs** similar to Netflix in the USA are also available in Japan. You browse their list of titles and choose the ones you would like to see. A certain number of titles will be sent to you at any one time with the next ones in your list coming once the previous ones are back.

**Tsutaya Discas** allows you to see up to ten DVDs per month. There is no sign up fee and the cost is a maximum of ¥1800 per month. It has a good selection and offers a one-month free trial. If you rent more than ten discs a month you must pay extra. Blockbuster fans will especially like the guaranteed availability plan, where if you register that you want to watch the movie before it comes out, they guarantee to send it to you on the day of release. Web (Japanese): [www.discas.net/](http://www.discas.net/).

**Livedoor Posren** costs ¥2000 per month for unlimited DVDs. There is a ¥1000 sign-up fee. At 27 000 titles, Posren has the widest selection, but not as many copies as Discas, so availability of popular titles can be a problem. Web (Japanese): [www.posren.livedoor.com/](http://www.posren.livedoor.com/).

## THE PRESS

The following is a list of popular newspapers written in English, available at most large bookstores and some major train stations.

**The Daily Yomiuri** ¥2650 a month. Tel 092-741-2015. Toll-free 0120 431-159. Web: [www.asahi.com](http://www.asahi.com).

**International Herald Tribune Asahi** ¥3900 a month.

## WEBSITES

### JET RELATED

[www.jetprogramme.org](http://www.jetprogramme.org)

Official JET Programme website.

[www.fukuokajet.com](http://www.fukuokajet.com)

Fukuoka JET website, with lots of information, lesson plans, and discussion.

[www.jetsetjapan.com](http://www.jetsetjapan.com)

Useful information and some great deals and discounts for JETs.

### FUKUOKA RELATED

[www.pref.fukuoka.jp](http://www.pref.fukuoka.jp)

Official Fukuoka prefecture website.

[www.city.fukuoka.jp](http://www.city.fukuoka.jp)

Official Fukuoka city website.

[www.city.kitakyushu.jp](http://www.city.kitakyushu.jp)

Official Kitakyushu city website.

[www.rainbowfia.or.jp](http://www.rainbowfia.or.jp)

Rainbow Plaza in Fukuoka.

[www.living-in-fukuoka.info](http://www.living-in-fukuoka.info)

Information on living in Fukuoka city provided by Rainbow Plaza.

[www.bcc-net.co.jp/kia/index\\_e.html](http://www.bcc-net.co.jp/kia/index_e.html)

Kitakyushu International Association.

[www.kyushu.com/fukuoka/](http://www.kyushu.com/fukuoka/)

A Fukuoka city guide, with information on shopping and other things to do.

[www.fukuoka-now.com](http://www.fukuoka-now.com)

Fukuoka Now has its magazine on the web for easy access.

[www.trip.co.jp/lovekyushu/](http://www.trip.co.jp/lovekyushu/)

A website with an English section at the bottom of the homepage. The Fukuoka part links to [www.acros.or.jp/english/english.html](http://www.acros.or.jp/english/english.html), which gives information on living in Fukuoka prefecture provided by the ACROS Center.

### FUN RELATED

[www.welcome-fukuoka.or.jp/freephoto/](http://www.welcome-fukuoka.or.jp/freephoto/) & [www.flickr.com/groups/fukuoka/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/fukuoka/)

Fukuoka Photos

[www.jonwilks.com/brief-guide-to-kyushu-ben/](http://www.jonwilks.com/brief-guide-to-kyushu-ben/)

Guide To Hakata-ben

[www.japanorama.com/links.html](http://www.japanorama.com/links.html)

A great list of links covering news, culture, travel and much more.

[www.web-japan.org/trends/index.html](http://www.web-japan.org/trends/index.html)

Trends in Japan Online magazine about contemporary Japanese culture.

[www.bigdaikon.com](http://www.bigdaikon.com)

Unofficial JET community packed with articles and ramblings by foreigners in Japan.

[www.h4.dion.ne.jp/~mjdotcom/home.html](http://www.h4.dion.ne.jp/~mjdotcom/home.html)

Junko Mizuno is an interesting illustrator/graphic designer.

[www.finalhome.com](http://www.finalhome.com)

Final Home is a really cool fashion/conceptual design label.

[www.hiropon-factory.com](http://www.hiropon-factory.com)

Takashi Murakami, the internationally known illustrator (especially within fashion), has a cool interview at [www.jca-online.com/murakami.html](http://www.jca-online.com/murakami.html)

**Asahi Weekly** ¥970 a month. Subscriptions: Asahi Shimbun. Tollfree 0120-456-371. Web: [www.asahi.com](http://www.asahi.com).

**The Japan Times** ¥4380 a month. Also sold at Kinokuniya and Maruzen bookstores. Tel 092-411-1131. Toll-free in English 0120-036-242. Web: [www.japantimes.com/sales/subscribe-e-info.htm](http://www.japantimes.com/sales/subscribe-e-info.htm).

**Guardian Weekly** For subscriptions write to: Circulation Manager, The Guardian Weekly, 164 Deansgate Rd., Manchester M60 2RR, United Kingdom. Web: [www.guardian.co.uk/guardianweekly/subscribe](http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardianweekly/subscribe).

**New York Times Weekly Review** ¥204 a copy. Tel 092-411-2659. Available through Asahi Shinbun. Web: [www.asahi.com](http://www.asahi.com).

**Fukuoka Now** is a free magazine that circulates the prefecture every month. It's probably your most likely shot at fame while in the ken as it often features pictures from events around Fukuoka. There will certainly be someone you know in each edition! Pick it up at the Tenjin Information Center, Seattles Best Coffee, and many other locations. Web: [www.fukuoka-now.com](http://www.fukuoka-now.com).

## INTERNET

Forget dial-up - Japan has some of the fastest and cheapest broadband internet connections in the world. ADSL, Cable, and Fiber services are available and most come with no data restrictions or speed throttling. Some services are not available in all areas, but speeds of 1mb/s should be possible anywhere in the prefecture. Check out some of these providers for more information, or head to your local electronics store for help.

**Dion by KDDI** has a full range of plans from dial-up to fiber, with an extra charge applied for a 1mb/s service. If you're renting your line from NTT, Dion also has a low cost IP phone service. Web: [www.dion.ne.jp](http://www.dion.ne.jp).

**Fusion GOL** has several options available depending on the speed you require. ADSL and fiber plans from ¥4500 with an extra

charge applied for IP phone services. Tel 03-4354-0030. Web: [www.gol.com/english/](http://www.gol.com/english/).

**Interlink** offers static IP addresses and DSL connections from ¥2000 a month plus NTT Flets ADSL charges, or ¥1000 a month for a server assigned IP address. Tel 093-645-3711. Web: [www.spinnet.jp/index.html](http://www.spinnet.jp/index.html).

**SpinNet** has a sign-up fee of ¥3150 plus ¥2100 a month for dial-up access, or ADSL at 1mb/s [other speeds available] starting from around ¥4000 a month.

SpinNet also offers an IP telephone service with calls between SpinNet users being free. Tel 03-3500-2500. Fax 03-3500-2501. Web: [www.spinnet.jp/indexe.html](http://www.spinnet.jp/indexe.html).

**Yahoo! BB** offers a range of options from 8mb/s ADSL to gigabit fiber, with prices from ¥3500-6800 a month. This includes BB Phone, an Internet protocol telephone (IP Phone) service. It has ¥7.5/3 min for domestic calls in Japan (excluding *keitai*) and international calls to America. Best of all is that calls to other Yahoo BB! Users are free.

There is an ADSL counter at Yodobashi Camera behind Hakata Station on 1F and a small YBB counter on B1F. Ask for someone who speaks English. The staff are always friendly and helpful. Otherwise drop by an electronics store to sign up - you can often get your first one or two months free! Web (Japanese): [www.bb.yahoo.co.jp](http://www.bb.yahoo.co.jp).

### INTERNET CAFES

In addition to internet access, these multi-floor cafes can offer just about everything for an hourly rate: game rooms with darts or pool, food and drinks, multi-player LAN rooms, extensive *manga* (comic book) and DVD libraries, showers, foot bath/massage, tanning booths, and oxygen rooms. Most places require you to purchase a membership card, good for a year or even a lifetime, which you must have in order to use the cafe. This only costs a few hundred yen and you must have some form of photo identification, such as your alien registration card or passport, to get the initial membership card.

You can choose a room from the available options. Regardless of which you choose, you will be able to use anything in the cafe at your leisure. A single computer is the cheapest, and you will probably be sitting next to a line of other users against a bare wall. This is the best option for basic services. If you're going to be in the cafe for a few hours, you might consider one of their "luxury" suites. These include a semi-private cubicle, often in a quiet, darkened area. The cubicle comes with blanket, slippers, headphones, halogen lamp, and any combination of computer, TV/DVD player, and game console. A single person suite generally has a reclining chair, while pair suites have a loveseat and four person suites come with an entire couch and up to four computers.

After selecting the room and the amount of time you wish to stay, you are given your room number and receipt with clock-in time. If you wish to reserve a shower or order food, now is a good time to do it. Food will appear hot from the microwave in your cubicle a short time later. If they don't provide actual food services, many internet cafes have vending machines with standard fried fare that you can purchase. Almost all cafes provide free drink machines, and some, like Cybac near Pik's Diner in Tenjin, even have a free slushy machine. Often they will provide toothbrushes and toothpaste or other bath and shower essentials for free at the front desk.

Many internet cafes, such as Popeye on Showa-dori in Tenjin, have a special night rate, where if you clock-in between 10pm and 8am, you can stay for four, six, or even eight hours for a flat fee instead of per-hour. Popeye charges start from ¥980 for five hours. This normally works out a little cheaper; they'll ask you what your preference is when you arrive. If you overstay, however, you will be charged extra at the regular rate.

## CHEAP TRICKS IN FUKUOKA

Here are some tips and tricks to save a few yen in your daily life:

**Nice Going Card** For an annual fee of 500 yen, this card entitles the 16-19-year-old bearer to a slew of discounts, including 40% off JR Kyushu trips over 100km, 40% off weekday travel on the Beetle to Korea, and a multitude of other discounts at restaurants, cinemas, amusement parks and more. Website (Japanese): <http://ngc.e-fukuoka.co.jp/>.

**Welcome Fukuoka Card** This free card gives you discounted entry to most major tourist attractions, such as Fukuoka Tower. Website: [www.welcome-fukuoka.or.jp/english/welcome\\_card.htm](http://www.welcome-fukuoka.or.jp/english/welcome_card.htm).

**Book your vacations early** Most travel agents offer discounts for bookings over a month in advance, and serious discounts for bookings six months in advance.

**100 yen stores** Don't go shopping anywhere until you've checked out the 100 yen store.

**Go food shopping late at night** Visit your local supermarket just before closing time for big discounts on most bakery items, fresh produce, and especially fish and meat.

**Haggle** You'll need a little bit of Japanese, or a lot of nerve, but you'll find you can talk the price down in many stores, especially electronics retailers.

**Play the sales** The New Year sales bring good bargains, as does July's *Natsumano* sale. *Seimonbarai*, a smaller sale in December every year, should tide you over till the New Year.

## SHOPPING

### DEPARTMENT STORES

Department stores are usually open from 10am-8pm. They are open on Sundays and national holidays, but are sometimes closed one weekday each month. Depending on the department store you visit, the products on offer range from low-cost everyday items to designer boutique goods. There are many department chain stores to choose from, including **Daiei**, **Daimaru**, **Futata**, **Isetan**, **Iwataya**, **Izutsuya**, **Kotobukiya**, **Matsuya Ladies**, and the most famous of all Japanese department stores - **Mitsukoshi**.

The Daiei Corporation also owns **U-need** and **Sun Live**, and although these are not as big or expensive as the department stores mentioned above, they still cater to most needs.

### ELECTRONICS

Japan has a reputation for being a gadget lover's paradise, and the wealth of electronics stores don't disappoint. Major chains include **Best Denki**, **Bic Camera**, **DeoDeo**, **Yamada Denki**, and **Yodobashi Camera**. All offer a point card system where points earned on your purchases can be redeemed as discounts at a later date. Because of this, it can be beneficial to shop at only one chain, though be wary of becoming a slave to the point card!

Best Denki Tenjin, Bic Camera Tenjin, and Yodobashi Camera Hakata all sell electronic goods at the lowest prices, featuring floor upon floor of nothing but electronics. Sometimes the price is negotiable. Big sales are a feature of these stores and, coupled with the point card, can make shopping for the latest technology surprisingly affordable.

### BOOKSTORES

Though the selection is sometimes limited, it is not impossible to get foreign reading material in Fukuoka. **Kinokuniya** and **Maruzen** (Tenjin) and **Quest** (Kokura and Kurosaki), all carry a range of foreign books and magazines, Japanese language materials, and newspapers. Check out their bargain sections where they occasionally have English books on sale for ¥300-700 apiece! If you can't find what you want in the stores, check out Amazon Japan ([www.amazon.co.jp](http://www.amazon.co.jp)). Spending more than ¥1500 in one order gets you free shipping within Japan, which saves you a few hundred yen.

### HOME STORES

These stores should be one of the first ports of call for anyone needing household goods. Stores such as **GooDay**, **Home Wide**, **Nafco**, and **Nakai** all carry a wide range of products for household or do-it-yourself supplies.

### DISCOUNT STORES

If you're looking for something at a great price, or need it now but don't have a bundle of cash to spend, discount stores are your friend. Starting with the holy grail of discounters - the **100 Yen (Hyaku en) Shop** (actually it's ¥105 once you include tax), there are many options to choose from. You won't believe what you can get for a hundred yen: small household items such as dishes, sponges, thread, baskets, envelopes, chopsticks, containers, toys, and just about anything else, so always pay a visit here before you purchase elsewhere.

Other major discounters include **Mr. Max**, **Direx**, **Don Quixote**, and **Topos**, which all have a wall-to-wall selection of household items, electronics, sporting goods, bedding, and clothing at discount prices.

**Daiso 100 Yen Shops** are abundant throughout the prefecture; noteworthy are the ones in the Hakata Bus Center Roof Floor, Tenjin Daiei Shoppers building, Nishijin Paraliva Department Store on the 7F, and Cha Cha Town Kokura.

**Topos Discount Store** carries similar products to Daiei but at discounted prices and can deliver your purchases for a small fee.

## LARGER-SIZED CLOTHING & SHOES

Finding clothes and shoes can be a struggle for many foreigners living in this country, and while the average Japanese has grown substantially over the last 50 years, most shoe stores still stock no more than three sizes: small, medium, and large. For those of us who are a medium back home, but a giant over here, fear not - here are a few options to choose from:

**Canal City in Hakata** has many North American stores including Eddie Bauer and J. Crew.

**Pier Walk Marinoa City** has many outlet stores with larger sizes.

**Uniqlo** has various locations, including Matsuya Ladies in Tenjin and Cha Cha Town in Kitakyushu.

**Gap** has branches in Mitsukoshi in Tenjin, Hawks Town, Canal City, and Riverwalk in Kokura.

**Muji** has branches in Solaria Stage basement in Tenjin, Canal City, Hakata Station, Kokura, and Kurosaki.

**Benetton** has branches in Hawks Town and Tenjin.

**Zara, Mango, Gent House, Big Walker, Cordoba**, all have stores in Tenjin.

**Washington's Ginza Shoe Store** in Matsuya Ladies in Tenjin has large sizes of women's shoes.

If sizes and styles in Japan are just not working for you, L.L. Bean, J. Crew, and Victoria Secret are a few of the foreign catalogue/internet companies that ship to Japan.

## HAIRDRESSERS

Hairstylists are everywhere in Japan, but to avoid a potentially scarring experience, try one of these stylists who have been recommended by current and former JETs.

**Nakamura Hair Salon** run by Yasu and his wife Keiko, is a stylish salon with a long family history and a unique and relaxed atmosphere. Yasu spent ten years working in New York and can show you an impressive portfolio of various fashion projects he worked on. He is experienced at cutting western hair and has good English, so can discuss styles and give advice. He comes very highly recommended by several JETs in the area and is always seeking to build his foreign clientele. A cut is around ¥5000 and includes coffee or tea while you wait, an amazing head and neck massage while they shampoo your hair, and an extensive collection of current English fashion magazines from around the world. Open 9am-8pm. Closed Tuesdays (though he will often work with your schedule to get you an appointment whenever you need it). Tel 092-741-7415. Web: [www.nakamura-biyoushitsu.com](http://www.nakamura-biyoushitsu.com).

**Curiosity Hair Style Shop** in Futsukaichi. The owner, Tetsu, speaks some English and studied at a hair academy in London, England. Men or Women's haircuts are around ¥3500. To get there, take the Nishitetsu line to Nishitetsu-Futsukaichi. Exit the station at the west exit, walk straight out of the station past the bikes, cross the street, and walk down the tiny alleyway lined with a wall covered with children's pictures. Follow

the road and it's two minutes down on your left. Opens at 10.30am. Closed Monday. Tel 092-918-5886.

**Dimanchi Salon** is owned by Rod Sebanon. A little pricey (¥6000 for a hair cut), but he speaks excellent English and Japanese. He's also very friendly and knows about western hair. Tel 092-713-2100.

**Hair Pinup** is located in the Tenjin Polestar Building near Iwataya Z-side and across from Mister Donut. This hip salon's owner worked in New York for ten years and speaks perfect English. The salon's services include everything from trims to extreme color treatments. A short post-wash neck massage is included as well. A cut is around ¥5000, but it's well worth it! Be sure to pick up a point card and get 10% off each subsequent visit.

**Heart 2 Heart** is located in Nishijin on Route 263, next to Starbucks in the Ten Good building. Services include massages, facials, manicures, pedicures, haircuts, highlighting, and deep conditioning treatments. The staff can speak only a little English, but they will make every effort to ensure you get what you want.

**Plaza Hair and Make** has a great atmosphere and is very clean and modern. Although they are not English speakers, they are not afraid of foreigners! Located in Fukuoka City, near Shintencho and Iwataya Z-side. Open 11am-10pm. Tel 092-737-7708. Web: [www.plazahair.co.jp](http://www.plazahair.co.jp).

**Renaissance for Hair** is within walking distance from Chojabaru Station (on the Sasaguri line, four stops from Hakata, ¥220). Although he doesn't speak much English, this hairdresser trained at Vidal Sassoon and loves to cut western hair. A cut and style runs ¥3500-4000. Tel 092-939-2755.

**WING** is located in Ohashi. Ask for Nobuhiro Arai who speaks some English. 3-25-2 Ohashi, Minami-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-553-4614.

## TICKETS

Advance tickets to movies, exhibitions, zoos, competitions, and performances can be bought at any ticket outlet, including Lawson convenience stores. There is a discount for buying tickets in advance; however, they are sold in limited quantities. Inside each major department store, usually located next to the Information Desk, there is a ticket sales booth. Advance movie tickets can also be bought at cinemas.

**Ticket Bank Midoriya** This discount ticket shop has three offices: in the Tenjin subway station (take exit #13 up the first set of stairs, go down the underground hall to the right, and the shop should be on the right); near Hakata Station; and in Kitakyushu near Kokura Station. It offers everything from airplane tickets to postage stamps at a discount. Their stock continually changes and may at times include concert tickets, Softbank Hawks baseball tickets, and even discounted gift certificates. Of particular interest to those taking trips on the *shinkansen* are the quartet (*karutetto*) tickets. While these tickets offer a considerable discount from the regular fare (¥2000 or more off the one-way fare to Osaka), when purchased from JR, they must be bought in packs of four and must be purchased by the last day of the month prior to the month in which the ticket is valid (July 31 for trips in August, for example). Midoriya sells the same tickets for a price slightly cheaper than JR (¥100-200 off) and sells the tickets individually. Furthermore, the tickets are available until sold out, also eliminating the need to purchase the tickets in the prior month. Web: [www.midoriya.net/ticket/](http://www.midoriya.net/ticket/). Tel 092-415-1222.

**Hello Ticket Office Tenjin** is located on the 5F of the Ishibashi building on Watanabedori. It's just across the street from the Daimaru building and has a big cartoon character hanging from the second floor - you can't miss it. If you can't make it to Tenjin to pick up your ticket, you can pay for it by *furikami* at your bank. They'll send you the ticket within a few days. Tel 092-712-8686..

# FOOD

Although you're about to embark on a new culinary experience, fear not—Japanese food is actually quite varied! There's more than just tofu and sushi, and it's considered to be healthier than Western diets. According to the World Health Organization's figures, Japanese longevity is correlated to the traditional Japanese diet, which includes substantial amounts of fish, soy, and green tea. Give it time—it grows on you. Additional information on food and cooking can be found in the JET Diary on page 220. Following are common ingredients that can be found at your local supermarket along with some recommended cookbooks and useful websites to get you started.

## SOY PRODUCTS

**Edamame** 枝豆 are fresh soybeans still in the pod. They are easy to cook (just boil for a few minutes and toss with salt) and are a great healthy snack, especially with beer in the hot summer months. Sold fresh and frozen.

**Miso** 味噌 is one of the oldest traditional Japanese ingredients. It is made of fermented soybeans and comes in a variety of colors: *shiomiso* 白味噌 (white, made with rice), *akamiso* 赤味噌 (red, made with barley), and *kuromiso* 黒味噌 (black, made with soybeans). The addition of different ingredients and variations in length of aging produce different types of *miso* that vary greatly in flavor, texture, color and aroma. In Japan, different types of *miso* are prepared and evaluated much the way Westerners judge fine wines and cheeses. *Miso* is very salty and versatile, used to make *miso-shiru* 味噌汁 (soup), seasonings, sauces, and marinades. It is known to aid in digestion and help the body clear itself of toxins.

**Nattō** 納豆 is definitely an acquired taste,

a stringy, smelly mess made of fermented soybeans. It is one of the healthiest foods in existence, providing an abundant amount of vitamin B and protection against many serious ailments. Unfortunately, it is rare that non-Japanese find *nattō* tolerable – even many Japanese can't stand it. Give it a try with a little mustard and *shōyu* (soy sauce) swirled in to dilute the smell.

**Tofu** 豆腐 is made of soybeans and is sometimes called bean curd. It is very nutritious, as it is low in fat and high in vitamins and protein, and is a very ancient and important ingredient in Japanese cooking. Keep raw *tofu* immersed in water (changed daily) to be sure it keeps for four to five days. There are two main types of *tofu*: *momen-goshi*, which is more firm and suitable for stir-frying, and *kinu-goshi*, known as silken *tofu*, which is best eaten raw with *shōyu*, grated ginger, and chopped scallions. *Koya-dofu*, or freeze-dried *tofu*, has a spongy texture and a rich, sweet taste, and is often found in bentos. *Abura-age* is thin, deep-fried *tōfu* that can be slit in half to make pockets. You'll often see it as *inari-zushi* (stuffed with rice) or floating in a bowl of *udon*. **Yuba** is a skin that forms on the surface of the liquid during the *tofu*-making process. It is sold in many forms, including sheets, rolls, and strips.

## RICE & NOODLES

Rice has been grown and eaten in Japan since prehistoric times. Japanese rice differs from other Asian rice in that it is short grain. It is tender and chewy when cooked, and its stickiness allows it to be eaten with *hashi*. There are over 300 varieties of short grain rice grown in Japan. **Genmai** 玄米 is brown rice, which means that it is the least polished form of Japanese rice. It is healthier but

takes much longer to cook and is chewier than white rice.

**Mochi** 餅 is steamed *mochigome* rice that has been pounded to a sticky mass. It is then formed into a variety of shapes for various dishes. It is an essential food during New Years. *Mochi* can be heated, grilled, or fried, and is used in both sweet and savory dishes. There is also *mochi* made with *azuki* beans or powdered *aonori*.

**Onigiri** お握り are rice balls stuffed with various fillings, including salmon, *umeboshi*, *tsukemono* (pickles), *kara-age* (fried chicken), and tuna-mayo. They are commonly sold in every *conbini* across Japan. They are often wrapped in *nori* sheets, and some brands have packaging to preserve the crispness of the *nori* from the moisture of the rice.

**Noodles** are one of the most popular foods in Japan and have a long history. In order of size, noodles range from *himokawa*, *kishimen*, and *udon* at the thick end, and *hiyamugi*, *soba*, and *somen* on the thin end.

**Ramen**, ラーメン meaning “stretched noodle,” are very thin noodles made from wheat flour and eggs. Though they originated in China, nearly every city in Japan has developed its own signature style of *ramen*, usually eaten in a bowl of broth with meat and seasonings.

**Soba** そば are specifically Japanese noodles made from wheat and buckwheat flour. Colors range from grayish browns to white, or even green if tea powder has been added (*chasoba* 茶そば). *Soba* is often eaten cold in summer (*zarusoba* ざるそば), served on a bamboo tray with a light dipping sauce. Also try it fried with meat, veggies, and *shoyu* in the form of *yakisoba* 焼きそば, a festival favorite.

**Somen** ソーメン are extremely thin, white noodles made from wheat and vegetable oil. They are best enjoyed cold during warm weather, tossed with spring onions and dipped in a light sauce.

**Udon** うどん are thick wheat noodles that come in four types: raw, par-boiled, boiled,

and dry. Eat *udon* in a steaming bowl of soup with a variety of toppings ranging from *abura-age* and *wakame* to *kare* (curry) and beef at noodle shops across Japan.

## FRUITS & VEGETABLES

**Azuki** 小豆 are starchy beans rich in fiber and protein. They are common in the West and seen often in Japanese cuisine, particularly when mixed with rice to make *sekihan* (red rice) for celebrations, and as *an*, a sweet bean paste used in many desserts.

**Daikon** 大根 is Japanese radish and is usually served raw, pickled or boiled. It promotes digestion and prevents strokes and heartburn. Parts of *daikon* range in flavor from mild to bitter. The best time to buy this radish is between early autumn and early spring. Choose those that still have leaves and are the heaviest, as these will be the freshest and contain the most juice.

**Gobo** ごぼう or burdock, is a sugary root vegetable that is inedible when raw, but is often seen in stir-fries, soups, *tempura*, or fried on its own. It is high in calcium and fiber.

**Hakusai** 白菜 is Chinese cabbage. It absorbs the flavor of the ingredients it is cooked with, so it is often used in *nabe* (Japanese broth) with meats, vegetables, and sauces. It is a good source of vitamin C in the winter.

**Horensō** ほれんそう is Japanese spinach. It differs from the Western variety, with thin, pointy leaves and a red root.

**Kabocha** 南瓜 is a small green pumpkin with a bright orange inside. Use it in *nimono*, fried in *tempura*, and in desserts.

**Kaki** 柿 or persimmons, have been grown in Japan for centuries and come in over 800 varieties. The most popular type has crunchy flesh and its bright orange color, which signifies autumn, makes it a popular addition to autumn salads and vegetable dishes.

**Konnyaku** こんにゃく, or “Devil's Tongue,” is a traditional Japanese jelly-like food made from a kind of potato. It is a good health food



because it contains no fat, is rich in fiber, and low in calories. It has no taste but takes on the flavor of the ingredients it is cooked with. It is sold in blocks or threads.

**Kuri** 栗 is a Japanese chestnut found in many dishes. You'll likely see them sold roasted at train stations or on the street, in *mochi* and *manju* 饅頭 [a Japanese pastry], or cooked with rice in *kurigohan* 栗ご飯.

**Mikan** みかん are commonly known as mandarin oranges. This winter fruit is sweet and juicy, and an excellent source of vitamin C and beta-carotene. They are usually eaten raw but can be found in some desserts.

**Mushrooms** きのこ are extremely popular in Japanese cooking, and can be found in abundance in several varieties. They are also quite cheap in Japan. *Enoki* えのき are a popular ingredient for *nabe* dishes and are also often seen in *yakitori* wrapped in bacon. They are white, long and thin and are sold in small bunches. Even though the yellow-colored *nametake* look different, these are actually the wild version of *enoki*. *Shiitake* しいたけ are used frequently in Japanese cooking, and are available fresh or dried. Fresh *shiitake* have a subtle woody flavor and tend to absorb the flavor of other ingredients. They are often used in *nabe*. Dried *shiitake* has a more intense flavor and a higher fiber content, giving it more bite than fresh *shiitake*. *Maitake* まいたけ grow in large bunches, are deep brown in color, and have scraggly edges. *Bunashimeji* ぶなしめじ is a cultivated mushroom that grows in bunches. They are smooth and brown and white in color. *Hiratake* ひらたけ is the Japanese name for oyster mushrooms. There are many cultivated varieties of *hiratake*, some of which look quite different from each other.

**Nashi** 梨 are Japanese pears with a high water content that gives them a crunchy texture and watery, not-so-sweet taste. They are most commonly eaten raw.

**Nasu** なす is eggplant or aubergine and comes in a variety of sizes. It absorbs oil and combines well with other ingredients.

**Potatoes** are found in many varieties. *Jagaimo* ジャガイモ is the most similar to Western types, looking like a standard potato. *Satsumaimo* サツマイモ, or sweet potato, can have skins ranging from red to deep purple and varies greatly in shape. It is used in *tempura*, desserts, or is roasted and eaten plain. *Nagaimo* 長いも or *yamaimo* 山芋 is a long potato that both grows wild and is cultivated in Japan. It is grated to form a slimy soup [*tororo*] and served over *genmai* rice, tuna *sashimi*, or *soba* noodles. To prevent itching on hands and lips, soak *yamaimo* in vinegar and water before grinding. Add water to dried *yamaimo* to use as a sticky starch. *Satoimo* サトイモ or *taroimo* タロイモ is a small, oval-shaped potato essential to ancient Japanese cooking. It has a rich flavor and is best eaten in *oden*, *nabe*, or steamed and dipped in *shōyu*.

**Seaweed** is known to aid digestion, enrich the blood, and rid the body of impurities. It is rich in iron, calcium, phosphorous, iodine, and Vitamins A and C. *Nori* 海苔 is the most famous seaweed product, sold in dried sheets. Thin strips are served atop noodles and rice, or full sheets are used to wrap *onigiri* and *mochi*. *Aonori* 青海苔 is a finely crumbled powder-like *nori*. It's called *ao* [green] *nori* for its bright green color. It is used as a topping for *okonomiyaki*. *Konbu* 昆布 is a kind of kelp. *Makonbu* and *rishirikonbu* are famous. Higher quality *konbu* is dark, thick and slightly sweet. It is sold dried. It comes salted, boiled in soy, or in forms suitable for making dashi or eating as is. *Wakame* わかめ is a bright green, tender algae with a slippery but crisp texture. It is sold fresh and often served in salads or in bowls of soup with *udon*. *Hijiki* ひじき is a black, spiny seaweed with a tough and crunchy texture. It is usually cooked in a sweet sauce and served atop rice or with *abura-age*.

**Renkon** レンコン or lotus root promotes healthy skin, increases stamina, and treats constipation. It has a subtle, fresh flavor and is best during autumn. Choose the more rounded ones.

**Shungiku** 春菊, or chrysanthemum leaves, are slightly bitter leaves packed with calcium,

iron, carotene, and Vitamin C. They are best eaten raw or lightly cooked to preserve the delicate herbal aroma.

**Takenoko** たけのこ are bamboo shoots and can never be eaten raw! They contain small traces of cyanide that the cooking process removes. Packaged shoots sold in stores are pre-cooked. They are common in salads, rice, and stir-fries.

**Tsukemono** 漬物 are pickled vegetables found in countless varieties in Japan. They are pickled in *miso*, sake, rice bran, or *sake shoyu* rather than vinegar. *Shiozuke* is a general term for all salted vegetables, including cucumber, aubergine, *daikon*, and *hakusai*. *Tsukemono* are often eaten mixed with rice or at the end of a meal to aid digestion.

**Yuzu** ゆず peel, not the flesh, is used to garnish soups. This citrus fruit has a distinctive scent. Peel *yuzu* very thinly and grind to add to *miso* with juice for *yuzu miso*. *Kabosu* カボス and *sudachi* すだち are similar to *yuzu* but green in color.

## SPICES, SAUCES, & CONDIMENTS

**Dashi** 出汁 is Japanese soup stock. It is traditionally made of freshly shaved *katsuobushi* [dried bonito] and *konbu*, a type of kelp. *Dashi-no-moto* is instant *dashi*, similar to cubed or powdered bouillon. You can alternatively use any soup stock you like the taste of, for example vegetable or fish stock, and add a teaspoonful of *hondashi* ほんだし [powdered bouillon] if you don't have time to make stock.

**Furikake** ふりかけ is sprinkled on top of rice but can also be mixed into *omusubi* [rice balls] or used to cover them. There are many varieties of *furikake* on the market but most are a mixture of seaweed, sesame seeds, *katsuobushi*, and flavorings.

**Goma** ゴマ are sesame seeds and both white and black varieties are often seen in Japanese cuisine. They are rich in protein, amino acids, calcium, and iron. Toast to bring out their rich, nutty flavor.

**Katsuobushi** 鰹節 are dried fish flakes made from smoked blocks [*sanmaioroshi*] of bonito fish. There are lower quality flakes made from *saba* or *sanma*. This is often used as a topping for *okonomiyaki* and *takoyaki*, but will also turn up unexpectedly on many dishes.

**Mirin** みりん is sweet alcohol made from *mochigome* and *komekōji* [yeast]. It enhances flavor and makes food shiny, and its sweetness is essential to Japanese cooking.

**Ponzu** ぽん酢 is made of vinegar, citrus juice, and a blend of spices, and is usually mixed with *shoyu* for a dipping sauce [*ajipon* 味ぽん is a favorite brand name].

**Sake** 酒 is the generic name for all alcohol but mainly refers to *seishu* [rice wine]. It is brewed from rice and *komekōji* [yeast].

**Shiso** しそ is an herb with a distinctive taste, similar to basil and mint. The leaves are spiky and often used in dishes using vinegar, *tempura*, as a garnish for *tempura* and *sashimi*, and in Japanese pickles. Red *shiso* reacts chemically to acid and dyes ginger red, so it is used when making *umeboshi*.

**Shoga** 生姜 or ginger, provides an essential and distinctive flavor to Japanese cooking. Use *hineshoga* or *neshoga* when cooking. *Shoga* pickled in sweet vinegar is called *gari* and is eaten with *sushi*. *Meshoga* is eaten raw with sweet *miso*. It can also be pickled in sweet *miso* vinegar. Eat with broiled fish.

**Shōyu** しょうゆ commonly known as soy sauce, is beneficial in relieving tiredness and aiding digestion, and is rich in Vitamin B.

**Su** 酢 is vinegar. In the past, rice vinegar was most commonly used in Japan. Recently, using distilled vinegar has become popular. Flavored vinegar for *sushi* rice is also sold in powder form. Wine vinegar is used in Western-style cooking, particularly in salad dressings.

**Umeboshi** 梅干 are made from unripened *ume* [plums] pickled in salt with *shiso* leaves. *Umeboshi* are extremely sour and have a

distinctive flavor of their own, but can be found in different varieties, two of the more common being *hachimitsu* 蜂蜜 (honey) and *shiso*. In former times, each household made their own, but now they're usually store-bought due to the time and trouble they takes to make. Add *umebashi* to preserve *omusubi* お結び (rice balls).

**Wasabi** わさび is a popular seasoning that goes well with seafood. It is always eaten with *sushi* 寿司 and *sashimi* 刺身. Vividly green, *wasabi* has a strong scent and spicy taste. The proper way to grate *wasabi* is on sharkskin. If unavailable, use a fine tooth grater in order to enhance the flavor. *Wasabi* grows very slowly in clean streams, thus it is expensive raw. It is commonly sold in powder or in tubes of paste.

**Yuzugoshō** ゆずごしょう is Japanese spicy citron paste, often mixed with *shōyu* to make a dipping sauce.

#### RECOMMENDED COOKBOOKS & WEBSITES FOR JAPANESE COOKING

For some hints and tips on food and recipe ideas while in Japan, the following cookbooks come highly recommended and are available at Maruzen or Kinokuniya in Tenjin, or from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

##### **A Guide to Buying Food in Japan**

by Carolyn R. Krouse

##### **Japanese Cooking for Everyone**

by Miyoko Sakai and Motoko Abe

##### **Harumi's Japanese Cooking**

by Harumi Kushihara

##### **Japanese Cooking At Home**

by Hideo Dekura

##### **Recipes of Japanese Cooking**

by Yuko Fujita & Navi International

##### **Japanese Homestyle Cooking**

by Tokiko Suzuki

##### **Japanese Favourites**

by Percipulus Mini Cookbooks

For **online** ideas, visit:

[www.bento.com/mailorder.html](http://www.bento.com/mailorder.html)

[www.japan-guide.com/e/e620.html](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e620.html)

<http://japanesefood.about.com>

#### **ALCOHOL**

You've finally arrived in Japan, ready to embrace the drinking culture with open arms, but if you go into an *izakaya* and order a glass of that sake you've associated with Japan for all these years, you've got a surprise coming: *sake* is the word for alcohol in Japanese, and there's quite a selection of traditional spirits to choose from. Let the following get you started.

**Beer** is by far the most popular drink in Japan, having surpassed sake as the #1 beverage of choice since the 1960s. It accounts for 75% of all alcohol consumption in Japan, pairing nicely with most Japanese foods. Of the three biggest companies, Kirin, Asahi, and Sapporo, Asahi Super Dry is the top seller.

**Nihon-shu** is sake as we know it back home: traditional Japanese rice wine whose history dates back to 4800 BC China. Like wine, there are endless regional variations and good or bad years; unlike wine, *Nihon-shu* is generally not kept for more than a year. A typical bottle contains about 16% alcohol and can be served warm (*atsukan*) or chilled (*hiya*)—the cheaper varieties are usually served warm.

**Shochu**, commonly called "Japanese vodka," is a distilled liquor made from sweet potatoes, rice, or barley and has a nutty or earthy flavor, much less fruity than sake. Many Japanese believe *shōchū* promotes health and longevity, and is often preferred by young Japanese to traditional sake. Containing about 25% alcohol, it's usually served on the rocks (*shōchū rokku*) or mixed 40:60 with water (*oyuwaru*).

**Umeshu** is a very sweet and sour plum wine that has been consumed in Japan for over 1000 years. It contains 10-15% alcohol, and its potassium and calcium content give it a reputation for good health. *Umeshu* can be easily made at home with *ume* (Japanese plums), sugar, *shōchū*, and patience, and is offered on the rocks (*umeshu rokku*), with soda (*umeshu soda*), or with sweet and sour mix (*umeshu sawa*).

**Chuhai** are cheap, easy, and delicious blends of fruit flavoring and *shōchū*. Containing 4-7% alcohol, these fizzy drinks can be ordered in any bar, are sold at *konbinis* across Japan, and come in tons of flavors: lemon, grapefruit, grape, pineapple, lychee, peach, seasonal varieties, and more.

#### QUICK GUIDE TO SUSHI

You're certain to give *sushi* 寿司 a try while you're in Japan. It's great anytime time of the day or night, whether it's a gloriously fresh breakfast at Shimonoseki's fish market, or a late night bite in one of Fukuoka's many *sushi* bars. Whatever your choice, here's a short glossary of *sushi* terms to help you out:

**Agari** あがり Japanese tea

**Otemoto** お手元 chopsticks

**Murasaki** 紫 Sushi bar term for soy sauce

**Gari** ガリ Ginger

**Wasabi** わさび Japanese horseradish

**Sabinuki** サビ抜き "No *wasabi*, please."

**Shari** しゃり Sushi rice

**Neta** ネタ Fish or any kind of food that is on top of the sushi rice

**Tekka-maki** 鉄火巻き Tuna roll

**Kappa-maki** かつぱ巻き Cucumber roll

**Geso** ゲソ Squid legs (usually fried up)

**Tai** タイ Sea bream/red snapper (eaten at celebrations)

**Hirame** ひらめ Flounder

**Ika** イカ Squid

**Ebi** えび Shrimp

**Maguro** マグロ Tuna

**Otoro** オトロ Fatty tuna (very expensive)

**Katsuo** かつお Skipjack tuna

**Sake** 鮭 Salmon (sometimes *shake*)

**Ikura** いくら Salmon roe

**Kani** カニ Crab

**Tako** たこ Octopus

**Kaki** カキ Oysters

**Uni** うに Sea urchin ovaries

**Anagi** うなぎ Freshwater eel

**Anago** アナゴ Saltwater eel

**Oaiso** 御会計 Check, bill \*Good in any restaurant. Alternative terms are "*okanjo*," "*okaikei*" or "*checkku*" with a Japanese accent.

#### **IMPORTED & ORGANIC**

##### **FOOD STORES**

Food may be one of the hardest cultural adjustments to make in Japan. "Western style" restaurants may confuse you with Japanese interpretations of European or American food, but most staple foods are easily found in your local supermarket or grocery store. Milk is one basic that may surprise you. You may find that it tastes thick or has a different smell than you're used to. The reason for this is that the pasteurization process takes place at a different temperature. Regular milk has no additives. Whole milk has between 3.5 and 4.5% milk fat. Low-fat milk (*teishibo* 低脂肪) has between 1.0 and 1.5% milk fat. It has a milder flavor than regular milk. Non-fat milk (*mushibo* 無脂肪) comes close to western low-fat milk.

Here are a few places to consider when suddenly struck with a craving for oatmeal, cheese, tortillas, cilantro, olives, crisps, herbal tea, marmalade jam, or any of those hard to find items from back home. Also check any department store basements for a nice selection of gourmet imported goods.

**Bon Marche** in Takamiya.

**Bon Repas** at Nishijin subway exit 1, and Yakuin.

**Costco** See Fukuoka East section for more details.

**F.B.C. Foreign Buyer's Club** located in Kobe has an extensive mail catalogue of items from overseas, including America and Britain. You can request the free catalogue or place your order online at: [www.fbcusa.com](http://www.fbcusa.com), or call 078-857-9001. Note to those who will re-contract for a second year: don't forget to visit while you are in Kobe for the Re-contracting Conference.

**F-Co-op and Green Co-op** offer non-chemical food.

**Hallday** and **Sunny** are supermarket chains with locations across the prefecture.

**Iwataya basement** has a very extensive cheese and foreign food selection.

**Meidiya's** at Gofuku-machi Gion stop on the subway line.

**Reimei's** in Shintencho.

**Sony Plaza** in the IMS building in Tenjin and AMU Plaza in Kokura.

**YouMe Town** has locations across the prefecture.

**Tengu Natural Foods** based in Sataima-ken has organic foods, spices, beans, grains, and cereals as well as decaffeinated coffee beans, fresh and frozen foods, and books. You can order using their catalogue and payment is made via postal money transfer. Tengu Natural Foods, 350-1251, Saitama ken, Hidaka-shi, Komahongo 185-2. Tel 0429-82-4811. Fax 0429-82-4813. Email: tengu@gol.com. Web: www.alishan-organic-center.com.

## EATING OUT

**Nabe** 鍋 is a style of *ofukuro-no-aji* お袋の味, or "home cooking," where food is added to a communal pot in the center of the table and diners sit around and eat together. Whether you have a big ceramic pot on a gas burner, or a Teflon super-machine with a self-heating bottom, the process is the same. Both fish and meat varieties exist and can be easily adapted. Other popular *nabes*, include *kimchee* キムチ and *chanko* ちゃんこ *nabe* (the sumo favorite).

**Shabu-shabu** しゃぶしゃぶ is a version of *nabe* where the soup is very plain and each mouthful is dipped in a soy/citrus sauce before eating.

**Osaka okonomiyaki** お好み焼き is often referred to as Japanese pizza, but is really more like an omelet and comes from the Kansai region. It is a batter mixed with cabbage, other various vegetables, and meat or seafood, and often cooked on the table in front of you.

**Kaiten-zushi** 回転寿司 is conveyor belt *sushi* and is a great option for vegetarians. It takes the stress out of reading the Japanese-only *sushi* menus and trying to guess about whether fish or bacon will be included with the ostensibly vegetarian rolls. You just grab what comes by you, or you can use the intercom to order if you don't see what you're looking for. Typical vegetarian offerings are *ume-shiso* (pickled plum), *kappa* (cucumber), *oshinko* (pickle), and *natto* rolls, as well as *tamago* (egg cake on rice) and pickled eggplant on rice, and all the standard fish selections will be present, as well as things you've never seen. Most shops start at ¥100 a plate for veggie rolls and go up with the quality of the fish used. A few recommended spots (especially for vegetarians) are in Yodobashi Camera (everything is ¥100) and in Shintencho in Tenjin.

**Kushi-age** 串揚げ is fried things on sticks, and is another excellent option for vegetarians. Sometimes found in *izakaya* (small Japanese restaurants) and *yatai* (street stalls), the selections spans from *shiitake* mushroom, *piman* (green pepper), *negi* (onion), *nasu* (eggplant), and *ninniku* (garlic), to bacon cheese, soft-boiled eggs, and every kind of meat you can think of.

## BEER GARDENS

In early summer, the rooftops of many hotels and department stores come alive with one of the most pleasurable things of the season: beer gardens. For around ¥3000 you can eat and drink your troubles and the humidity away. Beer gardens are generally open from late June till early September, coinciding with the worst of the summer humidity. Due to their popularity it is sometimes best to book in advance, especially if a large group is going. Popular locations include the Fukuoka Building in Tenjin and Isetan in Kokura, but any rooftop that can hold people, food, and beer in a jovial atmosphere is a potential target. *Kampai!*

## CHAIN RESTAURANTS

Although a few of the most popular chains from home have made it over to Fukuoka, including Hard Rock Cafe at Hawkstown and McDonald's everywhere you turn, Japan has

an exciting array of new fast food and chain restaurants to get to know and love. So even if you can't speak a word of Japanese, mutter the universal *hambaagaa* and you'll be served.

## CAFÉS

Whether you want a quiet place to study Japanese or just a good cup of coffee, Fukuoka has ample cafés for you to enjoy.

**Afternoon Tea** is a high-end café often found in department stores.

**Doutor** is one of many coffee shops featuring pastries and sandwiches as well as drinks.

**Mister Donut** sells bottomless cups of coffee for ¥250 and has tons of donuts to choose from, including the "pon de ringu" which has a mochi-like texture to it.

**Pronto** serves a variety of pasta dishes as well as both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.

**Seattle's Best** is just one of many Seattle-based chains, and often sells American-style desserts.

**St. Marc's** is extremely popular for its chocolate-filled croissants and other delicious pastries.

**Starbucks** has a huge following here in Japan, and while they're not on every corner yet, it's fairly easy to find one in both Fukuoka and Kitakyushu. It's also one of the few places that is non-smoking.

**Tully's** isn't as well known as Starbucks, but this café serves some great drinks and desserts in a similar setting.

## FAST FOOD

It's inevitable: no matter how much you've sworn to explore the delicacies of Japanese cuisine, sometimes it's all about instant gratification, and the convenience and speed of fast food becomes a thing of beauty. Try a Japanese chain for something a little different.

**Kentucky Fried Chicken** The chicken is the

same, but sadly the biscuits aren't.

**Lotteria** A Japan-based burger joint much like McDonald's. Good milkshakes!

**McDonald's** No explanation needed. The menu is slightly different with Japan-only specialties, and the service tends to be much better than back home.

**Mos Burger** Japan-based burger shop, the organic alternative to the golden arches. With a wide variety of great hamburgers and coffee in real mugs, it feels like home. Try some of the interesting Japanese creations from the constantly changing menu.

**Wendy's** With a few locations in Fukuoka, including Canal City, you can get your square hamburgers, baked potatoes, and Frosties just like at home.

**Yoshinoya** serves a variety of rice bowls and is extremely popular for their gyudon (marinated beef on rice)—who says fast food has to be burgers? Cheap, quick, and open all night.

## RESTAURANTS

You'll find a few familiar menus from home as well as a number of unique Japanese chain restaurants. Japan-based chains are plentiful, but can sometimes be harder to recognize as they're unfamiliar to you. Many of these serve Japanese food and Japanese takes on western food at a reasonable price.

**Freshness Burger** is more of a restaurant than fast food. They offer a variety of tasty and interesting burgers in two sizes so you can easily try more than one at a time. The sweet potato fries and onion rings are delicious accompaniments. Found in city areas.

**Gusto** is reliable and cheap, offering everything from pizza and pasta, to burgers and French gratin. Perfect food for a hangover.

**Hamakatsu** *katsu* chain can be found everywhere. Fill up on complimentary rice, *tsukemono*, miso soup and cabbage salad

as it's all-you-can-eat with your meal of fried delicacies.

**Hard Rock Café** has a location in Hawks Town right across from Yahoo Dome, making it easy to stop by before or after a baseball game for western favorites and huge desserts.

**Joyful** is a popular restaurant for families, it's cheap and has an unlimited soup and salad bar.

**Pietro** Serves Italian cuisine with a Japanese twist. Some have all-you-can-eat salad and/or bread bars during lunch.

**Ringer Hut** serves great *champon* and *ramen*. It's a shame about the name.

**Royal Host** is a family restaurant with special themes every now and then where they feature food from other countries and regions. One of the only places where you can have SPAM for breakfast.

**Umenohana** is a pricey but excellent Fukuoka-born chain where all the dishes are made of tofu. Its healthy cuisine makes it a favorite of Japanese women, but its beautiful presentation, peaceful ambience, and creative dishes make it a worthwhile meal for anyone.

**Volks** is another family restaurant found in abundance. With hot plates of hamburger and steak to choose from and an all-you-can-eat salad bar, how can you go wrong?

**West** ウェスト is a chain of specialty restaurants that each take on a different cuisine, such as *yakiniku*, *udon*, Italian, and more. It's known by many for its drink specials that are a great way to finish the week, and it's a lifeline for many JETs in the more *inaka* regions. Always cheap and filling, and many places offer all-you-can-eat soup/bread/salad bars.

## BEING & STAYING A VEGETARIAN IN FUKUOKA

You might imagine that in a Buddhist country, where a semi-vegetarian diet was enjoyed by everyone until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, that being meat and fish free would be relatively simple. Unfortunately, this is not the case in Japan. You will need to patiently explain your dietary requirements in detail to people at every meal you don't prepare for yourself. Vegetarianism is not common in Japan, so take the chance to do some international exchange. Although it's a good idea to absorb a bit of Japanese culture while you're here, you shouldn't feel forced to change your principles. Work out your own limits; are you prepared to eat pork broth in *ramen* noodles, and are you happy to pick out ham from salads? It's worth establishing with your supervisor early on what you will and will not eat, as they may well be able to help stop your welcome party from being held in the local "catch your own fish" restaurant. It is handy to know the names of a few dishes you would like to eat, like vegetable *tempura*, to give people an idea of what to serve you, should you be invited to their home. Occasionally you may be served meat anyway, so explaining in advance will go a long way.

Getting food from the convenience store is fairly easy as you can eat many of the *onigiri* on offer—veggie ones include *umeboshi* and *takana* 高菜 (spicy pickles). Egg sandwiches are also a frequent feature in the chilled cabinet. In addition, *inari-zushi* is a good bet—it is made of sweet *tofu* skin and rice, and is often sold in packs on its own. Some stores offer *anman* アンマン (sweet bean paste) and *chiizu man* チーズマン (cheese) dumplings in the hot section next to the registers. Crisps and snacks sometimes have fish flavoring but usually feature a picture on the package to warn you.

In Fukuoka, there are no dedicated vegetarian restaurants (you have to head towards Tokyo to find one) so training your

local favorite eatery to sate your desires is a good investment. Many will cater to you and welcome your return visit. Although *izakayas* can be intimidating at first with their Japanese only menus and boisterous staff, they can often be your best bet for vegetarian dishes as they generally have a large selection and can be very flexible. Generally, the staff are inclined to be much more accommodating than at a chain or fast food restaurant. They may even do it for you without asking if you eat there multiple times—you may be the only foreigner that has ever showed up, so they will remember you!

Often, it is not enough to just say you are a vegetarian; ham, bacon, fish, shellfish, or chicken may be served to you so it is handy to know the vocabulary to head off this situation. Make sure you list each item you want left out of your food. If you order a big daikon salad, it may come with little dried fish

all over it if you do not specifically ask to have it left off. You may think the servers will see the pattern in your requests, but don't count on it. Make everything specific just in case.

It is highly advisable to learn katakana and hiragana so you can read ingredients; learning the kanji for various meat and fish items will make your life easier as well. The more Japanese you know, the easier your vegetarian life here will become. Lastly, be patient with people. Your dietary needs may be unusual here and few people have the experience to cope with it. Take advantage of this chance to bring internationalization to your bit of Fukuoka!

## VOCABULARY FOR VEGETARIANS

These will help you out in a restaurant or at school:

I am a vegetarian. *Watashi wa saishokushugisha/bejitarian desu.*

I don't eat meat or fish. *Niku to sakana wa tabemasen.*

But I eat eggs and cheese. *Demo tamago to chiizu wa tabemasu.*

Does this dish contain meat? *Kono ryori ni niku ga haitte imasu ka?*

Do you have anything without \_\_\_? *\_\_\_ ga haitte inai ryori ga arimasu ka?*

*niku* - meat  
*chiizu* - cheese (note long *i*, *chizu* = map!)  
*sakana* - fish  
*tamago* - eggs  
*yasai* - vegetables  
*miruku* - milk  
*chikin / tori [niku]* - chicken  
*buta [niku]* - pork  
*aji no moto* - MSG

A quick aside here:  
Often cooks, waiters & Japanese in general don't consider things like fish, bacon or wieners to be meat. Go figure. One must be constantly vigilant and wade carefully into these carivororous waters. *Akirametenai*, amigo!

# RELIGION

Fukuoka does not have a foreigner population as large as that of cities such as Tokyo, Manila, or Hong Kong, but there is indeed a good amount of outside influence, so with a little effort, any religion can be accessible to those that are interested. Of course, if you have an interest in participating in the Buddhist/Shinto hybrid that is practiced here in Japan or the meditative discipline known as *Zazen*, Fukuoka provides a great setting with its abundance of beautiful shrines and temples located throughout the prefecture. However, finding places for other areas of worship in Fukuoka does take a little bit of effort. Access to most of the Catholic, Christian, Lutheran, Mormon, Jewish, and Muslim centers of worship would necessitate a trip to the Tenjin area in Fukuoka City or other major metropolitan centers.

With some effort, many faiths can be accessed in Fukuoka. One suggestion provided by Fukuoka's Rainbow Plaza to those who are seeking other members of their faith is to post a sign on your town bulletin board to see if any others of the same faith live in the area.

To order Christian books, music, etc. online, check out Christian Book Distributors at [www.cbd.com](http://www.cbd.com).

## WORSHIP CENTERS IN FUKUOKA CITY

### **Chuo-ku**

Anglican Church. 2-9-22 Kusagae Chuo-ku. Tel 092-751-0097.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. 4-10-7 Yakui Chuo-ku. Tel 092-531-5119.

Daimyo-machi Catholic Church. 2-7-7 Daimyo Chuo-ku. Tel 092-741-3687.

Fukuoka Baptist Church. 2-5-16 Arato Chuo-ku. Tel 092-741-6256.

Fukuoka Central Church. 3-26-5 Haruyoshi Chuo-ku. Tel 092-713-8221.

Fukuoka Chuo Korean Christian Church. 2F 2-7-7 Maizuru Chuo-ku. Tel 092-715-4250.

Fukuoka International Church. 1-12-45 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-716-7789. Services are bilingual in English and Japanese. Worship services are at 10.45am on Sunday. English speaking Japanese co-pastor's e-mail: [naoko3@rio.odn.ne.jp](mailto:naoko3@rio.odn.ne.jp).

United Church. 2-4-36 Daimyo Chuo-ku. Tel 092-731-7173.

### **Hakata-ku**

Fukuoka Korean Christian Church. 5-11-48 Chiyo Hakata-ku. Tel 092-651-9786.

Hakata New Life Church. 3-13-29 Hakata Eki Minami. Tel 092-481-5477. A 15-minute walk from the back of JR Hakata Station. Sunday service at 10.30am.

Hikarigaoka Catholic Church. 1-1-15 Hikarigaoka-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-581-0570.

Japan Baptist Union, Hakata Christian Church. 1-10-28 Aoki Hakata-ku. Tel 092-623-1442.

Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church. 3-9 Susaki-machi Hakata-ku. Tel 092-291-2404.

### **Higashi-ku**

Fukuoka Bible Church. 1-9-15 Tatara Higashi-ku. Tel 092-863-5088.

Kyushu University Muslim. Kyushu University Ryugakusei Center Students' Association. 6-10-1 Hakozaki, Higashi-ku. Tel 092-642-2156.

Nishitozaki Christ Church. 6-2-27 Nishitozaki, Higashi-ku. Tel 092-603-0258.

### **Minami-ku**

Fukuoka Shinsei Kyokai. 3-33-1 Miyake Minami-ku. Tel 092-561-6791.

Nagazumi Baptist Church. 1-8-20 Nagazumi Minami-ku. Tel 092-511-5967.

### **Sawara-ku**

Fukuoka Betania Kyokai. 5-4-37 Nanjo Sawara-ku. Tel 092-841-0198.

Nishijin Catholic Church. 3-14-1 Josei Sawara-ku. Tel 092-851-8032.

Seinan Gakuin Baptist Church. 7-5-9 Nishijin Sawara-ku. Tel 092-821-2852.

## CENTERS OF WORSHIP OUTSIDE OF FUKUOKA CITY

Chikushino Futsukaichi Kirisuto Kyokai. 4-6-11 Higashi Chikushino-shi. Tel 092-925-0085.

Fukuma Christ Church. 983-11 Tsumaru, Fukutsu-shi. Tel 0940-42-4801. Email: [aptist\\_shochan@yahoo.co.jp](mailto:aptist_shochan@yahoo.co.jp).

International Harvest Chapel. 1475-1 Kawai, Yame-shi. Tel 090-9607-3834. Website: [www.homepage3.nifty.com](http://www.homepage3.nifty.com).

Koga Baptist Church. 2-27-45 Hanami Minami, Koga-shi. Tel 092-942-2614.

Kurume Bethel Christ Church. 2192-172 Kamitsu-machi Kurume-shi. Tel 094-221-8638. They will pick up people at the Nishitetsu-Kurume station every Sunday before the 10.30am service. Call to check on the meeting location and time. Services are mostly bilingual and headseats are available with an English translation of the sermon.

Munakata Bethel Christian Center. Located in Akama. Tenpyodai 529-1. From JR Akama Station, turn left out of the front entrance. Walk out to the main road and turn left. Turn right at Otanidori South intersection. Turn left at Lawson and go up a little hill. Sunday at 10.30am. Tel 0940-33-3200. Pastor Nils Olson is fluent in English and Japanese.

Nogata Christian Center. 1-2-2 Mizobori, Nogata-shi. Tel 0949-24-8942. Pastor Nozomi Ikutake speaks English. Sunday 9.30am English Bible School with American missionary, followed by 11am worship service. Bilingual song service.

Sasaguri Christ Church. 4904-1 Sasaguri, Sasaguri-machi. Tel 092-948-0534.

Tsuyazaki Church. Miyaji 2018-1, Fukutsu-shi. Tel 0940-52-1102. Sunday 10.30am.

Wajiro Baptist Church. 1782-8 Sugawa, Haragami, Shingu-machi. English contact: Jack Dary. Tel 092-963-5789.

## ZAZEN 座禅

*Zazen* is a meditative discipline practitioners perform to calm the body and mind and experience insight into the nature of existence. While the term originally referred to a sitting practice, it is now commonly used to refer to practices in any posture, such as walking. For those of you interested in trying your hand, or your rear, at *Zazen*, you can have a go at any of the locations listed below. Please be aware that you may be beaten on your shoulders with a stick during the session. It is recommended that you learn the basics of *Zazen* beforehand. A lecture is typically given in Japanese, so it is necessary to take a Japanese speaker with you.

Ankokuji Temple 安国寺 3-14-4 Tenjin, Chuoku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-741-2770. Call ahead for dates and times. Free.

Chinzei zazen dojo 鎮西座禅道場 1-4-1 Miyako, Kokura-kita-ku, Kitakyushu-shi. Located 500m from the Tobata bypass. Tel 093-571-7747.

Kenkoin 建興院 9-2-4 Hinosato, Munakatashi. Tel 0940-36-1420. Every first and third Sunday from 9am. ¥200 each time. For additional information on Zen temples in Japan, visit [www.sotozen-net.or.jp](http://www.sotozen-net.or.jp) or call the headquarters of Sotoshu at 03-3454-5411.

Koshuji Temple 興宗寺 2-22-11 Terazuka, Minami-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-541-2348. Every second Sunday from 7.30am. ¥1500 a year.

Myokoji Temple 明光寺 3-8-52 Yoshizuka, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-621-2698. Every Saturday 6-8pm (must arrive by 5:40pm). Free.

Torinji Temple 東林寺 3-7-21 Hakataekimae, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-431-0990. Mon-Fri during the third week of each month. April to October 6-7am, and November to March 6.30-7.30am. Free. You must participate every day.

You have your house sorted out, everything is setup, and you're having no trouble getting around the prefecture; all you need is stuff to do! Fortunately, Fukuoka is blessed with many options. Check out the regional sections for more details in each area, but get started on some ideas with the following information. Have fun!

## IT'S NOT EASY BEING A FOREIGNER...



# LEISURE

## ART GALLERIES & MUSEUMS

**Fukuoka Asian Art Museum** opened in 1999 and contains an impressive array of art from over 21 Asian countries. It is a wonderful and relaxing way to spend the afternoon. Open daily 10am-8pm (last admission 7.30pm). Closed Wednesdays (or Thursday if Wednesday is a national holiday) and December 26 to January 1. Admission to the permanent collection is ¥200. There are also a couple of free galleries and a library. Located next to the Nakasukawabata subway station on the 7F and 8F of the River Site, Hakata Riverain. 3-1, Shimokawabata-machi, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi. [www.faam.city.fukuoka.jp/faam/e/contents.htm](http://www.faam.city.fukuoka.jp/faam/e/contents.htm).

**Fukuoka Art Museum** was established in 1979 to exhibit modern art from around the world. The permanent collection includes western fine art, including works by Salvador Dali, Japanese modern art, images of Buddha, and contemporary Asian art works. Watch for the regular special exhibitions. These offer an opportunity to view work from around the world and are especially recommended. Located in Ohori Park. Open daily 9.30am-5.30pm (last admission 5pm), July and August until 7.30pm (last admission 7pm). Closed Mondays (or Tuesday if Monday is a national holiday). Admission to the permanent collection is ¥200. The special exhibitions are usually about ¥1000. 1-6 Ohori-koen, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Details of current exhibitions are on the web: [www.fukuoka-artmuseum.jp/english/](http://www.fukuoka-artmuseum.jp/english/).

**Fukuoka Prefectural Museum of Art** is a must see for any one wanting to add a touch

of art to a day of shopping. It opened in 1985 and serves to promote artistic activities in Fukuoka Prefecture. The collection includes Hakata weaving, regional pottery, porcelain, and paintings. The museum includes a sculpture hall, permanent collection gallery, art library, audio-visual room, video booth, hi-vision gallery and a terrace cafe. Located conveniently close to Tenjin it is open 10am-6pm with the Art library open until 5.30pm. Closed Mondays (or Tuesday if Monday is a national holiday) and New Year's Holiday. 2-1 Tenjin 5-chome, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-715-3551.

**Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art** is set among 100 000 square meters of greenery with easy access to Kokura, Tobata, and Yahata. Built in 1974 according to the designs of the famous architect Arata Isozaki, the building houses an impressive collection of both global and local treasures. Open daily 9.30am-5.30pm. Closed Mondays and New Year's Holiday (December 29 to January 1). ¥150. 21-1 Nishi-sayagatani, Tobata-ku, Kitakyushu-shi. Web: [www.kmma.jp/index.html](http://www.kmma.jp/index.html).

**Kitakyushu Art Museum Riverwalk Gallery** is run by the Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art. It is easy to find in the Riverwalk complex, five-minutes walk from Nishi-Kokura Station, and has a new show monthly; recent examples include Astroboy, Escher, and Japanese Scientific Illustrations. ¥800. 10am-8pm. Tel 093-562-3215.

**Kitakyushu Center for Contemporary Art** is a gallery affiliated with Kitakyushu International University that focuses on contemporary art. Opened in May 1997, this non-profit organization is subsidized by the City of Kitakyushu and is intended to be a uniquely conceived institute for the study and research of contemporary art. 9am-

5pm. Closed Sun. Free admission. 2-6-1 3F, Ogura, Yahata-Higashi-ku, Kitakyushu. Web: [www.ccakitakyushu.org/](http://www.ccakitakyushu.org/).

**Kuga Art Museum** was established in 1979. Sakamoto Hanjiro, recognized internationally in 1956 for his paintings "Usurebi" and "Hoboku-sanba" in remembrance of the late Kuga Ichio, oversaw the commemoration and construction of the private art museum. Mr. Kuga died on June 6, 1984. Along with the site for construction and the building itself, the Kuga family donated commemorative works for the Kuga Art Museum. On August 6, 1986 the name Kuga Commemorative Art Museum was attached to the Sue Art Museum. The Kuga Art Museum, or "the museum in the woods," as it is often referred to these days, has become popular among present-day artists in the area. The museum has its own collection of Sue porcelain ware from the Lord Chikuzen collection. The museum also features exhibits from local, present-day artists. Free. 10am-5pm. Closed Mon. Web: [www.town.sue.fukuoka.jp/english/culture/kuga.html](http://www.town.sue.fukuoka.jp/english/culture/kuga.html).

**Ishibashi Museum of Art** was established at the heart of Shikobashi Cultural Center, sponsored by Shojiro Ishibashi. The collection includes works by local artists including Shigeru Aoki, Shigejiro Sakamoto, and Harue Koga. There is also a fine collection of Japanese paintings, pottery, and ceramics. ¥500. 9.30am-5.30pm in summer, til 5pm in winter. Closed Mondays and New Year's Holiday. 1015 Nonaka-machi, Kurume-shi. Tel 0942-39-1131.

**The Tanakamaru Collection** was founded in 1973 to exhibit the private collection of Tanakamaru Zenhachi. About 40 pieces from among the collection are usually on display. The exhibition changes several times a year. The collection was shown in the US at the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Seattle Art Museum in 1980. 10am-7pm. Closed Tuesdays and New Year's Holiday [December 30 to January 3]. Fukuoka Tamaya, 3-7-30 Nakasu, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-271-1111.

**Nogata Tanio Art Museum** was converted

from an old hospital. It opened its doors in November 1992 and holds a varied collection of 20th century Japanese art. ¥100. 9.30am-5.30pm. Last admission 5pm. Closed Mondays and the New Year's Holiday.

**The Koshiwara Pottery Museum** was founded in 1961 to preserve and exhibit ancient Koishiwara-yaki, ancient Kyushu yaki, pottery, and traditional Kyushu arts and crafts. ¥200. 9am-5pm. Closed Mondays and New Year's Holiday. Sarayama, Koishiwaramura, Asakura-gun, Fukuoka-ken. Tel 0946-74-2138.

**Kyushu National Museum** Kyushu kokuritsu hakubutsukan 九州国立博物館, or kyuhaku 九博, as it has become known, is the fourth national museum in Japan, alongside those in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Nara. A wealth of information on the history of Kyushu and many national treasures are on display here. It is adjacent to the Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine in Dazaifu and is one of the top tourist attractions in the area. Access via Nishitetsu train to Dazaifu, Route 3, or Kyushu Expressway. ¥420. 9.30am-5pm (last admission 4.30pm). Closed Mon. 4-7-2 Ishizaka, Dazaifu-shi. Tel 092-918-2807. Web [Japanese]: [www.kyuhaku.com](http://www.kyuhaku.com).

**Fukuoka City Museum** is a place for people to trace and learn the cultural development of the city through the history of the region and the lifestyle of its population. To get here by subway, get off at Nishijin station, use exit 1, and walk about 15 minutes. It's just down the street from the Fukuoka City Public Library. 9.30am-5.30pm. Closed Mon. Admission ¥200, but special exhibitions have additional fees. 3-1-1 Momochihama, Sawara-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-845-5011. Web: [www.museum.city.fukuoka.jp/english/index\\_e.html](http://www.museum.city.fukuoka.jp/english/index_e.html)

**Kitakyushu Museum of Natural History and Human History** is an excellent, fun, and comprehensive natural science museum. For anyone with an inquisitive mind this museum is a must. Contains exhibits on natural and human history from pretty much the beginning of time to the present

day. There is also a focus on Kitakyushu, which is very interesting. ¥500. 9am-5pm (last admission 4.30pm). Closed New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. 2-4-1 Higashida, Yahatahigashiku, Kitakyushu-shi. Web: [www.kmn.jp/index\\_e.html](http://www.kmn.jp/index_e.html).

**The Akizuki Museum** was founded in 1965 to exhibit the private collection of the Kuroda family. The collection includes armor, swords, kimono, pottery and porcelain, Japanese and Western paintings, and archaeological literature. Open daily 9am-5pm. Closed Mondays and New Year's Holiday [December 29 to January 1] and January 10 and 11. 695-1 Katakoji, Notori, Akizuki, Amagi-shi. Tel 0946-74-0895.

**Nakama City Folklore Museum** was founded in 1987 to exhibit historical and archaeological works found at regional ruins. The collection includes Jomen and Yayoi earthen wares, traditional household items, and archaeological literature. Open daily 10am-6pm. Closed Mondays, the last Wednesday of the month, and national holidays [including the New Year's Holiday December 29 to January 3]. Free admission. 5876-1 Oaza Nakama, Nakama-shi. Tel 093-245-4665.

**Hakata Machiya Folk Museum** is an outstanding museum for those wishing to dive into the lives of the Hakata people during the Meiji and Taisho eras. The museum features a reconstruction of a merchant's shop, a display of Hakata arts and crafts, and information on famous festivals in the region. There is even the chance to listen to the unique Hakata dialect through antique telephones. Open daily 10am-6pm (last admission 5.30pm). Closed December 29 to January 3. Admission is ¥200. 6-10 Reisen-machi, Hakata ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-281-7761.

**Noko Museum** houses a variety of materials connected to the Kamei family. Also included is a large trade ship that serviced many ports throughout Japan, including the five major ports in the Chikuzen area. There is a fine collection of paintings by several artists. A 200-year-old kiln excavated at the site of

the museum is also exhibited. Admission is ¥400. 522-2 Noko, Nishi-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-883-2887.

**The Previous Fukuoka Prefectural Civic Hall and Honorary Guest House** was constructed in March 1910 and served both as guest's reception hall and residence during the time of the 13th Kyushu and Okinawa Joint exposition. This French Renaissance-style wooden building was recently renovated and designated a national historical building. It is a three-minute walk from Nakasu-Kawabata subway station. Open 9am-5pm. Closed Monday. Admission is ¥240. 6-29 Nishinakasu, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-751-4416.

## JAPANESE THEATER

### TRADITIONAL FORMS

**Kabuki** is probably the easiest traditional Japanese theater form for a Westerner to appreciate, as it is quite visual. It could probably be called "Japanese Opera," but it has a lot more detail to it than European Opera. Though *kabuki* was founded by a shrine maiden named Okuni in the 17th century, all the actors are male, and there is often one actor, the *onnagata*, who plays the parts of all the women in the piece. Some of the costume changes made by the *onnagata* alone make the price of admission worthwhile! The makeup of the actors is heavy and white, with bold strokes to exaggerate the eyes and mouth. All of the actors are trained in movement and vocal work, but they don't exactly sing - all the music is provided by musicians and singers located on stage or sometimes behind a screen. The instruments used for *kabuki* are percussion, flute, and *shamisen* [a three-stringed lute played with a plectrum]. There are also some actors that are trained mainly as dancers, who perform before and after the main story.

The stage itself is equipped with trap doors and a long platform that extends into the audience on one side of the theater, allowing for spectacular scene and costume changes.

Most *kabuki* theaters offer a headset to listen to the storyline both in plain Japanese and sometimes in English. However, the written synopsis in the program is usually enough to help catch the main details of the storyline. If you find people yelling out during pauses in the show, do not be alarmed! These are fanatics shouting the names of their favorite actors, usually when the actors strike a particular pose.

**Kabuki in Fukuoka** is performed at the Hakata-Za in Fukuoka City. Tickets range from ¥4000-12 000 depending on seating. Sometimes you can also pick up information at the Joy Road outlets found at major JR stations. The Kabuki-Za in Tokyo is probably the best-known *kabuki* theater in Japan, though there is also a famous *kabuki* theater in Kyoto's Gion district.

**Noh** theater is a highly stylized version of *kabuki*. *Kabuki* is known for its stunning makeup and costume changes, whereas *noh* is known for its masks and costume layering. Again, all the parts are played by men, but some more modern companies do have female performers. Masks are worn for the characters of demons, old men, and women. Different emotional states are shown by tilting the masks in various directions. While wearing a *noh* mask, the actor is basically blind, so must know their movements precisely. The costumes are extremely bulky, and the basic walking movement is one of gliding across the floor with occasionally rhythmic stamping. Those actors not wearing masks keep their faces completely blank and emotionless. All of this gives the effect of the performers being life-size dolls. However, when there is the part of a demon in the piece, the movement becomes quite ecstatic, with high jumps and spins in the air.

As in *kabuki*, percussion, flute, and chorus provide the music, though the actors also

sing in parts of the piece. The percussionists' vocal techniques are quite spectacular! All the script is spoken in rhythm, and can be less-than-exciting at times. You will often see Japanese members of the audience following along with the script at the more "wordy" parts of the show. Though the themes of *noh* are often quite serious, there are short interludes of *kyogen* or "Noh comedy" throughout the piece.

**Noh in Fukuoka** In Fukuoka City there is a large *Noh* Stage in Ohori Koen, with many flyers for shows and workshops. In Kitakyushu City there is a *Noh* Stage in Ladies Yahata and often their shows and workshops are open to foreigners. Don't be surprised if you are given front row seats at Ladies Yahata!

**Bunraku** is Japanese puppetry. The shows are closely related to *kabuki* pieces; in fact, many famous *bunraku* pieces were adapted for *kabuki*. The puppets are quite large, probably a meter-and-a-half tall. A main puppeteer controls the head (complete with moving mouth and eyebrows) and one arm. A second puppeteer controls the other arm, and sometimes there is a third puppeteer controlling the feet of the puppet. The main puppeteer wears a black *kimono*, but his face is uncovered, while the second and third puppeteers wear black hoods. The face of the main puppeteer can be a little distracting at first, but once the story starts, the movements of the puppets are usually so enthralling that the main puppeteer seems to dissolve. The puppets themselves are gorgeous, and many are quite old.

As in *kabuki* and *noh*, the music is provided at the side of the stage by musicians (mainly *shamisen* in *bunraku*) and vocalists. The puppeteers hold their faces completely still and do not speak at all. In *bunraku*, the vocalists are extremely versatile as they often play anywhere from two to seven characters, using different vocal inflections for each voice. This style of recitation, called *jururi*, is in the Kansai dialect, with the vocalist and *shamisen* playing off each other. The *shamisen* also plays sound effects for the action onstage. Though the musicians are at the side of the stage, they are as

fascinating to watch as the action onstage. *Bunraku* usually has a more intimate feeling to it than *noh* or *kabuki*, and the storyline is usually very easy to follow.

**Bunraku in Fukuoka** There is usually one major *bunraku* show at Wel Tobata, next to Tobata Station in Kitakyushu City. There are only a small handful of active *bunraku* troupes in Japan. The main *bunraku* theater is in Osaka, so watch for their touring information.

## MODERN THEATER

Modern theater is presented on a regular basis at the new Riverwalk theater in Kitakyushu City. Flyers are available on the 6F at the box office. Some plays are Japanese renditions of western theater, while others are original pieces.

**Suzuki Company of Toga** is a fantastic group run by Tadashi Suzuki that performs contemporary theater pieces. His company lives in the mountain village of Toga where they intensely train their voices, bodies, and emotions to build up a sort of "theater battle aura." This is very evident in the actors once you see them in action- all their movements are precise and filled with an intensity rarely seen on stage. Watch for them on tour.

**Butoh** was created in the late 1950s by Tatsumi Hijikata and is a form of dance drawing on meditation and martial arts training. In some cases, dancers are physically and mentally brought to a point of catharsis in order to perform and create *butoh* pieces. *Butoh* dancers are often seen shaved and covered in white paint, though many of the female dancers perform with wild teased hair and torn clothing. The movements of *butoh* dance are extremely visceral and emotional.

**The Takarazuka Revue** Quite different from *kabuki*, but deriving from some of the same strict training, the *Takarazuka* features exclusively female performers, with women playing both the male and female roles. Girls enter the school as early as 13 years old and are chosen for a male or female role early on. They then spend the rest

of their training focusing on those roles. The *Takarazuka* mainly perform western musicals in Japanese, though some newer Japanese musicals have also been written for them. They perform a lot in the Tokyo area, and although Takarazuka City in Hyogo is their home, they sometimes tour throughout Japan. Web: [www.shoujo.tripod.com/takara.htm](http://www.shoujo.tripod.com/takara.htm).

## MUSICALS

Japan has not escaped the musical bug. "Phantom of the Opera," "Mamma Mia," "Lion King" and "Beauty and the Beast" are all currently being performed and touring through Japan - in Japanese of course! There are occasionally free tickets offered to JETs through various embassies and other organizations. There are also Japanese musicals. Flyers for these are always available at Joy Road.

**Shiki Theater Group** has a website in English containing information on where to see major musicals at their Fukuoka theater in Canal City, Hakata, as well as other places within Japan. Web: [www.shiki.gr.jp/siteinfo/english/index.html](http://www.shiki.gr.jp/siteinfo/english/index.html).

## WESTERN THEATER

Occasionally, theater and music troupes from the West tour Japan. Cirque du Soliel's "Allegria" and The Royal Shakespeare Company's "Othello" are two shows that have made their way through Fukuoka-ken in recent years. Look for flyers at Riverwalk's Performing Arts Center and at Joy Road.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Even if you are of limited Japanese language ability, participation in volunteer activities will transcend the language barrier and promote true internationalization. A good starting point is to ask at your town/ward office. Many towns have beautification days or other events, and they would love to have you join. You can teach a cooking class or have English story time at the town library.



Think of what you would like to do, the time commitment you would like to make, and your town will be happy to have you become a more active part of the community.

To find out more about volunteer opportunities in the foreign community, visit Rainbow Plaza on the 8F of the IMS building, or Kokusai Hiroba on the 3F of ACROS Fukuoka, both in Tenjin. If you read Japanese or can have someone translate, the Fukuoka NPO Center on the 8F of the Seinen Center by the Nishitetsu Grand Hotel in Daimyo has a folder full of groups looking for volunteers. Tel: 092-712-2947.

### DONATING USED GOODS

**Clothes** You can drop off usable clothes for the homeless at Deki Machi Park. Look for the blue tents behind the Nishi Nippon City Bank by Hakata Bus Station. You can leave a message in English for information at 092-843-7224.

**Toys and School Supplies** Wakabaso Goannai is a facility for orphans and abandoned children. They are happy to receive any toys or school supplies. You can also make arrangements to play with the children if you call ahead. Located on Route 35, the road that goes by Costco; take a left under the bridge just past the gas station/100 Yen Store near Costco. The orphanage is the white building on your lefthand side. You do

not have to call beforehand if you are only dropping off donations. Tel 092-976-0171.

### FEEDING THE HOMELESS

The group that distributes the clothes left at Deki Machi Park also serves a hot lunch to the homeless on the last Sunday of every month. You can leave a message in English for information at 092-843-7224.

### INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

The Asian Pacific Children's Convention is looking for volunteers year-round to help with photography, website updating, translation, camp staff, and other duties for a cross-cultural exchange program with children in Asia. Tel 092-734-7700. Web: [www.apcc.gr.jp](http://www.apcc.gr.jp). Email: [info@apcc.gr.jp](mailto:info@apcc.gr.jp).

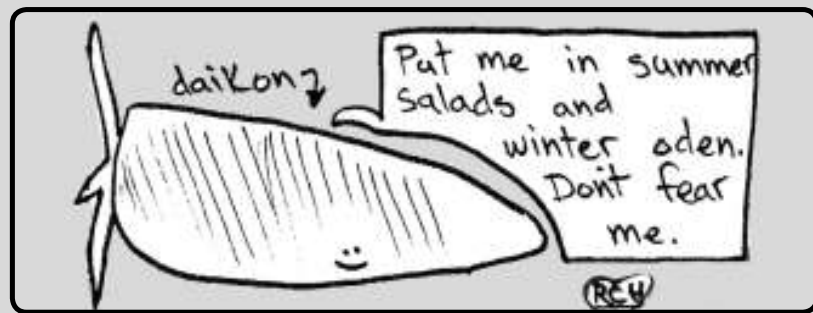
### WOMEN'S RIGHTS

AMIKAS is a group dedicated to increasing internationalization between the world's women. Tel 092-526-3755.

### GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES

If you are interested volunteering globally, you can visit the GO M.A.D. group, an international volunteer link set up by JETs, at [www.go-mad.org](http://www.go-mad.org). It can also help you plan lessons that get your students motivated about helping others.

## GET BACK TO YOUR ROOT...



# SPORTS

## BASEBALL

Baseball is by far Japan's most popular sport. It has been played here for over 120 years with the Japanese professional baseball league beginning in 1937. The Nippon Professional Baseball League (NPB) is comprised of two leagues, Central and Pacific, with six teams each. The winner of each league meets in the Japan Series to determine the champion. The teams have nicknames like in the US, but instead of being called by their cities, they are often called by the corporations that own them. Fukuoka has a team in the Pacific League, the Fukuoka Softbank Hawks.

There are many differences between American and Japanese games. Not all games end with a win or loss like in the US Major Leagues. Traditionally, any game tied after 12 innings remains a tie, with both teams satisfied that they tried their best. There is no inter-league play except for the Japan Series and three all-star games. There is also no minor-league baseball system in Japan. Instead, there are hundreds of company teams on which players can play, and, if they are good enough, make it to the Japan League.

Japanese baseball stadiums have a special section for cheering called the *oendan* where fans do choreographed chants at different parts of the game. The rest of the stands tend to be quiet, as spectators do not want to disturb other spectators' experience. This is more custom than rule, so feel free to cheer anywhere at any game. Also unlike Major League parks, there is an abundance of beer vendors carrying mini-kegs on their backs, as well as *takoyaki* and *chu-hai* vendors.

Baseball is extremely popular and competitive in high schools as well, with competition dating back to the Meiji Era. The National High School Baseball Championship Tournament, held each summer since 1924 in Koshien stadium near Osaka, is an extremely prestigious event. One team from each of the 47 prefectures competes in a single-elimination tournament to determine the national champion. These games are televised nationally and draw huge crowds of fans, supporters, and Japan League professional scouts.

## SOFTBANK HAWKS

Fukuoka's baseball team is owned by the technology company that operates YahooBB! They are managed by Sadaharu Oh, the world homerun champion with over 800 homeruns to his name. They won the Japan Series in 2001 and 2003. The Hawks play in the Yahoo Dome, an artificial turf stadium by the seaside with tickets ranging from ¥1000-8000. Tickets can be bought at convenience stores, the OMC Plaza at Daiei in Tenjin, or at the stadium on game day. Yahoo Dome is accessible by bus and subway. By Nishitetsu bus, take routes #68, #300, #301, #303, or #305 from Hakata or Tenjin. From outside of Fukuoka, special Nishitetsu highway bus services operate on game day. If coming by subway, take a Meinohama/Karatsu-bound Kuko line train to Nishijin and the Yahoo Dome is a ten-minute walk from the station.

## SOCCER

For those of you interested in playing soccer (football) during your stay in Japan, there are two main options available to you: In the Kitakyushu area there is the Xelha team. The owner of Xelha bar in Kokura, Colin, is a keen football fan and sponsors a team comprised of both foreigners and Japanese.

An active social life is almost as important to the team as its enthusiasm for the game. Practices and games are held every Sunday around mid-day. All nationalities and levels of ability are welcome to take part. For more information, talk to Colin behind the bar in Xelha or e-mail the manager, Rob, at robandyoko@hotmail.com.

Operating on a slightly more serious level than the Xelha team, Fukuoka Gaikokujin United (FGU) is the team of choice for JETs in Fukuoka prefecture. FGU have been the Kyushu Champions for the past five years and were winners of the Western Japan tournament three years on the trot. Games are held at the weekend and played on grass pitches in all parts of the prefecture. For more information, including contact details visit the website at [www.eteamz.active.com/fgu](http://www.eteamz.active.com/fgu).

### AVISPA FUKUOKA

Fukuoka's team in the national J1 League plays at Hakata no Mori Stadium near Fukuoka Airport. To get there, take the subway to the airport and transfer to a stadium bound Nishitetsu bus #3 or one of the special stadium services from Tenjin, Hakata, or Kokura. A good 2005 season saw them promoted from J2 to the J1 competition this year, where they play alongside the likes of Urawa Reds and Yokohama F Marinos.

### BASKETBALL

Japan has yet to fully embrace basketball as a major sport. It could be due to the height disadvantage suffered by the Japanese National Team during international competition. Most basketball enthusiasts will agree that Fukuoka is not a fertile hot bed for developing your basketball skills. If you want to showcase your skills on the playground, you'll find that outdoor courts are few and far between. There are public gyms in most towns or cities, but in most cases, you'll have to pay to play in their gym. These prices vary widely, from ¥480-1600 for two hours.

Some schools open their gyms to the public on Saturdays. You'll have to make inquiries

at your school to find this information (the PE teacher is your best bet). Once you've entered this underground network of basketball, you'll find that there are leagues in most large areas. The leagues have two seasons, an autumn/fall and a spring season. There are both men's and women's leagues. The games are usually on Sundays. The prices to participate in these leagues also vary depending on where the league is located.

Most schools will have an after school basketball club. Ask your supervisor who is in charge of the basketball club. In most cases, the club supervisor will be happy to have your help with the basketball club. If you are allowed to practice and play with the club, please take this commitment seriously.

### OUTDOOR COURTS

**Kasuga Park** is ten minutes by Nishitetsu train from Tenjin (Fukuoka).

**Chikuho Heights** in Iizuka-shi has baskets that may be lower than ten feet (Chikuho).

### GYMS

**Kaho Sports Gym** in Kaho-machi, near Iizuka-shi (Chikuho).

**Yame Public Gym** in Yame City (Chikugo).

**Kurume Public Gym** in Kurume City (Chikugo).

**Fukuoka City Public Gym** in Hakata, right next to Kencho (Fukuoka).

**Accion Fukuoka** is near the airport, accessible by Nishitetsu Bus #32 from Shime and by car (Fukuoka).

**Kasuya Dome** is a 15-minute walk from Chojabaru Station (Fukuoka).

### OPEN SCHOOL GYMS

**Fukuma Junior High School** Saturdays from 7.30 pm (Fukuoka).

See also Sports and Fitness in your region for other options that may be closer to home.

## MARTIAL ARTS

Martial arts are an excellent and fun way to experience Japanese culture, get fit, and learn self-defense. Martial arts have been a part of Japanese society for centuries. Though the prestige has lessened since the time of the *samurai*, martial arts are still widely practiced in Japan. Many of the currently popular martial arts have their roots in the fighting techniques used by the samurai. It is not just the techniques that have been passed down, but philosophy as well.

Martial arts vary widely even within a particular style, therefore the descriptions below are just an outline to give you an idea of the differences between them and help you decide which might be right for you. The following listings are places that are in the Fukuoka City area. If you live outside the city and want to try a particular martial art, call the Fukuoka *dojo* (training school) and ask if there is a *dojo* near you, or check the phone book. If you have never tried a martial art before and are a little hesitant, a good idea is to find out if you can watch a class, or try one before joining, to see how you like it. Another option is to pay a visit to your local police station, as many of them offer basic self-defense classes free of charge.

### AIKIDO

This is a primarily defensive art involving different techniques that utilize the attacker's own energy and momentum. Much of these techniques are either throwing techniques, or immobilization techniques. The practice of this martial art is usually done in pairs. Depending on the *dojo*, there will or will not be weapon instruction.

**Shoheijuku** 5-2-32 Naka, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-431-9104. Web: [shoheijuku.tripod.com](http://shoheijuku.tripod.com).

**Kensaikaikan** (does both Aikido and Karate). 1F, 4-2-38 Wakamiya, Higashi-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-682-7227.

## BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU

This martial art is based solely on ground fighting and grappling. It teaches techniques for submission holds and joint locks, which enable a much smaller person to be able to control a larger and stronger opponent. There are no punches or kicks in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. It is a great self-defense martial art because most fights go to the ground. This is also the martial art that has become famous internationally for its effectiveness in such competitions as Ultimate Fighting Championship and Pride.

**AXIS Jiu-Jitsu Academy Fukuoka** 1F, 2-9-23 Otemon, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-724-6878. Web [Japanese]: [www.h7.dion.ne.jp/~axis](http://www.h7.dion.ne.jp/~axis).

### JUDO

The word *judo* literally translates as "gentle way." This martial art comprises throwing techniques, and groundwork. It uses the opponent's strength and momentum to perform techniques. It is an Olympic sport, and the world famous Fukuoka International Women's Judo Championships is held at the Kokusai Center in December every year.

**Meidokan** 1-14-10 Akasaka, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-761-2580.

### KARATE

There are many types of *karate*, but they all emphasize striking techniques over grappling. There are no weapons, though some may be taught at higher levels. There are two major components to the training of *karate*, *kumite* [sparring] and *kata*. *Kata* is a series of movements that are used to practice certain techniques. The movements are those that might be used either defensively or offensively in a fight situation.

**Nihon Karate Kyokai Association** 4-248-1 Maidashi, Higashi-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-641-2624.

**Kokusai Karatedo Enshinkaikan** 3-37-1-306 Nishinagazumi, Minami-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-541-3332.

## SHORINJI KEMPO

This is a mixed martial art that incorporates techniques from *karate*, *judo*, *aikido*, as well as kung fu. The reason for utilizing techniques from different principles is to make a more complete martial art. There are striking techniques as well as throws and grappling.

**Zen Nihhon Kemporenmei Kenbukai** 7-13-3 Arita, Sawara-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-822-2967.

## KENDO

*Kendo* means "the way of the sword" and is the art of Japanese fencing. This martial art was developed in the 16th century, and while it has been adapted since, it still remains a very traditional martial art. It emphasizes self-discipline, and features swords, a uniform and protective armor. *Kendo* is often taught in schools and you may be able to practice at the school where you teach.

**Gokokutaiekukan** 1-1-5 Ropponmatsu, Chuoku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-711-0309.

**Fukuoka-ken Kendo Renmei** 1-1 Ohori, Chuoku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-712-1810.

## TAEKWONDO

Taekwondo is the national sport of Korea and one of the worlds most commonly practiced martial arts. While it translates as "the way of the foot and the fist," it is known primarily for its kicks. The reason that kicks are emphasized is because the leg is believed to be the longest and strongest weapon that a person has. There are also hand techniques, and some grappling at higher levels.

**Taekwondo Minami Fukuoka Doin** 2-18-7 Mugino, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-501-2382.

## TAI CHI

Tai Chi is a soft-style martial art that originated in China. It is a form of moving meditation that allows the student to learn concentration and coordination along with breathing techniques. One practices Tai Chi by doing slow movements that improve stability and flexibility in joints and muscles as well as letting the student relax while performing the movements.

**Fukuoka Taikyokuken Kyokai** 5-24-30-606 Watanabe-dori, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-716-0711.

**Fukuoka Taikyokuken Kenkyokai** 76-2-236 Hiraosui, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-526-1432.

## SUMO

This ancient sport dates back about 1500 years. At first, *sumo* matches had religious affiliations, being accompanied by harvest prayers to the gods. During times of war it evolved into a type of military fight training. Later, in more peaceful years, it began to develop into its present form - Japan's national sport as we know it today.

There are six *sumo* tournaments every year. The Fukuoka Grand Tournament is held in November. Each *sumo* wrestler (*rikishi*) competes once a day. The *rikishi* with the best record at the end of the 15 days of the tournament wins. Fighting begins early each day with the lowest ranked *rikishi*, and progresses to the final matches featuring *yokozuna*, the top-ranked wrestlers.

All 800 or so *rikishi* are re-ranked after each tournament, to reflect their performance. Any wrestler may be promoted or demoted, except *yokozuna*. To even be considered for promotion to the rank of *yokozuna*, a *rikishi* must win at least two consecutive tournaments as an *ozeki* (the second highest rank), and prove to possess both skill and character. In the past 300 years, only 68 *rikishi* have risen to this level of honor

in *sumo*. *Yokozuna* cannot be demoted, so if one should carry a poor record, he is expected to retire.

Sumo has maintained its ceremonies and rituals through the years. A team of *rikishi* will enter the ring wearing elaborate ceremonial aprons, and perform a ritual together before they fight. *Yokozuna* also performs a special ceremony featuring the famous stomping gesture, lifting each leg high into the air before bringing it down to symbolically drive evil spirits from the *dohyo* (*sumo* ring).

Before each match, the *rikishi* perform rituals to cleanse their mind and body. They rinse their mouth with water and wipe their bodies with a towel. Higher ranked wrestlers toss salt into the ring to purify it and to protect themselves from injury. Then they face off, crouching low and glaring at one another. This *shikiri* ritual comes right before the match begins, but it doesn't mean they will fight right away. The whole process may be repeated for up to four minutes (for high ranked wrestlers) until both are ready to start. To win a match, a *rikishi* must force his opponent out of the ring, or cause him to touch any part of his body to the ground inside the circle.

Matches take place in the *dohyo*, a clay stage two feet high with an area of 18 square feet. In the *dohyo*, there is a ring about 15 feet across marked with straw bags dug into the clay, where the fighting takes place. Above the *dohyo*, a roof resembling that of a Shinto shrine is suspended.

The referees (*gyoji*) are a critical part of the match. Elaborately dressed and ranked (like the *rikishi*), they call out the names of the opponents as they enter the ring. Four judges also monitor the action, and have the authority to overrule the *gyoji* or demand a rematch.

## KYUSHU BASHO

Every November, the Fukuoka International Center (Fukuoka kokusai sentaa 福岡国際センター) plays host to the Kyushu Grand Sumo Tournament. To witness this rich and fascinating sport for yourself, get tickets from

7-Eleven or Lawson. Same day sales are also available but can sell out quickly, especially for the opening and closing days, so it is best to pre-book. Prices range from ¥4000 to over 10 000, depending on where you sit. From Tenjin take Nishitetsu bus #55, #61, #151, or #152, or from Hakata take #47 or #48. Alternately, it's about a 30 minute walk from either place. For information on dates, seats, and more, visit [www.sumo.or.jp/eng/index.html](http://www.sumo.or.jp/eng/index.html).

## OUT & ABOUT

### HIKING

If you like hill walking, then you've come to the right place, 70% of Japan is made up of mountains. For straightforward hiking, it is recommended to stay on the heavily used trails, and to ascend and descend by the same route. Some mountains have trails that range in difficulty from "*your genki grandmother can do it*" to "be prepared to get lost." Your school may even have a mountain climbing or hiking club you can join. For additional information on hiking and camping, "Guide to Kyushu" compiled by Saga-ken AJet is a wonderful resource. The book is currently out of print, but email [sagaajet@hotmail.com](mailto:sagaajet@hotmail.com) to register your interest in obtaining a copy.

Trailheads can be difficult to find, so a Japanese hiking book might be useful if only for the maps. There are often multiple tracks up a mountain, so loop courses can be done. If you try a loop course, a topographical map and compass are highly recommended. Trails sometimes peter out into nothingness, with only bits of colored tape to mark the path. One good thing about hiking in Japan is that there is usually a village or a road at the bottom of every mountain. If you are lost, go downhill and you will probably be okay.

There are a few places in the ken to purchase hiking gear. **Chizu Mise** 地図店 is a map

shop in Tenjin (on Showa-dori across from the Central Post Office) that sells a range of topographical maps and Japanese hiking books. **Camp 2** is a good hiking chain store with branches in Nakasu (Fukuoka City) and Kokura (Kitakyushu City).

The following is a list of places to hike. Look in the respective area sections for more details.

**The Adachi Ridge** in Kitakyushu spans the ridge running from Kokura-kita to Moji. The trail is surprisingly secluded and well kept. Keep an eye out for the rope swing! The hike takes five to six hours, but give yourself more time to enjoy it. Bring food and water. Maps are available, but the maps on the trail will suffice.

**Fukuchiyama** in Chikuho is a 900m mountain that offers a spectacular 360-degree panorama of Nogata, Iizuka, and Kitakyushu from the top. Allow two hours for the ascent alone and bring a liter of water per person for the climb. The trail is not always well maintained, especially the last quarter to the top. The climb is not recommended during summer, but if you do venture out, be forewarned: it's buggy. Wear high-top shoes, boots, or long pants. Snakes are not uncommon in this area. You can get a local bus to Fukuchiyama from the Nogata Nishitetsu Bus Center, but this service is somewhat infrequent. A more convenient option is to take the Heisei Chikuho Tetsudo beside Nogata Station to Akaike (Red Pond), then take the Fukushi bus to the starting point.

**Hiko-san** in Chikuho stands at 1200m and is one of the highest mountains in the prefecture. It is very remote, but accessible by JR. Take a train from Tagawa-Ita to Hikosan station and then a bus to trailhead itself.

**Hinoyama** in Shiimonoseki, Yamaguchi-ken, is just across the Kanmon Strait on Honshu. Hinoyama is an easy day trip from nearly anywhere in the prefecture. To get there, transfer to the Sanyo Line at Kokura or Moji in Kitakyushu and take any Shimonoseki bound

train. Then take a bus from Shimonoseki Station going to Rippuuei Mae. This can be easily combined with a visit to Chotsu or one of the mountains in Shimonoseki.

**Hiraodai Limestone Plateau** in Kitakyushu has some great hikes. The limestone caves, complete with stalagmites and underground streams, are well worth a visit. There are three caves, each one taking about 45 minutes to go through. Buses run from Kokura Station. For more information on hikes you can ask at the Kitakyushu Tourist Information Desk at Kokura Station.

## HIKING TIPS

**Watch out** for the poisonous *mamushi* (snake), which is brown with a diamond-shaped head and is found in rice fields. Most other types of snake on Kyushu are harmless. *Suzumebachi*, a large variety of Japanese bee, has been known to kill people with weak hearts.

The water running in the mountains is apparently ok to drink, but only if there are no rice fields, farms, or other habitations upstream.

**Youth hostels and camping grounds** are quite common. Look for the sign (キャンピング). Resort bungalows are also available, usually offering just a dry place with tatami and futon. For online information and a list of youth hostels in Japan, visit: [www.yjh.or.jp/](http://www.yjh.or.jp/).

### Useful words

Hiking	<i>haikingu</i>
Trail	<i>michi</i>
Summit	<i>chōjō</i>
Trailhead	<i>tozanguchi</i>
Lost	<i>michinimayō</i>
Mountain	<i>yama</i>

**Homanzan** in Fukuoka is a popular hike, with views of Fukuoka and the Chikuho plain. Start from Dazaifu Shrine and follow the signs to the trailhead. The best route is a steep climb

up an excellent, well-used path to the temple is at the top (829 m). A variety of trails are available for the route down, offering rappels down steel chains set in the rock, hidden waterfalls, secret groves, and rock climbing faces. When using the seldom-used trails, a topographical map is recommended. The nearest station is Nishitetsu Futsukaichi on the Tenjin Omuta line.

**Kaneyama** is close to Fukuoka and accessible by bus. It features thunderous waterfalls and hidden pools perfect for taking a natural dip. The mountain is right beside Sefuriyama. A ridge route is possible from Kaneyama to Sefuri, but it is difficult to find even with a topographical map.

**Sarukurayama** in Kitakyushu has some really nice hikes. There is camping there as well. If you are not interested in hiking, there is a cable car that runs up to the top, where the views are great. From Yahata Station, walk straight out for about 15 minutes to the base of the mountain.

**Shaka Dake** in Chikugo is very remote in the southeast region of the prefecture, near Yabemura. There is a lot of good walking. Horikawa buses are infrequent. You can stay at Soma no Sato, an active-type center.

## ISLANDS & BEACHES

Fukuoka-ken has a wealth of pretty islands located off its coast. Ferry services can be a little infrequent, but are easy to use. The

beach season in Japan is actually quite short, only lasting from the end of the rainy season in July to *Obon* in August, when the jellyfish hit the beaches. Foreigners have been known to swim even after *Obon*, but be careful—you might get stung!

**Ainoshima** is a fishing island in Fukuoka with one tiny store near the ferry landing. Try cycling along the Genkai cycling trail. Access via a 17-minute ferry ride from Shingumachi.

**Aishima and Umashima** are two islands just off the coast of Kokura that are popular for fishing. Aishima is the larger of the two. It is populated by more than 100 families and is currently being used as a storage depot for oil tankers. There are three or four hostels, some eating places, and a small store. The ferry terminal is in Kokura near the International Center and the same ferry goes to both islands. Aishima is also accessible from Shimonoseki.

**Nokonoshima** has a nice botanical garden with a craft village where you can watch potters transform clay and blacksmiths hammer out knives. Bicycle rentals are also available. Take the ferry from Meinohama, Fukuoka-shi to get there.

**Oshima** is the largest island in Fukuoka prefecture. There are many hostels and inns (*minshuku ryokan*). Fishing rod and bicycle rentals are available. Take the ferry from Meinohama, Fukuoka-shi.

**Shikanoshima** was a separate island from Kyushu long ago, but a sand bar (now called *Uminonakamichi*) has built up over the years. Shikanoshima has a nice beach and bicycle rental is available at People's Recreation Village. Uminonakamichi Seaside Park has lots of space, bicycle rentals, an amusement park, and Marine World. It is best to take the ferry there from either Bayside Place or Marizon in Momochi, Fukuoka-shi. It is also served by the JR Kashii line.

## BEST BEACH

**Iki** is an island belonging to Nagasaki Prefecture, but is accessible from Hakata by ferry. It is said to have the most beautiful beaches north of Okinawa. Check the ferry times before you travel as there are only four ferries a day.

## SURFING

Swells in Fukuoka are predominantly brought on by winds generated from low-pressure systems to the Northeast of the prefecture. In Japanese, these winds are called *hokuto*. Generally, waves can be counted on to come at the tail end of a bout of good strong NE winds. However, swell windows are short and usually come and go within a few days. Most of the time conditions will be in the 1 foot range, 2-3 on the best days (measured from the back). Even in the most exposed locations, waves rarely get over 4 feet.

Typhoons coming up through the Japan Sea are wind-generating beasts and can spit some good stuff this way a few days before and after it passes through the area. Typhoon season is typically July-September. However, surfing typhoons is not recommended and your school(s) will go nuts if they hear about you doing it. Jellyfish usually start becoming a nuisance in late August/September.

The peak of surfing season is November through April, and yes, it gets cold. A 5/3 millimeter wetsuit is protocol in the winter. Gloves, booties, and a hood are optional, but helpful. Japanese rubber is also expensive, but that is the price you pay for the best. Check your local surf shop for brands and sizing.

Surf Spots in Fukuoka are distinctively split between the Eastside and Westside depending on what side of the city you live on, more so because of the distance between them rather than pride. But no matter where you find yourself waxing up, show the locals respect and be friendly. Try your best to initiate conversation, let your surfing do the talking and in just a few sessions you will have made friends for life.

Newcomers to the ancient Hawaiian sport of kings will find summer is a great time to get started. The water is warm and the waves are playful. Most surf shops also give lessons in the summer. Highly recommended is "Cult Surf" headed up by Yoshinori Murayama

(Mura-san) found right on Fukuma Beach. As one of the pioneers of surfing in Fukuoka, he is a local legend and there are few who do not know him. His surf lessons are ¥3500 for two hours, but as of this year he's doing a ¥5000 BBQ package that includes the lesson, a BBQ, and beverages. Mura-san is also the guy to hook you up with anything and everything you need in terms of gear without robbing you blind. Mura-san: 090-3323-0007. Pick up and drop off at JR or Nishitetsu Fukuma Stations also available.

The local spots are definitely enough to get your fix, but get ready to travel if you crave bigger and better waves. You will find most of the spots listed below are all dumpy beachbreaks that work best slightly before and after the peak high tide.

### EASTSIDE

**Mitoma 三苫** About a 20 minute walk from the Nishitetsu Miyajidake Line, Mitoma Station. Mitoma picks up a lot of wind-swells and has an inside left section that occasionally lines up with the outside peak. More than other places, jellyfish like this beach towards the end of summer.

**Shingu 新宮** About a 10 minute walk from the Nishitetsu Miyajidake Line, Shingu Station. A right that crumbles off the southernmost tetra-pod facing the ocean. Actually holds typhoon swells okay.

**Tsurikawa 釣川** A river mouth spot that produces waves on both sides and directly in front of the tetra-pod jetties. Look for a sandbar that sometimes forms directly in front of the river mouth. It is your best chance to find a barrel on the Eastside.

**Hatsu Gyoko 波津漁港** About a 20 minute drive north of Tsurikawa, Hatsu is a semi-deep water break best in the winter and is probably one of the best waves in the prefecture on a good swell.

**Shioiri 汐入** Much like Tsurikawa in that it is a river mouth break, Shiori is different only because its location allows it to pick up more swells than other areas. Crowds can be frustrating at times.

## TIPS FOR SURFERS

Getting your gear around on public transport requires some effort, but is doable.

Get a car or a find a friend with one, preferably one who also surfs.

Head down to Miyazaki Prefecture for consistent Pacific swell. It gets pretty good down there.

Japanese surfers might seem a little standoff-ish at first, but are very friendly and interested if you make a little conversation.

### WESTSIDE

**Futamigaura 二見ヶ浦** Take the Showa bus #32 from Hakata Bus Center (¥470 one way) to Nishi-noura (about 40 minutes). About a 15minute walk from Nishi-noura. Sandy beachbreak with a cool shrine planted in the middle of the ocean.

**Nogita 野北 /Keya 芥屋** Often the site for many amateur surfing contests in the prefecture, the Keya beach area is probably one of the best known spots on the Westside

**Oguchi 大口** A 15-20 minute walk West of Futamigaura. Similar beachbreak just down the road.

**Tategami 立神** Actually in Karatsu, Saga-ken, Tategami point is a combination cobblestone/sand bottom that creates waves with a little more juice. A welcome escape if you can get out there.

### OTHER WATER SPORTS

For those who want to indulge in the various other forms of water sports, head over to Fukuma which is about half way in between

Fukuoka and Kitakyushu. Here you can enjoy everything from wakeboarding to jet skiing!

**The Marine Pro Shop** on Fukuma Beach rents jet-skis for ¥6000/30 minute lesson or two-seater jet-skis for ¥5000/30 minutes.

**Outside Fukuma Surfing & Body-boarding** is next door to Restaurant Chip at the south entrance of the road going into Fukuma Beach. Tel 092-043-5877.

**Pantai Bagus** on Fukuma Beach offers wakeboarding, body-boarding, and windsurfing, as well as good music and a snack bar. Summer hours: Sat-Sun 11am-7pm. Tel 094-042-6769.

**Seagull-Inn Windsurfing School** offers beginner windsurfing lessons. Ask for Harusan who has over 20 years of experience teaching windsurfing at Fukuma Beach. She also speaks a little English. Courses also offered in bodyboarding and scuba diving. Summer hours: Sat-Sun 10am-6pm. Tel 094-043-2661. Web: seagull-inn.co.jp.

## SNOWBOARDING

Alas, Fukuoka Prefecture is not exactly a boarder's paradise. There are two sites that have gained a respectable amount of popularity, but sadly they are both indoor artificial snow parks: **Big Air Fukuoka** (Hakata Bayside, Tel 092-263-5755) and **Snowba Kashii** (Tel 092-674-4688). The runs are quite short in length, but do offer a scratch for your midsummer boarding itch, as they are open all year round.

### IN KYUSHU

For quality boarding and skiing, you will have to set your sights outside the prefecture, but you don't necessarily have to go as far as Nagano or Hokkaido. Closest to Fukuoka on Kyushu would be **Gokase Highlands Ski Park** (Tel 0982-83-2144) in Miyazaki Prefecture, where boarders are only allowed a few days of the week, and **Tenzan Highland** (Tel 0952-58-2336) in Saga Prefecture. Both are artificial snow parks but offer pretty decent

runs. There are also a few small points of interest in and around the Kuju-Aso National Park of Oita and Kumamoto prefectures. One such place is a mere five minutes from the giant caldera on Mount Aso.

## OUTSIDE KYUSHU

In Hiroshima and Shimane prefectures there are some good slopes accessible by car or tour bus. In Hiroshima, there are a 25 ski resorts in all, one of them being **Osorakan Ski Jo** (Tel 082-628-7007), which reportedly gets the biggest dumps of natural snowfall in western Japan. There's also **Geihoku Kokusai** (Tel 082-635-0250), which has had positive reviews for the intermediate snowboarder. The only down point for these sites is that access may be difficult without a capable car. Many tour buses won't venture in that direction because of the icy ride up. Other slopes in Hiroshima include **Geihoku Kogen Osa** (Tel 082-635-0038) and **Snowwa Hiroshima Boarders Arena** (Tel 082-505-5100), which are both snowboard friendly. Boarders Arena, pretty much just a snowboarder park, is probably the most accessible as it is located 20 minutes from Hiroshima Station.

In Shimane, there are a total of seven resorts, but only a few are friendly to boarders all throughout the week. Two sites worth mentioning are **Sanbe Onsen** (Tel 085-483-2020) and **Mizuho Highlands** (Tel 085-585-1111). Mizuho is probably one of the most popular sites for Fukuoka JETs if not the most popular. Access is quite easy by car or by overnight bus. One friendly information center that JETs have stumbled upon is a small store called **SG Island** (Tel 092-713-5885) in the Daimyo area of Tenjin. To get there, walk west from Nishitetsu Tenjin train station, turn left when you reach Nishi-dori, turn right at the Porsche dealership on the side of the building, walk straight ahead to the end of the building, and turn left. The staff members are extremely helpful and friendly to foreigners, and have good English skills. They conduct a bus tour (¥7000 round trip) that leaves Saturday night and gets back Sunday evening. They have boards, boots, and wear available for rent (supply is limited so call early), all for ¥2000 or ¥1000 each

separately. Lift tickets are separate. For beginners there is a snowboard school conducted by one of the staff members, Kiji Imai, free of charge. Great crew, great fun, and they'll really take care of you throughout the tour. Taking a tour bus up there definitely beats the long drive up which can be quite tiring and confusing. Happy boarding!

## ONSEN

Ever pictured yourself bathing in a warm water natural spa, snow capped mountains in the background while small flakes fall around you, melting when they hit the water? Considered one of the keys to Japanese longevity, living in Fukuoka is the perfect opportunity to experience the age-old tradition of visiting *onsen* 温泉 (hot springs). Though best in the wintertime, the rich medicinal properties of *onsen* can be enjoyed all year round. Fukuoka is not a famous *onsen* area, but it still has plenty to offer, with some great places that will wet your appetite for the art of bathing. There are two types of places where you can bathe: *ofuro* お風呂 (bath houses) and *onsen*. *Ofuro* do not have naturally heated water; *onsen* do. *Yu* 湯 can refer to either. Most places are separated by sex. Mixed baths are called *konyoku*. In some places, you can also rent a private *yu* by the hour. This type of bath is called *kazokuyu* 家族湯.

## WHAT TO BRING

**Two towels are needed:** a large bath towel to dry yourself off with, and a small towel used to clean yourself and cover up your private parts when walking from the changing area to the shower area.

**Soap and shampoo** are provided at most places, but if you have any allergies or preferences you can bring your own.

**Drink for afterwards** The water is very hot and can be dehydrating.

## DOS & DON'Ts

**No visible tattoos** when you walk into the establishment. Many Japanese still associate body art with *yakuza* (Japanese mafia). If

your tattoos are not covered up before you undress, you may be denied entry.

**Washing yourself** before you get into the baths is a must. However, on cold winter days when you are freezing and all you want to do is get in and warm up, just pour a few pails of water over your body before you get in. Once you have warmed up, you can then use the soap and shampoo to clean yourself. Make sure all the soap and bubbles are washed off your body before you get back into the bath.

**No swimwear or towels** are allowed in the baths. While this may be very embarrassing at first, the relaxation of the baths will quickly do away with any uneasy feelings you had previously and you soon get used to it.

**No swimming**, which won't be a problem in most places as the baths are usually quite shallow.

**No food** is allowed. Some places do allow you to take drinks – even alcohol – but use your discretion as to the amount and always be sure to dispose of any rubbish you create.

## MAIN ONSEN AREAS IN FUKUOKA

**Harazuru** (Asakura-Shi 朝倉町)

**Futsukaichi** (Chikushino-Shi 筑紫野市)

**Chikugo-gawa** (Ukiha-Shi うきは市)

**Funagoya** (Setaka-Machi 瀬高町)

**Shin-Funagoya** (Chikugo-Shi 筑後市)

**Hakata** (Fukuoka-Shi 福岡市)

**Wakita** (Wakamiya-machi 若宮町)

In *onsen* areas, you will find a number of hotels and *ryokan* (Japanese inns) grouped together. Keep in mind that there are a multitude of *onsen* around the prefecture that are not a part of these areas. Talk to people around you, especially workmates,

about *onsen* and *ofuro* in your area. If you would like to make a trip to the neighboring prefectures, Oita offers Yufuin and Beppu, perhaps the most famous *onsen* towns in the whole country. Both are accessible by train; the Sonic Limited Express stops in Beppu. Kurokawa Onsen in Kumamoto is also very popular with people visiting from all parts of the country. It's a little harder to get to; by car is normally the best option, though JR does offer five-day travel packages.

## DAYTRIPPING IN THE KEN

There are many interesting places to visit within the prefecture. Check out the regional sections for more detailed and extensive listings, or see the highlights below.

**Aji sai no yu Onsen** is a beautiful *onsen* in the Sarakura mountain range in Kitakyushu. It's near the Kawachi reservoir, which has a nice walking track all the way around it. There is also a craft village within walking distance of the *onsen*. The craft village is open until 5pm, closed on Mondays. The *onsen* is open until 10pm. There is a fantastic restaurant there too. The manager speaks excellent English and loves to practice. Yahata station is the closest point to Mt. Sarakura, which has a cable car, running to the top, which has a stunning view. To get there, go to Yahata station and take the free shuttle bus running at 10.15am, 11.25, 12.35, 1.45, 3.20, 4.30, 5.40, and 6.50pm. To find the bus exit the station and turn left, it is white with a purple flower painted on the side. The ride takes 20 minutes and lets you off at the *onsen* itself. If driving, follow Route 3 into Yahata and then turn onto Route 62. This road takes you to Kawachi. Admission: ¥800. Web (Japanese): [www.hagagr.co.jp/ajisaino-yu/](http://www.hagagr.co.jp/ajisaino-yu/).

**Dazaifu** is home to Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine and the grave of Tenman-Tenjin, God of learning, among other nearby temples and historical relics, such as Komyozenji with its moss garden. There is also the chance to try *umegae mochi* (rice cakes) straight off

the griddle. Kyushu National Museum is also located very close to the Tenmangu Shrine. Access is easy via the Kyushu Expressway or by Nishitetsu train from Tenjin, with a change at Nishitetsu Futsukaichi.

**Fudo Iwa** is a fantastic sight; an unmistakable giant cylindrical rock nestled on the side of the mountain. It would be a good tourist place, but few travel guides mention its existence. This makes it hard to locate the right information. Signs to Fudo Iwa are not well maintained and there are only parking spaces for about eight cars. This would be a good place to send adventurous parents. Web: [www.02.so-net.ne.jp/~aoki/english/efudoiwa.htm](http://www.02.so-net.ne.jp/~aoki/english/efudoiwa.htm).

**Keya Oto Park** is an hour's drive from Fukuoka City along unspoiled coastline. It has beaches, a pleasant fishing village, scenic walks, and a sea cave. It is also one of a few surfing spots in the prefecture.

**Mojiko** is at the very tip of Kyushu, part of Kitakyushu-shi. The area around Mojiko station, known as Mojiko Retro 門司港レトロ, features many buildings from the turn of the 20th century, including the old Mojiko Customs Office. Heading out to Megari Park, you go underneath the Kanmon Bridge that links Kyushu and Honshu. It is possible to walk or cycle to Shimonoseki on the other side of the Kanmon Strait in Honshu via an underwater tunnel. Taking in the sights on both sides of the water is a great day out and when you are done, the Mojiko Beer and Pizza Factory will satisfy the hunger and thirst the day has given you. Take any Mojiko-bound Kagoshima line train to its final destination. Refer to the Kitakyushu regional section for more information.

**Nokonoshima Island** is located at the heart of Hakata Bay, just a few kilometers offshore. It contains a nice stretch of beach, several good walks, and a country park. See the ferry section for access information.

**Space World** is an amusement park in Kitakyushu. They boast training of NASA standards and the chance to see a lot of space-related items. Take the JR Kagoshima

line bound for Mojiko/Kokura and get off at Space World Station. A one-day entry with unlimited rides is ¥3600 for adults. Web: [www.spaceworld.co.jp/english/index.html](http://www.spaceworld.co.jp/english/index.html).

**Shikanoshima Island** is an island located at the end of a spit north of Hakata bay in Fukuoka City, and connected to the mainland by a bridge. The island is famous as the place where a golden seal stamp was found. The seal, now a national treasure, is around 2000 years old and can be seen in the Fukuoka City Museum. The island also boasts fine views of the bay and beyond. See the ferry section for access information.

**Yanagawa** in the Chikugo region has a famous boattour that is highly recommended. Cruising on a poled boat called a *danka*, you go from Nishitetsu Yanagawa station to Ohana around the old Yanagawa Castle. A guide gives commentary along the way; however, no English translation is available. The trip itself takes just over an hour and costs around ¥1500 with a return trip to your point of origin included in the price. Boats are easy to find and can be picked up at many places along the river.

## GETTING INVOLVED

This section is designed to help you get under the skin of Japan; to explore some of the arts, pop culture, history and literature; to help explain why Japan is like it is, and give you interesting things to discuss with the people you meet along the way; in short, to help you get involved! So for some recommended books, films, music and links, take a look at the following.

## BOOKS

### AUTHORS

**Murakami Haruki** Arguably Japan's most famous exported author. Fictional works

include *Norwegian Wood*, *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*, *Wild Sheep Chase*, *Dance, Dance, Dance*. Non-fiction works are *Underground* about the Sarin gas attacks on the Tokyo subway, and *After the Quake*, following the Kobe earthquake in 1995.

**Yoshimoto Banana's** most famous work is *Kitchen*, a unique look at ideas of family, love and loss. *Amrita* is also worth a read.

**Saga Junichi** *Confessions of a Yakuza* is a good historical account of early 20th century *yakuza*.

**Kanehara Hitomi** is one of the youngest authors ever to win Japan's prestigious Akutagawa prize. *Snakes and Earrings* is a tale of the Tokyo underground scene.

**Murakami Ryu** *Almost Transparent Blue* and *Coin Locker Babies* are edgy, hedonistic novels showing an unconventional portrait of Japanese youth.

### TITLES

**Angry White Pyjamas** by Robert Twigger, an Oxford poet teaching English in Tokyo decides to train with the Tokyo riot police.

**Lost Japan** by Alex Kerr is a nostalgic search for "old Japan."

**Dogs and Demons** also by Alex Kerr is an essential guide to explaining why modern Japan is the way it is.

**Wrong About Japan** by Peter Carey is a memoir-cum-travelogue exploring the roots and symbolism behind Japanese *manga* and *anime*.

**Hokkaido Highway Blues** by Will Ferguson follows an English teacher and travel writer as he chases the *sakura* (cherry blossom), hitch hiking from the southern tip of Kyushu to the Northern extremity of Hokkaido.

**Shogun** by James Clavell is a classic tale of 16<sup>th</sup> Century Japan.

**Geisha** by Liza Dalby is an autobiographical account by the only non-Japanese woman to have become a *geisha*.

**The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture** by Mark Schilling gives a detailed account of books, movies, music, comedians, and cultural scandals that have had the greatest impact in Japan.

**The Blue-eyed Salaryman** by Niall Murtagh looks at working as a foreigner in a well-known Japanese company.

**Fresh Fruits** by Shoichi Aoki is a collection of portraits documenting the growing explosion in street fashion within the suburbs of Tokyo.

## FILMS

### DIRECTORS

**Kurosawa Akira** is Japan's most famous director. Sergio Leone based his Spaghetti Western trilogy on stories by him! Anything by Kurosawa is likely to be good, but especially *7 Samurai*, *Rashomon*, *High & Low* and *Yojimbo* (The Bodyguard).

**Miyazaki Hayao** is widely regarded as the Disney of Japan, and his *anime* films are loved here and at home. Try *Mononoke Hime* (Princess), *Spirited Away*, *Howl's Moving Castle*, *Castle In The Sky*, *My Neighbour Totoro* and *Lupin*.

**Takeshi Kitano** (a.k.a. Beat) is probably the most acclaimed actor/director in Japan at the moment. Check out *Hana-Bi* (Fireworks), *Sonatine*, *Zatoichi*, *Brother* and *Dolls*.

### TITLES

**Tanpopo** (Dandelion) is about the travails of a woman who runs a noodle house all by herself.

**Always** or *San Chôme no Yuuchi* is about Showa-era Japan. A good family drama that makes you nostalgic for the "old Japan."

**Mimbo-no-onna** is a *yakuza* comedy. After its release the director mysteriously died.

**Battle Royale** Originally a book by Koushun Takami; think Quentin Tarantino does *Lord of the Flies*. This is a tale about junior high school kids living in a not-so-far-off fascist Japan, who have to compete in a death match on an island until there is only one left.

**Lost In Translation** You may have already seen it, but watch it again now that you're here in Japan to really appreciate the film's subtleties.

For more suggestions and good all-around information on Japanese film, check out <http://www.asianfilms.org/japan>.

## MUSIC

### ARTISTS

**Cornelius** (a.k.a. Oyamada Keigo) is very cool, mixing rock and electronica. *Fantasma* is the album to get.

**DJ Krush** This hip-hop and electronica DJ/producer has many strings to his bow. To find out more visit [www.mmjp.or.jp/sus/krush/](http://www.mmjp.or.jp/sus/krush/).

**Minekawa Takako** combines sensitive vocals with everything from electro-pop to folk and funk. Check out *Roomic Cube* and *Cloudy Cloud Calculator*.

**Tsujiko Noriko** is the Japanese Bjork: beautiful and ethereal.

**Hatori Miho** of Cibbo Mato fame makes up the Miho part of Smokey & Miho, playing low-tempo Brazilian jazz.

**Yokota Susumu** is a DJ who plays a blend of jazzy trance tunes. Visit his website for more information: [www.susumuyokota.org/](http://www.susumuyokota.org/).

**Number Girl** Although the band has now split up, the back catalogue of this hardcore, amazing melodic rock band from Fukuoka is well worth checking out.

**Ogre You Asshole!** is a great Tokyo guitar band.

**The Mooools** from Tokyo are cool.

To hear sample sets and find out information on club music in Japan, visit Samurai FM: [www.samurai.fm/home/](http://www.samurai.fm/home/).

### LOCAL BANDS

Local bands worth looking out for include: **The Monkeys**, **Butch**, **The Shitms**, **Hyakka** (100 Mosquitos), **Apple Fish Monday**, **The Camps**, **Cut Flowers** and **DJ For Hire**. These bands all play the clubs and live houses in Fukuoka City, so there's a good chance you'll come across fliers and adverts for their gigs.

### CLUBS & LIVE HOUSES

**Butterfly**, **Decadent Deluxe**, **Early Believers**, **Keith Flack**, **Vivre Hall** and **Voodoo Lounge** are all on Oyafuko-dori in Tenjin. **Jah Jah** hosts Time Market and is located in Nishijin.

## MOVIE TIP!

For a country with the second-largest cinema-going audience world-wide, proportionally speaking, it's surprisingly expensive to go to a movie—general admission is 1800 yen. Some cinemas offer specials on the first day of the month where movies only cost 1000 yen, as well as ladies' night (Wednesday, 1000 yen), men's night (Friday, 1000 yen), and late show discounts.

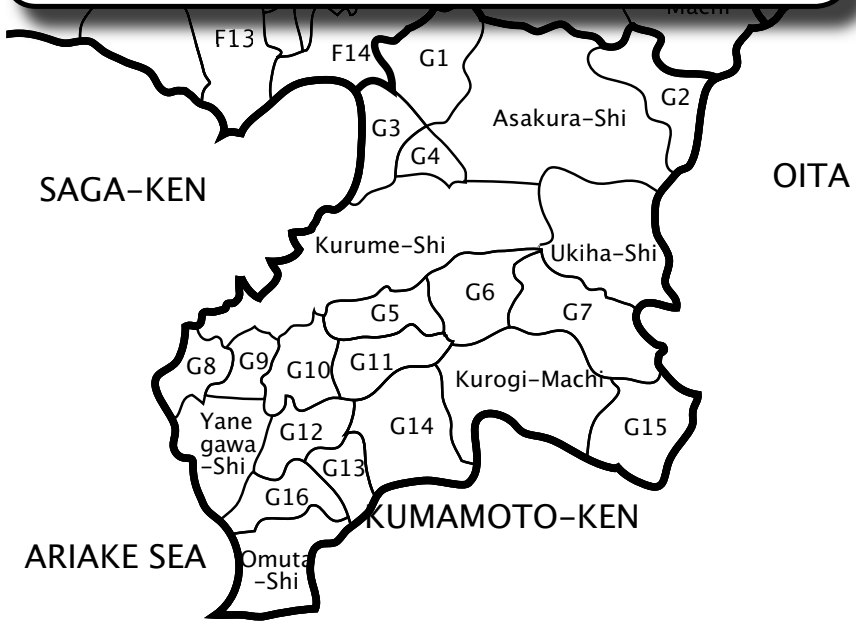
## CHIKUGO REGION 筑後





# CHIKUGO REGION 筑後

The Chikugo region is known for its agricultural production and its sake. Kurume, the third largest city in Fukuoka, boasts many shopping and dining opportunities. Its style of ramen, thick noodles topped with nori in a white broth made from pig bone, is famous throughout Japan. The region borders three other prefectures: Kumamoto, Oita, and Saga, making it easy to venture out for daytrips to other areas.



# CHIKUGO 筑後 MAP KEY

CHIKUGO 筑後					
Chikuzen-Machi	筑前町	G1	Setaka-Machi	瀬高町	G12
Toho_Mura	東峰村	G2	Yamakawa-Machi	山川町	G13
Ogori-Shi	小郡市	G3	Tachibana-Machi	立花町	G14
Tachiarai-Machi	大刀洗町	G4	Yabe-Mura	矢部村	G15
Hirokawa-Machi	広川町	G5	Takata-Machi	高田町	G16
Joyo-Machi	上陽町	G6	Asakura-Shi	朝倉市	*
Hoshino-Mura	星野村	G7	Kurume-Shi	久留米市	*
Okawa-Shi	大川市	G8	Omuta-Shi	大牟田市	*
Oki-Machi	大木町	G9	Ukiha-Shi	うきは市	*
Chikugo-Shi	筑後市	G10	Yanagawa-Shi	柳川市	*
Yame-Shi	八女市	G11			

# LIVING LIKE A LOCAL - AT THE CHIKUGO RIVER HANABI FESTIVAL:

## SHE HADN'T GOTTEN THE SKANKY YUKATA MEMO



Speaking in local dialect (Chikugo-ben) will vastly amuse any native within earshot and it's fun to pull out at social functions. Here are some examples!

Dialect	Standard Japanese	Meaning
deken でけん	dekinai できない or dame だめ	not possible, can't or useless
~bai ~ばい	~desu ~です	verb copula
~yan ~やん	~deshô ~でしょう	probably
~ken ~けん	~kara ~から	because, from
suito! すいとー!	sugoi すごい	awesome
esuka えすか	kowai こわい	scary!
Nan ba shotto? なんばしょっと?	Nani wo shimasu ka? 何をしますか?	What are you doing?
hidaruka ひだるか	onaka ga hetta! おなかがあへった!	I'm hungry!
Tottotto!/? pointing とととと		That's mine!/Is that taken?

(Used to ask or stake a claim on something.)

# ASAKURA & AROUND

## ASAKURA-SHI 朝倉市

Newly merged into Asakura, what was once called as **Amagi** is still known as the “Kyoto of Kyushu” for its many historical areas and beautiful scenery. Its Akizuki region is famed for its autumn leaves and firefly watching in the summer. Take the highway bus bound for Hita from Fukuoka and get off at Amagi Interchange. About one hour from Fukuoka. Amagi Park is home to 4000 cherry trees and is a great place in the spring for cherry blossom viewing (ohanami). By car, entering town from the west on Route 386, turn left on Route 322 and follow the signs.

**Akizuki Region** is an area filled with many historical sites. The Akizuki Castle Ruins date back to 1623. The Megane Bashi (eyeglasses bridge) is one of the most famous bridges in Japan and seems to be copied by every town, although the replicas are not as picturesque. The Akizuki Kyodokan Museum has a nice collection of local and historical art. There are also a few by Picasso and Matisse. You can take the purple bus to Akizuki from the Bus Center in downtown Amagi. By car, turn north on Route 322 from Route 386.

**Asakura** is home to the famous Three Water Wheels, and is the basis of the noh play Ayano su Zumi. This play tells the story of an old man who fell in love with a beautiful princess and begged her to meet him for a tryst. She gave him a drum and told him to beat on it by the lake at midnight. At the

appointed time, he did so, only to discover that the drum was constructed to make no sound. Despondent over the trickery, he drowned himself in the lake. To get to Asakura-machi, take the highway bus bound for Hita from Fukuoka and get off at Asakura Interchange. About one hour from Fukuoka.

**Fujii Honey Factory** is owned by a family that follows the bees' migration from Kyushu to Hokkaido every year. The factory has a small museum dedicated to apiculture (bee keeping), as well as a store featuring ten different types of honey (free samples available), natural health and beauty products, a cafe, and all things bee related. By car take Route 386 towards Hita, and take a right at Hishino, next to the Honey Factory. By bus, get off at the Hishino bus stop, cross the street, and look for the big red and white sign. 10am-6pm everyday. Tel 0946-52-2151.

**Himeko** is a small natural onsen located in the Amagi Pepot (ピーポト甘木). It is part of a community center that has places to lunch and some exercise equipment. The onsen gets crowded on the weekends. From the Amagi Train Station, take a left at the stoplight. Walk two minutes and turn right at Route 523. By car take Route 386 headed towards Fukuoka, turn right on Route 322 and follow the signs. The onsen is ¥400 if you say you live in Amagi. 10am-10pm. Closed Mon.

**Kirin Beer Farm** is the place to take a free tour through the brewery and learn everything about Kirin Beer, from the ingredients to the packaging and delivery. Perhaps the highlight of the tour is the 20-minute all-you-can-drink

tasting at the end. Big drinkers can attempt to break the record of 16 handles! Next to the brewery is a restaurant that serves lamb, steak, and all other delights that go down nicely with the freshly brewed Kirin. In the fall, Kirin opens its popular Cosmos Flower Garden to visitors. The big sign for the brewery can be seen as you approach the Amagi Interchange bus stop. From the Amagi Railbus Tachiarai station, turn left on to Route 500 and walk for five minutes. The brewery tour takes place regularly between 11:30am-9pm everyday except Monday. The restaurant is open everyday from 11:30am-9pm.

**Mori no Yu Onsen** is hidden in the mountains of Amagi. The Japanese architecture and the beautiful green scenery make Mori no Yu a great place to relax after a hard day's work. There are two types of onsen available: family style and public. The first ones you pass are family style (private onsen that can fit up to six people). You can buy it as a set with a Japanese meal. The onsen further up is a public bath. The area around the onsen is small-town picturesque, with little cafes and a quilt shop. There is a bus that takes you there and back for about ¥800. The purple “new life” Amagi bus leaves from the Amagi Railbus Center, or you can catch it at Amagi City Hall. The bus doesn't run frequently, but it allows you plenty of time for a long, relaxing bath in their splendid rotenburo, and it saves you the steep hike into the hills or the even steeper cab fare. By car, take a right at Koganchaya off Route 386 heading towards Hita. Take a right at the 7-11. Follow the road for a bit and then turn right at the green and white sign with a red arrow. The family onsen costs ¥3000-¥6000, depending on how long you stay. The public onsen is ¥600 per person. 10am-11pm. Closed every third Wednesday. Tel 0946-24-0380.

**Three Water Wheels** were constructed in the mid-18th Century. The wheels are connected together and are considered a rare sight. They are the largest scale examples in Japan of automatically rotating and pumping water wheels. Even though the wheels are there year-round, it is best to see them in the summer. By car take Route 386

towards Hita. Turn right at Hishino, next to the Honey Factory. By bus, get off at the Hishino bus stop, cross the street and follow the signs.

**Yoshino (Kobayashi) Gallery** is hard to find, but worth the search. It's a small cafe and store that offers used but spotless kimonos and cheap new yukata. The owners can sometimes be talked into lowering the price. It also has many traditional Japanese gifts and cloths, such as old obi for sale. The staff do not speak English, but they are happy to see foreigners. For a fancy meal, visit the traditional restaurant next door. By car, take Route 386 towards Hita, turn left on Hishino West and follow the brown signs. By bus, get off at the Hishino bus stop and follow the brown signs. 10am-6pm everyday. Tel 0946-52-9747.

## FESTIVALS

**Amagi Fireworks Festival** is held the second week of August on the banks of the Chikugo River.

**Bata Bata Ichi** is crowded with many visitors who ask for a bean drum called “Bata Bata.” It is said to be effective as a charm of good health and for pregnant women to have an easy delivery. Held on New Year's Day.

**Amagi's Gion Yamakasa Festival** is held July 13-15 and is a smaller version of the one held in Fukuoka, where men run around in loincloths in the early morning carrying floats that weigh almost a ton. The goal is to see which team can run a set course the fastest.

**Hinashiro Okunchi** features a lion dance, dedicated every year during the parade of deities of Hayashida Minagi Shrine. If the lion, covered completely with hemp, bites a child's head, the kid will be free from illness for one year. If the lion dances bravely, it is a prediction that the harvest will be a good one. Held October 20 and 21.

## CHIKUZEN-MACHI 筑前町

Formerly Miwa Machi and Yasu Machi.

### FESTIVALS

**Spring Pottery Festival** In Yasu, similar to the pottery festival in Toho-mura, this festival gives you the chance to meet potters and get discount earthenware. Held April 29 to May 5.

**Omunachi Shrine Okunchi** is known by locals as "Ongasama no Okunchi." Its history stretches back 700-800 years. Okudari, a parade that imitates the daimyo's procession of Akizuki Han and Urayasu no mai, which is the same parade but performed by elementary and junior high school girls, are especially worth seeing. Held in October.

**Kagashi Matsuri** features a scarecrow as its main character. This symbolizes the harvest, as agriculture is a key industry of Chikuzen-machi. Held November 2 and 3.

## HAKI-MACHI 杷木町

**Haki-machi** is the biggest onsen town in Fukuoka. Besides being dotted with small onsen, Haki is also home to the Harazuru onsen area (原鶴温泉). To get here take the highway bus bound for Hita from Fukuoka and get off at Haki Interchange. About 70 minutes from Fukuoka. Web : [www.amagi-asakura.jp/e/haki.php](http://www.amagi-asakura.jp/e/haki.php) (English).

**Harazuru** overlooks the Chikugo River and has the largest collection of hot springs found in the prefecture. A number of hotels and ryokan offer a wide variety for those wanting to try as many onsen as possible. Prices range from about ¥250-¥1000. You can stay at one of these hotels and enjoy the full Japanese experience of wearing *yukata* and eating *kaiseki*. Harazuru is also famous for cormorant fishing. This is a traditional method in which flames are used to attract

fish and specially trained birds catch them. Located on Route 386 between Amagi and Hita. By car you can take the Oita Expressway and get off at the Haki Interchange.

**Hana Noka** is just below the View Hotel Heisei on Koyama. It has public baths for ¥600 or private kazokuburo for ¥2000 an hour. In a separate building, local photographs and crafts are on sale, as well as a traditional Japanese lunch. By car it's off Route 386 towards Hita, turn left at Koyama. If you're coming by bus it's best to take a taxi from the Haki bus stop. 10am-7pm (private baths 10:30am-6pm). Closed Thursdays. Tel 0946-62-1150.

**Hotel Parens Onoya** is located in Harazuru and features an onsen set in a Japanese garden. You can also get massages or eat blueberry pie in the cafe. 11am-8pm everyday. Tel 0946-62-1120.

**View Hotel Heisei** is on the top of Koyama and has a large rock onsen with a sweeping view of the Chikugo Valley. The onsen is in a separate building from the hotel, so please pay at the hotel's front desk before going in. By car it's off Route 386 towards Hita, turn left at Koyama. If you're coming by bus it's best to take a taxi from the Haki bus stop. 10am-7pm everyday. Tel 0946-62-1150.

### FESTIVALS

**Himawari Festival** is held in the middle of September and celebrates Haki's most famous flower, the sunflower.

**Oshiroi Matsuri**, held on December 2, is a time for locals to pray for crop fertility during the upcoming year. Rice powder, made from fresh rice, is mixed with water and put on people's faces. The more the rice powder sticks to the person's face, the more luck they will have in the new year.

## TACHIARAI-MACHI 大刀洗町

This little place is known for spinach, strawberries, and its Peace Memorial Hall. Take the Nishitetsu Train to Kurume. Change to the Amagi Train. Get off at the Tachiarai stop. About 45 minutes from Fukuoka.

**Tachiarai Peace Memorial Hall** 大刀洗平和記念館 is a museum dedicated to the Japanese military aviation division, featuring artifacts and exhibits from World War II, in particular Tachiarai Airfield. The airfield was the center of military aviation strategy for Japan. It was used primarily for training, but towards the end of WWII it was used to launch combat and suicide missions. The base was destroyed in March 1945. The museum has two aircrafts on display, along with uniforms, pictures, maps, money, letters, etc.. Admission is ¥500 for adults and ¥300 for children. There are discounts for groups of 20 or more. Located at the Amagi Railbus Tachiarai station. You can transfer to the railbus at JR Kiyama station or Nishitetsu Ogori station. By car take Route 500 headed towards Amagi. It's on the left hand side at Amagi Railbus Tachiarai station. 9:30am-5pm everyday. Tel 0946-23-1227.

## TOHO-MURA 東峰村

Formerly Hoshuyama-mura and Koshiwaramura, Tôho-mura is a tranquil village famous for its rustic earthenware. It attracts pottery enthusiasts from around the world. It is also a place for those in need of a cool escape from the stifling summer heat. You can take a walk through the quiet streets and explore some of the many family-run shops. Located on Route 211, which branches off of Route 386 between Haki and Hita. It is also accessible from Iizuka. From Iizuka, take Route 211 southward heading towards Kaho, go straight through the town, and the scenic winding roads will lead you to the village.

## HITA IN OITA-KEN 日田大分県

Hita, in Oita-Ken, located just outside Fukuoka-ken, is considered the Kurume of Oita-ken. Located right on the Chikugo River, Hita has some great fireworks shows during the summer. It is also known for its hinamatsuri display. The heart of the city can be reached by taking either Route 210 or 386, where there's a movie theater and bowling alley. You can also take the Nishitetsu Highway Bus or JR train bound for Hita. For more information visit the Oita JET web site at [www.oitajets.com](http://www.oitajets.com).

## EATING & DRINKING

### CAFÉS

**Apple Land** is a bright and cheery pie shop in Asakura, and one of the few places in the area where you can relax with a good cappuccino. The made-from-scratch pies are great and the apple juice is made fresh when you order it. There is a small garden with picnic tables for al fresco dining. By car take Route 386 towards Hita, and take a right at Hishino, next to the Honey Factory. By bus, get off at the Hishino bus stop, cross the street, and look for the big red and white sign. 10am-5pm. Closed Tuesdays. Tel 0946-53-0374. ¥¥

**Chez Sagara** in Tanushimaru has more variety than the chain bakeries and uses local produce. Make sure you try the dried tomato and eggplant mini-pizzas. There is also cranberry bread and grape and kiwi jam. By car or bus, go to JR Tanushimaru Station. Head towards the hospital and turn left. It is just past the hospital on your left-hand side. 8am-6:30pm. Closed Tuesdays and the second Wednesday of the month. ¥

**Hatomame** in Asakura sells freshly baked cream puffs. The smell is enough to lure you in. The puffs are filled with a mixture of whipped cream and custard, all for less than ¥130. There is a great selection of food omiyage as well. If you decide to eat there, expect to be served tea and pickles. It is located at the crossroads of Route 386 and Route 80 in Asakura. By car, take Route 386 towards Hita. Take a left before you reach the stoplight that connects with Route 80. By bus, get off at the Hiramatsu Chūgakkōmae bus stop and walk towards Route 80. Cross the street. The bakery is on your left. 9am-7pm everyday except for the second and fourth Sunday of every month. Tel 0946-52-0036.

### JAPANESE

**Tachiban** makes fresh soba and udon to order in a clean and friendly restaurant in Asakura. By car, it's on the right-hand side across from the Asakura 7-Eleven. By bus, get off at the Hiramatsu Chūgakkōmae bus stop and head towards the Ringer Hut. Tachiban is on your left-hand side. 11am-7pm everyday. Tel 0946-52-1645. ¥

**Vega** is right next to the Powerhouse Gym in Ukiha. It's a small Southwestern American-themed cafe that serves Japanese curry. The staff are happy to have foreigners visit. Off Route 80 close to the Mini Stop. 11:30am-8pm. Closed Mon. ¥

### OTHER

**Apple Pie-ya** is a hilltop restaurant in Asakura with lots of apple-based foods, such as curry, tea, and of course, pie. A set with all these things costs ¥1200. Make sure you check out the adjoining two-story gift shop featuring handicrafts from the region. By car, take Route 386 towards Hita, and take a left on Yamada. The restaurant is on the top of the hill on your right-hand side. By bus, get off at the Hishino bus stop and walk towards Hita. Take a left on Yamada. 10am-6pm everyday. Tel 0946-52-0913. ¥

**Ibiza** is a funky little place in Amagi with smoked sausage, well priced pizzas, and the occasional flamenco show. Make sure you try out their sherry selection. They are

happy to accommodate vegetarians. Try the tsubaki for a new and refreshing twist on beer. Straight across from the Amagi Bus Center (off Route 386 towards Hita), next to Fukuoka Bank. 10am-11pm everyday. Tel 0946-22-4877. ¥¥

**Koraïen** is a nice Korean restaurant in Chikuzen that serves good *yakiniku* and *bibinba*. Get a bus from Asakura Gaido on the Nishitetsu Tenjin-Ōmuta line towards Amagi or Haki (bus route #40 or 41). Get off at Shin Machi stop in Miwa Machi, on Route 386 (30 minutes from Asakura Gaido). The restaurant is on Route 386, out the front, and to the left of the elementary school gates. 11:30am-10pm everyday. Closed the second and fourth Thursday. Tel 0946-23-0666. ¥¥

**Ramen Ajisen** is a Taiwanese restaurant in Chikuzen with decent ramen and Chinese dishes. Get a bus from Asakura Gaido on the Nishitetsu Tenjin-Ōmuta line towards Amagi or Haki (#40 or 41). Get off at Kurita bus stop in Miwa Machi, on Route 386 (just under 30 minutes from Asakura Gaido). Walk back a short distance, and you will see a big yellow sign outside, with the restaurant's name written in red in Japanese. Opposite the Andou car-yards. 11am-3pm and 5-10pm. Closed Mon (except when Monday is a public holiday). Tel 0946-24-1913. ¥¥

**San Marco** in Asakura serves pizza and pasta, and features a wall of photos including former ALTs. All entrees can be made vegetarian. Take out pizza is available. Dinner set of salad, drink, individual pizza, and dessert costs only ¥1000. By car, heading towards Hita on Route 386, turn right on Route 80. San Marco is on the right-hand side, next to the telephone booth in the small shopping center, across from the Acoop. By bus, get off at the Hiramatsu Chūgakkōmae bus stop and walk one minute to where Route 80 meets Route 386. Turn right. 12-10pm everyday. Tel 0946-52-3120. ¥¥

## SHOPPING

### GROCERY STORES

**Asakura Farmers' Market** offers vegetables and fruits as well as breads, kimchi, and mochi made by the townspeople. The prices are cheaper than the supermarkets and the food is fresher. The staff is friendly and always willing to identify exactly what type of produce you are buying. Outside are maps and information about special events in Asakura-gun. By car, going towards Hita, on your right hand side across from the Asakura 7-Eleven. By bus, get off at the Hiramatsu Chūgakkōmae bus stop and head towards the Ringer Hut. The market is on your left-hand side. 9am-5pm Tue, Thu, and weekends.

**Green Co-op** is a small store in Amagi that specializes in organic food. Look for the happy yellow squirrel in green overalls with a one-toothed smile. They also deliver to local schools. Ask your teachers if you are interested in having Green Co-op deliver to you. On the same road as Jusco, by the fire station.

**Sunny** also has a good selection of foreign food, with an entire aisle dedicated to Mexican and Southeast Asian food. In Ukiha, off Route 80 before you hit Route 210, just past the Powerhouse Gym. 10am-9pm.

### SHOPPING COMPLEXES

**Jusco** is located near the Amagi Interchange. It is host to Mister Donut and McDonald's, and has a good selection of foreign food, especially, chips, cookies, and cheese. With a Uniqlo, Best Denki, and Daiso ¥100 store just down the street, this area is by far the most popular place to shop for clothes, shoes, and groceries. It also has a collection of ATMs from all the local banks. These are located near the far right of the building. Jusco is open 9am-11pm everyday (until 10pm in the winter). Other shops open 10am-9pm everyday.

**Local Nurseries** in Asakura offer cheap plants and flowers. If you take a right past the Three Water Wheels and walk down a small path (marked by signs for Yoshino Gallery), you will see two nurseries on your

left. Both have cheap flowers and vegetables ready for planting. Big plants are four for ¥500 and small plants and flowers are eight for ¥500. Neither one of them is staffed, so bring correct change for the payment box. Both are open dawn to dusk everyday.

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Grass soccer fields** along the banks of the Chikugo River can be rented for a nominal fee. Tel 0943-77-7828. Web: [www.town.ukiha.fukuoka.jp/e/Index.html](http://www.town.ukiha.fukuoka.jp/e/Index.html) (English).

**B and G Swimming Pool** is the place to go if you want to escape the summer heat or want a warm place to exercise in the winter. Five minutes before every hour, everyone must vacate the pool for a rest. It costs ¥260 to swim and they will lend you a swim cap for free if you do not have one. In Amagi, off Route 386. By car, head towards Hita and turn left at Koganchaya (across from the Hirai bentō shop). Go past the first signal. The pool is on your left-hand side. By bus, get off at the Koganchaya stop. Head towards the Koganchaya signal. Turn right. You can swim from 6-9pm Tue-Fri, 10am-5:30pm on weekends. Summer hours vary, so call ahead. Tel 0946-24-9500.

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

**Libraries** in Amagi, Asakura, and Ukiha have English books, movies, and CDs that you can rent for free.

**Amagi Nishitetsu Travel's** Eguchi-san speaks wonderful English. He is a great resource for domestic travel and tries to get you the cheapest price possible. You can book all types of tickets and get some great discount packages from him. When he has time, he will personally deliver your ticket to your school. Tel 0946-22-4517.

# KURUME & AROUND

## KURUME-SHI 久留米市

Formerly a castle town settled over 400-years ago, Kurume hosts the Chikugo River Fireworks Festival, western Japan's largest *hanabi* festival. The hometown of Bridgestone Tires, Kurume is the biggest city in central Chikugo. A bustling city at any time of the day, Kurume provides a small reprieve from the quiet countryside. Take either the JR or Nishitetsu train to get to Kurume. About 30 minutes from Fukuoka.

**Bairinji Temple** 梅林寺 is the largest zen training temple in Kyushu. In the outer garden there are 500 plum trees, which bloom from late February to early March. A 15-minute walk from the JR Kurume Station.

**Fukuoka Science Museum** focuses on the cosmos, but also has displays about computers and the environment. There is a planetarium, and on sunny Saturdays, you can use the telescope at 1:30 pm to see sunspots and Venus. Located in the Kurume Chuo Park by the bird center. By bus, get off at Kagakukan-mae. By car, from the Nishitetsu Station, take Route 322 towards Hita and follow the signs (turn at the Sunday Sun). Admission is ¥430. 9:30am-4:30pm Tue-Fri, 9:30am-5pm on Sundays, holidays, and the second and fourth Saturday of the month. Closed Mondays and the last Tuesday of the month.

**Ishibashi Cultural Center**, established by Bridgestone money (*ishi* means stone and *hashi* means bridge), is a three-building complex comprised of the Ishibashi Art Museum, Kurume Central Library, and

Kurume Cultural Hall. The buildings are laced together by a meandering park at the rear of the complex. It has a lovely fountain and flower garden. It is located off Route 322 by the Mister Donut and Sports Garden. From the Nishitetsu Station, take a bus from Stop 3 to the Bunka Center Mae bus stop. By car, take Route 322 towards Hita. The Center is on your right hand side.

**Ishibashi Art Museum** has some splendid masterpieces and includes notable pieces by three leading Japanese artists: Shigeru Aoki, Hanjiro Sakamoto, and Harue Koga, whose works are on permanent display. Open April-September from 9:30am-5:30pm, October-March 9:30am-5pm. Closed New Year's Day. Admission is ¥500.

**Kurume Central Library** flanks the Ishibashi Art Museum's east side. 10am-6pm. Closed Mon. Until 8pm every Thursday (except for the fourth Thursday of the month).

**Kurume Cultural Hall** primarily hosts regional musical festivals and competitions between schools in the region, but also presents professional-level fare when orchestras are on the Japan-leg of their world tours.

**Korasan Mountain** is home to the Azalea Forest Park, with 62 000 azaleas in bloom in April and May. Views from the summit give a full view of the Chikugo Plains. There are also man-made mountain trails and camping sites on the mountain. Kora Taisha Temple is on the west peak and is the highest-ranking shrine in the Chikugo region. This temple is dedicated to the God of longevity. Take Route 332 towards Hita. Veer onto Route 800. The entrance is on your left.

**Kurume Castle Ruins** are all that remains of the 16<sup>th</sup> century castle, but the foundations, castle walls, stonewalls, and the inner moat are preserved. Now, Sasayama Shrine and Arima Memorial Museum are located on this site. Off Route 46, close to Kurume University Hospital.

**Kurume Civic Hall** sits next to the *shiyakusho* and is the city's other main cultural venue in addition to the Ishibashi Cultural Center. Programs range from lectures and concerts to full-dress traditional Japanese theater arts. While the building is architecturally frumpy next to its tall and lean neighbor, the hall's interior and lobby is a model of modernity and comfort.

**Kusano-machi** quietly sits at the base of the Minō mountain range, surviving both WWII bombing raids and insensitive urban development. Kurume's oldest buildings are in Kusano-machi, which are mapped on walking tour signs that pepper the neighborhood but are only in Japanese. The residents of Edo-period homes open their houses for public tours in the fall. Hossin park, famous for its sakura orchard and 100-year old wild cherry tree, rests on the remains of Kusano's castle. Chikugo-Kusano is the area's stop on the JR Kyudai line.

**Narita San Temple** has the 62 meter high Jibo Kannon Statue (the Goddess of Mercy) in its precincts. This white statue can be seen from far away. You can climb up the steps in the statue to catch a view of Kurume and even Mt. Unzen. It's a place where victims of illness or misfortune may pass their discomfort onto the deified Buddha. It's also said to provide protection from evil as well as blessings for traffic safety, business success, family well-being, salvation of aborted babies, and the gratification of all wishes. After descending the statue, there is a gallery of Buddhist and stone art. There is an occasional Buddhist hell exhibit. Beside the statue is an Indian Buddhist building with Sri Lankan paintings telling the story of Buddha. Don't forget to check out the tire Godzilla at the nearby pre-school. Admission is ¥500. Off Route 3 or you can take a bus from Nishitetsu Kurume. 9am-5pm everyday.

**Rokkakudo** is a small promenade used for various events from *ramen* festivals to concerts. It also sponsors various international events to promote friendship between the Japanese and foreigners. It has several restaurants located on three floors. It is located on the Nibangai, which is Location 12 on the map.

**Tera-machi Streets** 寺町 is an area containing 17 temples. They were once built for the defense of the Kurume Castle. Also in this area are the graves of prominent locals such as Hikokuro Takayama (a loyal patriot), Den Inoue (founder of the Kurume cotton textiles), and Harue Koga (artist). The Henshoin Temple Garden in this area has a tea ceremony room in the garden. Off Route 3 headed towards Fukuoka.

**Yanagisaka Sone Wax Tree Avenue** is designated as a prefectural natural asset. Two-hundred wax trees are lined up along the street for a kilometer, leading to the Eishoji temple, which is dedicated to the healing Buddha and dates its establishment to 680 AD. At the end of November the wax trees' leaves turn deep dark red. It is also a beautiful place to visit on a spring afternoon. Off Route 210 headed towards Hita, at the foot of the mountains. Information center Tel 0942-47-4410.

## FESTIVALS

As the dates of some festivals change each year, please call 0942-31-1717, the Kurume Festival Committee, for exact dates.

**Chikugo River Fireworks** 筑後川花火大会 is held on the banks of the Chikugo River near Suitengu Shrine. It is the largest festival of its kind in western Japan, and is truly a spectacular display (up to 2½ hours long). Held in August or early September.

**Chikugo River Rape Blossom Festival** celebrates the early blooming season of the *nanohana* (rape blossoms). Held the last Sunday in March.

**Kurume Tsutsuji Festival** is an exhibition and sale of Kurume azaleas and garden plants. Held April 5-May 5.

**Kurume Water Festival** 久留米の水の祭典 starts at 1pm featuring a parade of local acts that runs along Meiji-dori. At sundown, Kurume's signature dance, the *soroban odori*, or abacus dance begins, in which over 10 000 people participate. Both parades run down Meiji-dori. August 3-5.

**Suitengu Grand Spring Festival** and Suitengu Grand Summer Festival. According to the Shinto faith, these festivals are celebrated to guard children, prevent drowning, and ease childbirth. Held May 5-7 and August 5-7, respectively.

**Kusano Furu Festival** alternates yearly on the second weekend of September between the Wakamiya Hachimongu and Susan shrines in Kusano-machi. The parade features the imaginary Shi Shi Mai figure, which nibbles the tops of children's heads to bestow them with good luck. The relics used for the festivals are on view at the Yamabenomichi Bunka Kan, an early 1900s hospital relocated from the area around Hanabatake station, which was recently designated a national heritage building.

**Setsubun Matsuri** are held at shrines throughout Japan on the first day of Spring on the lunar calendar. Shrine priests throw *azuki* beans to send away demons and their attending bad luck and to invite good luck into the New Year. Part of the tradition is to eat the same number of beans as your age. You can catch this traditional spring rite at Hiyoshi Shrine in central Kurume and Naritasa Shrine on Route 3.

**Tamataregu Shrine's Oniyo Fire Festival** features men wearing loincloths wielding huge torches. This festival is one of three major fire festivals in Japan. Held at Daizenji on the night of January 7.

**Yakitori Festival** celebrates Kurume's obsession with *yakitori* as the city has the most *yakitori* restaurants per capita in Japan. *Yakitori* places from all over Kyushu converge on Rokkakudo backed by live entertainment. Held on September 4 every year because 9-4 is pronounced "ku-shi," and *kushi* means "things on skewers."

## CHIKUGO-SHI 筑後市

Chikugo is famous for Japanese *shōchū*, *nashi*, and *ayu*, and is an agricultural/industrial city known for the Funagoya Hot Spring (船小屋温泉). Take the JR to Hainuzuka 羽犬家 Station for about 40 minutes from Hakata.

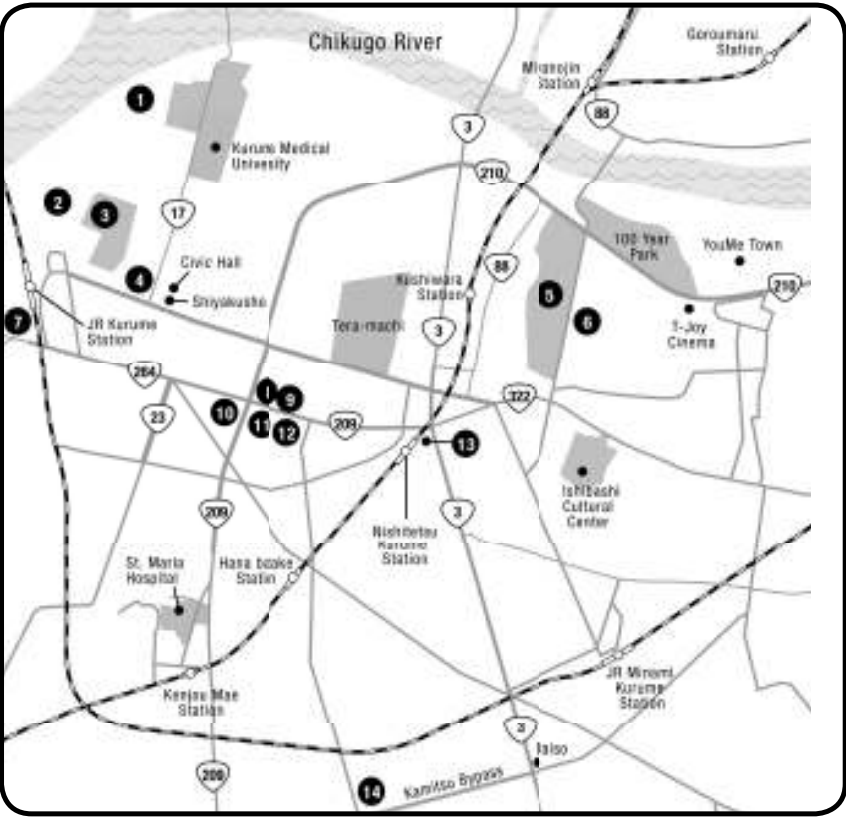
**Funagoya Hot Spring** 船小屋温泉 is on the Yabe River. The spring water here is noted for having the richest carbonic acid content in Japan, and soaking in it is believed to be good for heart diseases and anemia. Drinking the water is beneficial for gastrointestinal disorders. This area is especially beautiful in the spring when the cherry blossoms are in bloom, and the lush green leaves of the camphor trees grow thick. The Yabe River is also open for swimming in the summertime. In the area you can also go camping, play golf, and ride horses. From JR Hainuzuka station, take Nishitetsu bus #50 headed towards Funagoya and get off at Shin-Funagoya bus stop. By car, take Route 209 south toward Setaka-machi, until you see the big red bridge across the Yabe River. The *onsen* is on the east side of 209. 10am-4pm in the winter, and 10am-6pm in the summer. ¥500 for adults. Tel 0942-52-3322.

### FESTIVALS

**Kumano Shrine Tsuina Festival** is a fire festival in which young men dressed in traditional festival clothes carry three large flaming torches as they race around the shrine grounds with shouts of "*Wasshoi! Wasshoi! Wasshoi!*" (Japanese for "Heave ho! Heave ho!") Held on January 5.

**Rope-hauling Obon Festival** features children up to the age of 13 who smear black soot from cooking stoves over their bodies and tie straw capes around their waists, hauling rope that is 30 cm in diameter and 30 meters long, while parading down the street of Chikugo. The purpose of the festival is to pull ancestors out of Hell with the ropes so they can visit their families for Obon.

# KURUME 久留米



## KURUME 久留米 MAP KEY

Kurume Castle Ruins	①	Fukuoka Ginko Kurume	⑧
Bairiniji Temple	②	Central Post Office	⑨
Meizen Senior High School	③	Daiei	⑩
Dr. Honma	④	Izutsuya	⑪
Fukuoka Science Museum	⑤	Ichibangai & Nibangai	⑫
Kurume Sports Complex	⑥	Iwataya	⑬
Suitegu Shrine	⑦	Goodya	⑭

## HOSHINO-MURA 星野村

This small village next door to Oita-ken is proud of its beauty and its tea. To reach Hoshino by car take highway 442 east through Yame-shi, and turn left onto 52 at the Mini-Stop, then go through Jōyō-machi. The only bus that goes to Hoshino is Horikawa bus, and leaves from Fukushima Bus Stop in Yame-shi.

**Ocha no Bunkakan** お茶の文化館 the Tea Culture Center, is the place to go if you want to know about tea. For ¥600 you can be served high quality ocha and shown the intricacies of temperature and brewing. You can even eat the tea leaves with soy sauce! It's a great place for souvenirs, too. Located on Ikeno-yama. Turn right at the stop light beside the Hoshino Village Office and go up the mountain. Follow the signs in Japanese. Tel 0943-52-3003.

**Hoshi no Bunkakan** 星の文化館 the Star Culture Center, is the name of this cool observatory. A look through the telescope will cost you ¥300. Turn right at the stop light beside the Hoshino Village Office and go up the mountain. Follow the signs in Japanese. Tel 0943-52-3000.

## JOJIMA-MACHI 城島町

Now part of Kurume-shi, this town is renowned for its sake factory and stone devil heads. It is featured in the children's story, *Kobodashi*, a tale about how fish came to be in the Chikugo River. Take the Nishitetsu train to Daizenji 大善寺 Station. Take the #15 bus headed to Ōkawa 大川. About one hour from Fukuoka.

**Aoki no Yu** is a natural sulfur onsen located in the middle of the rice fields. Though smelly, the water is renowned for its healing properties and skin benefits. Admission is

¥500. From the Jōjima Town Hall, located at the intersection of Route 701 and Route 83, go west on Route 701, then take a left on Route 702. Take a left at the Takatsu stoplight, right after the junior high. Take a left at the next light onto Route 711. 10am-10pm. Closed Wed. Tel 0942-62-1427.

**Holzmarkt** is a place dedicated to all things wood related. The place is divided into different sections, including a store dedicated to woodcrafts, toys, and furniture. It offers wood-working and knife-carving schools. At the end of April and November, Holzmarkt has a wood festival. From the back of the Hasta La Vista Supermarket on Route 710, head towards the river. Turn right and then right again at the first slope. Holzmarkt is where the log cabins are. Weekdays 10am-6pm. Weekends and holidays 10am-6:30pm. Closed Wed. Tel 0942-62-3355.

**Jōjima Planetarium** is located at the Jōjima Community Center. Explore the wonders of the night sky every Saturday from 7pm-8:30 pm. Admission is free. The center also has hula, tai chi, cooking, pottery, and other classes. From the Jōjima Town Hall, located at the intersection of Route 701 and Route 83, follow Route 133 to the north. Before the ramp that leads you to the river, veer right. Take a right at the stop sign. Tel 0942-62-6226.

**Sake Factories** You can pick up a map at the Town Hall (off Route 710 or go straight from the Shinmachi Bus Stop). Every February 11, the town holds a sake festival, where you can sample the local brews to your heart's delight.

### FESTIVALS

**Sakagura Matsuri** Every February 11, Jōjima-machi celebrates its *sake*. All the *sake* factories are open to give you free tastes of the town's most famous product. There are also performances and more *sake* in the town hall parking lot.

## KUROGI-MACHI 黒木町

Take the Nishitetsu train to Kurume Station. From there take a bus to Yame, and then change buses to get to Kurogi-machi. About two hours from Fukuoka. By car, take Route 442 east through Yame-shi.

### FESTIVALS

**Kurogi Town Festival** dates back to 1773 and features 44 men who purify themselves in the river. They then take part in a feudal lord parade wearing gorgeous costumes and are accompanied by 14- and 15-year-old boys playing Japanese drums. Held December 8.

**Giant Wisteria Festival** 大藤祭り The symbol of Kurogi-machi is the 600-year-old Giant Wisteria; a purple flower that hangs in bunches over a meter from its trees. Held in late April through early May, the Giant Wisteria Flower festival attracts big crowds and media from within the prefecture and around the country! For more information about festivals in Kurogi, please call 0943-42-0153.

## OGORI-SHI 小郡市

This town has a small but growing international community and offers low-cost Japanese classes on Wednesdays. To get there, take the Nishitetsu train to Ogori Station, about 30 minutes from Fukuoka. Please call 0942-72-2111 for more information.

## OKAWA-SHI 大川市

Take the Nishitetsu train to Yanagawa Station. From there, take the #31 bus to

Ōkawa. About one hour from Fukuoka. By car, take Route 442 west through Chikugoshi and Ōki-machi.

**Furogu Shrine** was established 1800 years ago. The current shrine dates back to 1560. The temple grounds hold several Fukuoka Prefecture assets including an 1800-year-old camphor tree and a seated wooden figure of the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy. It's a nice place to visit at any time of the year, but it is full of activity during festival time.

**Masao Koga Memorial Museum** is where you can learn more about Masao Koga, a very famous enka composer and developer of the Koga Melody. You can even visit the house in which he was born. When you walk around town, especially alongside the canal system, you'll be able to hear some of his music. Every November 18 there is a festival celebrating all things Koga. ¥300 entrance fee. By the Kaneki bus stop. On Route 208 heading towards Saga, the museum is on your left-hand side, by the Matsueda Furniture Company. Look for a blue post with gold lettering. 9:30am-5pm. Closed Mon.

**Shokaikyo Bridge** is the largest moveable iron bridge in western Asia. This cultural asset was constructed as part of the Saga Line of the former National Railway. With the closure of the railway, the bridge was opened as a walking path and is now a popular place to view the sunset. The view of this bridge at sunset has come to symbolize the city of Ōkawa.

**Takahashi Family Home & Vinegar Factory** is in the same neighborhood as the Yoshihara Family Residence. It also dates back to the Edo Period. Tours of the vinegar works are available and there is a two-day festival here in mid-April, when you can see the interior of the home. Entrance is free. 9am-5pm. Closed Mon. Tel 0944-86-8333.

**Yoshihara Family Residence** is a beautifully constructed samurai house dating back to 1825. Some of the beams and floorboards are from large camphor trees and run the length of the large rooms. There are also elaborate wooden carvings above the doors and other nice interior features. By car, on

Route 208 heading towards Saga, turn left at the signs for Wakatsu Port. Go about four minutes and turn left at Higogashi (look for a small blue sign with a red arrow). Entrance is free. 9am-5pm. Closed Mon. Tel 0944-86-8333.

## FESTIVALS

**Furogu Shrine Festival** On the eve of the shrine's annual three-day festival, about 500 local men and boys run in next to nothing for three kilometers through town with bamboo torches aflame. In addition to the regular turnout, keep an eye out for the *yabusame* (Horseback Archery) on the final day. It is one of the three major festivals in the Chikugo Region. Held in early February.

**Kinoka Marathon**, "the scent of trees," is a ten-kilometer run looping around Onojima Island, plus a five-kilometer course. The event is held at the end of February; registration costs ¥3000 and closes around mid-January. Application forms can be obtained by contacting Ōkawa City Hall. On the day of the race, there is an optional shuttle bus running from Yanagawa Station to the race site, and all participants receive lunch and a chance to be in the prize drawing after the race. Tel 0944-87-2101.

**Mokkosai**, a three-day festival in early October, is Ōkawa's largest annual event. Don't miss the super- mukade races. Teams of five, often in ridiculous costumes, stand on top of two parallel flat wooden legs and attempt to race as quickly as possible across 50 meters of lawn and asphalt. Contact Ōkawa City Hall for more information. Tel 0944-87-6919.

## OKI-MACHI 大木町

Take the Nishitetsu train to Hatchomuta Station 八長牟田. About one hour from Fukuoka. Or by car, take Route 442 west from Chikugo-shi.

**AQUAS アクアス** From Hatchomuta Station on the Nishitetsu line heading for Ōmuta, you

will see a UFO-shaped building. This facility has an onsen, walking pool, restaurant, massages, and serves local delicacies. The next building over is the gym, complete with a weight room and aerobics floor. Both the spa and the onsen building offer free stretch classes. Onsen: 10am-10pm. Closed Mon. Gym: Tue, Fri, Sun, and holidays from 10am-6pm, Wed & Thu 1-9:30pm, and Sat 10am-9:30pm. Both the gym and the onsen/pool cost ¥500 each.

## TANUSHIMARU-MACHI 田主丸市

Now part of Kurume-shi, this town is proud of its *kappa* heritage and even has a *kappa* face on the front of its train station. The town is also well-known for its mountains, wine, and fruits. To get here, take the JR train to Kurume and switch to the yellow-colored train. Get off at Tanushimaru Station. About one hour from Fukuoka.

**Benitome Brewery**, located near the Kyoho Winery, is a *shōchū* brewery with dozens of kinds of *shōchū* to sample. Most of their *shōchū* is made from sesame seeds. 10am-5pm everyday. Closed Christmas and New Year's. Tel 0943-72-2382.

**Kyoho Winery** has a tasting room showcasing wines from the region and benitome, their famous *shōchū*. The grounds also feature *shōchū*, a wine cellar and a park. Join in on the grape crushing during the New Wine Festival in the first week of September. By car it's south of Route 210. Turn towards Tanushimaru station at Higashi-machi (東町) intersection, go right at the station, turn left to cross the railroad tracks, go past the hospital, and head straight into the mountains. Turn left at the second stoplight. Go about five minutes and the winery is on your right. By train, go to the Tanushimaru Station to get a walking map. 9am-5pm everyday. Tel 0943-72-2382.

**Tanushimaru JR Station** offers a local history museum as well as many maps of events to see and walking tours that include

visiting sake breweries and onsen. You can borrow bikes for free from the tourist association. Hours vary.

Hang-gliding is a popular activity in Tanushimaru. On weekends, people take to the air to sail over the Chikugo River. Please call Moriyama Takemi at 0926-26-5471 if you are interested.

## UKIHA-SHI うきは市

Formerly Yoshii-machi and Ukiha-machi, Ukiha-shi is famous for its white-washed walls and traditional architecture. The walls were built over a hundred years ago as a measure against fires, and there are about 100 still standing today. While admiring these traditional structures you can also check out a number of antique stores and artwork collections. Take the JR train to Kurume and switch to the yellow-colored train. Get off at Chikugo-Yoshii Station. About one hour from Fukuoka.

**Chikugo Noodle-Making Village**. Would you like to create your very own noodles? Occupying part of a local factory, Chikugo Noodle-Making Village offers the unique opportunity to taste different kinds of noodles from udon to ramen and experience soba making. The experience costs ¥2625 per person and takes about an hour. From the JR Chikugo Yoshii Station go right, then right again to cross the tracks, walk about 200-300 meters, and it's located on the right hand side. Everyday 9am-5pm. Tel 0943-75-2151.

**Enjū no Yu** is also known as the Purple House. Located at the foothills of Ukiha, this hot stone bath is a combination of sauna and steam bath. For ¥500 an hour, you lie down for 15 minutes, take a break, and go back in again (don't worry, the staff will tell you when you should rest and for how long). Bring your own pajamas and small and large towels, or rent it all with a drink for ¥1000. The bath is recommended for its great health benefits and is comfortable even for those who do not like traditional saunas. By

car take Route 210 towards Hita and turn right at the Naka-machi signal. Go straight until you hit Enjūji (Route 151). Turn left and it is on your left-hand side. By bus, get off at the Naka-machi stop. From there, follow the car directions. 10am-11pm everyday. Tel 0943-75-5671.

**Water World Ofuru** (not in any way associated with the Kevin Costner film) is good if you would like to be wet and naked with strangers inside rather than outside for a change. You can enjoy four different temperature baths, as well as an herb bath, sauna, and salt scrub room, complete with TV. There is also an outside bath featuring a waterfall. The women's side even has a waterslide. Make sure to cover up visible tattoos when you walk in. Admission is ¥520, and an extra ¥250 if you need to borrow a towel and toiletries. By car, on Route 210 going east towards Hita, turn left onto Route 80. Water World is right next to Mir Pachinko and across from the Sunny supermarket. By bus, get off at the Hirokuchi bus stop and walk towards Direx. Turn left on Route 80. 11am-11pm everyday.

## FESTIVALS

**Hinamatsuri** the Dolls Festival, is held annually February 15 to April 3. During the festival many of the shops and restaurants display traditional dolls to celebrate. At any of these places you can get a map to all other locations that have public doll displays. It is said that Yoshii rivals Yanagawa for the best Hinamatsuri in Fukuoka Prefecture.

## YAME-SHI 八女市

Yame's green tea is highly regarded and the city is easy to visit. Take the Nishitetsu train to Kurume. Change to a bus, such as lines 31 or 33, headed to Yame. About one and a half hours from Fukuoka.

**Bengalamura** is a public bath located near



Yabe River. There is a small beer factory inside the Bengalamura restaurant. Take the Horikawa bus from Fukushima station. Tel 0943-24-3339.

**Iwatoyamakofun** is the ancient tomb of Iwai who governed Chikugo in the 600s. This designated historical site is the largest tomb on Kyushu. If you're coming from Kurume on Route 3, turn right at the traffic light at the Fukushima High School intersection.

**Tea Plantations Pilot Farm** From the top of this hill you will have the best view of the tea that Yame is famous for growing. Coming from Kurume on Route 3, turn left at Yoshida traffic lights. Then turn left again at the Yame Daichaen sign and go up the small winding road to the top of the hill.

**Traditional Arts Museum** has an exhibition of Yame products (handmade paper, green tea, and paper lanterns). From Fukushima Station walk south about ten minutes and turn right when you see the sign for Kooritsu Byouin.

## FESTIVALS

**Furosato** is a festival with a spectacular toro doll performance. This doll is used in performing a special ceremony and is the only puppet that can be operated from the side of the stage. During Furosato you can also stroll around town looking at the dolls in houses, shrines, and museums, especially the doll museum/factory off Route 442 towards Joyo town. Held in March.

**Yoroningyo** has a puppet show and many stalls selling food, drinks, and agricultural products. On the stage is a performance by the Dento Kogeikan that is different every year. It is the predecessor to noh theatre. Held September 21 or 22. For more information about Yame festivals, please call 0943-23-1111.

# EATING & DRINKING

## CAFÉS

**Chi No Shio 地の塩** (look for the red sign with blue writing) celebrates "Day of the Dead" everyday. Enter the door marked "Devil's Lounge" and you'll find that this skull & skeleton themed izakaya is clean, comfortable, and actually not very creepy. All manner of drinks are served, and the house salad and mentaiko omelet are featured treats. In Kurume, directly behind Daiei (where you can hear the thumpin' of a neighboring club, Popov). 6pm-12am. Closed Sun. ¥¥

Grand Chef specializes in all that is sugar and light. The patisserie owner trained in Europe and won the crown of "TV Champion" on the popular Japanese TV trivia/skills show. Give the shop's tiramisu as a present to your supervisor and you're sure to score big points. Established in 1982, it's across from the Mc Donald's by Saint Maria's Hospital in Kurume. 9am-9pm. Tel 0942-32-3295. ¥

**La Paix** in Jōjima has fresh baked croissants and fabulous chocolate mousse. From Route 710 in Jōjima, take a right at the Nakamachi light (by the post office). La Paix is on your left-hand side in the yellow building. 10am-6pm. Closed Tue. ¥

**Juran** The family that owns this restaurant in Tanushimaru makes everything that is inside, including the wood carvings and fantastic jams and pies (apple, strawberry, blueberry, and kiwi, to name a few). A great place for teatime. By car, take Route 210 east towards Hita, and turn right at Kamitanushimaru intersection (across from the Lawson). Turn left at the T-intersection. Juran is on your left-hand side. By bus, get off at Kamitanushimaru. Follow the car directions. 10am-6pm. Closed Tue. Tel 0943-72-4528. ¥¥

**Mori no le** is a small and funky cafe located in the hills of Ukiha. It often features live music, enhanced by the back wall that looks

like two huge gramophones. It is also one of the few places in the area that uses organic produce. They proudly serve organic rice coffee. A bit difficult to find, but the drive up is lovely. By car, off Route 210 from Hita, take a right at the Ukiha Town Hall. Follow the road to the Ukiha Country Club. Follow the road by the reservoir and the white and blue signs. By bus, take a taxi from the Ukiha Bus Center. 11am-9pm. Closed Wed. Tel 0943-77-7693. ¥¥¥

**Oily's Cafe** sports good coffee drinks and teas, hip music, access to free internet and a pool table, a full bar, food, and the occasional "live show" in a modern, spacious atmosphere in Kurume. From Nishitetsu, go out the rear exit, away from Ichibangai. There is the Nishitetsu drop-off area and a small parking lot and turn around area. Leave the parking lot the way the cars do. Cross the street and go through one stoplight. Keep going in that direction. There's a smallish street; keep going. The cafe is half a block from the station. 11am-12am. ¥¥

**San Ki Rai Cafe and Gallery** converted an Edo period home located in Kurume's Kusano-machi into a welcoming respite from modern life. Spring is the best time to visit to enjoy its view of pastoral Japan as well as teas and cakes. Kusano-machi 471-1. Tel 0942-47-3355. ¥¥

**Sho** is a bakery in Ukiha that makes western-tasting cakes, including made-to-order birthday cakes. By car or bus, on Route 210 towards Hita, Sho is on the right-hand side by the Ukiha Palace Pachinko. 9am-8pm. Closed Wed. Tel 0943-77-7616. ¥

Meiji-dori, the Kamitsu Bypass and Route 3 in Kurume are veritable restaurant rows.

## JAPANESE

**Fukugawa** is a good two-story restaurant in Ogori-shi serving fusion Japanese and other foreign cuisine. There's always a set of specials displayed to make ordering easy, and a good selection of wine to accompany your meal. Turn right out of the Nishitetsu Ogori station, and take the first sharp left (at Taiko yakitori). It's about 50 yards down on the left, on the 2F and 3F. 6-11pm. Tel

0942-72-4656. ¥¥

**Hiwakaya** is a *chanko nabe* restaurant, one of the nicest places to eat in Chikugo-shi. Great food, and the owner loves to hang out and drink with foreigners! There's nothing like eating live squid! Across the street from JR Hainuzuka station in Chikugo-shi, with a big neon sumo wrestler on a big orange and green building. 11am-2pm and 5-10pm. Tel 0942-53-3005. Lunch ¥, dinner ¥¥¥.

**Nobu** is a *gaijin* hangout in Ogori-shi. Owner and Chef Yoichi create unique haute cuisine dishes mixing Japanese cuisine with foreign spices, sauces, and ingredients. Fabulous decor. In front of the Nishitetsu Ogori station on the right-hand side of the street. Across from Tom's video, on the 2F. 6pm-12am. Closed Sun. Tel 0942-73-1685. ¥¥

**Quatre Saisons** in Kurume-shi is a restaurant dedicated to seasonal cooking with organic ingredients. Some dishes have interesting twists, like a vegetable curry with purple sweet potatoes. In Kurume, just after the Tagawanishi stoplight on your right-hand side. Look for the building with purple signs. Everyday 11am-3pm, 5-10pm. Tel 0942-65-1846. ¥¥

**Stamina Taro スタミナ太郎** offers a *nomihodai/nomihodai-tabehodai* for 90 minutes for only ¥1200. Located in Kurume on the Kamitsu bypass by Van Electronics. 11:30am-11:30 pm. Tel 0942-21-2948. ¥¥

**Showatei 昭和亭** is a great *ramen* restaurant in Kurume, located on the Kamitsu bypass. Everyday 11am-2am. Tel 0942-22-6886. ¥

**Sumo Chaya Daichi 相撲茶屋大一** serves *chanko nabe*. The restaurant's seating encircles a *sumo* wrestler figure in a *sumo* ring and you can feed the fish swimming in the indoor moat from your dinner table. Their *chanko nabe* is good and fun for groups. Off Route 3, near the Karihara bus stop before the Kamitsu bypass. 11am-10 pm. Closed New Years. Tel 0942-22-0102. ¥¥

**Tachibana Sushi Restaurant** in Yame is a bit expensive, but is well known for its delicious sushi. Located on the same road as the Dento Kogeikan in Yame. Turn left at the sign for Yame Koritsu Byouin. Go past the Kurashikan supermarket and the next traffic light, and it'll be on the corner. Baba 345-1. Tel 0943-24-3645. ¥¥¥

**Taiko** is a good and reasonably priced *yakitori* restaurant in Ogori. Its specialties are *matsu nabe* and *tonsoku*. Turn right out of the Nishitetsu Ogori station and walk 30 meters to the place with all the red lanterns. 5pm-12am. Closed Mon. Tel 0942-73-4654. ¥¥

**Tempudon** has the best tasting *ramen* in Chikugo-shi. Go south on Route 209, heading towards Setaka-machi. Pass the Yame High School and the Route 209 intersection, and it's just a little further up on your right, next to a bookshop. 1198-2 Shimokitajima. 11am-2pm and 4-9pm. Tel 0942-52-3754. ¥

**Tontei とん亭** is a good *tonkatsu* restaurant in Ogori-shi that also has *donburi*, curry dishes, and *teishoku*. Located in Ogori on Route 500, about 30 meters from City Hall. Closed Tue. Tel 0942-72-9117. ¥¥

Yatai You don't have to go all the way to Fukuoka to enjoy street stall eating. After 5pm, Kurume's Meiji-dori lights up with stalls offering *yakitori* and Kurume's famous *ramen*. ¥

### ASIAN (NON-JAPANESE)

**Bishnu** is a delicious Indian restaurant in Kurume where the owner is happy to talk to foreigners. If you call ahead, they can accommodate groups up to 20 people. They can even create menus to your taste and budget for special events. There are two locations. One is located on the second floor of Rokkakudo. The other is near Youme Town. Take a bus from Nishitetsu Kurume station headed for Youme Town and get off one stop after Hyakunen-koen. Everyday 11am-10pm. Tel 0942-37-0369. ¥¥¥

**Gett** (Umikijin) 月人 in Kurume has nice cuisine from Thailand and Bali. The house

specialty is *ayamu goren*, a fried chicken dish from Bali. They also have a good selection of *sashimi* and other dishes including fried bananas. There are great original cocktails as well. Try the Helicopter (*hericopu*). Covered wall-to-wall with decorations and carvings from Indonesia and India, this restaurant has a cozy atmosphere and friendly staff. In Kurume, turn right at the end of Nibangai. Cross Meiji-dori, and take the first left. Look for a green sign on your right. Everyday 6pm-3am. Tel 0942-31-3393. ¥¥

**Sanmon Gardens** is an excellent Korean restaurant in Jōjima-machi with a beautiful interior. The lunch set for ¥1000 features kimchi and a traditional Korean hot pot. Dinner is much pricier, but the wonderful food and atmosphere makes it worth it. A great date place. From the Jōjima Town Hall, go left. Turn left at the Naratsu stoplight (702) and you'll see it on your left. 11:30am-3pm for lunch, 5:30-9:30pm for dinner. Closed Tue. Tel 0942-62-6456. ¥¥

**Tandoori** is a decent Indian restaurant in Kurume that hosts salsa parties twice a month. Behind the Nishitetsu Kurume Bus Center. Tel 0942-32-3018. 6pm-10pm, Tue, Wed, Thu, and Sun. ¥¥¥

### EUROPEAN

**Adachi** in Ōkawa-shi is a true coffee place dedicated to selling coffee beans and accessories from around the world. The owner, Adachi, speaks some English and Italian. He will pour you a free cup if you have the time to chat. Off Route 208 towards Saga by Takagi Hospital in Ōkawa. By the Nakabaru bus stop. 12-8pm. Closed Tue. Tel 0944-86-5863. ¥

**El Barco**, located in Kurume-shi, is a great place for fantastic Spanish food. The chef studied in Spain for three years, which shows in his fabulous and authentic paella. They have excellent sangria with fresh oranges that nicely accompanies tapas and other Spanish dishes. 126-8 Kushihara-machi. Tel 0942-31-2032. ¥¥¥

**Nakamura** is a cafe that serves Western-style food, next to Holtzmarkt in Jōjima-machi. It has the distinction of being one of

the few completely non-smoking restaurants in Japan. It has a good selection of curries and dessert. From the back of the Hasta La Vista Supermarket on Route 710 head towards the river. Turn right and then right again at the first slope. 11:30am-2:30pm for lunch, 5-10pm for dinner. Closed Sun. Tel 0942-42-4555. ¥¥

**Neima** is a small bakery and restaurant in Kurume. Its specialty is a popular 5-course fondue set. Reservations are recommended for larger parties. 11am-11pm. Closed Wed. 5-9 Hotarugawa-machi. Tel 0942-39-6224. ¥¥

**Paris Montsouris** in Ōkawa-shi is a bakery/cafe with a Japanese owner who studied pastry making in France. Located in Ōkawa by the Takahashi and Yoshihara homes. By car, on the 208 heading towards Saga, turn left at the signs for Wakatsu Port. Go about 4 minutes and turn left at Higogashi (look for a small blue sign with a red arrow). 10am-8pm Sun-Thu, 10am-10pm Fri & Sat. Closed Tue. Tel 0944-87-6919. ¥¥

**Woody's** is a western cafe-style restaurant in Chikugo-shi, Route 209, just north of the Yame High School intersection. They have good coffee, desserts, and entrée dishes. 245-1 Izumi. 10am-10pm. Closed Thu. Tel 0942-53-0724. ¥

### OTHER

**Tony's Cafe** in Ukiha is one of the most authentic Mexican restaurants in the prefecture. Jose and his wife Sachiyo will serve up all your favorite Mexican dishes as well as imported beers and wines. The menu is constantly changing and Jose can alter the spiciness. It is also available for parties. Please call ahead for parties of more than five people. They both speak English so there will be no language problems. By car, take Route 210 towards Hita and turn right at Hon-machi. Tony's is on your left-hand side, across from the temple. Park behind the restaurant. By bus, get off at the Naka-machi stop. Backtrack to Hon-machi and turn left. Tel 0943-76-4076. ¥¥

### BARS

**Café au Lait** is a relaxing bar in Ogori-shi with comfortable sofas that occasionally hosts live music. Turn right out of the Nishitetsu Ogori station and walk 10 meters. It's on the left, behind a bakery. ¥

**Cool Club Bar** has the best cocktails in Ogori-shi and good, reasonably priced food as well (salads and French fries are ¥100). Two rooms plus a karaoke room in the back. Turn right out of the Nishitetsu Ogori station, and take the first sharp left (at Taiko yakitori). It's about 30 meters down on the left, on the 2F (next to Fukugawa). Usually open until 5am. ¥

**Eternity** is a small bar near the Nishitetsu Kurume station that opened in April 2004. Beers and cocktails are ¥500. A bit too small for parties of more than five people. Exit Nishitetsu Kurume station and cross the street. Turn left down that street and Eternity is on your right side, on the 3F. Look for the blinking Zima sign. 8pm-3am everyday. Tel 090-6898-9902. ¥

**Flamingo Cafe** is a small restaurant and bar that serves Nasi Goren, Spicy Tacos, Locomoco, and more. It's usually empty, but can be reserved for parties and includes karaoke. Across the street from Iwataya in Kurume Nishitetsu Station. Look for a small flower shop at the bottom of a building and take the elevator to the 5th floor. 68-4 Tenjin-machi. Tel 0942-34-0439. ¥¥

**Fools** is a small bar in Chikugo-shi with a cozy atmosphere and every kind of drink you can imagine. Reasonably priced and located on a side street near JR Hainuzuka station. Walking straight out of Hainuzuka Station, turn left after about 200 meters. Located in a building with several other "snacks" on the right-hand side. Tel 0942-53-9787. ¥¥

**Pub Elements** offers an incredible view of Kurume, free karaoke with drinks, dance music, and an accommodating, young, all-male staff. A two-hour *nomihodai* costs ¥3500 accompanied by bar snacks. Go west on Meiji Dori from Nishitetsu Station, past Rokkakudo, and after the Family Mart

on the right. The next building on the right is the one you're after. Take the elevator to the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. Opens at 10pm. Closed Sun. ¥¥¥¥

**Twilight** serves Kurume's young Japanese clientele. Drinks and food are excellent, the *hotate sashimi* salad is highly recommended, and their staff are very welcoming. Go towards Ichibangai. Pass ARKTZ and Taiou Pachinko on your left, and turn left at the corner where there is a 7-Eleven on your right. Go through the stoplight, and it is the first place on the left past the car park. ¥¥

**Ye Olde Little Monkey** in Kurume is a British-style bar that serves Guinness on draught and is worth a look on weekends. Fun if you go in a group. Exit behind the Nishitetsu Kurume station and go past the taxi stands. Cross the street and Ye Olde Little Monkey is on the right-hand side. 33-2 Tenjin. Tel 0942-35-0108. ¥¥

**Merville** in Ogori is a tiny pub with electronic dart machines. Score 500 points (men) or 450 points (ladies) and you get a free set of darts. In front of the Nishitetsu Ogori station, walk half a kilometer and it's on your right in the big pink building that has the broken "Carrot Lounge" neon sign. On the 2F. ¥¥

## NIGHTCLUBS

**ARKTZ** "Live House" (which translates to 'concerts' in English), has DJs, food and drinks. Clean but not elegant, Arktz is Kurume's biggest hangout for the 20s and early 30s crowd. The staff is nice, drinks are good and its food offerings of pasta, salads and meat dishes are excellent. Drinks regularly cost ¥500, but *osusume* drinks drop to ¥300 on some weekdays. Leave Nishitetsu's main entrance and cross the street towards McDonald's. At the corner turn right toward Ichibangai, and it is a few places down on the left, 2F. If you pass Taiyô Pachinko Parlor, you've gone too far. ¥¥

**Buzz** has "Live Shows," DJs, and friendly staff accompanying the intimate atmosphere. The venue is small, but presents a great variety of music. Drinks are ¥500 but no food is served. In Kurume, go down Ichibangai and

Nibangai, and keep going. Pass the Daiei building on the left and turn left at the rear corner of the building. Go down the alley until you are almost at the other corner. It's on the left. ¥¥

# SHOPPING

## SHOPPING COMPLEXES

**Don Quixote**, a discount store popular with the younger set, is filled to the brim with novelties, sundries, clothing, house wares, and groceries, including a selection of non-Japanese Asian-food imports. A good place to go to for Halloween costumes. Less than 10 minutes by bicycle from Youme Town off Route 210 by the bowling alley. Look for the bowling pin and a penguin wearing a crown. Open 10am-2am daily, until 4am on Sat and holidays.

**Ichibangai 一番街** and **Nibangai 二番街** is a two-part shopping arcade that runs parallel to Meiji-dori and opens in front of Nishitetsu station and ends in front of the Daiei, a grocery and department store. While strolling through these shopping arcades you'll find a bit of everything: pachinko parlors, cafes, western and Japanese clothing boutiques, import stores, and the high-end department store *Izutsuya*, which sells a small stock of import foods and English language books on its top floor. Little Monroe also sells imported snacks. (see map, #12)

**Like a Rolling Stone** in Ôkawa-shi boasts an eclectic mix of used goods, with a large selection of both men's and women's clothes and jewelry, including tie-dyed thermals. It is also a good resource for larger-sizes of shoes. Worth a visit if only for what's written on the side of the wall. Off Route 208 heading towards Saga on your right-hand side, by ¥100 Sushi. From the Ôkawa Koiyo Mae bus stop, go straight. 11am-9pm everyday. Tel 0944-88-2355.

**Kurume Jibasan** spotlights the city's local specialties and industries and is great for Christmas gifts. The jibasan usually houses industrial and trade shows, but

on the 11th every month, you can pick up regional products such as Kurume-kasuri textiles, sake, basketry, and pottery as well as Moonstar sneakers. Where route 210 meets the Kurume Interchange, turn south before you cross under the Kyushu Expressway. The center is parallel to the expressway. Higashi Aikawa 5-8-5 tel (0942)44-3700.

**Kamitsu Bypass** connects Routes 3 and 209. Many ALTs live in this area. Along this bypass are various restaurants and shops. Some of the better restaurants are Gusto, Ninnikuya (if you love garlic), Chinese Kitchen, kaitensushi, MK's (for *shabushabu*), Onion (for meatloaf), and a variety of *yakiniku* shops. Notable shops include Uniqlo, Video America (video and CD/tape rentals), Shoe Plaza (with a selection of larger sizes), GooDay (household items at cheap prices. Also check out Hand-make, a competitor on Route 3), and Best Denki. Bus #52 and #55 from Nishitetsu Kurume station will take you to Kamitsu Bypass.

**Nishitetsu Kurume Station** recently finished remodeling. The newly brightened interior now boasts an Emax, Muji, a bookstore, a music outlet and a stationery store, as well as an array of boutique shopping. Behind the Mister Donut and Haagen-Daz, old ladies sell fruits and vegetables. Through the rear of the station, Iwataya and Rivil provides the shopping set with glamour and style. The florist by the Rivil plays Western videos. For those on tight budgets, ¥100 store Daiso has a large selection. It shares a large basement space with a Hawaiian goods and sporting goods store underneath Iwataya. Just outside the station's immediate environs, one can find also a hobby and toy store, an outdoor equipment shop, and a place for musical instruments & sheet music.

**Youme Town**, located in Kurume-shi, Ôkawa-shi, and Yame-shi, offers everything the homesick mall rat could ever want, whether it's trendy suits, *shôchû* and sake or camping gear and cosmetics. The anchor stores are Toys R Us, Sports Authority, and Nitori ニトリ, a home furnishings store that

makes deliveries, as well as a Starbucks and a Kinokuniya bookstore with a large English language section. In Kurume, "Dream Town" sits on Route 210, far from the mercantile center around the train/bus station, but you can catch the reduced-fare blue shuttle bus that leaves regularly from Nishitetsu Kurume station. In Yame-shi, it is located on Route 15, north of Route 442. 9am-10:30pm.

## OTHER

**Kinokuniya** in Kurume's Youme Town and the bookstore on the 6th floor of the Iwataya in the Ichibangai both have a selection of books in English. Between Nishitetsu Kurume and Meiji-dori, there are many department stores, including Emax, Iwataya, Izutsuya, and Rivil. In Kurume, you can find various electronic stores, including Best Denki, Applied, and Yamada Denki off of Route 210, Route 3 and the Kamitsu Bypass.

# ENTERTAINMENT

## CINEMAS

**Cinema 10 T-Joy** is a new entertainment complex that houses a video arcade, a stone spa, a Doutour coffee bar, and a beauty salon along with a 10-screen theater. The cinema costs ¥1800, ¥1000 on the first of the month and Wednesdays. The stone spa is ¥1800 for 90 minutes. Located off Route 210, by Youme Town. For movies and show times, call 0942-41-6250 or visit [www.t-joy.net](http://www.t-joy.net).

**Ichibangai Central 一番街セントラル** is a small four-screen theater hidden behind the AM/PM reminiscent of the fine arts or independent movies houses back home, but also shows first-run western movies. It is on your right, after crossing the first alley coming from the station. Tickets are ¥1800 for general admission, and ¥1000 on the first of the month and Wed. For movies and show times, call 0942-32-5266.

## KARAOKE

**Gailbar** and America are two great places in Kurume to get your karaoke fix. Gailbar gives you a loaf of French bread on Saturday nights and America never closes. America is

located on the Kamitsu Bypass by the Melon Dome.

**Magic World Karaoke** has a freaky-faced entrance. The prices are higher than most (depending on the time you go, up to ¥1500 an hour) but you are paying for the atmosphere. In Kurume's Ichibangai. Tel 0942-31-2525.

#### OTHER

**Raiku Ichi Raku Za 210** 楽市楽座 (with a big red neon sign) is located in Kurume, next to the Don Quixote off the 210. For ¥3000, you can bowl, karaoke, and eat to your karaoke heart's content. Open 10am-12am.

**Sports Garden** in Kurume has a pool, video games, table tennis, table hockey, ice-skating, ten-pin bowling and batting cages. It is over the road from the Ishibashi Cultural Center. 10am-2am Sun-Thu; 10 am-4pm Fri, Sat, and holidays. Tel 0942-37-2541.

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Esta** has an indoor pool and tennis facilities, and offers a variety of exercise classes. Located in Kurume, it can be hard to find in the far side of the Sunny shopping plaza even though the sign is visible from Route 3. Memberships start at ¥7000. Suwanomachi.

**Dance Dreamer**, run by a former *tazakakura* performer, features mainly jazz dance classes but she also offers ballet classes, tap, and a Jazz dance and vocals package in Kurume. Children and teens generally populate the group classes but private lessons may be arranged. On the 3rd floor next to the Green Hotel. 18-48 Hiyoshimachi Tel 0942-37-2121

**Karate** lessons in Chikugo-shi are offered by Marty Yamaguchi who teaches *karate* classes six days a week. The *dojo* is about 3 minutes walk from Ye Olde *Jutaku*. He has

taught himself English by watching movies and loves to talk about the cinema. Everyone is welcome to join his classes, no matter your level. One month for unlimited classes is ¥5000. Tel/Fax 0942-53-5638. Email: marty@mx2.tiki.ne.jp

**Kurume Aikido Dojo** splits its practice workout between Suwa J.H.S (Tue, Wed) and Jonan J.H.S. (Thu, Sat). ¥3000/month for unlimited attendance to the classes. Tel 0942-43-5264.

**Kurume Buyoukan** in Kurume-shi offers classes in *kendō* and *iaidō*. Tsuetsugusensei's classes are foreigner-friendly but all in Japanese. It is located behind Family Mart a few blocks north of Hanabatake Station. Nishi-machi 1509 Ban-chi. Tel 090-1515-5413. Web: www16.ocn.ne.jp/~buyoukan/

**Nova Sports Center** is a gym that's conveniently located behind Kurume Nishitetsu station and features an indoor pool, weight machines, and several types of workout classes. Memberships start at ¥6000. 154 Tenjin-machi. Tel 0942-35-8282.

**Powerhouse Gym** in Ukiha is a small gym with lots of weights and some cardio machines with televisions. It is popular with JETs in the area. You can pay ¥1000 for one visit or join for around ¥3000 a month if you buy a membership. On your first visit, you receive a training program from one of the staff members. The gym includes showering facilities. Off Route 80, between Routes 386 and 210, behind Vega Curry Café. 10am-8pm on weekdays, 10am-6pm on weekends. Closed Thu. Tel 0943-73-0397.

**Tenjin Dance School** focuses on competition and social dance, but hip-hop, modern and latin dance classes are also offered. The studio's relaxed but intense atmosphere will definitely keep you dancing. From Kurume Nishitetsu Station exit at the rear and turn right. Follow the Nishitetsu line west, go another block after the 7-Eleven. Then cross over a small stream and it's on your left. 639-1-2F Higashi-machi. Tel 0942-36-0797

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

#### INTERNET CAFÉS

**Chat** is by the McDonald's facing the Nishitetsu Kurume Station. Hours vary.

**E-Palette** e-パレット is at the end of the Kamitsu Bypass in Kurume. It is open 24 hours and features an all-you-can drink bar. One hour is ¥480, four hours is ¥1000. Bring your own disk because they do not have Word or Excel on the computers. By the big red glasses. Tel 0942-22-1201.

**Kurume Shiyakusho** 久留米市役所 is a high-rise glass and concrete wing that improves the city's boxy and utilitarian skyline, earning it the nickname "the Star Trek Building." After making a withdrawal at the Fukuoka Bank branch in the basement, visit the cafe at the top floor and take in an eagle-eye view of the entire city in comfort. You can't miss the futuristic white & glass building as you exit the JR Kurume station, which is less than ten minutes away on foot. Off Route 46. It has free Internet stations available upstairs on the mezzanine level.

**Planet** is a 24-hour Internet cafe off the Kamitsu Bypass in Kurume, in the Van complex. There are different spaces you can rent, including one with two couches that can accommodate six people. You can choose between just using a computer or spaces that have televisions and DVD players. There is also an all-you-can-drink cappuccino/espresso machine. For Internet only, one hour is ¥400. Tel 0942-51-2266.

#### LEGAL

**Kurume International Information Salon** hosts consultations for foreigners by administrative lawyers covering immigration, international marriage, naturalization, family registration, alien registration, permanent residence, tax, and social insurance at the Kurume International Exchange Association in the Kurume Civic Hall on 3rd Saturday of

each month from 10am-3pm with a lunch break between [12-1pm]. English, Chinese, and Korean interpreters are on hand, and confidentiality is guaranteed. Appointments are not necessary.

**Kurume Bicycle Impound Lot** lies under the J.R. tracks next to Bairinji temple. It's a good place to start if your bicycle was stolen or was swept up in an illegal bicycle-parking raid. You should expect to pay about ¥1500 for bike bail.

#### LIBRARY

Kurume Central Library contains an English language section with a good selection of international literature, and subscribes to a few English language magazines. The library screens classic English and other foreign language films (subtitled in Japanese) every first and second Sunday at 2pm. 10am-6pm. Closed Mon. Until 8pm every Thursday (except for the fourth Thursday of the month).

#### OTHER

**Glare** is a hair salon and game center/hangout in Ukiha run by Takanori, the brother-in-law of Jose from Tony's Cafe. This is a great place to get a haircut while watching Japanese MTV. Takanori speaks a bit of English and displays photographs from his world travels throughout the store. He and his friends love to swap travel tips and stories with foreigners. By car, take Route 210 headed towards Hita. Glare is on your left, just before the Mobil gas station. By bus, get off at Yoshii-machi Eki-mae and backtrack to Glare. Haircuts from around ¥4000, cut and color ¥8000. It's a good idea to call ahead for an appointment as Takanori closes the shop for a couple of days now and then to travel overseas. 10am-8pm everyday. Tel 0943-76-5700.

**Kurume University Hospital** in Kurume is the best place to find an English speaking doctor. See the Kurume Health Section for more information. Open 24 hours, but it is best to call at 9am to schedule an appointment. Tel 0942-35-3311.

**Kurume International Exchange Association** is hard to find on the first floor and under the stairs of the Kurume Civic Hall. The association facilitates homestays and student exchanges and maintains the Kurume International Information Salon, which is useful as a clearinghouse for pamphlets and has some foreign books, newspapers and magazines. It's easily confused with the Kurume Bureau of Tourism, which is nearby. The association's website is available in four languages and provides a good summary of the city's services and cultural sites. Kurume International Exchange Association Civic Hall 1F, 16-1 Jonan-machi, Kurume, Tel 0942-31-3211. Fax 0942-31-3210. Web [www.kiea-azalea.jp](http://www.kiea-azalea.jp).

**L-Pia** houses a variety of Kurume's cultural and social organizations, such as The Lifelong Education Center & The Equality Rights for Men & Women Promotion Center, in an architecturally open and graceful building with a stunning vaulting atrium. L-Pia has a library, a free internet terminal, and occasionally presents chamber music offerings and some English movie screenings. 1830-6 Suwano-machi.

### JAPANESE LESSONS

**Ogori-shi** offers low-cost Japanese classes on Wednesdays. Please call 0942-72-2111 for more information.

**YWCA** of Fukuoka offers language courses in Kurume that specifically train for the Japanese Proficiency Language Tests. The fall course costs about ¥40 000 and begins in September. Call 092-741-9251 for more information.

### TRAVEL AGENTS

**Kurume H.I.S. Travel's** manager, Miyagisan, speaks English clearly, as does another staff member who specializes in domestic travel. Walk west along Meiji-dori towards the central post office from Nishitetsu Kurume Station and the office is to your left. Tel 0942-39-5585.

## HEALTH

**Dr. Honma** in Kurume runs a small, by-appointment internal medicine clinic near the *shiyakusho*, and speaks English well. His brother heads the pediatric clinic a block away on the same street and takes walk-in appointments, but his English is less fluent. 14-3 Jonan machi. Tel 0942-33-3421.

**Jogo Dental Clinic** in Kurume has staff that speaks English. 1-4-37 Daizenji. 9am-12:30pm and 2-7pm. Closed Sun. Tel 0942-26-1555.

**Kurume University Hospital** is the biggest hospital in the region. All departments have at least one English speaker, usually trained overseas, including gynecologists. If you need certain types of birth control, they can refer you to a clinic. Note that the exams in Japan are somewhat different than those in Western countries. Some of the front desk staff also speak English. Located a few blocks back from the Kurume City Hall off Route 46. Consultation hours vary, but most start at 9am. Tel 0942-35-3311.

**Saint Mary's Hospital** in Kurume is where ALTs are often taken to be treated for ailments as it's near the municipal Board of Education. On Route 3 by the NTT Building. 422 Tsubukuhonmachi. Tel 0942-35-3322.

**Sato Dental Clinic** in Ukiha (Yoshii-machi) has an English-speaking dentist. Mon-Fri 9am-12.45pm and 2:30-6:30pm. Tel 0943-75-5888.

**Yano Clinic** in Tanushimaru has at least one English-speaking doctor. Mon-Fri, 8:30am-12pm and 2-5pm. Sat 9am-12.45pm. Tel 0943-72-2464.

## OMUTA-SHI & AROUND

### OMUTA-SHI 大牟田市

Despite how its name translates, Omuta is in fact more than just a big, muddy rice field. It is famous for the Japanese sweet *kusagi manju*. Its symbol is the dragon, which it celebrates with a festival in the summer. The Nishitetsu train starts/terminates in Omuta. The JR train runs from the same station. At the Nishitetsu side, you can rent bikes for ¥500 from 5am-11pm. On the JR side, there is a tourist information plaza open from 9am-5pm. About 90 minutes from Hakata.

**Mitsui Greenland** It is actually located in Kumamoto Prefecture but is only a short distance by train from Omuta. The park features more than 70 rides including roller coasters and one of the world's biggest ferris wheel at 105 meters. Attractions include nine different swimming pools in the summer and ice-skating in the winter. Weekends feature special shows, like Super Ultraman, Masked Rider, and Wan Wan Kingdom, a performance by dogs. Take the JR train ten minutes south to Arao station, then a taxi to the park. Buses also run periodically between the park and Omuta station. Weekdays 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat, Sun, and holidays until 6pm. Adult admission is ¥1600 or a Super Free Pass gets you unlimited rides for ¥3600. There is an extra charge to attend the weekend shows. Tel 0968-66-1112. Web: [www.greenland.co.jp/eng](http://www.greenland.co.jp/eng).

**Omuta City Zoo** has animals from four continents. It also features a ferris wheel. It is a 15-minute walk from Omuta Station in Showa-machi, next to Enmei-koen, a

large public park. By car, take Route 208 towards Kumamoto and follow the signs to Enmei Park. March-October, 9:30am-5pm; November-February, 9:30am-4:30pm. Closed every second and fourth Monday, and December 29 through January 2. Entrance is ¥360.

**Omuta Cultural Hall** houses a small planetarium. Little English is available. Located in Shiranui-machi, a five-minute walk south from Omuta station. Closed Mon.

**Refresh Omuta** リフレッシュ大牟田 is a large community center that has an onsen and campgrounds for rent. Camping equipment is also available for rental. It also has a climbing wall that you can use for free on Wednesdays from 7-9pm (volunteers make sure that you climb safely). Bring your own equipment. If you join the group of volunteers, you can use the wall for free on select weekends. Take Route 208 to Route 10 and follow the English signs. Tel 0944-58-7777.

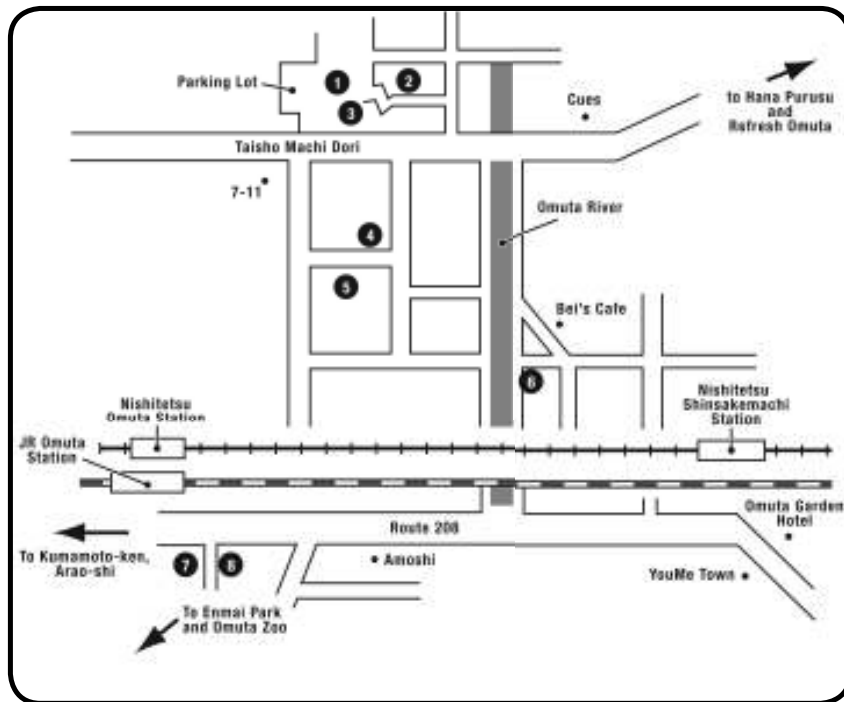
### FESTIVALS

**Daijyama** is an annual summer festival complete with parades, fireworks, drunken debauchery in the streets, and fire-breathing dragons. On Saturday at 7pm the parade of dragon floats begins. On Sunday, around 10 000 people gather in the streets to perform traditional Japanese dances for about 90 minutes. Held the last weekend in July around Shinsakae-machi. Call 0944-52-2212 for more information.

### SETAKA-MACHI 瀬高町

Take the JR train to Sekata Station. About

# OMUTA 大牟田



## OMUTA 大牟田 MAP KEY

Backstreet	①	Amoshi	*
Cinema Central	②	Bei's Cafe	*
Afro	③	Cues	*
New York Karaoke	④	Hana Puruasus	*
Spice Cotton	⑤	Youme Town	*
Fireball	⑥		
Victoria Pub	⑦		
Fukuoka Bank	⑧		
City Hall	⑨		

\*These locations are labelled on the map.

one hour from Fukuoka. By car, take Route 209 south from Chikugo-shi.

**Kiyomizu Temple** is a beautiful, old, historic temple on Kiyomizuyama. The 500 Buddhas are amazing. The gravestone of Basho, the haiku poet, is also there. Before heading directly up to the temple complex, visit the temple's viewing garden, which frames a pond shaped into the kanji for "love" against the mountain that the temple sits atop. The temple and garden is popular for its kyouyou, or autumn reddening of leaves. There are aqua-colored signs from Route 209 pointing the way, in English and Japanese.

### FESTIVALS

**Don Kyan Kyan** is a religious festival that includes prayers for a rich harvest as well as the elimination of disease and tragedy. Lots of drums. Held in October in Houji Hongo. Kouwakamai Dance is held on January 20<sup>th</sup> in Daiei Tenmangu. Popular narrative songs from medieval times are used for this dance. There are ten songs in all based mainly on a military theme. Tel 0944-63-6111.

## TAKATA-MACHI 高田町

Takata is a small, rural town of about 15 000 people set amid the rice fields between Yamato and Omuta. Its main products are agricultural goods such as rice, *mikan*, and strawberries. To get there take the Nishitetsu train to Enoura Station. About 90 minutes from Tenjin.

### FESTIVALS

**Noh Performance** Takata-machi is one of two cities in all of Japan to host an amateur *noh* performances. Every year on October 17, males from the Shingai area (a subsection of Takata) give a performance at Houman Shrine 宝満神社. These performances used to be all day until midnight, but now they are only held from 3-10pm. In addition to *noh*, a performance of *noh kyogen* is given. *Kyogen* is different from *noh* in that it doesn't use masks and the themes are usually farcical.

Either performance will require high levels of Japanese to fully comprehend, but the body language is so exaggerated that you will be able to understand much of it anyway. To get to Houman Shrine from Fukuoka, take the Nishitetsu-Omuta limited express train to Yanagawa Station and transfer to the local Omuta-bound train for five stations. Get off at Hiraki Station. It should take about an hour and fifteen minutes. On the festival day you will see crowds of people heading to the shrine, which is less than a block away.

## YANAGAWA-SHI 柳川市

Yanagawa is a small city crawling with tourists who come to ride on its canals (which are actually the extensive moat system of the castle that once stood here) and pretend that they are in Venice. It is also the hometown of the famous poet, Hakushu Kitahara. To get here, take the Nishitetsu train to Yanagawa Station. About 45 minutes from Tenjin. There are tourist offices located next to the ticket window at the Nishitetsu station. It is usually open from 9am-5pm.

**Kawa Kudari** 川下り is a riverboat ride on a punting boat. It takes about one hour and costs ¥1500 per person. You and up to 19 others are taken down the canals that run throughout the town, starting near the Nishitetsu Yanagawa station and ending in Ohana. Your guide will be one of many old Japanese men who give running commentary on the sights and sounds, complete with old songs and folktales. Although English translations are not available it is a very enjoyable tour. The guides are friendly and will try their best to ensure that you understand the basics. Some guides even let you try your hand at punting yourself (much harder than it looks)! By car, take Route 208 headed into Yanagawa. At Shimobyakumachi 下百町, take a right. Look for the red wooden bridge on your left-hand side. From the train station, take a right on Route 208 and then a left at Shimobyakumachi (about five minutes).

**Ohana** is a historical home of the local

daimyo, a cultural museum, a western-style house, and an accompanying Japanese garden. Admission is ¥700 for access to all three. Ohana is near the birthplace of local poet-hero Hakushu Kitahara, which is open to the public for an additional charge.

## FESTIVALS

**Hinamatsuri** is a famous festival in Yanagawa celebrating Girl's Day from March 1-April 3. During this month *sagemon* can be seen everywhere in town. On the second day, boats with girls dressed as dolls parade along the streams. On the last day, floating paper dolls are displayed to end the celebration.

**Hakushusai** celebrates the great poet Hakushu Kitahara over a period of three days. It is a tremendous event featuring a nightly procession of boats through the canal, which is lined with paper lanterns. All the neighborhood children stand over the canal bridges and play with sparklers or shout out to the parade participants for food and drink. Along the canal route there are dozens of traditional Japanese performances, including *taiko*, *shamisen*, dance, puppetry, and *kota*. At the end of the water parade is a 40-minute concert culminating in a huge fireworks display. Held the first week of November.

**Onigie Festival** at Mihashira Shrine is a loud late night festival not to be rivaled in the Chikugo area. Held in October, it involves a marching parade and a puppetry show in addition to festival standards.

**Suitengu Shrine Festival** is a drama over the water. The floating parade boasts a floating shrine and traditional water vessels over the 200-meter route. Held May 3-5 in Okinohata.

**Ushinohi** involves eating eel for vigor during *doyou*, the last 18 days of summer, a custom handed down from the Edo period. On *Ushinohi* (the day of the cow), eels are believed to taste especially appetizing and the aroma of broiled eel dipped in special sauce is everywhere. The place to go is definitely Yanagawa-shi, which is famous throughout Fukuoka Prefecture for eel. For

more information on Yanagawa festivals, call 0944-73-8111.

## EATING & DRINKING

### JAPANESE

**Bei's Cafe** in Omuta-shi is a posh place for drinks or dinner. The heavily stocked bar and very cool atmosphere with movie projection on the walls makes this place interesting. The bar staff are extremely friendly and mix an excellent Long Island Iced Tea. 5:30pm-2:30am. Tel 0944-56-9622. ¥¥

**Dai-Gomi No** visit to Yanagawa would be complete without a visit to Mama-san and the coldest draft in town. It's one of the best yakitori shops you'll find. And no, its name doesn't mean "big garbage." Take a right out of the station and make a left onto Route 443. Go straight and it's about a 20-minute walk. Located on the left next to Lawson. 79 Chikushi-machi. Tel 0944-72-8089. ¥¥

**Kawaichi** かわいち is just across the intersection from Kun Kun and Brown Sugar in Yanagawa-shi. Take a right out of Yanagawa Station and make a left onto Route 443. It's about a five-minute walk. They serve up some excellent and reasonably priced yakitori and *izakaya* food. Recommended are the large croquettes and onigiri. Tel 0944-74-2860. ¥¥

**Yoshi** よし in Yanagawa is a pseudo-Chinese restaurant able to cater for big groups. The food is good and cheap (you can't beat ¥15 chicken wings). In Yanagawa, continue on Route 443 from Kawaichi and cross the bridge. Turn right and you should see a large sign with Yoshi written on it in hiragana. Kuma-machi. Tel 0944-72-0402. ¥¥

**Yotahachi** 与太八 probably has the best variety of yakitori and *izakaya* food in Yanagawa, and serves some great *shumai* (Chinese dumplings) and *sashimi* too. The master's wife also speaks excellent English. Continue on Route 443 over the bridge and

you'll see it on your right. 31 Asahi-machi. Tel 0944-72-1164. ¥¥

### EUROPEAN

**Amoshi** in Omuta-shi is a stylish establishment for the best Italian/Japanese/French fusion meal you'll ever have. The food is marvelously prepared and beautifully presented. The owner and staff are extremely friendly and they offer not only an extensive wine selection, but also some of the best desserts around. If it is not too busy and you're feeling brave, ask the owner to prepare something special for you and chances are you won't be disappointed. The chocolate cake is a miracle on earth. On Route 208 between City Hall and Youme Town. 11:30am-2pm for lunch, 6-10pm for dinner. Closed Tue. Tel 0944-57-3214. ¥¥¥

**Brown Sugar** in Yanagawa-shi wouldn't look out of place in a trendy part of London or New York. Nice interior and atmosphere, sometimes with a DJ playing. When dining in big groups food orders can take a while. A two-hour wait is not unheard of. Take a right out of Yanagawa Station and make a left onto Route 443. It's about a five-minute walk. 6-9 Shimo-hyaku-cho. Tel 0944-75-6157. ¥¥

**Happy Pizza** in Yanagawa-shi usually has great tunes and serves maybe the most westernized pizza around. Ask for Taku. To get there, take a right out of Yanagawa Station and make a left onto Route 443. Continue to the Tsujimachi traffic signal and turn left. Located across from Denshukan Senior High School. 3-3 Hon-machi. Tel 0944-72-8279. ¥¥¥

**Pigalle** in Yanagawa-shi is a quiet little restaurant specializing in European style food. Take a right out of Yanagawa Station and make a left onto Route 443. It's about a five-minute walk. Next to the bridge leading to Mihashira Jinja and Takahata Park. Near the intersection of Route 443 and 208. Tel 0944-73-9477. ¥¥

**Spice Cotton** in Omuta-shi has a casual atmosphere with excellent Italian dishes. Here you'll have your choice of pastas,

pizzas, breads, and fabulous pumpkin gratin. 5pm-2am daily, until 3am on Sat. Tel 0944-57-3108. ¥¥¥

### OTHER

**Kun Kun** in Yanagawa-shi is a lovely little restaurant close to the station, which serves a western-Asian fusion menu and plays awesome jazz. Take a right out of Yanagawa Station and make a left onto Route 443. It's about a five-minute walk. Look for a deck full of plants in the front. 6 Shimo-hyaku-cho. Tel 0120-75-2125. ¥¥

**Taj.** This restaurant in Okawa features curries from different South Asian nations. Don't let the fact that it is located in a barn-like building throw you off. It also has an area that is used for seasonal displays, like Hinamatsuri, as well as gifts and clothes from around the world. Located across from the Ôkawa Youme town, on the Best Denki side. Open 11:30am-11:30pm. Closed Thu. Tel 0944-87-0855. ¥¥

### BARS

**Cue's** in Omuta-shi is a pool hall where you can relax, drink some beer, and perfect your skills until the small hours. One hour of pool costs ¥500. 12pm-12am. Tel 0944-55-5155. ¥¥

**Fireball** is a recent addition to the Omuta bar scene. Enjoy tasty burgers in a casual cool atmosphere. 8pm-3am. ¥¥

**Victoria Pub** is Omuta's quaint British-style pub and offers a casual atmosphere for those who just want to relax and have some pints. Highlights include Bass and Guinness on tap. Good music, cheap food, and a view of a large gorilla scaling the building across from it. Next to the Ômuta River in Sakaemachi 2 Chome by the railroad tracks. 6pm-2am. Closed Wed. Tel 0944-51-0348. ¥¥

### NIGHTCLUBS

**Afro** Pull out your lip-gloss and platforms and head down to this cheesy hole-in-the-wall 70's disco. When they have advertised parties, it's often worth the trip; otherwise this place is generally dead. 8pm-3am.

**Backstreet** is a hip-hop club in Omuta with loud music, cheap beer, and a lively, fun crowd. They often bring in DJs from around Kyushu. It's usually pretty crowded and a good place to watch young Japan get down on Saturdays. Mon-Fri it is a casual bar. Look for the black cat scratching records. Directly behind the Central Cinema. 8pm-3am.

## SHOPPING

### SHOPPING COMPLEXES

**Hana Plus** 花プラス is a farmers' market, greenhouse, cafe, bakery, and natural cosmetics area. Worth stopping by for a cup of tea in a garden setting. Take Route 208 to the 10 and follow the English signs. Located right under Refresh Omuta. 9am-5pm.

**Youme Town**, located in Omuta, is a well-known chain of shopping centers. Omuta's branch boasts a large bookstore, Best Denki, Toys R Us, and ¥100 shop all near the main complex. Inside Youme on the 1F is a wide range of Japanese restaurants, as well as a Starbucks and an Italian restaurant with surprisingly good pizza. Clothing shops, novelty shops, a pet store, and grocery store fill the two floors of space that also houses an array of fast food places, from KFC and McDonald's to takoyaki stands. Off Route 208. 9am-11pm.

### RECYCLED CLOTHING

**Nishikaigan** 西海岸 (West Coast) in Yanagawa is the store to go to when you miss buying cheap recycled clothing. A huge store filled with second-hand clothes, bags, and an occasional feather boa or two. The prices are reasonable and the selection is great, especially for those that wear bigger sizes. By Yanagawa High School. From the Nishitetsu Yanagawa station take the Ohanayuki bus to Ohaname bus stop. Backtrack to Honyo-machi and take a left. It is the white building on your left. By car, take Route 208 (follow the signs to Ohana and Yanagawa High School) to Hoyo machi, and take a left. Everyday except January 1, 10am-7pm. Tel 0944-73-1966.

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Cinema Central** シネマセントラル features first-run English language movies with subtitles in Japanese. Movies start showing around 10am, with the last show around 6pm. General admission is ¥1800 or ¥1200 for shows after 6pm. The first Monday of the month and Wednesdays cost only ¥1000. To check show times, call 0944-56-9008. By bus, take the Youme Town bus to Eigakanmae 映画館前.

**New York 40 Karaoke** ニューヨーク40 カラオケ is easy to spot if you look out for its massive flashing neon lights. This place is not to be missed. One hour of nomihodai (all-you-can-drink) here will set you back ¥800. After 6pm, there are deals on food. A large selection of Western songs, both old and new, and a staff well accustomed to hordes of drunken, tone-deaf JETs. Located in Omuta. 11:30am-3am daily, until 5am on Fri, Sat, and holidays.

## HEALTH

**Yamakawa Dental Clinic** in Omuta has an English-speaking dentist. Mon-Sat 9am-12:30pm and 1:30-6pm. 83-1 Ichibunmachi. Tel 0944-52-4193.

**Gynecology Hospital Watanabe** in Omuta has English-speaking staff. Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat 9am-3pm. 6-1 Ichimura Machi. Tel 0944-52-8479.

## CHIKUHO REGION 筑豊

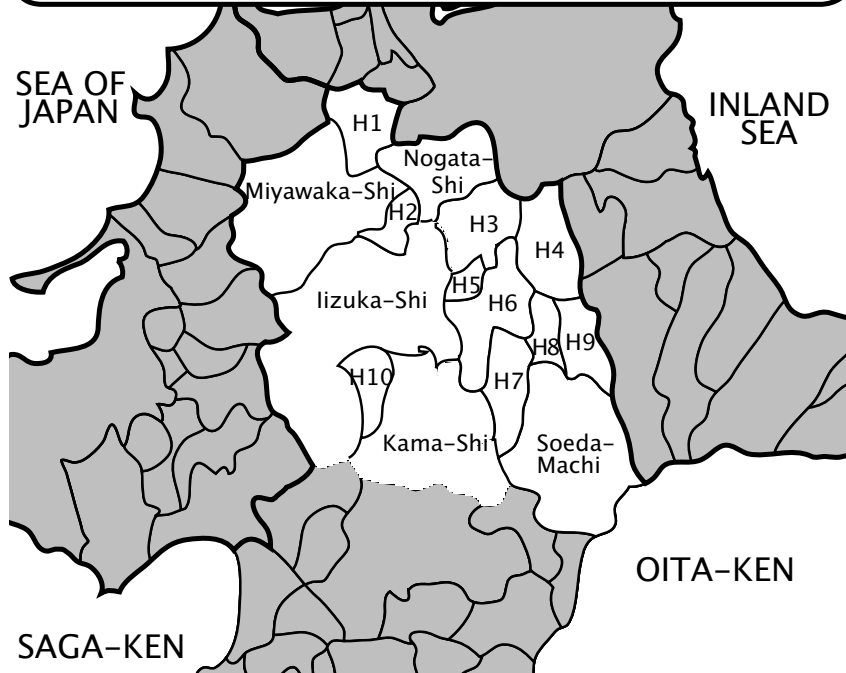




# CHIKUHO REGION 筑豊

## CHIKUHO'S TOP 3

1. HIKO-SAN
2. TAGAWA'S JINKOSAI FESTIVAL
3. NOGATA'S BIKKURI-ICHI



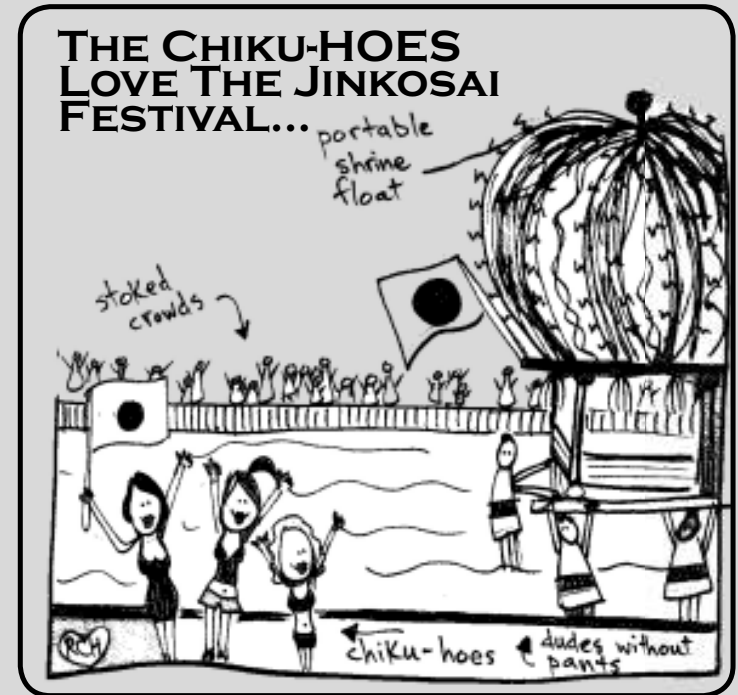
## CHIKUHO 筑豊 MAP KEY

CHIKUHO 筑豊		Aka-Mura	赤村	H9
Kurate-Machi	鞍手町	Keisen-Machi	桂川町	H10
Kotake-Machi	小竹町	Iizuka-Shi	飯塚市	*
Fukuchi-Machi	福智町	Kama-Shi	嘉麻市	*
Kawara-Machi	香春町	Nogata-Shi	直方市	*
Itoda-Machi	糸田町	Soeda-Machi	添田町	*
Tagawa-Shi	田川市	Miyawaka-Shi	宮若町	*
Kawasaki-Machi	川崎町			
Oto-Machi	大任町			

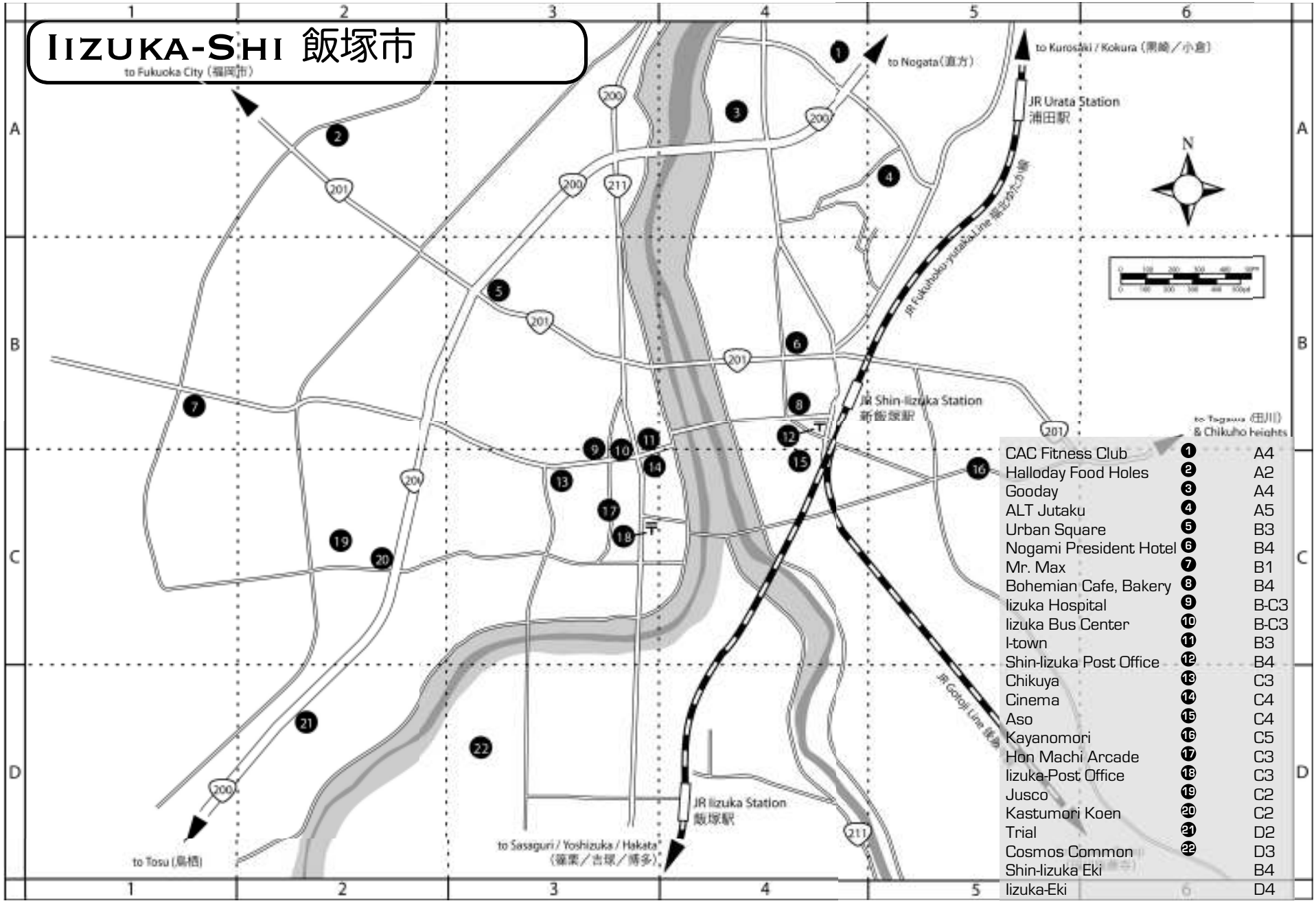
\*These locations are labeled on the map.

## LIVING LIKE A LOCAL

Chikuho, sprawled across the middle of Fukuoka-ken, is geographically the largest region in the prefecture. The area is dominated by mountains on all sides, with flat rice fields stretching across every corner of the valleys in between. The scene of Japan's "gold rush," this attractive region used to host a thriving coal industry, but the only remnants of that are the odd mining museum, a declining population and an abundance of snack bars. However, don't be fooled by remarks of "inaka!?" (countryside) from city folk surprised by the fact that you hail from Chikuho, (as if the journey to Tenjin takes 3 weeks on the back of a camel). The main cities of Iizuka, Tagawa and Nogata are commuter friendly areas, with good, frequent connections to both Fukuoka City (Hakata) and Kitakyushu.



Originally famous for its rice production, in the last century Chikuho was the greatest producer of coal in Japan. The area flourished in tandem with the industry, rapidly evolving from its agricultural roots into an industrial center by the late 1960s. Since then Chikuho has suffered from the effects of a declining coal industry, and is experiencing a dwindling population as a result. Its cities are large, sprawling residential areas connected by crisscrossing highways and complicated intersections. Driving around the area requires patience and a good map! Large scale restructuring at a local level has begun across the region. This in turn has made an impact on schools which have had to merge or close. Most recently, the two sleepy settlements of Miyata and Wakamiya have combined their powers to form Miyawaka City, hardly a cosmopolitan urban jungle to rival Fukuoka, but a "city" nonetheless.



# IIZUKA-SHI KAMA-SHI & AROUND

## IIZUKA-SHI 飯塚市

If you can see three large hills or mounds, plopped in the center of town, you know you're in the beating heart of Chikuho, Iizuka-shi. These mounds provide one theory for the origin of the city's name: "li" means rice, and "zuka" or "tsuka" is a reading for mound. Though it's the largest city in the Chikuho area, Iizuka is not particularly big. With just over 83 000 people, it's a popular commuter town with new construction projects everywhere. It has recently merged with a few small neighboring towns: Chikuho, Shonai, Honami and Kaita.

Kama-shi is the product of the same recent spate of local administrative amalgamations. Unlikely to be featured in any World City Guide, or rank alongside Paris or Barcelona in anyone's top 763 romantic city-break recommendations, it is rather a collection of 4 quiet towns spread around the Iizuka area: Inatsuki, Yamada, Usui and Kaho. Iizuka and Kama are dealt with together in this section.

There are two universities in Iizuka, the Kyushu Institute of Technology (KIT) and Kinki University. Both have ties to international institutions, so many foreign students come here to study, lending to Iizuka a more cosmopolitan air than can be felt in Nogata or Tagawa. Particularly popular subjects, and the universities' strengths, are IT and engineering. The city itself offers no dazzling attractions for visitors, but it is the most central access point from which to get further out into the *inaka*.

Iizuka's alternative claim to fame is the dubious title of "Japan's 3<sup>rd</sup> most dangerous city," behind its more illustrious cousins, Osaka and Yokohama. The unofficial ranking doesn't refer to random lightning strikes or loose paving stones, but the *Yakuza*, Japan's mafioso underbelly. This is nothing to be alarmed about, unless of course you are a *Yakuza* yourself (which is unlikely), or you are prone to stumbling into shady bars. The *Yakuza* presence in Iizuka is another legacy of the area's deindustrialization. Shorn of ready employment, some people naturally found alternative ways of making a living. If the gentleman on your left at the bar is sporting a sharp suit, dark glasses and elaborate tattoos, try not to spill his drink.

To get to Fukuoka City you can catch a bus to Tenjin from outside JR Shin-Iizuka station. Look for the bus that says "Fukuoka" on the side. To get here from Fukuoka-shi, go to the Tenjin bus center and take the Tagawa bus from platform 1. It will take you to the Iizuka bus station (in the town center), with the next stop being JR Shin-Iizuka station (50 minutes, ¥900). Save money on your inevitable trips to and from Tenjin with the Iizuka Bus Center's discount tickets. Buy a pack of 16 bus tickets for ¥10 000 and it will save you ¥275 each time you ride. Conveniently, a bus also runs from the Iizuka Bus Center directly to the Fukuoka Airport, which means you'll avoid having to lug your set of matching baggage onto the Fukuoka subway. By train take the JR Fukuoku Yutaka/Chikuho line to Hakata station. From Fukuoka you want the trains bound for Orio, Nogata or Shin-Iizuka. (40 minutes, ¥720).

Cosmos Common is named after the famous flowers, which are the symbol of Iizuka-shi. This cultural center hosts concerts, plays,

lectures, and exhibitions. Tel 0948-21-0505.

Kaho Theater is the last of its kind in Kyushu. A traditional wooden theater with galleries built in 1921. Various events are held here throughout the year. Situated right outside Iizuka, signposted from Central Iizuka on route 200.

**Katsumori Koen** is a small but convenient park in Central Iizuka, famous for its cherry blossoms and azaleas. It is great during *hanami* (cherry blossom viewing) when it becomes filled with food stalls. There's a children's playground and a large, swan-filled pond. It sits right behind Urban Square at the junction of routes 200 and 201.

**Kayanomori Historic Museum and Kofun** These ancient burial mounds in Tateiwa are thought to be 2000 years old, from the Yayoi Period. Excavated in 1953, they are now a National Cultural Asset. Five minutes from Shin-Iizuka Station. From the West Exit turn right and follow the signs.

**Onga River Trail** The total length of this trail is 128 km. From Iizuka it goes all the way to Nogata along the embankment (approximately 12km), and is a popular route for joggers and cyclists. During September and October hundreds of meters of cosmos flowers bloom pink and purple, a beautiful sight.

## FESTIVALS

**The Yamakasa Festival** is when thousands of men in sumo thongs go charging through the streets carrying *yama* (ornate portable shrines). Spectators throw "power water" on the men as they go by. A special elementary school children's *yamakasa* is also held. Both are in mid-July.

**Hanabi**, the fireworks festival, is held in late summer, at the end of August. Thousands of people from all over Chikuho head to the Onga River and enjoy food from the stalls set up all over the area. There are many vantage points to witness the exploding beauty; a safe bet is from the bridge between Iizuka and Shin-Iizuka, near I-town.

**Obon** Sporting its own bon-dance, Yamada-shi comes alive during the *obon* festival.

## CHIKUHO-MACHI 筑穂町

Home to 12 000 people spread out over a large area, this is a quiet town with no train link. To get here take the no.14 bus from Iizuka Bus Center or Keisen Train Station. Chikuho-machi's mountain, Sangun-zan, has a dry ski slope called Akane Sun village and a hike which takes about an hour or so from the ski centre. From Iizuka take Route 200.

## INATSUKI-MACHI 稲築町

Located to the southwest of Iizuka on Route 211. The closest train stations are Iizuka and the local Tento. From Iizuka take bus 10, 11, 12, or 13. They go through different parts of Inatsuki on their way elsewhere. Located next to the town hall is the new Inatsuki Park, great for picnics and short walks. There is a lookout at the top of the hill, and a small playground for children. Parking is available. *Natsuki no yu* is Inatsuki's *onsen*, across the river on the east side. In mid-March the town holds the traditional good harvest and rice planting festival, and in early May the *Gion* Festival draws large crowds.

## KEISEN-MACHI 桂川町

The town's main attraction is *Otsuka Kofun*, a 1500-year-old burial mound. There is a museum adjacent to the mound, which has a full size replica of the tomb. The site is conveniently placed only a five-minute walk away from Keisen *Eki*.

## USUI-MACHI 碓井町

Usui is home to the Kotohira Art Museum. Located next to Usui library, it has been known to display the works of ALTs in the past. Mount Haseyama is a pleasant short hike with a nice picnic area at the top and a good view.

## EATING & DRINKING

### CAFÉS

**Bohemian Café** is a stylish, quiet cafe that serves fantastic coffee and occasionally, great food. It hosts a monthly live jazz event. From Shin-lizuka station, go straight down the street on the left, opposite Fukuoka bank. 12-2pm, then 5pm-12am. Mon-Sat Tel: 0948-21-5128.

**Nakamura** is a very nice cafe with a typical Japanese menu opposite Shin-lizuka station. 11:45am-3pm, then 6-10pm. Tel 0948-25-8844.

### JAPANESE

**Chikuya** is a fantastic world food (mostly East Asian) restaurant. Great food and a lively atmosphere make it the favorite ALT place to eat and drink. The owner, a bodybuilding and cowboy enthusiast, likes to perform magic tricks and practice his English on you. This place is a must. From the lizuka bus center, go right out of the main exit. Chikuya is a five-minute walk up the hill, on the left, 2F. 5pm-4am. Closed Tue. Tel 0948-24-7888. ¥¥

**Chirorinmura to Kuruminoki** offers cool jazz to accompany your wine and simple food. lizuka-shi, Yoshihara-machi. Tel 0948-24-5810. ¥¥

**Don Don Tei** will satisfy all your *okonomiyaki* cravings. In the Kayanomori, white building opposite Baskin Robbins. Tel 0948-24-3667. ¥

**Hamakatsu** If you like it fried, this is a great

place to eat *tonkatsu* (fried pork). Near Don Don Tei in the Kayanomori. Tel 0948-24-1796. ¥

**Ichi Taro** Chase your food at this *kaitenzushi* (conveyor belt) joint. On Route 200, coming from lizuka, past Sporting Core Gym, on the right. ¥¥

**Kagome Kagome** is a trendy Japanese *izakaya* that does great western-style salads and desserts. Opposite the lizuka Post Office. 5pm-2am. Closed Mon. Tel 0948-23-2014. ¥¥

**Nogami President Hotel** is the biggest hotel in Chikuho, with two restaurants, Chinese and Western, both of which are popular lunch and dinner spots. The Nogami has a decent roof top beer garden with cheap *nomi* and *tabehodai* from June to August. On the other side of the river in Shin Tateiwa. Tel 0948-22-3840. ¥¥

**Sanzoku Nabe** off Route 200, is a good place for large get-togethers. Warm yourself up in the winter with steaming pots of *nabe*. ¥¥

**Sawabe** is a small *izakaya* with great original food and a fun staff (of 2) just opposite Shin-lizuka Hospital (see the map). Some Japanese would be helpful here. ¥¥

**Stamina Taro** is a "Viking" buffet restaurant located on Route 200, towards Nogata. 10 minutes walk from the *jutaku*, next to CAC Fitness Club. Storm Valhalla at this mighty smorgasbord, gorging yourself on a wide range of food, including *sushi*, *yakiniku*, desserts and various Chinese-inspired dishes. ¥¥

**Yajirobei** Located behind Shin-lizuka station, this is a big, wooden affair with great food, cheap drinks and extremely helpful staff. It's a good place to book for big parties. ¥¥

**Yakitori Isamu** is a fantastic *yakitori* restaurant in Usui Machi. They have a huge menu, available in English. Find the 7-Eleven convenience store in Usui and head towards Kaho. The restaurant is directly opposite Power Drug. ¥

### OTHER

**RayDuck** is a burger bar that serves homemade authentic burgers in a casual diner-style setting. Located on route 211 in lizuka. 9am-10pm. Closed Wed. ¥

**Ristorante Italiano** serves decent Italian food and relatively cheap pizza. Kayanomori. Tel 0948-22-4413. ¥¥

### BARS

lizuka's main nightlife area is concentrated in and around a long narrow street which runs past the lizuka Bus Center. There are the requisite snack bars, a few of which are OK with women, and a few "bars."

**Darts Bar** has big measures and well traveled barmen. Tel 0948-22-2340.

**Fellows** a tiny, but stylish bar/club popular with the younger crowd is open later than most and hosts the occasional hip-hop night. The extensive cocktail menu is on the expensive side. Tel 0948 25-6724.

**Rudies** is a recent addition to the lizuka bar scene that's well worth a visit. Come here to hone your darts skills on the electronic boards, or just chill on the nice couches while taking in not only the bar's swanky design but also the average-priced drinks. Find Rudies just across from I-Town in lizuka.

**Smith's Landing** is a small western-style pub with live bands and many beers. There is a cover charge of about ¥300. On Saturday nights, there is the chance to get up and sing a song with the band.

## SHOPPING

Although lizuka is well equipped for shopping, many people head up to Nogata. There you'll find a vast shopping center, Aeon, which houses a Jusco superstore, an international food store, masses of decent clothes shops, a multiscreen movie theater and plenty of cheap restaurants. Also in Nogata is the *Bikkuri-ichi* びっくり市—a fantastic weekend market selling fresh fruit, vegetables, meat

and fish, and a whole lot more. To get there, either take the train north to Nogata then the #13 bus from Nogata Bus Station, or drive north on Route 200 for about 15 minutes until you see Aeon up ahead on the right. The *Bikkuri-ichi* is about a minute drive on the other side of the highway. For more information see the Nogata section.

### GROCERY STORES

**A-Price** sells many imported goods, spices, and juices at discount prices. To the left of Fukuoka Bank, in lizuka.

**Aso** is a chain supermarket with several stores in Chikuho. The most accessible is opposite the Shin-lizuka post office, behind the hospital. They have a great selection of local produce, fresh every day. Open from 9:30am.

**Halldays Food Holes** is great if you have a car, with a wide selection of groceries including fresh produce. You can catch the #2 bus in front of Shin-lizuka station.

**Hon-machi** mall in lizuka's town center has a reasonable variety of stores. There are a host of local corner stores selling decent fruit, vegetables, meat, and fish

**Inatsuki Daiei** supermarket, Tendo, has fresh local farm produce. Fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, and fish are all good here.

**Trial** is a brand new superstore which has the whole *jutaku* wishing they had bigger baskets on their bikes. Very cheap, very big, open 24-hours—what more could you want? Find it just across the river from Cosmos Common (Library/Community Complex).

### SHOPPING COMPLEXES

**I-town** in lizuka has a range of shops including Best Denki (electronics) and a good supermarket with lots of fresh produce. On the left of the bus center, over the bridge from Shin-lizuka. You can't miss it.

**lizuka's Jusco** used to have the distinction of being the largest mall in Chikuho, until Nogata's mighty Aeon stole its crown. Nevertheless, here you will find almost everything you need. Just about everything

else can be found in Nogata. Take the #3 bus for 15 minutes, from in front of Shin-lizuka station. Look for the big pink sign on the left.

### OTHER

**Bikkurisaketten** びっくり酒店 in Nogata's Bikkuri-ichi is the best place to buy alcohol in the area. Here you can find a pretty good selection of reasonably priced wines, all the *sake*, *shochu* and spirits one could ask for, and of course, domestic beer, happo-shu and a few foreign favorites like Coors, Bud, Heineken & Guinness.

**Fukufukudo** is a lovely little bakery specializing in croissants and sweet cakes. From Shin-lizuka station go straight down the street opposite the station for two blocks until you see the yellow sign on the left. 10am-10pm daily. Tel (0948) 23-8511

**Go-ryu** 五龍 is a fantastic liquor store and the hub of the lizuka wine society. A wide selection of wines from all over the world is hidden in the cool little cellar at the back. However, as is to be expected in a country lacking in good wine, it is expensive, with bottles ranging from ¥1500 to 10 or 20 times that. The owner enjoys speaking English. 8:30am-8:30pm daily. Find it on the street directly opposite Shin-lizuka station, two blocks to the right, at the corner.

**Ka-sansushi** かせん寿司 sells amazing homemade quality *maki-sushi* (hence the *ka-san* which means "mother"). Directly opposite the entrance to the Honmachi arcade on central lizuka's main street, same side as the bus center. 9:30am-6:30pm Mon-Sat.

**Kayanomori** has a strip on Route 201 towards Tagawa with several good restaurants and shops.

**Saint Etoile** is a great bakery that also has cheap coffee and plenty of tables to sit at and enjoy your delicious cakes. On the left of Aso in the centre of town, opposite Shin-lizuka Post Office, behind the hospital. Open daily.

**Tonbu** is a small store where you can have

your *kimono* or *yukata* hand made. Just bring your own material. On the street directly opposite Shin-lizuka station, on the right-hand side, just past Go-ryu liquor store. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm. Tel 0948-23-8020.

## ENTERTAINMENT

The best movie theater in the area is in Nogata's Aeon. For more information see the Nogata section.

**The Central Movie Theater** in the middle of lizuka features some foreign films, but options are seriously limited. Warning: evening shows start early, around 6:30pm daily. The late showing kicks off at around 9pm on Saturdays. From I-town cross the road and go left and down one block.

**NO.1 VIDEO** is the only place near the jutaku for renting videos/DVDs. Head across the bridge from Gooday (right at the Ringer Hut) and it's about 1 kilometer further down on the right-hand side.

### KARAOKE

There are many small karaoke venues around lizuka. Most of them are in snack bars, but there are also a few dedicated just to *karaoke*.

**Cotton Club** is a salary-man-style karaoke venue opposite Shin-lizuka Eki

**Santa's** is a cheap, dedicated *karaoke* joint open 24 hours, and popular among ALTs. The major draw card here is that you can bring your own drinks. It's a bit far from the *jutaku* to walk there or even to ride a beer-fuelled bicycle, so your best bet is to jump in a taxi and tell them to head for Santa's *Karaoke*. Tel 0948-28-4420. Fax 0948-24-5649.

**Ice Palace** offers ice-skating and ice hockey, though not year-round. Located behind the lizuka Police Station, you can catch a bus from Shin-lizuka station.

**Urban Square** features billiards, bowling, and a game center. On Route 200 opposite the fire station, at the junction with 201.

## SPORTS & FITNESS

### GYMS

**lizuka Taikukan** (local city gym) is near the JUSCO shopping center. There is a *sharinji-kempo* martial arts club and a badminton club, to name a couple of the activities available.

**CAC Fitness Club** is a very small but decently fitted gym with many classes from yoga to hip hop dance lessons to boxercise. It also has a tiny swimming pool and sauna. Varying levels of membership:

- ¥6500 a month (go as often as you want)
- ¥3500 a month ( +¥300 each time you visit the gym)
- ¥2500 a month (Classes only. +¥200 each time you visit)

10 minutes walk from the jutaku, on Route 200 towards Nogata, next to Stamina Viking restaurant. 10am-10:30pm. Tel 0948-22-1768. Fax 0948-22-1746.

Chikuho town in the south has a small gym with treadmills and one or two weight machines. ¥100 per session.

### COURTS & FIELDS

**Chikuho Heights** has a large park with a basketball court and a swimming pool. It's a great place to hang out on weekends in the summer when the pool is open.

### POOLS

**Yamada Salvia Park** has the largest pool in Chikuho. Difficult to get to without a car as Yamada has no train service and limited bus service. Signposted from Yamada-machi in newly formed Kama-shi

**Inatsuki swimming pool**, also in Kama-shi can be found next to Natsuki no Yu Onsen.

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

**lizuka Library** has about 160 000 books available, only a few of which are in English. Opposite Cosmos Common. 10am-6pm. Closed Mon and holidays. Tel 0948-22-5552.

**Joy Road** is a travel agency that books domestic travel. Located next to Shin-lizuka station's ticket desk. No discounts available, but it is an accessible, good location for last minute bookings.

## HEALTH

**Both lizuka Hospital** (0948-22-3800), in the middle of town, and Ryosai Hospital (0948-22-2980), in Honami (Kama-shi), have doctors and nurses who can speak good English. Those at the reception desk might not speak English however, but don't let that put you off.

**Nishihara Medical Clinic** in Shin-lizuka is the best smaller local clinic. Nishihara-sensei speaks some English. His practice is more modern than others. Tel (0948) 25-0070.

## TAGAWA-SHI & AROUND

田川市

Tagawa is famous as the center of Chikuho's once thriving coal industry. The city now supports a limestone and cement industry, which cost it the top half of one of its tallest mountains, Kawara-dake. Tagawa's inhabitants, who number around 50 000, are renowned for their gritty characters, and for their distinctive dialect, *Tagawa-ben*.

Tagawa serves as access to the more remote countryside areas of Chikuho both by rail on the Hita-Hikosan line and by road. From the Tenjin bus center you can catch an express bus directly to Tagawa. This is the cheapest and most direct route. Kokura, Nogata and Iizuka are all easily accessible by bus as well.

The JR Hita-Hikosan line connects Tagawa Ita station directly with Kokura, while the small Heisei Chikuho Tetsudo Ita line runs between Tagawa Ita and Nogata. To get to Iizuka or Hakata, take the JR Gotoji line from Tagawa-Gotoji station to Shin-Iizuka. Change at Shin-Iizuka for Hakata.

**Genji no Mori** is hidden in the mountains of Aka-mura. You can visit an *onsen*, go for a country walk, watch the fireflies in spring, and camp out in autumn. There are also some nice temples and views. From Tagawa Ita Station take the Heisei Chikuho eastbound to Genjinomori (seven stops).

**Hiko-san**, at around 1200 meters, is the highest mountain in the prefecture. Located east of Tagawa, near the town of Soeda (signposted). It provides a challenging hike and on a clear day the views across the way to Oita-ken are fantastic. There are numerous hikes to do, but the best way to go is to start at the top of the road (near the last temple) and ascend the mountain on the left side. Descend the steps to the fantastic Hiko-san temple at the end of your climb. There is an *onsen* at the base of the mountain (¥500). Take the train from

Tagawa (Ita or Gotoji, 45 minutes) to Hikosan Station. You can get a bus from here to the trailhead (10 minutes ride).

**Kangetsu Yaki** in Soeda-machi, Chuganji is a pottery studio and restaurant nestled in beautiful gardens surrounded by hundreds of Buddha sculptures made by the local potter Fujimoto-san. Beginners are welcome. You return a week later, after the firing has been done, to complete the glazing of your works.

**Tagawa's Coal Museum** serves as a valuable legacy for the city's old coal-mining culture; with thousands of valuable artifacts on display such as original tools, pictures portraying the history of coal mining, and a reconstruction of a pit showing how the miners worked. There is also an extensive collection of works by the acclaimed artist Sakubei Yamamoto. The museum is a five-minute walk, uphill, from the rear of Ita train station.

### FESTIVALS

The **Jinkosai Festival** is one of Kyushu's biggest festivals, bringing 100 000 visitors to Tagawa on the third weekend in May. Rival teams push and pull huge mobile shrines, *Yamakasa*, through the streets of the city, arriving at the edge of the Hiko-san river on Saturday afternoon. In this event, the only one of its kind in Japan, the teams then drag the *Yamakasa* into the river, where they compete against each other in a variety of races and displays of strength. The *Yamakasa* are displayed overnight outside the budokuden, where a carnival of traditional entertainment and a wide variety of food stalls keep the visitors happy until the early hours. On Sunday, the whole thing starts again, with the *Yamakasa* teams going back into the river after lunch before returning to their respective communities. Crowds can be huge, so meet up with friends before you arrive and, if possible, leave your car outside the city and travel in by train.

## KAWARA-MACHI 香春町

If you can't get enough of your students climbing all over you then why not take a trip to Monkey Mountain in Kawara? These monkeys are treated like gods, fed constantly by the locals, and they are known to frequently steal crops from farmers and escape their habitat to terrorize students at nearby schools. You can get a train to Kawara from Tagawa or Nogata.

## OTO-MACHI 大任町

Oto is a collection of villages on the edge of Tagawa-gun that merged into one in the late 19th century. Oto has a huge museum of cactuses (Tue - Sun 0947-63-4832). The local community center hosts events as well as having a library and a small local archaeology exhibition in the foyer.

## EATING & DRINKING

**Hako Alternative Space** A café/bar built in two tunnels once used as bomb shelters to protect coal mine equipment in WWII, Hako often hosts art exhibitions and live events by local artists and musicians. If you're tired of having to choose between Kirin and Asahi, then this is the place for you, with beers imported at reasonable prices from all over the world. From Tagawa Ita station turn left and go through the tunnel under the train tracks, so that you're on the opposite side of the station. Go up the hill towards the two gigantic chimneystacks, and keep left. Hako is on the right-hand side of the road.

**Saki** On Route 322 in Higashi-machi, opposite the Kenritsu University, Saki is only open for lunch, but offers some of the tastiest *teishoku* (meal set) anywhere in

Chikuho. The unique building, shaped like a Swiss chalet with its steep-sloping roof means you won't miss it on your way into Tagawa from Kitakyushu. ¥¥

**Takanohana** Named in honor of the famous yokozuna, whose sons visit from time to time, Takanohana offers *chanko-nabe*, the stock diet of *rikishi*, as well as top-class *sushi* and *sashimi*. Lunchtime *bentos* offer outstanding quality for just ¥600 and evening meals can be eaten in one of the booths around the *dohyō*, a *sumo* ring, which dominates the ground floor of the restaurant. ¥¥

**Yakitori Benkei's Mama** isn't known for her people skills, but here you'll get to hear some of the colorful language that is Tagawa-ben, and eat and drink until you forget the way home. From Tagawa Ita Station go left into the arcade and past the snack bars until you see Benkei on the right. ¥

## SHOPPING

**Sun Live** is the best supermarket in Tagawa to get all your groceries. On route 201, towards Iizuka. For everything that you can't get in Tagawa, jump on the Heisei Chikuho Tetsudo line from Tagawa Ita to Nogata, where you'll find the enormous mall AEON, open daily until 10pm. For more information see the Nogata section.

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Tagawa Training Center** isn't exactly the cutting edge of fitness training, but at ¥210 a time, who cares. The locals may take some time to warm to you but once they do, you'll find this as good of a place to work out as any air-conditioned super-gym. From the rear exit of Ita Station, take a right and walk up the hill to the coal museum. Walk through the museum grounds and take a left. At the traffic lights, turn right and walk past Homewide, then turn left after Joyfull. Take a right at the top of the hill.

# NOGATA & AROUND

## NOGATA-SHI 直方市

Famous for being the hometown of *Kaio*, a highly ranked sumo wrestler, and home to the world's oldest recorded meteorite, Nogata was a once a thriving coal-producing city that has evolved into a commuter satellite of Hakata and Kitakyushu. One of the advantages of Nogata being in the countryside is the amount of outdoor activities in the region.

**JR Nogata station** is a major station on the Fukuhoku Yutaka/Chikuho line that runs between Hakata and Kitakyushu. Trains regularly run between Nogata and Hakata and stop just about everywhere in between, including Shin-lizuka and Yoshizuka. For ¥910 it takes about 55 minutes to get to Hakata on the rapid service train. Add about 15 minutes for the less rapid service. Recently the Ariake "Kaio" Express has cut the time to 46 minutes, but there is an express surcharge of ¥400. To Kitakyushu the usual route involves heading to Orio Station where you can change for Kokura, however some trains do run all the way to Kokura (¥670) and Mojiko.

**The Chikuho Dentetsu** line (also known as the electric train or Chin Chin Densha) is a private line that runs north from Nogata. Chikuho-Nogata Station is located about 10 minutes walk from JR Nogata Station, while Chikuho-Ganda is closer to the jutaku, about 10 minutes walk from the Bikkuri-ichi towards the river. This line runs to Kurosaki in the middle of Kitakyushu.

**The Heisei Chikuho Tetsudo** (railway) is another private line that runs south from

Nogata into Tagawa, located next to JR Nogata station.

**Nishitetsu Highway** buses run to and from Tenjin and Kokura and take about one hour each way; ¥1000. The nearest stop to the jutaku is Ojidancho in Ganda, on the main road by the Bikkuri-ichi.

**Kappa no yu** is a great artificial *onsen* right next to Aeon, just off Route 200. The two sides (male and female) swap from time to time, so no one misses out on great views of the mountains and the chance to flash the Aeon car park. Special women's rate on Wednesdays. ¥800 for the first visit, ¥500 thereafter with the discount ticket.

**Fukuchiyama** is a great hike which takes about two hours. Make sure to follow the red tape carefully. There is a great view of Nogata and the surrounding areas from the top. Directions are signposted from the center of town. The best way to get up here is by car. Shakudake is another nearby peak, just below Fukuchiyama. You can hike from Shakudake to Fukuchiyama in an afternoon. If you are feeling adventurous, try the 40km hike from Mount Sarakura in Kitakyushu to Fukuchiyama.

**Nogata Chuo Kuminkan Community Center** The yearly membership costs ¥6000 and the monthly membership is ¥1500. This includes access to weekly classes in *ikebana* (flower arranging), *shōdō* (calligraphy), and more. Classes are usually 7pm-9pm, Tue and Thu. You can contact Ishida-kakarichō who speaks a little English. Head out from the JR Nogata station towards the river, then turn right at the first main intersection. Proceed to the next main intersection and turn left. The Community Center is about 50

meters up on the left behind Café Roma. Tel (0949) 25-2241 or 22-0785.

**Nogata Flower Park** changes its floral gardens in accordance with the seasons. Several waterfalls in this area can easily be reached (with directions from the right person). This is a nice place for picnics. Cottages and campgrounds are available. Close to Fukuchiyama. Follow the signposts from the center of Nogata.

**Nogata Yumenity Hall** is right next to the Nogata Central Library. It is a great venue to listen to musicians from various places and watch performances in the evening. You can pick up a monthly schedule at Nogata Station, or go there yourself. As you walk out of the main exit of the JR station, turn left and cross over the white foot-bridge, you can't miss it.

**Noguchi Galleries** There are a number of Japanese arts and crafts shops within a five-minute walk from Nogata Central Station. From the JR station's main exit turn right, go under the bridge, and pass the Taka shrine on your right. Here you will find four or five shops selling ceramics. In this area, there is also a small art gallery where local artists have exhibitions. It is a great place to buy souvenirs such as Japanese handmade papers, memo books, letter sets, and other gifts.

## AKA-MURA 赤村

Home to 1400 people, Aka village has many pottery sites to visit. There is a large onsen in the village with open-air rock pools available (men on odd days, women on even), as well as a Japanese cypress bath. The onsen costs around ¥600 per person. From Nogata, change to the Heiseichikuho Railroad Line.

## AKAIKE-MACHI 赤池町

Akaike is a small town, home to 10 000 people. In this rural agricultural area nashi, or Asian pears, are grown on several farms. When they ripen in the autumn they are both juicy and sweet. The town boasts a 20-meter waterfall called **Shiaito no Taki** whose water is famous for its mineral properties. This area is also a popular place for BBQs in the summer. Towering above the town are **Mts. Fukuchi** and **Takatori**, the latter being home to Takatori castle, built in 1039 but demolished in 1616. The town's Zen temple **Koukokuji**, built in 1326, is still in active use and worth a visit. There is a Zen meditation every month on the 17th. Akaike's most famous product is Agano ware, a type of pottery that has been produced in the area for 400 years. **Agano no Sato** sells the local pottery and hosts the annual **Aganoyaki Pottery Festival** in spring. Ten minutes from Akaike Station.

## KURATE-MACHI 鞍手町

Kurate is a small town of about 20 000 people with a JR station on the Fukuhoku Yutaka line. Kurate's claim to fame is its grapes; those big sweet purple grapes you get in the summer are Kurate's very own little babies. The main cultural site in Kurate is the ancient cave dwelling complex at **Furumon**, a network of caves over 1000 years old where a number of artifacts and cave paintings have been discovered. To get there from the station it is best to go by taxi.

## MIYAWAKA-SHI 宮若市

This "city" incorporates Miyata and Wakamiya. Neither has a station. To get

to or from Miyawaka take the bus to/from Iizuka or Nogata. The highway bus to Tenjin also stops here.

Miyata is a town of about 21 000 people. The town's main employer is Toyota, which has a factory there. Historically, this was once home to a POW camp, which was disbanded at the end of WWII. Wakamiya is spread over a large area to the south of Miyata. In Miyata, the **Gojinko Festival** is held once every two years. During the festival the shrine is alive with street stalls, sumo matches, a children's festival band, and a flower arrangement exhibition. The highlight of the festival is the Gojinko ritual (God procession) that has been practiced for more than 700 years. In the ritual 300 representatives of the devotees, carrying lanterns and ritual instruments, quietly march in a parade to **Hiyoshi Shrine**, leading the *yamakasa* float decorated with lights.

**Kiyomizudera** is a nice little Buddhist temple to the west of town.

**Hachimangu Shrine** It may in fact be older, but the current shrine was constructed in the early days of the *Edo* period. Inside are the illustrations of 36 *Tanka* poets done by artist Iwasa Matabe (1578-1650). Located north of the town proper, between the expressway and the *shinkansen* line.

**Sengoku-Koen** is a park ideal for camping or just hanging out with friends and families.

**Takehara Kofun** is a cave fresco rendered in black and cinnabar red dating from the late 6th century. It's a designated national historical site. Located to the west of town; there are signs to it everywhere.

**Wakita Onsen** is the pride of Wakamiya. Located in the Wakita area to the southwest of the town center.

## EATING & DRINKING

### CAFÉS

**Café Roma** is another option for coffee and Italian food, just opposite the Post Office. From the JR Nogata station head towards the river. Turn right at the first main intersection, then left at the next intersection. Café Roma is about 50 meters up on the left.

**Cappuccino Restaurant** has delicious food and some of the friendliest service in Nogata. Great if you want to relax and enjoy a cup of coffee or a good meal. The pizza and assorted parfait are fantastic. Located in the arcade across from the JR Nogata Station, next to the ¥100 store, and across from the flower shop on the 2F.

### JAPANESE

**Asu Naro** is a healthy, organic restaurant with kind owners, a nice menu, and great strawberries and honey. Everything is grown on the property and is certified organic. It is ten minutes off the Route 200 bypass, near the Flower Park and Ikko No Mura Onsen. You definitely need a car! ¥¥ ¥

**Earth, Wind and Fire** is a *tempura* bar that offers a set meal for ¥1300. This means you will get an assortment of all sorts of foods battered and served for about an hour by a friendly husband and wife team. Head into the arcade opposite the JR Nogata station and turn right down the brightly lit "snack bar" street until you see 地球, 風, 山, and 森. ¥¥

**Furuno Yakiniku** is located behind Kurate station. This restaurant serves quality *yakiniku*, similar to Kobe's famous *yakiniku* beef, but from Kurate's premium herd. Very tasty, but a little pricy, expect to pay around ¥2000-¥3000 to satisfy your hunger. ¥¥¥

**Haru**, in Miyawaka-shi, is a small, cozy restaurant famous for its extremely tasty *okonomiyaki* (Japanese pancakes). It's

located right across the street from the ALT apartments in Honjyo, Miyata-machi. The owner lets you cook your own *okonomiyaki* if you ask, which can be really fun. ¥

**Kara Gome Ya** 唐米屋 is a reliable *izakaya* with a good atmosphere, decent food, enormous beers and a convenient point-card system. From the station cross the road and head down the arcade. Take a right down the street with all the "snack bars". Kara Gome Ya is about halfway down on the right, on the ground floor of a big grey building, set back a little from the road. ¥¥

**Umaiya** is a great *izakaya* decked out with bamboo. There is a wide range of Japanese, Chinese and European food, as well as a selection of courses ideal for parties. For ¥4000 you get a really good traditional Japanese meal and free reign on any drinks for 2 hours (book ahead). Head into the arcade opposite the JR Nogata station and turn right down the brightly lit "snack bar" street. You'll find Umaiya at the bottom on the left, conveniently close to Tokio Karaoke. ¥¥¥

**Wabisuke** is a traditional Japanese-style sit down restaurant and bar located close to Fukuoka Bank's ATMs in Nogata's Furumachi arcade. ¥¥

### OTHER

**Lenpicka** is an Italian restaurant with good food and wine. Turn right after leaving the JR Nogata station, turn left after going under the bridge, and you will pass a small park. Look for the wooden doors and enter through the tiny one. ¥¥

**Marche** is the coziest (and perhaps the only) place in Nogata for French cuisine. Head into the arcade opposite the JR Nogata station and turn right down the brightly lit "snack bar" street. A popular meal is their dinner set for about ¥1000 with the best pumpkin soup in town. One of the waitresses speaks good English and will help you with the menu if you need it. Situated on the main road leading from the JR Nogata station to the river, about 200 meters down. ¥¥

### BARS

There are two main "regular" bars in Nogata (possibly the only two) and both are located in the Furumachi arcade. The one called "The Bar" is recommended as the menu is in English and the staff are friendly. There is, however, a plethora of hostess bars should you feel the urge to pay over the odds and be congratulated on your *karaoke* skills by a venerable barmaid.

## SHOPPING

What Nogata lacks in nightlife it makes up with its shopping.

Just off the main Route 200, you'll find **Aeon**. This vast, American-style shopping mall has just celebrated its 1<sup>st</sup> birthday since it started bringing light and hope to ALTs throughout the region. Here you'll find a huge Jusco superstore, an international food store, masses of decent clothing shops, a ¥100 shop, restaurants of all kinds and a Toho multiplex cinema showing a decent range of movies in English and Japanese. From opposite the JR Nogata station, take either the #13 bus or the bus clearly marked "Aeon."

**Jusco** in Aeon is your classic all-in-one-go superstore. Any food that you can't find here will probably be a 2 second walk away in the **Kaldi Coffee Farm!** If you have a craving for muesli, Blue Mountain coffee, authentic Thai green curries, Peroni beers, goat's cheese, Tim-Tams, Moet et Chandon, or indeed anything, then this is the oasis you've been thirsting for. It's not the cheapest shop around, but it's not prohibitively expensive either. The friendly staff speaks some English and they are always happy to help.

**Bikkuri-ichi** びっくり市 is unequivocally awesome. If you live in the *jutaku* there is no excuse for an empty fridge. This self-styled "gourmet carnival" is open until 6:30pm from Friday to Sunday. This is a great farmer's market selling cheap fruit and vegetables fresh out of the ground, more meat than you'll see livestock in Japan, a mesmerizing



array of fish and other seafood, cheap liquor, and a myriad other edible things which you're guaranteed never to have seen before. Feast on fresh *sushi* at ¥42 apiece, or challenge your insides to the fearsome heat of the kimchi bibimba—a brute of a Korean dish—in the large food hall. From the *jutaku* you can't miss it, just follow the music. From further a field, look out for car parks, flags, an animatronic statue of Gulliver dancing with his Lilliputian friends, and a 40 foot red sign reading "MEAT," just off Route 200.

The best place to buy alcohol in the area is the **Bikkurisaketen** びっくり酒店 in Nogata's **Bikkuri-ichi**. Here you can find a pretty good selection of reasonably priced wines, all the *sake*, *shochu* and spirits one could ask for, and of course, domestic beer, happo-shu and a few foreign favorites like Coors, Bud, Heineken and Guinness. Pick up a point card here and stock up.

Explore the **Furumachi** shopping arcade (near the JR Nogata station) where you can find a little bit of everything including a variety of foods (Japanese and foreign), a bike shop, a good cup of coffee and some traditional Japanese gifts. Unfortunately many shops here have now closed, due in no small part to the advent of Aeon, but there are still some great shops dotted around.

**Maruwa** You can get all your shopping done here in one trip. Inside this large store is a ¥100 shop, a clothing department, a grocery store, a bakery, a florist and even a small arcade center. However, with Aeon and the Bikkuri-ichi, the only thing real selling-point of Maruwa is its proximity to the *jutaku*.

## ENTERTAINMENT

Gone are the days of trekking into Nakama to watch a movie! **Aeon's Toho Cinema** is a large multiplex showing a good selection of foreign films, most in their original versions. The late showing, 8:00pm onwards, is reduced to ¥1200, while tickets on Ladies Day (Wednesday) and on the first day of every month cost a mere ¥1000. A good plan is to check current and future screenings on

their website: <http://www.tothoheater.jp/theater/nogata/index.html>

There is one recommended *karaoke* venue in Nogata. Tokio is located near Wabisuke restaurant, near the Fukuoka City Bank ATM closest to the Taga Shrine. Unlike its near-namesake, Tokyo, Tokio looks and is cheap.

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Aquametz Gym/Nogami Swimming School** is one of Nogata's two gyms. It is more like a health club with amenities such as aerobics, step, and dance classes, treadmills, rowing machines, free weights, nautilus weights, swimming classes, and two pools (19 meters and 25 meters). ¥6000 a month for unlimited visits. Closed from the 29th to 31st of every month. From Nogata Central Station go straight over Hinodebashi bridge, pass the Poplar convenience store, go right at the light where the road forks, and take the next right.

**Kurate Chuokominkan** (in Kurate-machi) is a *dojo* (martial arts center), where there are regular *Kendo*, *Karate* and *Judo* classes. Next to this is a *Kyudo* (Japanese Archery) range, where training is held every Tuesday and Friday 7pm-9pm. The Chuokominkan is about 10 minutes from the station, as you leave Kurate Station turn left and then right onto the main road, head away from the river, past a book store, then take the first left before the 7-11 then up the 2nd ramp on your left. Call 0949-42-7201 and ask for Narumi Kajikuri who speaks some English for more information.

**Se Shin Kan** is a popular *judo* *dajo* whose sensei is something of a local legend. You might not understand what he's saying but it's likely to be a warm welcome to his *judo* class, who practice at 6pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and at 4:30 on Saturdays. As you leave the JR Nogata Station, turn right, go under the bridge and past a small park. After the park, go through a traffic light, and

the *dojo* will appear on your left. From the station it takes about 10 minutes on foot.

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

**Hair** Nogata is awash with hair salons. In the Furumachi arcade, **KZ Hair Factory's** staff speak some English. Also highly recommended is **Switch On Hair**, located near the *jutaku*, opposite the 7-Eleven. They're very friendly and do a great job. Ask for Takuzo who will be all too happy to

keep the ALT patronage alive and help you practice your Japanese. For a cheaper cut, try the ¥1000 place in Aeon.

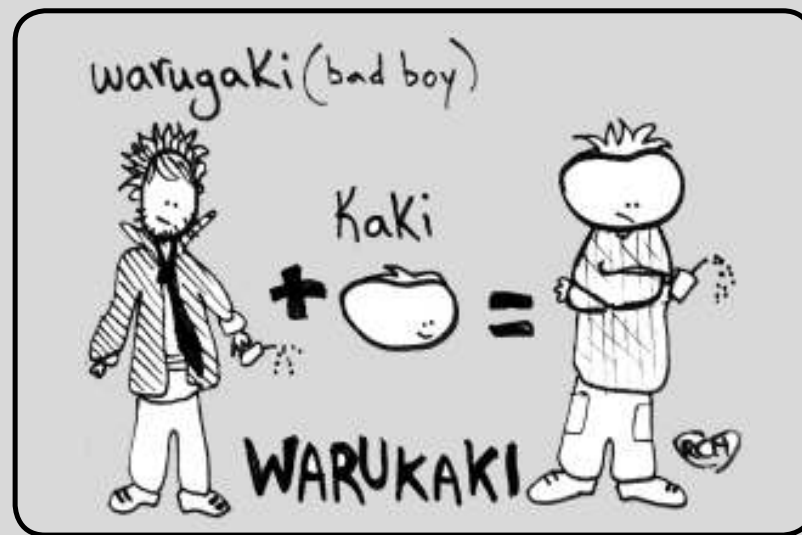
**ATMs** Fukuoka Bank is on the main street perpendicular to the station. Its ATMs are open until 8pm on weekdays. Aeon also has a range of ATMs. Nogata's best kept secret is the 7-Eleven close to the *jutaku* (opposite Maruwa)—the ATM here works 24 hours a day.

**Nogata Christian Center** is about five to ten minutes from Nogata JR Station. Sunday morning service begins at 11 am, and English Bible study begins at 9.30am.

## "HE REALLY WENT BAD IN AUTUMN"

### CHIKUHO-BEN

Chikuho's *hogen* (slang or dialect) has similarities with Hakata-ben, but can only be heard in the region—locals don't use it in other places. Listen for the *bai* endings, for example *daijobai* (no problem), and *chi* sounds, such as *nanchi* or *chi-nan-shi-yon* (what's up?). The usual *~shite-iru* ending often becomes *~yon*, for example, *nan-shi-yon* (what's up? what are you doing?), *nan-tabe-yon* (what are you eating?), *nan-mochi-yon* (what have you got there?) etc.

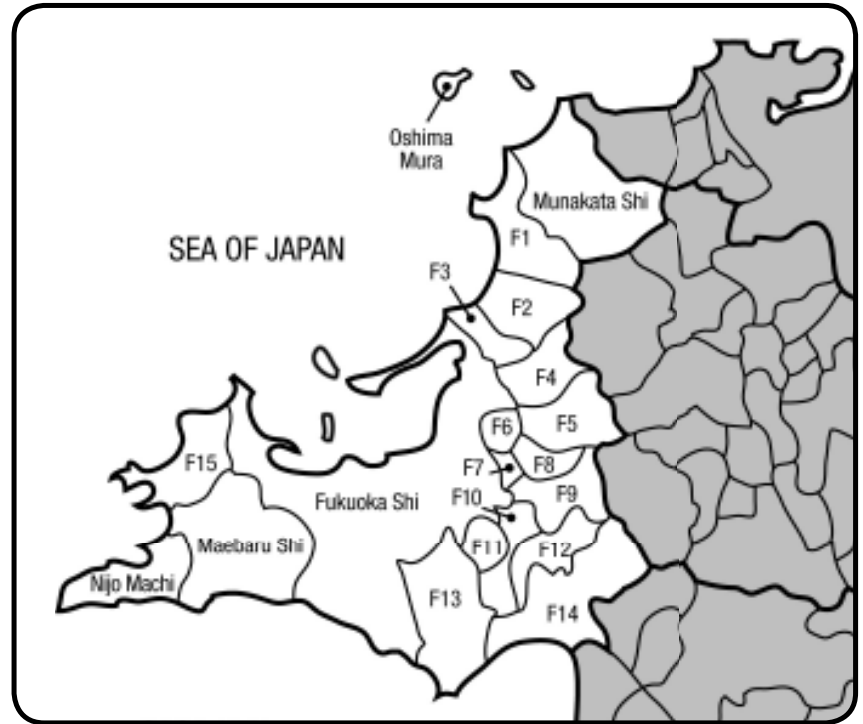


# FUKUOKA

## 福岡



# FUKUOKA REGION 福岡



# FUKUOKA 福岡

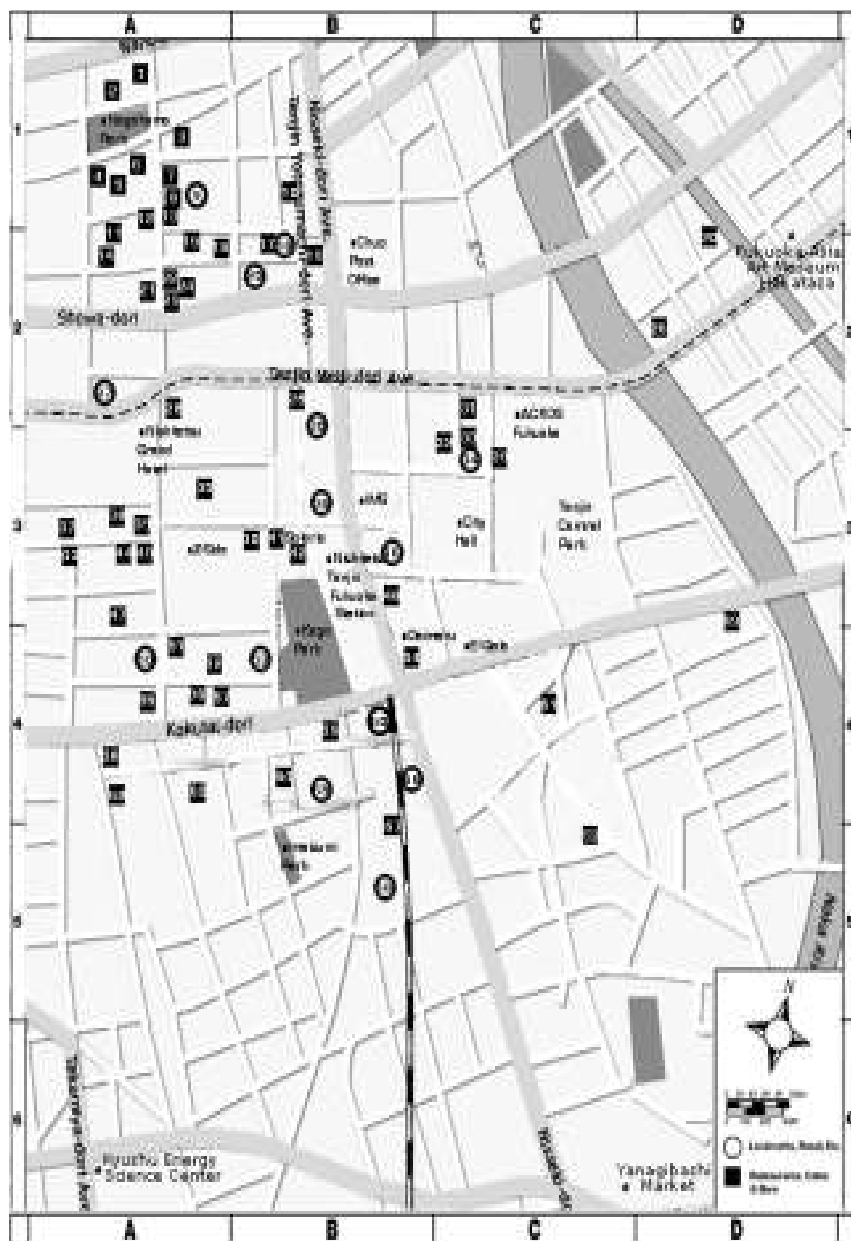
## MAP KEY

### FUKUOKA 福岡

Fukuoka-Shi	福岡市	*	Sue-Machi	須恵町	F8
Maebaru-Shi	前原市	*	Umi-Machi	宇美町	F9
Munakata-Shi	宗像市	*	Onojo-Shi	大野城市	F10
Nijo-Machi	二丈町	*	Kasuga-Shi	春日市	F11
Oshima-Mura	大島村	*	Dazaifu-Shi	太宰府市	F12
Fukutsu-Shi	福津市	F1	Nakagawa-Machi	那珂川町	F13
Koga-Shi	古賀市	F2	Chikushino-Shi	筑紫野市	F14
Shingu-Machi	新宮町	F3	Shima-Machi	志摩町	F15
Hisayama-Machi	久山町	F4			
Sasaguri-Machi	篠栗町	F5			
Kasuya-Machi	粕屋町	F6			
Shime-Machi	志免町	F7			

\* These locations are labelled on the map.

# TENJIN 天神



# TENJIN 天神 MAP KEY

## LANDMARKS, RETAIL, ETC.

ACROS Fukuoka	C2-3	Voodoo Lounge	16	A2
Chuo Post Office	B2	Pik's Diner	17	B2
City Hall	C3	International Bar	19	B2
Daimaru	B4	Sai Sai	20	D2
El Gala	C4	Nanak	21	A2
Imaizumi Park	B5	Arena	22	A2
IMS (Rainbow Plaza)	B3	Baku Artspace	23	A2
Kego Park	B3-4	Dark Room	24	A2
Nagahama Park	A1	California Cotton Fields	26	D2
Nishitetsu Grand Hotel	A3	Sam and Dave's	28	A2
Nishitetsu Tenjin Fukuoka Station	B3-4	Ahobonji	28	A2
Solaria	B3	Asian Kitchen	28	A2
Tenjin Central Park	B3	Starbucks	29	B2
Tenjin Subway Station	B3	Ichiran	31	C2
Z-Side	B4	Seattle's Best	32	C3
Hotel Greenland	A1	Starbucks	33	C3
Cybac	B2	Ume No Hana	35	C3
Popeye's Media Cafe	B2	Toranosuke	37	A3
Daimyo Catholic Church	A2	Happy Cook	38	A3
Iwataya	B2	KFC	39	A3
Best Denki	C3	Tsunapapa	39	A3
Solaria Stage	B3	Starbucks	40	B3
Australian Consulate	B3	Hyotan no Kaiten Sushi	41	B3
Cybac	A4	Chibo	42	B3
BIC Camera	B4	Jugoya	43	A3
BIC Camera	B4	Gin no Momo	43	A3
Love Hotel	B4	Choperia	44	A3
Canadian Consulate	B4	Ippudo	45	A3
Love Hotel	B4	Bistro a Vin	47	A3
		Bal Musette	47	B3
		Bleu Fonce	48	B3
		Tamon	49	D3
		Luccino	51	B4
		Your Mom's	52	A4
		Aux Bacchanales	54	B4
		Afternoon Tea	54	B4
		Roots	55	A4
		La Boheme Qualita	56	A4
		Shinkai	57	A4
		Perche No!	58	A4
		Source	59	B4
		Tadasuke	61	C4
		Covent Garden	62	A4
		Tattoo	63	A4
		Cafe Xando	64	B4
		Propeller Drive	67	B4

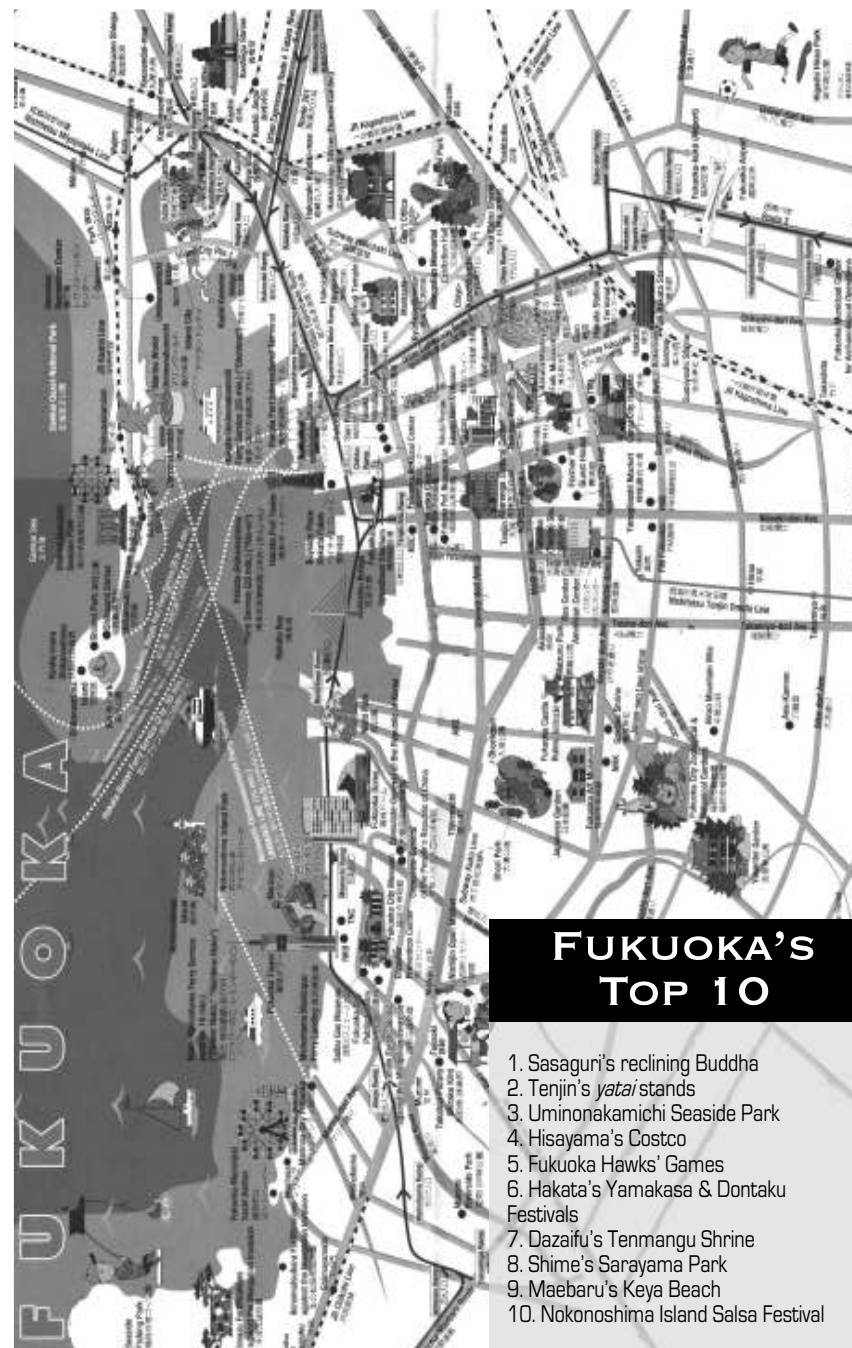
## RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS & BARS

Le Union	1	A1
One Way	2	A1
Anmitsu Hime	3	A1
Cross-Up	4	A1
Keith Flack	5	A1
Bar Farnese	6	A1
Cineterie Tenjin	7	A1
Safari	8	A1
Q's	10	B1
Funky Café	11	A2
Off Broadway	12	A1
Fubar	13	A1
Lab-Z Remix	13	A1
OD	14	A2
Uprising	14	A2
Early Believers	15	A2
Dragon Lock	16	A2



### DAIMYO 大名 MAP KEY

Nanak	1	Suzushiro/Goo	10	SuSu	20
Art Space Baku	2	Garyumon	11	Asayama	21
Tundora	3	Lao Di Fang	12	Bistro A Vin/ Bal Musette	22
Ahobonji	4	Mabre Blanc	13	Risa Risa	23
Shirokiya/ Asian Kitchen/ Sam & Daves	5	Gin No Momo	14	Buaiso	24
Sushi Tei	6	Gombe	15	Daimyo Burger	25
El Borracho	7	Yebisu Kitchen	16	Takoyan	26
Fujiya	8	Tunapaha	17	Haleakala	27
Sagar	9	Choperia/ Toranosuke	18	Jammin Kah	28
		Nakamura Wine	19		



### FUKUOKA'S TOP 10

1. Sasaguri's reclining Buddha
2. Tenjin's *yatai* stands
3. Uminonakamichi Seaside Park
4. Hisayama's Costco
5. Fukuoka Hawks' Games
6. Hakata's Yamakasa & Dontaku Festivals
7. Dazaifu's Tenmangu Shrine
8. Shime's Sarayama Park
9. Maebaru's Keya Beach
10. Nokonoshima Island Salsa Festival

# FUKUOKA-SHI & AROUND

Most famous for its *yatai*, Hakata *ningyo*, Hakata *bijin*, *mentaiko*, and the SoftBank Hawks, those who live close enough to this cosmopolitan center are the envy of JETs scattered throughout Kyushu. With all the amenities that an international city has to offer, Fukuoka City can satisfy most, if not all, of your urban needs. With an abundance of tasty eateries, fashionable boutiques, bars, clubs, music and bookstores, and various other activities and attractions to keep you busy, this will undoubtedly be more than just a place you come to for your monthly meetings.

Long a trade center and gateway between Japan and the rest of Asia, Fukuoka City has developed around diplomatic and mercantile activity. During the *Edo* period, Fukuoka was separated into two distinct cities: the "samurai town" situated west of the Naka River, home to the castle of Fukuoka's first feudal lord (now *Maizuru Koen*) and the nearby "merchant town" of Hakata, east of the river. In 1889, the clans were abolished and the city united, but the two areas still carry an aura of individuality. Modern Fukuoka City is now divided into seven wards: Higashi, Hakata, Minami, Chuo, Jonan, Sawara, and Nishi. All but Jonan and Minami are adjacent to some part of Hakata Bay.

Most JETs will first find themselves wandering around Hakata Station as it provides the easiest accessible meeting place in Fukuoka to the uninitiated. But soon you'll discover Tenjin, Daimyo, and their surrounding locales which play host to a bit more interesting distractions. As the city can be overwhelming and confusing to newcomers, visiting international organizations such as Rainbow

Plaza and Kokusai Hiroba are recommended for getting your initial grounding. They have English-speaking staff and offer a wealth of information on Fukuoka, Kyushu and the rest of Japan. However, the most useful services consist of referrals for English-speaking doctors, lawyers, etc., language and culture classes, health and personal consultations, as well as travel advice. Both are in Tenjin.

Rainbow Plaza is especially good for gathering local, national and international tourist information and maps, as well as listings on available cultural and language courses. It also offers free book rentals which can save you quite a few yen, considering the markup on English books in Japan. For some lighter reading pick up *The Rainbow*, a free publication that details upcoming events and attractions occurring in the city. Finally, check out the message board when you find your first paycheck quickly disappearing and you still need furniture, a futon, region free DVD player, microwave, or whatever. It's also a good place to find language tutors or tutees. Everyday 10am-8pm. Closed monthly on the third Tuesday (except in July and August) and December 29 to January 3. IMS Building 8F, 1-7-11 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-733-2220. Web: [www.rainbowfia.or.jp](http://www.rainbowfia.or.jp)

Kokusai Hiroba is best known for the free origami and calligraphy lessons they offer to foreigners. Kokusai Hiroba also has a quite a large selection of books available for rent as well as free DVD viewing booths and Internet access. Open 10am-7pm. Closed Mondays (or Tuesday if Monday is a holiday) and December 29 to January 3. 1-1-1 ACROS Bldg 3F, Tenjin, Chuo-ku Tel 092-725-9200. Web: [www2.kokusaihiroba.or.jp](http://www2.kokusaihiroba.or.jp)

## MARINOA マリノア MOMOCHI 百道 NISHIJIN 西新

Take in a baseball game, cruise at the beach, shop for some new threads, eat some good food and then head home or spend the night over at one of the many fabulous resort hotels in the area. Encompassing the area from Meinohama 姪浜, the last stop on the city subway, to Tojinmachi 唐人町, this is part of Fukuoka City that makes for nice excursions and a pleasant escape from the hustle and bustle without straying too far from the city. Here are a few hotspots worth the trip.

**Marinoa City** Known for its "Pier Walk," Marinoa City is basically an outlet mall offering name brands at a discount. Recently expanded as of July 2004, there are more than 130 shops to blow your yen on. Adjacent to the mall stands Evergreen Marinoa, a seaside leisure complex complete with a luxury hotel and home to "Sky Dream Fukuoka," the largest Ferris wheel in Asia. Take the subway to Meinohama station or Nishitetsu Bus to Nagara Danchi. 2-12-30 Odo, Nishi-ku. Tel 092-892-8700.

**Momochi Seaside Park** With Summer in full swing, make the most of the sun and warm water by spending a day at the beach. Located within walking distance from Fukuoka Tower and the Yahoo! Dome. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Fukuoka Tower Minami-guchi. Call if you get lost. Tel 092-822-8112 (Fukuoka Port and Seaside Management Center)

**Fukuoka Tower** Standing 234 meters tall and adorned with over 8000 two-way mirrors, Fukuoka tower is easily one of the cities main attractions. Enjoy a romantic evening at the restaurant with one of the best views of the city below or simply go up one more floor to the observation deck hovering 123 meters above solid ground. However, if you're just curious about the view, you can actually see the city from a little higher for

free from the Sea Hawk Hotel & Resort next to it. Admission is ¥800, but if you get the Fukuoka Welcome Card, available for free at the JR Hakata info desk or Rainbow Plaza, you'll save 20%. Take the subway to Nishijin Station or Nishitetsu Bus to Fukuoka Tower Minami-guchi. April to September 9:30am-10pm, October to March 9:30am-9pm. Special hours for the New Years and Golden Week holiday periods. Closed the last Monday and Tuesday in June. Tel 092-823-0234. Web: [www.fukuokatower.co.jp](http://www.fukuokatower.co.jp)

**Fukuoka City Public Library** Boasting over 1 million books, Asian films, and priceless historical documents, to say it is a wealth of information would undoubtedly be an understatement. The library is also equipped with a big-screen auditorium, theater, and restaurant. Take the subway to either Nishijin or Fujisaki, otherwise take the Nishitetsu Bus to either Hakubutsukan Minami-guchi or Fukuoka Tower Minami-guchi. Tuesday to Saturday 10am-7pm, Sundays and Holidays 10am-6pm. Closed Mondays and the last day of each month (the following day if those days happen to be a holiday), and December 28-January 4. 3-7-1 Momochihama, Sawara-ku. Tel 092-852-0600.

**Fukuoka City Museum** has four exhibition rooms featuring arts and crafts, folk art, historical, and archaeological exhibits as well as the Kuroda Memorial Room showcasing various special exhibits outlining the history of Fukuoka throughout the eras. Adult admission is ¥200. Take the subway to Nishijin or Nishitetsu Bus to Hakubutsukan Minami-guchi/Kita-guchi or Fukuoka Tower Minami-guchi. Tuesday to Sunday 9:30am-5:30pm, weekdays in July and August 9:30am-7:30pm. Closed Mondays (Tuesday if Monday is a Holiday) and from December 28 to January 4. 3-1-1 Momochihama, Sawara-ku. Tel 092-845-5011.

**Fukuoka City Disaster Prevention Center** was designed to educate Fukuoka residents about possible disasters as well as prevention and protection techniques. Simulations of earthquakes, fires and hurricanes are available to the curious. While Fukuoka is not nearly as earthquake prone as other regions

throughout Japan, there are occasional tremors now and again, so why not check it out? Free admission. Take the subway to Nishijin or Nishitetsu Bus to Seinan-chukoma-ae or Hakubutsukan-kitaguchi. Tuesday to Sunday 9:30am-5pm. Closed Mondays (Tuesday if Monday is a Holiday), the last Tuesday in every month, and from December 28 to January 4. 1-3-3 Momochihama, Sawara-ku. Tel 092-847-5990.

**Yahoo! Dome and Hawks Town** The Yahoo! Dome is where the pride of Fukuoka, the SoftBank Hawks, call home. It is Japan's first retractable roofed dome and multiuse arena. The easiest way to get baseball tickets is through a Lawson's ticket machine, at the Dome, or through the OMC Plaza in the Daiei building in Tenjin, where you can check availability and pick exactly which seats you would like. When in trouble ask the staff, and you might even get lucky and find someone who speaks some English. Baseball season here runs parallel to the Major Leagues beginning in early spring and lasting through fall. Those accustomed to watching Major League Baseball might notice the fence is a bit closer, making home runs more frequent. Games are also called if a tie remains at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> inning. Both teams are said to have fought valiantly and the game is left undecided. There is also a designated cheering section in the outfield which is really fun when you get into the mix of it all. Also, instead of the seventh inning stretch, everybody buys balloons and releases them after singing the Hawks' fight song. Dare it be said, Japanese baseball is way more fun than its American counterpart!

The "Dome" also hosts various events and concerts throughout the year, and on days where nothing is happening you can take a backstage tour of the Hawks' home stadium.

The complex surrounding Yahoo! Dome also includes Hawks Town Mall, Zepp Fukuoka (a major live music venue), and the newly revamped JAL Resort Seahawk Hotel, where many dignitaries and visiting teams' players stay while in Fukuoka. Foreigners will especially take note that Fukuoka's Hard

Rock Café sits between Hawks Town Mall and Yahoo! Dome. Fully equipped with all the menu favorites of Hard Rocks around the world, this is the haven JETs escape to when the craving for a real hamburger and french fries is just too much. Vegetarians can also find more things on the menu they will eat. The recently renovated and expanded Hawks Town has been supered-up with a variety of facilities such as a full spa, Futsal court, movie theaters, bowling, batting cages, etc. as well as a plethora of new stores. Take the subway to Tojinmachi or Nishitetsu Bus to Fukuoka Dome-mae.

**Yahoo! Dome Backstage** tour adult admission ¥1000. Call for hours. Tel 092-847-1006.

**Hard Rock Café Fukuoka** Sun-Fri 11:30am-11pm, Sat 11:30-1am. 2-2-1 Jigyohama, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-832-5050. Web: www.hardrockjapan.com ¥¥

**Hawks Town Mall** Everyday 11am-9pm. Restaurants until 10pm. 2-2-1 Jigyohama, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-847-1429. Web: www.hawkstown.com

**Zepp Fukuoka** Check website for event and ticket information. 2-2-1 Jigyohama, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-832-6639. Web: www.zepp.co.jp

**OHORI KOEN 大濠公園**  
**ZOOLOGICAL & BOTANICAL**  
**GARDENS 動物園&植物園**

One of the best things about Japan is that no matter how high the buildings or how many lights decorate the nearest city, there are sure to be hidden sanctuaries where one can peacefully gather his or her thoughts and soak up what is left of the natural, unadulterated Japan.

**Ohori koen 大濠公園** was opened in 1929 around an artificial lake that was modeled after the Sai Lake in China and used to

be part of the moat surrounding Fukuoka Castle. As such, the ruins of Fukuoka Castle, now Maizuru koen, are easily within walking distance of Ohori koen. Also located on the periphery of the park are the Fukuoka Art Museum, a *noh* theater, and a Japanese garden that screams *Zen* serenity. Go for a relaxing jog, a bike ride, or rent a mini pedal boat to cruise around the lake. Take the subway to Ohori koen or Nishitetsu Bus to Nishi koen.

**Maizuru koen 舞鶴公園** was formerly Maizuru Castle, built by Nagamasa Kuroda, the feudal lord of the Fukuoka-HAN (group of Feudal lords), in 1601. Also known as the Fukuoka Castle Ruins, Maizuru koen is now a coveted *hanami* locale with the *sakura* trees' branches stretching out and providing just enough canopy to allow both shade in the day and moonlight by night. For some reason there is something special about the sakura that bloom here that makes the experience seem different and just plain gorgeous. Take the subway to Akasaka or Nishitetsu Bus to Otermon or Heiwadai.

**Fukuoka Art Museum** can be found adjacent to Ohori koen and houses a large collection of pieces including the work of Marc Chagall, Joan Miro, Salvadore Dali, as well as Kyushu native, Shigeru Aoki. The permanent exhibits of pre-modern and antique art collections are nothing short of impressive. Adult admission is ¥200. Take the subway to Ohori koen or Nishitetsu Bus to Jonai Bijutsukan Higashiguchi. Tuesday to Sunday 9:30am-5:30pm, weekdays in July and August 9:30am-7:30pm. Closed Mondays (Tuesday if Monday is a Holiday) and from December 28 to January 4. 1-6 Ohori koen, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-714-6051.

**Nishi koen 西公園** is probably one of the best (and most crowded) places to see the *sakura* bloom and then scatter pink confetti as they dance in the wind. Every year, Fukuoka ALTs crawl out of their jutakus to have a *hanami* party at Nishi koen. The rest of the year, it makes for a great walk or picnic spot. Take the subway to Ohori koen or Nishitetsu Bus to Nishi koen. Tip: Ohori koen and Nishi koen sit on opposing sides of Meiji dori.

**Korokan Historical Museum** Due to Fukuoka's fortuitous geographical positioning, it was allowed the privilege of serving as an important contact point in diplomatic and international exchange. Korokan was an official guest house established in the 9<sup>th</sup> century built exactly with that in mind. The museum has on exhibition the lodging house which has been reproduced, as well as scaled down buildings, pottery, and other excavated artifacts. Free admission. Take the subway to Akasaka or Nishitetsu Bus to Heiwadai or Akasaka 3-chome. Everyday 9am-5pm. Closed December 29 to January 3. 1-1 Jonai, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-721-0282.

**Yusentei Garden** Built by the 6<sup>th</sup> of the Kuroda feudal lords in 1754; Yusentei is everything you would expect of a typical Japanese garden. The face of the garden changes with the seasons, thus alluding to the almost tangible connection with nature. Drop by to participate in a tea ceremony and other cultural activities or just take pleasure in the tranquil splendor of the garden. Great for picnics. Adult admission is ¥200. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Yusentei. Tuesday to Sununday 9am-5pm. Closed Mondays (Tue if Mon is a holiday), and December 29 to January 1. 1-46 Yusentei, Jonan-ku. Tel 092-711-0415.

**Fukuoka City Zoological and Botanical Gardens** The botanical garden and the zoo are joined together by a bridge in the middle and play host to over 160 species of animals and 2600 kinds of plants. The botanical garden also houses Asia's largest greenhouse in which approximately 900 plus types of rare plants are grown. Adult admission is ¥400. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Dobutsuen-mae or Taisei Kokoma-ae. Tuesday to Sunday 9am-5pm. Closed Mondays (Tuesday if Monday is a holiday), and December 29 to January 1. 1-1 Minami koen, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-531-1968.

**BAY AREA**

Only a short ferry ride from Hakata Bay lies three of Fukuoka's most famous islands:

Nokonoshima 能古島, Shikanoshima 志賀島, and Uminonakamichi 海の中道. Special in their own way, each of these fairly isolated little gems all add to the character of the prefecture. Those who care to venture just a little further by boat should pack a day-bag and passport and wander over to the Hakata Port International Terminal, which offers daily speed-craft services to Pusan, South Korea in about 3 hours.

Other notable locations in the Hakata Bay area known for holding various types of conventions, exhibitions, concerts, and other large-scale events include Fukuoka Kokusai Center, Fukuoka International Congress Center, Marine Messe Fukuoka, and Fukuoka Sun Palace.

**Nokonoshima 能古島** is a short 10 minute ferry hop from Meinohama and has a spot in history for being recognized in the oldest remaining Japanese anthology titled, "Manyo-shu" which was compiled in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Most popular among JETs for the annual Isla de Salsa festival in early August, but the beauty and attractions of Nokonoshima warrant your company the rest of the year too. Bikes available for ¥200/hour or just foot it as you take in the wonder of flowers changing to fit the season. Visit the Kiyou-bunko Noko Museum and check out Nokonoshima Island Park. You can also try your hand at pottery painting and dine at the island restaurant which has a commanding view of Hakata Bay and the city beyond. Take the municipal ferry from the Meinohama ferry terminal. Nokonoshima, Nishi-ku. Tel 092-883-2887 [Kiyou-bunko Noko Museum] Tel 092-881-2494 [Nokonoshima Island Park]

**Shikanoshima 志賀島** Also appearing in the previously mentioned "Manyo-shu," Shikanoshima is an important cultural asset in Fukuoka. It is home to many historical sites and cultural facilities such as the monument of Manyo Song, the Kinin [Gold Seal] Park, the Moko-zuka [Mongolian Soldiers' grave], and the Shikanoshima Museum. Shikanoshima also offers a nice retreat for beach goers, and surfers will find one of the few left-reef breaks in all of Fukuoka here. Easiest access is by car or municipal ferry. By car, drive north

of Fukuoka City towards Shingu on Route 495 and follow the signs to Uminonakamichi. Once you see Uminonakamichi keep going down that road and you will end up crossing a paved over sand bridge to Shikanoshima. By municipal ferry, catch it from Hakata Futo to Shikanoshima.

**Uminonakamichi 海の中道** Seaside Park spans about 230 hectares and offers a variety of ways to enjoy your day. There are cycling trails through grassy fields and wildflowers, a huge jungle-gym playground, the biggest swimming pool in western Japan, a resort hotel, an amusement park with 21 rides, a miniature golf course, camping grounds, a marine theme park, pony rides, and an outstanding petting zoo with each animal maintained in its own natural habitat. All of this is next to beautiful Hakata Bay. For cycling, you can bring your own bike or rent one at ¥410 for three hours. The park entrance fee is ¥400.

**Marine World**, a marine theme park, features an array of aquariums and has 350 species of marine life on display, including daily dolphin and sea lion shows. Admission is ¥2100, but for around ¥4000 you can purchase a yearly pass and come as often as you like. By car, drive north of Fukuoka City towards Shingu on Route 495 and follow the signs to Uminonakamichi. By bus, take the Nishitetsu Bus to Marine World Uminonakamichi. You can also take the municipal ferry from Hakata Futo [Bayside Place] or the speed-craft from Momochi's Marizon terminal. Get off at the Uminonakamichi Tosenjo terminal. March 1 to October 31 9:30am-5:30pm, November 1 to the end of February 9:30am-5:00pm. Closed the first Monday and Tuesday in February, December 31, and January 1. Higashi-ku. Tel 092-603-1111. Web:www.marine-world.co.jp or www.uminaka.go.jp.

**Fukuoka International Congress Center** Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Kokusai Kaigijo or Sun Palace-mae. 2-1 Sekijo-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-262-4111.

**Marine Messe Fukuoka** Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Marine Messe Fukuoka-mae. 7-1 Okihama-cho, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-262-3111.

**Fukuoka Kokusai Center** is the site of the Fukuoka International Women's Judo Championships and, more importantly, the Kyushu Grand Sumo Tournament held in November. Tickets can be expensive and difficult to obtain if it's a popular season, so try to buy tickets in advance. You can do this via any ticket vending machine at a Lawson convenience store, but the display is difficult if you don't know Japanese so it's best to ask the helpful staff. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Kokusai Center or Sun Palace-mae. 2-2 Chikko-honmachi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-272-1111.

**Fukuoka Sun Palace** The site for many concerts, international conferences and lectures. There is also a quiet hotel and restaurant with a view. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Kokusai Center or Sun Palace-mae. 2-1 Chikko-honmachi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-272-1123.

**Hakata Port International Terminal** Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Chuo-Futo. 14-1 Okihama-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-282-4871.

**Bayside Place Hakata Futoh** Although this is the main terminal for Shikanoshima and Uminonakamichi, you can also catch ferries to Iki, Tsushima [Nagasaki] as well. The attractions don't stop at just boats though; Bayside Place also sports indoor snowboarding, a cool little aquarium, spa, restaurants, shops and other facilities to keep you busy. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Hakata Futo. Shops: 11am-9pm. Restaurants: 11am-11pm. 13-6 Chikko-honmachi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-272-3939.

**KASHII香椎**  
**HIGASHI HIRAO**  
**KOEN 東平尾公園**  
**HAKOZAKI 箱崎**

With the 2006 World Cup recently in the books, the interest in soccer has again sparked up and football fans will be wondering where Fukuoka's top tier J-League team, Avispa, plays, right? Answer: Hakata no Mori Stadium located in Higashi Hirao koen.

Hakozaki and Kashii are also important parts of the city contributing their share of important festivals, fine dining, and additional amusement.

**Higashi Hirao koen 東平尾公園** To say this park is huge would be a gross understatement. Higashi Hirao koen offers a wealth of recreation and sports facilities built to international competition standards which include stadiums, track and field venues, and tennis courts. Also, Hakata no Mori Stadium, home to Fukuoka's J-1 soccer team, Avispa, is located within park grounds. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Higashi Hirao or Higashi Hirao koen-iriguchi. 2-1-2 Higashi Hirao koen, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-611-1515.

**Hakozaki Shrine 箱崎宮** was built in 923 and is one of the three great "Hachiman" shrines in Japan. Its pavilions and *sakura* gate are designated as Nationally Important Cultural Properties. The shrine holds Fukuoka's major festivals such as Hojoya, which is a *Shinto Buddhist* ritual held in autumn that features a large traditional wares market handcrafted by the same artisans that create those lovely Hakata *ningyo*. Hojoya is held annually from September 12-18<sup>th</sup>. Hakozaki also plays host to the Tamaseseri festival on January 3 of every year. Traditionally this was a New Year's festival to ensure a good harvest and a large catch of fish for the coming year. The *tamaseseri* is actually a wooden ball about 30 centimeters in diameter, and legend has it that men who touch it will have good luck through the year. The actual festival has two teams of men dressed in nothing

but loincloths, pouring sake over the ball and parading the ball around the shrine. Something you have to see at least once. Take the subway to Hakozaki-Miyamae or Nishitetsu Bus to Hakozaki. 1-22-1 Hakozaki, Higashi-ku. Tel 092-641-7431.

**Maimatsubara** 舞松原 Maimatsubara is an area that lies in the Higashi ward to the east of the city (close to Kashii). In Maimatsubara itself there are no particular points of interests other than the *jutaku* that houses about 6 ALTs. However, with all the local amenities and quality *izakayas* this part of town has to offer, ALTs living this side of the city may not need to go all the way into Tenjin to have a good time. Take the 24C Nishitetsu Bus from the 18B bus stand outside the central post office in Tenjin and get off at Wakamiyata, the central intersection of Maimatsubara. ¥420, about 20 minutes. By train take the JR Kagoshima line north to Chihaya Station (¥220, 12 minutes). Exit the station and follow the signs to Wakamiyata. You can expect about a 10 minute walk. Here are some places to get you started:

**Dance Pine Fields 12** is a spacious *izakaya* that serves great food with the added bonus of live jazz every Thursday and Sunday nights. Sun-Thu 5pm-1am, Fri & Sat til 3am. Located in Wakamiyata, next to the Hallo Days supermarket. Some English spoken. Maimatsubara. Tel 092-683-1815. ¥¥

**Furaibo** Those who are not intimidated by the fountain and *noren* screening the entrance (featuring a man carrying something on his head), will enter to find a savory gem of a *yakitori* place. They have a full range of everything you can imagine on a stick for about ¥100 a pop, and they even do take out. Located at the Wakamiyata intersection, towards the post office, next to a flower shop. Maimatsubara. Tel 092-662-8850. ¥¥

**Tekoju Okonomiyaki** is located in Wakamiyata in Maimatsubara, opposite Sunny supermarket. Friendly owners welcome you into this *okonomiyaki* house that is always busy with locals. They offer an entire range of fillings like shrimp, cheese,

*mochi*, corn, and more to choose from. Standard *okonomiyaki* run about ¥600 each. Tel 092-682-3752.

**Kashii Sports Garden** includes a McDonald's, an internet cafe, PePecino (an Italian restaurant), a bowling alley, Esta [a sports gym, see directions in Sports & Fitness], indoor tennis courts, a driving range for golf, and even an indoor snow park for snowboarding (Snowtopia). It's located in Kashii, near Maimatsubara and is a 10 minute walk from the Chihaya Station on the Nishitetsu Miyajidake Line.

**Kashiihama Beach** is perfect for evening BBQs and fireworks in the summer and at times has a very lively atmosphere from the high school students enjoying themselves. It is 15 minutes by bicycle from the Maimatsubara *kyoshokuin jutaku*. A large shopping mall is conveniently adjacent to the beach. It includes familiar stores such as Starbucks, The Body Shop, Tower Records, Toys R Us, and an array of restaurants. The bicycle ride through Kashii itself is also very pleasant, with cute boutiques that make for a nice afternoon of shopping.



The moment you step off the train at Hakata Station the first thing to come to mind will undoubtedly be, "what is that wonderful smell and where is it coming from?" Stepping out of the central exit into Hakata Station, it becomes clear that you are following your nose to Il Forno de Mignon, the resident patisserie responsible for making people stand in those ridiculously long lines just for a croissant (which is worth every minute by the way).

As the center of Fukuoka's transportation network, Hakata will probably be one of the first places where you will calibrate your bearings as new ALTs. Tenjin and surrounding locales follow close behind, but Hakata Station is by far the easiest meeting

place for those not yet familiar with the city. The JR Hakata Station is surrounded by office buildings, hotels, shopping complexes, and shrines.

About a ten minute walk straight out of the Hakata-guchi exit will land you in the largest entertainment district in Western Japan,

**Nakasu** Aside from finding yourself seduced by all the neon and siren calls, one can also stumble upon some of the best restaurants Fukuoka, or Kyushu for that matter, has to offer. Not a place for the weak of heart or wallet, we invite you to explore Nakasu at your own pace and at your own discretion.

**Hakata Riverain** A multi-complex facility that includes Hotel Okura, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Hakata-za Theater, Nishi-Nippon City Bank, and the darling of a shopping complex better known as "eeny meeny miny mo," where one visit is a lesson in brand name fashion. LV, YSL, BCBG, G, and DK[collection], are just a few letters to give you an idea. The restaurants in "eeny" also buy into the relationship between price and status, but will in turn give you a meal to remember. Take the subway to Nakasu-Kawabata or Nishitetsu Bus to Kawabata-machi. 3-1 Shimokawabata-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-271-5050. Web: www.riverain.co.jp

**Hakataza Theater** Japanese theater is a must see while in Fukuoka. To accommodate and enhance the dramatic effect of Japanese traditional theatrical arts such as *noh*, *takarazuka*, and *kabuki* a part of the stage has been pulled out splitting the audience; like a bridge connecting the stage to the back of the theater. Shows are performed monthly with big acts often on the bill. Take the subway to Nakasu-Kawabata or Nishitetsu Bus to Kawabata-machi or Hakataza-mae. 2-1 Shimokawabata-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-263-5858. Web: www.hakataza.co.jp

**Fukuoka Asian Art Museum** introduces the history of modern and contemporary Asian art and serves as a place of exchange for the burgeoning local art community. Visit

the website to see what exhibitions are on display or for special event happenings. Adult admission is ¥200. Take the subway to Nakasu-Kawabata or Nishitetsu Bus to Kawabata-machi or Hakataza-mae. 10am-8pm (7:30pm doors). Closed on Wednesday (Thursday if Wednesday is a holiday) and from December 26 to January 1. 3-1 Shimokawabata-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-263-1100. Fax 092-263-1105 Web: www.faam.city.fukuoka.jp

**Canal City Hakata** is one of the largest and most popular shopping malls in town, conveniently situated within equal walking distance between Tenjin and Hakata Station. Across the river in Nakasu, the brightly colored shopping and entertainment center is flanked by the Grand Hyatt and Washington Hotels. The bottom floor hosts many eateries including a Pietro, Pronto, Kohinoor, Wako Tonkatsu, a *gyoza* only restaurant and more. Going up a few floors will lead you to Raumen Stadium, which has a collection of noodle shops from all over Japan. See which region's *ramen* you like best as both the broth and noodles change from region to region (Fukuoka's *tonkatsu ramen* really is the best in all Japan). Canal City also has an amusement center, movie theaters, and many familiar western stores which are a bit more fitting to the ALT budget than "eeny" like J. Crew and the Gap. Catch the ¥100 bus right in front of the IMS Building or in front of the JR Hakata Station (Hakata-guchi exit) and get off at "Canal City Hakata-mae." Web: www.canalcity.co.jp.

**Hakata Machiya Folk Museum** is a replica of a town in Hakata during the mid-Meiji period (end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Visitors can experience the lifestyle and festivals of the time and observe or even participate in the making of traditional arts and crafts specific to the Hakata area, such as weaving, *hariko* (papier-mache tigers), *ningyo* (dolls), and *koma* (chess pieces). Adult admission is ¥200. Take the subway to Gion or Nishitetsu Bus to Canal City Hakata. 10am-6pm. Closed December 29-31. 6-10 Reisen-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-281-7761.



**Jotenji Temple** 承天寺 Built in 1242 by a Sung merchant by the name of Sha Kokumei and high ranking monk named Shoichi Kokushi, this temple is said to be the birthplace of the Hakata Gion Yamakasa Festival. Take the subway to Gion. 1-29-9 Hakataeki-mae, Hakata-ku.

**Tochoji Temple** 東長寺 Kobodaishi Kukai, a well-known Buddhist monk who did much of his training in China, built this temple in 806 during his stay in Hakata. It is the oldest temple of the Shingon sect he founded in Japan. The "Rokkakudo," or hexagon hall, has been designated by the city as an important architectural treasure. The temple also hosts the "Mercy with 1000 hands," the largest wooden statue of Buddha, and is a Nationally Designated Important Cultural Property. Take the subway to Gion. 2-4 Gokusho-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-291-4459.

**Sumiyoshi Shrine** 住吉神社 is worshipped as the home of the guardian of sea travel and traffic safety, which means it is a good place to buy omamori for your car. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Sumiyoshi/Ekimae 4-chome. 3-1-51 Sumiyoshi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-2591-2670.

**Kushida Shrine** 櫛田神社 The shrine is famous for being the starting point in the Hakata Gion Yamakasa festival. Businessmen can often be seen here on their first-of-the-year shrine visits as it is believed that Kushida Shrine is home to the god of thriving business, health, and longevity. There is also a museum on the premises (admission ¥300) called the Hakata Historical Museum which details the Yamakasa festival and gives a brief history of Hakata. Take the subway to Gion or Nishitetsu Bus to Canal City Hakata. 1-41 Kamikawabata-machi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-291-2951.

**Shofukuji Temple** 聖福寺 This historically important gateway was the first Zen temple in Japan built by the founder of the Japanese Zen sect, Eisei, in 1195. The temple houses many precious artifacts such as a statue of Daikan Zenji (a famous Zen sect priest), and is deemed a Nationally Important Cultural

Property. Take the subway to Gion. 6-1 Gokusho-machi, Hakata-ku.

**Rakusui Park** 楽水園 is a beautiful Japanese garden believed to be built by a wealthy Hakata merchant around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The combination and carefully thought out placement of rock, water and greenery create a peaceful and serene atmosphere that is only enhanced by taking part in an open air tea ceremony in the autumn and spring. Adult admission is ¥100. Take the Nishitetsu Bus to Sumiyoshi/Ekimae 4-chome. 9am-5pm. Closed Tuesdays (Wednesday if Tuesday is a holiday) and December 29 to January 1. 2-10-7 Sumiyoshi, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-262-6665.

## TENJIN 天神

What has been grouped together in the "Tenjin" category includes all of Tenjin proper, Daimyo, Imaizumi, Kego, Nagahama, Nishi-Nakasu, Haruyoshi, Watanabe-dori, and the Yakuin areas. Although not geographically PC, all these areas are within walking distance from that famous TV in Salaria Stage and will be familiar to you soon. Tenjin has it all and it's all waiting for you. For that reason, we have saved the best for last to hopefully serve as a starting point to launch your own adventures from. Remember not to be afraid of small doors and illegible menus as those places usually turn out to be the best.

## EATING & DRINKING

If there is one thing Japan takes exceptional pride in, it would be its dedication to all things food. Fukuoka City is so rich with international eateries that you will not be hard pressed not

to find authentic cuisine. However, keep in mind that Fukuoka is considered by many to have some of the best fish and local seafood in Japan. You like fish? You're in the right place. For more information on dining in the city, consult the local Japanese magazines such as EPI, Kyushu Walker, and Fukuoka Now, or [www.kyushu.com/fukuoka](http://www.kyushu.com/fukuoka) to find out where to get the good stuff.

### CAFÉS

**Art Space Baku** Far from being a typical beatnik hangout, Baku provides a small getaway in the middle of the city to enjoy your usual coffee shop/bar goodies and check out some local artwork. Baku has been supporting local artists for close to 30 years, so do your part and go get a little culture with that martini. Located at the intersection of Oyafuko-dori and Showa-dori. Everyday 11am-8pm, Café/bar til 10pm. 高栄ビル (Koei Bldg.) 2F, 3-4-14 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-781-7597. Web: [www.artspacebaku.com/](http://www.artspacebaku.com/).

**Aux Bacchanals** is a replicated French sidewalk café that has a fabulous array of pies, cakes, quiche, and full bar. Cool people watching spot. Between the two Daimaru buildings. Everyday 8:30am-10 9pm. Breakfast til 11am. Daimaru Bldg 1F, 1-4-1 Tenjin Chuo-ku. Tel 092-762-7373.

**Bleu Fonce** Café and Patisserie has wonderful desserts and offers a nice hiding place from the crowded walkways of Tenjin Chikagai. The café is right next door to the patisserie and is very popular, especially among the city girls. Tenjin Chikagai. Tel 092-732-8200.

**Café Shiki** 四季 is a cute contemporary café in the Yakuin area. It also has a sister store in Imaizumi that just goes by **Café Xando**. Both are great for lunch or a light snack, and as the name suggests, the menu is constantly changing with the seasons. If the weather is nice, patio seating is available at the Yakuin location. 2-14-29 Yakuin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-738-5788.

**Mabre Blanc Café** Unobtrusively tucked away in the middle of Daimyo, through a tiny

door lies a gem of a late night coffee spot and best known for its wonderful crepe desserts. Warm, spongy, and laid flat like a pancake, a wide array of toppings and ice cream are at your bidding, so go ahead and indulge. Be aware that the café is petite and can only accommodate around 12 guests at one time. Sun-Thu 12pm-12am. Fri, Sat, and days before holidays open till 2am. 2-1-31 Daimyo, Chuo-ku Tel 092-714-2520.

**Manu** Hidden in Haruyoshi is Soushi's Manu Café, serving great organic roasts, an array of made-to-order drinks (incl. Rogue Ale & various Spirits) & the deliciously inexpensive Mark Sandwich series. With great art on display, good tunes and a fun staff this is where to go anytime. From Daimaru cross Kokutai-doro and heading toward Hakata, turn right just before Freshness Burger. Head straight down the little alley for about 10 minutes. Just opposite 7-11. Everyday 9am-12am Tel.092-736-6011

**Patisserie 16区(ku)** is a sinfully good French confectionary in Yakuin. Each cake, pie, cookie, candy, cupcake, whatever, is carefully and lovingly handcrafted just like they do it in France. Everyday 9am-8pm. Closed Mon. 4-20-10 Yakuin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-531-3011. Web: [www.kyushu-cake.com](http://www.kyushu-cake.com)

### JAPANESE

**Ahobonji** Sumptuous cooking and an ambience speaking of old Japan makes this huge, yet cozy restaurant a winner for dates or parties. It gets crowded really quick, so reservations are recommended. Open from 5pm. Daimyo, Chuo-ku 2-9-5, Grand Building. Tel 092-726-2828. ¥¥

**Asa-yama** あさ山 There are two distinctly recognized styles of *okonamiyaki* in Japan: Hiroshima-fu and Osaka-fu. Asa-yama is Hiroshima-fu. In Hiroshima-fu *okonamiyaki*, a crepe-like batter is first laid atop the griddle and the cabbage and toppings are cooked sequentially on top. Besides the way it's cooked, the main difference in Hiroshima-fu is the addition of soba noodles at the end. The sauce is the same for *okonamiyaki* everywhere, so which side of the fence you eat on is up to you. Mon-Sat 11:30am-2pm, 6-11pm. Closed Sundays and holidays. 1-13-

8 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-731-6554. ¥

**Asian Kitchen** is a huge chain *izakaya* and a good choice for large parties. The food is a fusion of Asian flavors—the Thai Tom Yan Gun soup served with Indian naan bread is one such example. There are three locations in Fukuoka City. One is on the corner of Nishi-dori and Mejjidori, located above Sam N Dave's on the 9F of the West Side Bldg. Everyday 10am-11pm. Tel 092-262-2041. ¥¥

**Buaiso** is a favorite amongst college kids and those who appreciate a chill atmosphere and reasonably priced food. Locations in Daimyo, Maizuru, and on Oyafuko-dori. Daimyo location: Everyday 5pm-5am. 247 Bldg. 2F, 1-15-35 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-715-0026. ¥¥

**Chibo** 千房 Chibo is famous for the other style Osaka-fu *okonomiyaki*, where a batter consisting of cabbage and your choice of toppings are mixed together and then grilled like a big pancake. It is then topped with a special kind of sauce, mayonnaise, dried bonito flakes, dried seaweed powder, and green onions. If you sit around the grill you can watch them cook it, otherwise they bring it to your table hot and steaming. It's a cool and delicious place to take visiting family members to get a taste of Japan not found anywhere else. Solaria Plaza 6F, 2-2-43 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-733-7601. ¥

**Fujiya** All you can eat yakiniku starting at ¥999. If you really want to go big, you can add on a *nomihodai* with that too. The restaurant has just been renovated and has since installed industrial strength air vents over each table so you don't go home smelling like what you ate. Reservations are recommended. 2-6-20 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-735-0501. ¥¥

**Gin no Momo** 銀の桃 The quiet exterior conceals one of the nicer *izakaya* in Tenjin. The food here is as expected, but it's the ambiance and décor that give this restaurant its appeal. Everyday 11am-LO 3pm, 5:30pm-LO 11:30pm. Bar til 3am. 2-1-41 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-734-0002. ¥¥

**Gombe** 権兵衛館 is a well known *yakitori* joint in Daimyo famous for their *torikawa*, or skewered grilled chicken skin slathered in a secret *teriyaki* sauce. Other kinds of *yakitori* also available starting at ¥100. 5pm-LO 11pm. Closed Sun. 2-1-43 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-714-2296. ¥¥

**Hakozaki Tororo** is famous for its *tororo donburi*, which is grated *yama-imo* (mountain yam) over rice. If you like the texture of natto and okra, you'll probably like this. The owner speaks good English, and encourages foreigners to try this traditional Japanese dish. About a ten minute walk from the Hakozaki Miya-mae subway station. Mon-Sat 11:30am-LO 2:30pm, 5-8:30pm. Sat, Sun, holidays 11:30am-LO 8:30. 5-12-9 Maidashi, Higashi-ku. Tel 092-651-2153. ¥¥

**Hyotan no kaiten sushi** ひょうたんの回転寿司 is probably the best *kaiten sushi* in the city (the main restaurant is right across the street). Fresh fish and quick service keep the seats filled and a line outside no matter what time of day you go. Above all, the grilled *anago* is their calling card, but you have to order it as it does not come out on the conveyor belt. Take-out also available. Everyday 11am-9pm. Solaria Stage B2, 2-8-222 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-733-7081. ¥¥

**Ichi-Ran** 一蘭 is famous for its good *ramen* and quick service. Select your *ramen* from the order card and buy a ticket from the vending machine outside before you walk in. Place it on your table and someone will come to pick it up. The location in Tenjin is just north of Seattle's Best/Starbucks on the east side of Tenjin Core (in a shady alley, but open 24 hours a day!) and has individual booths to eat in so you can focus all your energy on the bowl of noodles in front of you. There are also locations in Nakasu and in Canal City. Web: www.ichiran.co.jp ¥

**Ippudo** 一風堂 is another famous string of *ramen* restaurants and a textbook example of the restaurant theory that people lined up outside means really good food inside. They offer two slightly different broths, red and white, but both are made from a *tonkotsu* base. The sliced pork sitting in your *ramen*

simply melts on your tongue and the bite-size *gyoza* is fantastic. English menu also available. Tenjin location: Everyday 11am-12am, lunch special available til 2pm. Tel 092-771-0880. Web: www.ippudo.com. ¥  
**Ipputei** 一步亭 is another acclaimed *tonkotsu ramen* shop located just outside of Hakata station. Although a *tonkotsu* base, the broth is surprisingly mellow and not overpoweringly oily. The *gyoza* is heavenly and you can also spice up your *ramen* with the bright green noodles made from chives and only found here. Mon-Fri 11am-3pm, 5:30-11pm. Sat 11am-3pm. 住友生命ビル (Sumitomo Seimei Bldg) B1, 3-2-8 Hakataeki-mae, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-441-9087. ¥

**Restaurant Hill Top** is a great place for lunch and is located in the Fukuoka Yamanoue Hotel, 2F. Five minutes from the entrance to the zoo, just across the main road and to your left once you pass the high school. The food is great, but the beautiful view of Fukuoka City steals the show. Tel 092-771-2131. Web: www.yamanoue.jp. ¥¥¥

**SaiSai** 際際 is an *izakaya* with three locations in and around Tenjin alone. SaiSai is especially proud of its *shochu* selection and *ikitsukuri sashimi*. The ALT favorite is in Nakasu, which features a foot onsen adjacent to your table. Be warned that due to the popularity of this novelty, reservations are difficult to get, but worth the extra effort. Mon-Sat 5pm-5am. Sundays and holidays til 1am. スプーンビル (Spoon Bldg) B1, 5-1-7 Nakasu, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-262-3131. Web: www.saisai.biz. ¥¥

**Shirokiya** 白木屋 Another humongous chain *izakaya* with locations all over Fukuoka City, Shirokiya is a good bet for big parties and *nomihodai*. Check the website for details. Everyday 5pm-5am. Tenjin location: Tel 092-713-9188. Web: www.monteroza.co.jp ¥¥

**Sushi tei** 寿司亭 A surprisingly affordable and high quality *sushi* restaurant in Daimyo that is an ersatz *Edo-mae sushi* joint. Mon-Sat 5pm-LO 11:30pm. Sundays and holidays 12pm-LO 9:30pm. 福岡赤坂ビル (Fukuoka Akasaka Bldg) 1F, 2-4-19 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-714-7722. ¥¥

**SuSu** is a chic *izakaya* whose fountain at the entrance will immediately catch your eye and your curiosity. Recessed lighting, plush furniture, and clean lines enhance and accentuate the metro *wabisabi* tone. SuSu also offers *nomihodai* starting at ¥1500 and can normally accommodate large parties without reservations in advance. Everyday 5pm-3am. 1-14-26 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-735-4747. ¥¥¥

**Tadasuke** 忠助 will make you fall in love with Japanese food all over again. More than just a *sushi* bar, this experience in Japanese haute cuisine will allow you to fully appreciate the beauty and wonder that is *umami*, or the 5<sup>th</sup> taste. This is the stuff that makes you giddy. Mon-Sat 6pm-12am. Closed Sundays and holidays. ヤヤマビル (Yayama Bldg.) 3F 5-1-22 Watanabe-dori, Chuo-ku. Tel/Fax 092-738-3522. ¥¥¥¥

**Takoyan** 蛸やん A small *takoyaki* joint that's great for a snack while wandering the streets of Daimyo. If you like *takoyaki*, you absolutely must try this place. Mon-Thu 3pm-2am. Fri-Sat 3pm-3am. Sun 3pm-1am. 1-4-12 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-724-9633. ¥

**Toranosuke** 虎之介 is another trendy nouveau riche *izakaya* with a creative selection of dishes that are essentially new takes on old favorites. Course menus and *nomihodai* also available. Everyday 6pm-3am. CEPA Bldg. 4F, 1-12-52 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-716-7600. ¥¥

**Ume no Hana** 梅の花 is a locally-owned (Kurume) chain of specialty *tofu* restaurants that create amazing *kaiseki*-style dishes that look too good to eat. Herbivores beware, not everything here is veg-friendly. For example, the *chawan-mushi* and *yuba* soup are made with fish stock. There are both Japanese and Chinese-style versions of *Ume no Hana*, and 12 in Fukuoka alone! Besides the Tenjin location listed here, check the website for other locations around Kyushu. Everyday 11am-LO 2:30pm, 5pm-LO 9pm. Closed Jan 1-3. Acros Bldg. B2, 1-1-1 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-725-9022. Web: www.umenohana.co.jp ¥¥¥ ¥

**Yoshitomi Sushi** 吉富寿司 If you've never thought *sushi* could be sexy, you've yet to eat at Yoshitomi. Yoshitomi-san's *sushi* is the old-fashioned type, or what is called *Edo-mae sushi*. Among other things, one of the most impressive facts about *Edo-mae* sushi is that the chef operates with a surgical precision, so honed that the number of grains of rice in each piece of sushi will nearly be equal. There isn't a menu, but just say, *inedibles notwithstanding, "omakase onegaishimasu"* [I am in your hands], and you are on your way to pure bliss. Everyday 12pm-2pm, 5:30-9pm. Closed Sun. サンハイツ (Sun Heights) 1F, 3-6-23 Maizuru, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-741-3490. ¥¥¥¥

**Zauo** is a novelty restaurant chain with a boating theme that lets you fish for your own dinner, and then choose how it's to be prepared. There are ten locations around Fukuoka, most with a giant pond and boat to fish from inside the restaurant. There's a discount on anything you catch, as well as the joy of being slow-clapped by the whole restaurant when you go without a bite for 20 minutes. There is also a healthy list of standard Japanese fare to choose from. The Tenjin location is actually in Nagahama next to Yu no onsen. Details below. Visit the website for maps to all locations. Mon-Fri 5pm-LO 11pm. Sat, Sun, and holidays 11:30am-LO 11pm. 1-4-15 Nagahama, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-716-9988. Web: www.zauo.com ¥¥¥¥

### ASIAN (NON-JAPANESE)

**Garyumon** 門龍臥 is an *izakaya* serving Chinese food that's tasty, filling, and best of all, cheap. A great go-to when nobody can decide what they want to eat. One location is across the Yodobashi Camera next to Hakata station and the other in Daimyo. Daimyo location: Everyday 11:30am-2:30pm, 5:30pm-12am. 1-12-36 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-713-7230. ¥¥

**Jammin Kah** This "super ethnic" restaurant is definitely someplace you'll want to check out if you're feeling a bit more adventurous. Specializing in Thai and general Southeast Asian cuisine, the food is honest and there

is a reasonably cheap (¥1260) *nomihodai* available for groups. Everyday 12-4pm, 5pm-LO. 12am. 南風ビル[Nanpu Bldg.] B1 1-1-20 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-771-3108. ¥¥

**Kara Kara** Don't let the size fool you. This tiny restaurant has a wide selection of Korean foods and beers. Everyday 6pm-4am. City House Hakata 4-24-1 Hakata Eki-mae, Hakata-ku. ¥¥¥

**Nanak** is the Fukuoka installment of an Indian restaurant chain. The menu has all the usual favorites and there are some good specials if you happen to make it for lunchtime. Set menus from ¥1500. The one in Tenjin is found where Oyafuko-dori meets Showa-dori. Mon-Fri 11am-3:30pm, 5:30-10:30pm. Weekends and holidays 11:30am-10:30pm. 1-1-4 Maizuru, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-713-7900. ¥¥

**Sagar** has mouth-watering curry and lets you choose how much spice you want to add to it. The owners/staff speak very good English and always welcome foreign visitors. Mon-Fri 11am-3pm, 6-10:30pm. Weekends and holidays 11am-10:30pm. ELK Daimyo Bldg. 1F, 2-2-43 Daimyo, Chuo-ku, Tel 092-714-7199. ¥¥

**Sala Rim Naam** will gladly prepare vegetarian versions of their authentic Thai dishes. They speak some English and can accommodate groups of four to 20 and is one of the few places where you can pay by credit card. Mon-Fri 5:30-10pm, Sat-Sun 5-10pm. チップ\*ザ\*アカサカ [Tip the Akasaka] 2F, 3-9-25 Akasaka, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-715-1418. ¥¥

**Sala Thai** is a hole-in-the-wall restaurant possibly serving the most authentic Thai food in Japan. You are greeted at the door by a Thai woman and can choose from a selection of popular northern Thai dishes. The sets are recommended, although you'll need two really hungry people to eat everything. An English menu is available. Everyday 11:30am-2pm, 5-9:30pm. Closed Sun. ビーエス (BS) Bldg. 3-19-14 Hakataeki-mae, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-414-2139. ¥¥¥

**Shinkai** is a Chinese restaurant that has

fabulous dim sum and other dishes starting at ¥100. Lunchtime can be a blur so get there early because it's usually packed. 11:30am-1:30pm, 6-11pm. Closed on the second Tuesday of every month. 2-3-34 Chuo-ku, Tenjin. Tel 092-731-5548. ¥¥

**Tamon** Hands down the best Korean food in Fukuoka. Their *chijimi*, or savory Korean pancake, is a must, and the various kinds of spicy nabe and other lip smacking treats are just ridiculous. Everyday 5pm-LO 11:30pm. JOJO Bldg. 1F, 3-12-26 Haruyoshi, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-751-7865. ¥¥¥

**Tunapaha** is a Sri Lankan restaurant with a wide selection of traditional foods that can and will blow your head off with its spices that range from a "just a tinge" to "the burning fires of hell." Everyday 11:30am-11:30pm. KFC Bldg. 5F, 2-1-1 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-712-9700. ¥¥

### EUROPEAN

**Bistro A Vin Bal Musette** While the street level café is a great place to enjoy a cappuccino and a bite to eat either inside or on the patio, downstairs is where they keep the good stuff. Like stepping into a traditional French wine cave, the low arched ceiling and soft lighting lets you escape the noise and sets the mood for a great meal. The knockout home-style French cooking gets even better with something from the wine list that includes selections definitely within the ALT budget. Dinner prix fix for ¥3500 or ala carte. Wed-Mon 12-2pm, 6pm-LO 11pm. Closed Tue. 1-14-13 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-736-5055. ¥¥¥

**La Boheme Qualita** Four stories above the Apple store in Tenjin sits this fabulously hip eatery recently brought to Fukuoka in November 2005. The cuisine is fusion countryside Italian and is kept simple, allowing the quality and natural flavors of the ingredients to be expressed on the plate. Outfitted with a patio, cigar lounge, main bar, and a chic main dining room, there's a mood for everyone. Open everyday 11:00am-LO 4:15am. 天神ルーチェ [Tenjin Luce] 5-7F, 2-3-24 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-737-2601. Web: www.global-dining.com/ ¥¥¥¥

**Perche No!?** is one of the top trattorias in Fukuoka. It has a great wine list, delicious food, a superb atmosphere, and unrivaled service. You can choose to order ala carte or the course menu. Either way, you win. Reservations recommended. Tue-Fri 6pm-LO 10pm. Sat 12-2pm, 6pm-LO 10pm. Sundays and holidays 12-2pm, 6pm-9pm. Closed Mon. Spazio-IV Bldg 1F, 2-17-10 Kego, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-725-3579. ¥¥¥

**Pietro** is a Japanese Italian restaurant chain but probably most famous for their salad dressings. They are generally flexible towards a vegetarian diet, and are reasonably priced. MioMio is a take-out version of Pietro and great on the go. Check the website for locations all over Fukuoka. Everyday 11am-LO 10:30pm. イムズビル [IMS Bldg] 12F, 1-7-11 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-733-2065. Web: www.pietro.co.jp. ¥¥ ¥

**Tundora** ツンドラ Ever wonder what Russians eat with all that vodka? Once you sink your teeth into a hot, pillowy, meat and veg-filled piroshki, you'll wonder why you didn't know about this restaurant sooner. Intended to uphold the body through cold, long winters, this cuisine has "comfort food" written all over it. The borscht—a tomato and beetroot based stew of meat and vegetables, is a delicious example. Everyday 11am-10pm. Lunch til 3pm. 斉藤ビル [Saito Bldg] 1F, 2-7-11 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-751-7028. ¥¥¥

**Velona** Named after a sister restaurant in Italy by the same name, Velona has scoured throughout Italy to find only the best ingredients for its pastas and pizza. Tomatoes from Naples, olive oil from Toscana, and salt from Sicily are just some examples of the extremes they have gone through to ensure authenticity. 11:30am-LO 9:30. Closed Wed. 福岡トヨタF・Tビル [Fukuoka Toyota F T Bldg.] B1, 4-8-28 Watanabe-dori, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-721-0057.

**Vignerone** This is the place for wine-os, aspiring wine-os, or for those curious to see what all the fuss with food and wine is about. Owner/master sommelier Fukushima-san strongly

believes in "cost performance" and will gladly help navigate you through his extraordinary wine list to pair with your meal and your wallet. The fare is French incorporating only the best seasonal ingredients locally and from abroad. Gastronomic synergy at its best. Ten minute walk from Tenjin Station. 5 minutes from Yakuin Station. Wed-Mon 6pm-LO 1am. Closed Tuesday. コラソソビル(Corazon Bldg.) 2F, 1-24-24 Takasago, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-531-3880. ¥¥¥¥

**Yebisu Kitchen** Simple, seasonal pastas and pizza dishes make up the majority of the menu here. Easy to find, tasty, and filling for a nice price, why not? Mon-Fri 12-2:30pm, 5:30pm-LO 10pm. Weekends and holidays 12-3pm, 5:30pm-LO 10pm. 2-1-50 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-712-0563. ¥¥

## SPANISH/MEXICAN

**Arena** is a Mexican restaurant that has fantastic burritos and a great weekend salsa dancing night. Yet another dancing spot on Oyafuko-dori. Mon-Fri 6pm-1am, Sat-Sun til 2am. Bacchus Building 5F, 3-4-15 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-739-1313. ¥¥

**El Borracho** is the ALT favorite for authentic Mexican food and over 100 varieties of tequila. In Spanish, the name actually means "the drunkard." Mon-Fri 5:30pm-1am. Sat-Sun til 2am. Liberty Daimyo Bldg. 2F 2-3-2 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-720-5252. ¥¥¥

**Los Pinchos** Like stepping out of Japan and into a Spanish cantina, Los Pinchos is heavy on the ambiance and healthy on their selection of traditional dishes and Spanish wine. A star in the Fukuoka Spanish dining scene, it has been hosting live Flamenco performances on Saturdays for over six years and welcomes beginners and professionals alike. A short walk from either Gofukumachi or Nakasu-Kawabata subway stations. Mon-Sat 5:30pm-LO 10:30pm. プログレススペースII (Progress Space II) 1F, 6-9 Tsunaba, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-262-7789. Web: www.2.odn.ne.jp/lospinchos. ¥¥¥

**Risa Risa** is a Spanish Diner perfect for those who don't need a big meal, but just want something to nibble on while enjoying

good company. All the dishes are appetizer size and there is a choose-your-own course menu starting at 5 dishes for ¥1680. Nomihodai also available starting at ¥1500. Everyday 11:30am-1am. G Bldg. 5F, 2-1-5 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-718-0117.

**Sancho Panza** is located around the corner from Iwataya and serves delicious Latin-fusion dishes. Although the chef hails from a 5 star hotel restaurant in Argentina, the food is reasonably priced with dishes starting in the range of ¥500-600. They frequently host Salsa dancing nights and provide live flamenco guitar performances during dinner hours Monday-Friday. Everyday 12-11pm. デイトンビル Dayton Bldg 3F, 2-4-5 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-762-4110. ¥¥

**Suzushiro** is a tasty Tex-Mex *izakaya* with a variety of dishes including burritos, quesadillas, and nachos. The portions might seem small, but they have a huge list of cocktails, wine, and beer. Call for hours. 小野ビル Ono Bldg. 1F, 2-2-47 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-716-7141. ¥¥

## OTHER/FUSION

**Brasserie Petit Cinq** is located inside the Centraza Hotel right outside of Hakata station's Chikushi exit and has a nice lunch and dinner buffet. Lunch ¥1575 11am-2:30pm; Dinner ¥2310 6-10pm. Tel 092-461-2101 Web: www.centraza.com

**Choperia** is a Brazilian restaurant that offers a decent selection of food and Brazilian beer. 6pm-2am. Closed Mon. Venus Bldg. 1-8-40 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-714-3100. ¥¥

**Daimyo Burger** serves close-enough-to authentic hamburgers out of a lunchwagon on one of the back streets in Daimyo. They also have tasty *takoyaki* and of course, french fries. Everyday 1:30-9pm. 1-3-1 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. ¥

**Haleakala** is a hip California-style *sushi* bar owned by a husband and wife who spent a few years as sushi chefs in the United States. Their menu features more than just sushi and is constantly changing. A wide selection of alcoholic beverages, delicious desserts

and an English menu make this restaurant a favorite. Mon-Thu 12pm-12am, Fri-Sat 12pm-3am, Sun 11am-11pm. Cerebro Bldg. 3F, 1-2-9 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-738-2004. ¥¥

**The Lock Up** is a freak show of a restaurant. Unique from start to finish, the restaurant is modeled after a gothic, punk, S and M, horror house, and a jail, complete with waitresses in risqué and classic jailer's uniforms. The food is so-so, but you weren't really coming here for the food now, were you. 3-6-1 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-720-5701. ¥¥¥

**MacSween** is a Scottish pub with a wide assortment of scotch whiskeys, beers, and perhaps the only Shepherd's Pie in Fukuoka. The only drawback is that it is notoriously difficult to find as it is located in the aptly named Concealment Building. Everyday 12pm-3am. Closed the first Monday of every month. コンシールメントビル(Concealment Bldg.) 2F, Akasaka, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-735-2110. ¥

**Propeller Drive** is a two-level, brightly lit, industrial-style bar and restaurant popular with the cool twenty-somethings. The food is a lot of Eurasian favorites and the bar is well stocked. Some English is spoken. Mon-Fri 6pm-LO 1am, Sat-Sun 6pm-LO 3am. 1-13-30 Imaizumi, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-715-6322. ¥¥

**Sushi Den** is an American *sushi* restaurant where you can find all those crazy handroll combinations they call *sushi* back home. The ambiance is posh and the wine list is well thought-out. The dynamite and spider rolls are excellent. Located just north of the yatai stands in Nagahama. Everyday 5:30pm-12am. Fri-Sat til 1am. 1-9-22 Minato, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-738-5570. ¥¥¥

## BARS

Fukuoka City is where to be whether you're looking for the most hopping bar in town or just want a chill place to nurse your favorite libation. Although tipping in bars is not standard practice, most places will have a seating charge and price their drinks slightly higher. There are so many places hidden in

the streets and alleyways of Tenjin, Daimyo, Haruyoshi, Nishi-nakasu, Imaizumi, and Hakata that making a list would be absurd, but we're gonna try anyway.

**California Cotton Fields** offers more than 100 beers from all over the world with an American country-western atmosphere. Beers from ¥600 and a small but tasty food menu. Everyday 6pm-2:30am. B1F, 4-2-15 Nakasu, Hakata-ku. Tel 092-271-5130.

**Covent Garden** has an all-female staff and a relaxed atmosphere for food and drink. The all-you-can-drink system is innovative: after the ¥300 door charge, there's a price cap of ¥2000 on draft beer, no matter how much you drink. They speak a little English. 7pm-3am, til 5am on weekends. Closed Sun. Estate Moor Mansion 2F, 2-4-33 Imaizumi. Tel 092-738-2400.

**Cross Up** is a Mexican shot bar and restaurant with occasional reggae tendencies. Beer from ¥400, cocktails from ¥700. Specials are as follows: Monday ¥200 beer; Tuesday ¥200 wine; Wednesday ¥500 cocktails; Thursday, all food half price; Friday ¥200 tequila shots. Open 6pm to 3am. No.7 Maria House 1F, 1-8-26 Maizuru, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-716-7141.

**Fireball Café** The only sports bar in Tenjin that actually feels like a real sports bar. The walls are adorned with sports memorabilia which gives it that touch of authenticity, and even the pub grease they call food is reminiscent of home. Die hard fans can catch all major sporting events via satellite TV, although the time difference may pose a bit of a problem. Fair warning must be given that due to the size of the place, reservations for popular sporting events are sometimes difficult to come by, so call ahead. Sun-Thu 6pm-1am, Fri-Sat 6pm-3am. コミュニオンビル (Commune Bldg.) B1, 2-6-28 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-732-8688.

**Go** Nice staff, friendly atmosphere and no seating charge make this the perfect place to pre-party or grab that last nightcap before heading home. A full bar is accompanied by an interesting selection of beers from

around the world and tapas style munchies to seep up all the alcohol. Everyday 6pm-3am. 小野ビル(Ono Bldg) 1F, 2-2-47 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-741-9560. Web: tagban.com/go/top.php. ¥

**Hakata Harp** is an Irish pub with tasty bar food and happy hour from 5-7pm. That means you get to drink your dinner at half-price; draught Guinness, Kilkenny, and Yebisu beer. Otherwise, Guinness on tap is ¥900. Located on Showa-dori, opposite Okura Hotel, it's a great place to get away from it all for a while. ¥300 cover charge. 11:30am-4pm, 5pm-3am (from 12pm on weekends). 1-1 Hotel Eclair Hakata. Tel 092-283-6446.

**International Bar** is a good place to go and just hang out. It features karaoke, Nepalese food, and a staff that is as international as the name claims. Across from the Shopper's Daiei building. Everyday 7pm-2am. Tenjin Fuyo Bldg 4F, 3-1-13 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-714-2179.

**Lao Di fang** Slightly different from the usual watering hole, Lao Di fang is *kakuuchi*, or standing bar. Basically a dive bar without chairs, what this place lacks in seats it makes up for in value. Shochu ¥300~, nama biirus ¥390, umeshu ¥400~, etc. Mon-Sat 5:30pm-12am. Closed Sun. 2-135-2 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-733-1253 ¥

**Nakamura Wine** More of a wine store than bar, but Nakamura-san always has at least one bottle of Champagne and a few wines open to try. And weren't you just wondering where in Daimyo could you pop in and have a glass of wine? Tel 092-741-7331.

**Off-Broadway** Fridays and Saturdays have big crowds and jumpin' hip-hop until 6am. The hamburgers are legendary and the kitchen is open until late. Salsa dance lessons and live music are also often on the schedule so keep your ears open for events. On Oyafuko-dori. Weeknights til 2am. Tel 092-724-5383. Web: www.broadwayjapan.com.

**Source** is a grungy, funky bar, with wood logs for chairs and very fresh, fruity drinks. Jorisu

Building B1, Imaizumi, Chuo-ku. Everyday 6pm-3am. Tel 092-751-1115.

**Tattoo** is known for its eclectic lighting, rooftop balcony, and ¥300 happy hour. The staff doesn't speak English, but it does have an English menu and is seasoned in dealing with rowdy ALTs. The Naan curry pizza and spring rolls are excellent. Everyday 11:30am-5pm, 6pm-LO 3am. 1-18-36 Imaizumi, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-716-6119.

**Uprising** No cover, a chill vibe and reggae music jammin' in the background make this place a relaxing getaway from the concrete jungle. Happy hour Mon-Thu 9:30-11:30pm. Everyday from 9:30pm. 2F 1-3-4 Maizuru, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-716-6364.

**Voodoo Lounge** is a bar/restaurant with a relaxed atmosphere, good food, and is often a venue for a variety of live music. Tuesday night is Ladies' night, all drinks, including cocktails are half-price! Located between Oyafuko-dori and Watanabe-dori, Tenjin Center Building 3F, 3-2-13 Tenjin. Tel 092-732-4662.

**Xaymaca** is a Jamaican bar with authentic food and drinks, a party atmosphere, good prices, and an English-speaking owner. Mon-Fri 4:30pm-2am. Sat-Sun 12pm-2am. In the Nishijin Shotengai (shopping street), 2F on the left. 5-9-20 Nishijin. Tel 092-843-7922. Web: <http://xaymaca.hp.infoseek.co.jp>

## NIGHTCLUBS

Almost all of Fukuoka's dance club scene centers around Tenjin on and around Oyafuko-dori. In comparison to other large cities it's a little sparse, but it's always possible to find some place hopping any day of the week.

**Anmitsu Hime** is not a nightclub but a transvestite comedy and dance show. It's entirely in Japanese, but so over-the-top that even if you don't get the jokes, you'll still be laughing yourself to death. Your ¥5000 ticket includes a *nomihodai*, so at least you have the option of drinking until it starts to get interesting. There's a lot of audience interaction, and be warned that foreigners

usually get suckered into doing something. Showtimes are 8pm, 10pm, and 11:45pm. It's on Oyafuko-dori, opposite Freshness Burger, above Karaoke. Lion Bldg 2F, 3-7-13 Tenjin. Tel 092-725-2550.

**Dark Room** is owned by a former JET and often hosts events such as the Jan-Ken-Pon Charity Tournament or the New JET Welcome Party. There is a great outdoor patio on the roof in summer, and music varies by DJ but tends to be more alternative fare. No cover. Open from 8:30pm. Tenjin Bacchus House Bldg. 8F. Tel 092-725-2989. Web: [www.thedarkroom.biz](http://www.thedarkroom.biz).

**Due Due** is one of Fukuoka's oldest clubs. It plays hip-hop and R&B, and gets a good weekend turnout. The fresh fruit cocktails are lovely. After 10pm there is a ¥1500 cover charge which includes one drink. Obelisk Building 3F, Maizuru, Chuo-ku. Mon-Thu 7pm-3am. Fri-Sun 8pm-5am. Tel 092-721-6250.

**Fubar** is one of the newest clubs in Fukuoka. Although formerly one of the Happy Cock clubs, it's now run by an ex-JET. The place bumps on weekends and is usually crowded with more foreigners than Japanese. Whether that's a good thing or not is up to you. On Oyafuko-dori in the Tenjin Okabu Bldg. Next to Family Mart, above Buaiso, 4F. Tel 092-722-3006.

**Happy Cock** Welcome to the Daimyo meat market. The Happy Cock is filled with beautiful people and has great energy fueled by chart pop/dance/hip-hop music, especially on the wild holiday weekends. For ¥3000 (men) or ¥2000 (ladies) you can buy an all-you-can-drink pass on Friday and Saturday nights, otherwise it's ¥1200 with 2 drinks for both men and women. Drinks from ¥500. Check the website for hours. Mountain 5 Bldg 9F, 2-1-51 Daimyo, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-734-2686. Web: [www.happycock.jp](http://www.happycock.jp)

**Lab-Z Remix** is a small but sophisticated dance club with a nicely mixed clientele and one of the more frequented ALT clubbing spots. Cover is ¥3000, but includes two free drinks. Tenjin Okabu Bldg 6F, above Fubar.

Tel 092-711-1004.

**OD** is a techno dream factory. Some of the best DJs in Japan and from abroad play the main room here. Cover is usually about ¥2500. Open from 9pm on weekdays and from 10pm on weekends. 第19ラインビル Dai 19 Line Bldg, 1-8-36 Maizuru, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-731-2200.

**One Way** is the place to indulge your salsa cravings. If you're a fabulous Latin dancer, you'll fit right in here. Otherwise, expect to sit on the sidelines watching jealously. No cover charge on weekdays, but ¥1000 cover on Friday and Saturdays get you in, and a free drink. Open from 7:30pm. Tel 092-722-2565.

**Q's** is Fukuoka's biggest and most opulent night-club. It's the place to be and be seen and plays great music over its two floors. The vibe is different depending on the day of the week, but is usually techno or hip-hop. It's a little expensive, but it's the place to go if you want that big city club atmosphere. Tenjin YY Building, 3-15-26 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-738-7131. Web: [www.cool-family.com](http://www.cool-family.com).

**Roots** is a laid-back cozy club with 70s funk and an R&B vibe. It's a bar on weeknights, but Friday to Sunday is for adult disco-goers. On Nishi-dori, opposite the big crab. 第11ラインビル Dai 11 Line Building 6F 1-15-41 Daimyo. Tel 092-711-1705.

**Safari** is one of the latest additions to the Fukuoka scene. This hip-hop and R&B club is great fun. On weekdays it's an *izakaya*, and becomes a club on Friday and Saturday from 1am. The club doesn't really come to life until 3am but stays open until well after the first trains start running the next morning. ¥1000 entry (includes one drink). Drinks from ¥500. On Oyafuko-dori. 3-6-18 Tenjin, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-762-6767. Web: [www.club-safari.com](http://www.club-safari.com).

**Sam & Dave** expanded from its base in Osaka to Fukuoka and has found a niche with the younger crowd, often hosting fundraisers and mixers. Music varies by DJ

but the standard is chart pop/dance/hip-hop. Closed Monday and Tuesday. Wed-Thu 7pm-4am with no cover charge. Fri-Sat from 9pm (men ¥2000 with 2 drinks, women ¥1000 with 1 drink). Sunday 7pm-2am with free cover. West Side Bldg 3F, 2-8-22 Tenjin. Tel 092-713-2223.

## GAY/LESBIAN NIGHTLIFE

Whether you're a full-fledged family member, or just looking to explore a different segment of the society, Fukuoka does have some gay bars for you to check out. Lesbian bars in Fukuoka are slightly harder to find, but there are a couple of places in the city worth checking out. They're concentrated on a street block in Sumiyoshi, an area located roughly between Canal City and Tenjin. Before venturing in, it's a good idea to leave your preconceptions at home; in Sumiyoshi, you won't find any huge dance clubs or DJs. Rather, you'll find yourself in small, seemingly regular, everyday Japanese style bars, the only obvious difference being the lack of women. Expensive drinks, sexual innuendo snacks and loud *karaoke* is the standard fare here. Important to note, various bars cater to various types of guys, with distinctions varying from hair length to age groups. Being a foreigner, you might not feel at home anywhere, but don't fret—embrace being different, enter with an open attitude and the locals will embrace you back.

**Sumiyoshi** is easily accessible by foot from Hakata station. Upon exiting the Hakataguchi (博多口) side, walk straight towards the main street ahead of you. Turn left and walk to the end of the block, passing the large Hakata Post Office on your left. At the corner intersection, cross to the other side and turn right on Sumiyoshi-dori (住吉島). Walk straight, away from Hakata with the ANA Hotel across the street on your right. Eventually you'll come to a Royal Host restaurant. From there, keep walking straight, take the third left and you will soon find yourself in the treasure trove of Fukuoka's gay community. Most bars are open every night, but weekends are the best time to explore. On

an odd note, most of the bars have their own sports team comprised of regular customers. From soccer, to rugby, to badminton, you might be invited out to the bar's next game if you become a frequent face. If the scene isn't for you, there are semi-regular club nights as well. Often on a long weekend, these events conform to more Western notions of partying and as such, attract a number of foreigners. For information on upcoming events, it's best to check flyers available at the following listings.

### GAY BARS

**Overall** is an overall great place to start your night. One of the first bars on the right side of the street, the bartenders are very friendly and quite used to seeing foreign faces. A beer can set you back as much as ¥900, but includes *karaoke*. They also have handy, up-to-date maps of the area and its bars.

**Dai-Dai** is half-a-block down, and is a rather large, if aphotic choice of venue. Often empty early on, things get packed for Saturday Night Gay Bingo at around midnight. Prizes range from your very own keep of *shōchū*, to "articles" that will induce a nostalgic laugh the next time you play Bingo with your kids at school.

**Shichimencho**, further down on the left side, is a popular spot where the arrival of a *gaijin* might cause the customers to suddenly become preoccupied with their cell phones, but the staff will gladly treat you like one of the guys.

**Bayo** sort of looks like an insurance office on the outside, but on the inside, you'll find a welcoming staff who typically cater to guys on the chubby side. A very friendly spot, near the end of the street on your left.

### LESBIAN BARS

**Heaven** 102 Nakahara BLD 3-13-23 Haruyoshi, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-761-5984.

**@home** 4th Floor, Oka BLD, 1 2-18-13 Kego, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi. Tel 092-733-6555

## SHOPPING

### BOOKSTORES

Though selection may be limited, foreigners can find most major English publications at larger bookstores in Fukuoka City. In Tenjin, Kinokuniya, Junkudo, Maruzen, and ABC (Aoyama Book Center) are the main bookstores that carry a range of English magazines, books, Japanese language materials, and newspapers. At first the sticker prices may be a bit alarming, but soon they will become second nature. Or, you can do what Japanese people do, and read it there. Also, check out the bargain book sections where occasional clearance sale English books can be found dirt cheap. If you can't find what you want, check out Amazon Japan ([www.amazon.co.jp](http://www.amazon.co.jp)) where spending more than ¥1500 in one order gets you free shipping.

### DEPARTMENT STORES

Throughout Japan's retail history these conglomerates of retail have become a status symbol and a guarantee of quality. Japanese department stores are only occupied by the most glamorous boutiques and high quality products; made evident in that everything looks so pretty, but you realistically can't afford it. **Daimaru, Iwataya, and Mitsukoshi** are the main (and most prestigious) department stores and are within walking distance of each other in Tenjin. **Izutsuya** is also a fairly large department store found adjacent to Hakata Station. They are usually open from 10am-8pm with special hours during the holiday season. There are also a number of smaller retail/discount stores around the city like HomeWide, Goo-day, Trial, Nafco, Jusco, Mr. Max and those owned by the Daiei Corporation such as U-need and Sun Live. Although these are not as big or expensive as the department stores mentioned above, they still cater to most needs and are friendlier to the ALT's budget.

### ELECTRONICS

Tenjin and Hakata are home to a few of Japan's largest electronics stores, Bic

Camera and Yodobashi Camera. Wherever you shop for electronics, be sure to apply for a point card. You will get a percentage of money back on your purchases or points that can be applied to discounts on future purchases. For example, you may buy a ¥40 000 camera and get enough points to get a good memory card nearly free. Best, Bic, and Yodobashi usually have English speaking staff available so ask within.

**Best Denki** The Tenjin location is a three-minute walk from the Tenjin subway station, just around the corner from Starbucks and across the street from the Acros Bldg. Web: [www.bestdenki.ne.jp](http://www.bestdenki.ne.jp)

**Bic Camera** There are two locations in Tenjin, both within a two minute or less walk from Mitsukoshi. Web: [www.biccamera.com](http://www.biccamera.com)

**Kitamura Camera** A Camera products store. Offers cheap and fast film development. Web: [www.kitamura.co.jp](http://www.kitamura.co.jp)

**Yodobashi Camera** Exit the JR Hakata Station from the Chikushi-guchi and turn right. It's on your left. Web: [www.yodobashi.com](http://www.yodobashi.com)

### GROCERY STORES

**Bon Repas** is an upscale supermarket specializing in international foods such as cheese, breakfast cereals, snacks, and most importantly, ranch dressing. There are three locations in and around Fukuoka City: Momochi, Yakuin, and Nishijin. For the Nishijin location, go out of the Nishijin subway station at exit #1, take a left up Route 263. It will be on the right underneath the Starbucks in the TenGood Bldg.. For the Momochi location, take a right from Nishijin subway exit #1, follow Route 263 and Bon Repas will be on the left.

**Marukyo** is a great store to go to for cheap eats. There is one location near the Jonan-ku *kyoshokuin jutaku*.

**Sunny** is one of the larger grocery store chains, has great produce and international items. Look for the treble clef "S."

## SHOPPING COMPLEXES

Mall-rats would be surprised to find that in a country as in tune with fashion as Japan is and with their insatiable thirst for spending money, there aren't very many shopping malls. The giant retail conglomerate AEON, which owns Jusco, usually is responsible for the mall-like complexes in the more local areas apart from the city.

**Canal City** Smack dab in the middle of Hakata, Nakasu and Tenjin. See Canal City entry for details. Web: [www.canalcity.co.jp](http://www.canalcity.co.jp)

**Hawks Town Mall** in Momochi is another good place for shopping and has been recently renovated, effectively doubling its size. Foreigners will be pleased to find many familiar stores like Toys R Us, Gap, Quiksilver, Billabong, Starbucks, Hard Rock Café and more. It also has bowling, batting cages, a day spa, and a movie theater. Everyday 11am-9pm. Restaurants open til 10pm. 2-2-1 Jigyohama, Chuo-ku. Tel 092-847-1429. Web: [www.hawkstown.com](http://www.hawkstown.com)

**Pier Walk Marinoa City** is an outlet mall featuring many stores selling western-sized apparel. Of special note are the **Muji outlet store** (¥300 casual shirts) and **Mr. Max**, a really cheap general house wares store. See Marinoa City entry for details. Web: [www.marinoacity.com](http://www.marinoacity.com).

## FURNITURE & HOME

**HomeWide**, **Goo-day**, **Nafco**, and **Off House** are great affordable places to start looking for furniture and appliances for your home. Nafco (two-one style) is an upscale version of Nafco, and of all the places listed here, probably has the best selection for bed linens, *futon*, *kotatsu*, shelving and more. Off House is a used goods store, but generally the items are of high quality and in good condition. Sometimes there are some amazing bargains. They also sell some used electronics, appliances, CDs, etc. Wander around your area to find the closest one near you. Note: many of these stores offer delivery service, so you don't have to lug your stuff all the way home.

## GENERAL

**Don Quixote** is a cheerful store that fits a great range of items onto their floor space and has prices lower than almost anywhere else. Occasionally, you'll find them selling off extra merchandise at unbelievable prices. Stores in Nishijin, (next to subway exit #1) and in Hakozaki.

## ENTERTAINMENT

### CINEMAS

Most cinemas in Fukuoka City are in Tenjin and Nakasu, but small, private cinemas dot the city as well. [See the General Section for more information.] For show times in English, visit [www.fukuokanow.com](http://www.fukuokanow.com) and click on "Cinema Guide."

**AMC Canal City 13** is located in Canal City. Mainly showing current blockbusters either dubbed or subtitled. Tel 092-272-2222.

**Cine Libre Hakataeki** in the Hakata Bus Center is good for alternatives to Hollywood films. Tel 092-434-3691.

**Cine Salon Praveria** in Nishijin is also a good bet for alternatives to your basic Hollywood flick.

**Cineterie Tenjin** is the best place for alternative and art-house films from around the world. It's on Oyafuko-dori about five blocks toward Nagahama from the Freshness Burger. Tel 092-781-5508.

**Solaria Cinema** shows movies that are on their way out of the theater (and probably already on DVD). It's located inside Solaria Plaza. Tel 092-733-7373.

**United Cinemas** located in Hawks Town Mall is perhaps the nicest theater in the city. It shows first-run films for the typical price, but the stadium seating and roomy seats are nice. For ¥1000 yen per year you can sign up for a member's card which gets you a free movie ticket, a Coke, a discount off the normal price, and allows you to collect points that can be converted to additional free tickets (one free ticket every five or six movies is typical). Web: [www.uci-j.co.jp](http://www.uci-j.co.jp)

## KARAOKE

There are so many *karaoke* places in Fukuoka City that it's best to just explore until you find one that you like. You pay by the hour and there are usually different packages to choose from, including just renting the room or including a *nomihodai* deal. However, make sure you understand the deal you are getting as some places are purposely tricky with their menus.

**Big Echo** is a convenient place to start your *karaoke* education. They offer a point card that can be redeemed for discounts on the room fee. A basic room fee is ¥315 per hour per person. The *nomihodai* menu is ¥1200 yen per hour per person and you can choose anything from soft drinks to cocktails, beer, wine, etc. They update their music selection every six months, and although they don't have an English menu, they're used to dealing with JETs. The most difficult part is figuring out the remote control, but with a little trial and error you should be fine. Open 24 hours.

## OTHER

**Yu no Hana** is a popular onsen located in Nagahama, northwest of Tenjin. It features several indoor baths, as well as an outdoor courtyard with two more communal baths and three large wooden buckets that serve as private tubs. There is a sauna inside and a steam room accessible from outside, as well as a foot-bath and a raised platform covered in reed mats where you can lay down and cool off between baths. There are baths on the first and second floors, one for men and one for women. They switch genders daily, so you'll be able to experience both floors if you go on different days. Overall, the two floors are basically identical with a few cosmetic differences. Admission is ¥700, and you can rent or buy a towel for ¥150 each. If you become a member, you get a ¥50 discount each time you go. Buy tickets for everything you need at the machine next to the front desk. Mon-Fri 8am-3am, Sat-Sun 8am-6am. Tel 092-733-1126

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

### INTERNET CAFÉS

There are a number of places that offer Internet access in the city. Many require purchasing a membership before using their Internet services. The average charge for a membership is around ¥300-400 and the hourly rate is about the same. These shops usually have printers, copiers, and scanners available. Some, including Cybac and Popeye's Media Cafe, offer discounts on all-night use, making them an uncomfortable but cheap way to sleep in the city if you miss the last train home. See the General Section for more information.

**Cybac** is a chain with two locations in Tenjin. One is located on Nishi-dori across the street from the Apple store. Look for the big yellow car (an actual car) hanging off the front of the building. The second location is closer to the clubs, visible from Oyafuko-dori. A third location is in Nishijin. By subway, go up exit #1 from Nishijin station and turn left on Route 263. At the Best Denki turn left again. Cybac is on the left immediately after the Topos. Open 24 hours.

**Kinko's** has several locations in Fukuoka City. One is in Nishijin very close to the subway. Take Nishijin subway exit #1. Exit the station and turn left on Route 263. Kinko's is at the next traffic light on the left, across from Claire's Boutique. Another Kinko's location is in Akasaka across from Starbucks. Take the subway to Akasaka. A number of Nishitetsu buses also stop near this Kinko's. A third Kinko's is located in Chuo Ward's Beffu area. Kinko's is open 24 hours a day.

**Kokusai Hiroba** Internet usage is also on the list of all the other free services Kokusai Hiroba provides to its members.

**Popeye's Media Cafe** is located in Tenjin on Showa-dori. Open 24 hours a day.

**Round 1** More than just an amusement center filled with UFO catcher games and purikura, Round 1 also offers Internet

access. Located across the street from the main Iwataya building.

**Space Create** is open 24 hours with locations in several areas of Fukuoka. One location is in Nishijin close to the subway. Go up Nishijin subway exit #1. Turn left on Route 263. Walk about three blocks and you'll see Space Create on the left side, just after the Starbucks and next to Hard Off.

## LOVE HOTELS

In a culture with traditionally thin walls and multiple generations living under the same room, it's not surprising that couples need another location outside their homes to have some, er, alone time. Love hotels originated to fulfill that need. Noted for their rent-by-the-hour trade and sex toy vending machines, they are a unique experience in Japan. Although they still struggle with the somewhat seedy or completely over-the-top image that has been built up, the number of tasteful establishments with decent amenities, sometimes even better than normal hotels, is increasing. One thing remains constant however, and that is discretion and privacy. Secluded entrances, touch-screen room selection, and payment via vacuum tube are all designed with this in mind.

**Love Hotels** are located throughout Fukuoka City but most are concentrated along Nakasu River, in Tenjin south of Mitsukoshi, and near the airport. They have rather ostentatious neon signs broadcasting cheesy names such as "With" & "Apple." If you pass an establishment with a somewhat corny name, claiming to be a fashion or boutique hotel, chances are you have come to the right place.

Prices are general divided into three categories: no time or free time, which is the daytime or off peak rate; rest, which is for short stays of three hours before 10pm; and stay, for those looking for the overnight love hotel experience. Prices range from ¥3000 to 15 000 depending on how long and when you are staying. As to be expected, they are most popular on weekends or before a national holiday, so be careful as you can not

book your stay.

**Acqua Myu** is a love hotel on the west side of the city in Odo. Its coolest rooms have an entire bar adjacent to the bed so you can move the party from cocktails to the main course in about two steps. Rest from ¥2500, stay from ¥5000. Tel 092-883-0045. Web: [www.opmcorp.co.jp/acqua.htm](http://www.opmcorp.co.jp/acqua.htm)

**Hotel Ritmo** doesn't have themed decor, but the huge bathrooms (some with full-sized Jacuzzis) and in-room slot machines makes this an interesting choice. Look for the large glowing sign on the northeast corner of Imaizumi Park. The cheapest room's rest rate is ¥2940/70 minutes and the most expensive is ¥10 400 for the night.

**Royal Cas VI Hotel** has a Greek/Safari theme (only at the entrance), outdoor baths, and everything is computerized to ensure your privacy (you'll need to know some kanji). Choose the room number to look at the room's options (not all rooms have DVD players). Choose 戻る if you want to return to the main menu, or 入る if you want to enter that room. Take your room ticket, go to your room, and don't worry about a thing until you check out. Hit the 合計 button at the room's entrance for the bill, feed your money into the slot, and you're good to go. Follow the directions to Hotel Ritmo (above). It's half-way down Imaizumi Park on the left side. The prices are about the same as Hotel Ritmo.

## CAPSULE HOTELS

When the last train has come and gone but the salaryman is not done drinking, where does he sleep? Simple—a capsule hotel. Capsule Hotels are places where people sleep in individual "capsules," for the night and they are generally segregated by sex. Capsules (カプセル) are generally located in areas surrounded by office buildings as businessmen sometimes do not make the last train home. Many Capsules can be found in Tenjin, in and around Oyafuko-dori, Nakasu and the Hakata areas. Many capsule hotels offer other amenities such as bath facilities, snazzy pajamas, and TV lounges.

**Capsule Wellbe Fukuoka** カプセルホテルサウナのウェルビー is located between Hakata and Nakasu and costs ¥3000-4000 a night. Men only. Tel 092-291-1009. Web: [www.wellbe.co.jp/wellbe/fukuoka\\_a.html](http://www.wellbe.co.jp/wellbe/fukuoka_a.html).

**Hotel Cabinas Fukuoka** ホテルキャピナス sits next to Hakata Station. It costs between ¥3000-4000 per night. Men only. Exit from Hakataguchi and turn right. Look for the red カプセル sign up high on the left. Web: [www7.ocn.ne.jp/~cabinas/](http://www7.ocn.ne.jp/~cabinas/).

**SIESTA** is located in Tenjin's Hotel Greenland and is one of the few capsule hotel options for women. It offers a sauna, aromatic baths, and other services. The capsule hotel is about ¥4000 a night; sauna ¥2310 to use. Its location makes it a convenient place to crash after a night of clubbing on Oyafukudori. It's across the street from OD (see Nightclubs section above). Women only. Tel 092-733-4000. Web: [www.greenland-group.jp](http://www.greenland-group.jp)

## TRANSPORTATION TIPS

**Fukuoka City Subway** consists of three different lines. The Hakozaki and Kuko (airport) lines are accessible via the Tenjin Chikagai under Solaria Stage and runs along Meiji-dori. The new Nanakuma line (also accessible via the Tenjin Chikagai) is located south of Mitsukoshi department store and runs along Watanabe-dori before heading east. The Nanakuma line does not share a terminal with the Kuko and Hakozaki lines, so a 2 hour grace period is given to passengers who need to transfer. It is about a 15 minute walk between terminals. The subway is easy to ride and hard to get lost on with strategically placed maps in romaji at each entrance, exit and door. Subway trains stop at every station and all stops are announced in English. When you transfer to and from the Nanakuma line, pass through the green signaled gates, take your ticket and walk to the other terminal. Tel 092-845-7800.

**Nishitetsu Bus** runs the local bus service throughout Fukuoka-ken. Schedules and

maps at bus stops are usually in Japanese and can be confusing, but the sign on the bus is usually printed in English. If you ask, the driver is usually kind enough to notify you of your stop. There are main bus stops at designated areas on Meiji-dori, Watanabe-dori, and Kokutai-doro. Information can be found at the Highway Bus Center on the third floor of the Nishitetsu-Tenjin Station. Here you can also get stop information and a Tenjin bus stop map. Tel 092-733-3333.

**Highway Bus Centers** in Hakata Station and Tenjin Station in Fukuoka City provide long-distance bus services. Nishitetsu bus information can be found on the 3F of both the **Tenjin Bus Center** and the **Hakata Bus Center**. Buy your ticket at the counter before boarding and get in line for your destination at its designated boarding point.

**JR Kyushu Trains** all stop at Hakata Station, the major transportation center in Fukuoka for JR and Shinkansen trains. Train schedules are in English at larger stations and unless there is inclement weather, you can set your watch by the train. Tel 092-471-8111.

**Nishitetsu Tenjin-Omuta Line** runs southbound departing from Tenjin Station in Fukuoka and terminating in Omuta at Omuta Station. There are regular, express, and limited express trains. All trains cost the same and tend to be cheaper than the JR. See the General section for more details on transportation and deals on fares.

**Nishitetsu Miyajidake Line** runs north from Kaizuka station (end stop for the Hakozaki subway line) to Tsuyazaki. However, beginning in April 2007, the train's last stop will be Shingū.



## NORTHERN FUKUOKA

### FUKUTSU-SHI 福津市

The coastal location of Fukutsu makes this city a famous summertime hotspot for beachgoers of all kinds. Fukutsu City was created in May 2005 by combining the towns of Fukuma and Tsuyazaki into one city. Although the address has changed, the locals still carry a strong identity of place.

**Anzunosato Park** is located seven kilometers past Nishitetsu Tsuyazaki station on Route 495. In early April, this park is a favorite amongst locals for viewing *ume* and *sakura* blossoms and for letting their kids run around the big grassy playground. There is also a farmer's market open every day except Tuesday. The top of the park commands a grand view of the islands offshore and the surrounding plantations, making this a great place for some beautiful sunsets.

**Fukuma Beach** is a popular windsurfing spot especially in the summer. The beach is a 5 minute walk from Nishitetsu Fukuma station on the Nishitetsu Miijidake line, or a five-minute cab from JR Fukuma Station. From Nishitetsu Fukuma Station, exit the station, turn right, and make a left at the end of the street. Go straight and you'll be on the sand in about 5 minutes. Windsurfing costs about ¥5000 per day, with a variety of places to do so. Cafés and bars along the beach offer a place to relax and soak up the view. You can also spend the night at one of the pensions lined up along Fukuma beach such as Sandstone Cafe/Art Gallery and Pensions (rooms for rent). Tel 094-043-4486.

**Fukuma Harbor/Seaside Park** is a newly constructed seaside park with a huge fishing pier that is on the most southern part of Fukuma Beach.

**Hinokagenoyu** is a stone bath located on Route 97 between Fukutsu and Koga. Stone baths are really very good for blood circulation. A must try! Exit the JR Fukuma Station, follow the green road to Route 97 and at the "JR Fukuma Station West" intersection, turn left. The bath will be on your left next to 7-Eleven. Everyday 10am-11pm. Last admission 10pm. It's ¥1050/visit or 12 tickets for ¥10 000. Tel 0940-43-2073.

**Shiraishihama Beach** is a quiet and secluded beach where you can watch baby sea turtles hatch in the late summer/early fall. From Nishitetsu Tsuyazaki station, turn right onto Route 495, go 1 kilometer past Joyfull, and you'll see a small sign for the beach. Turn left here. At the next traffic signal, turn right. About one mile down the road there will be a small dirt lane off to your left next to a canal (it's easy to miss).

**Suwanoyu Onsen** is located on Route 97 5 minutes from the Nishitetsu Store. From the store turn right onto Route 97, the bath will be on your right. From JR Fukuma Station, exit the station, follow the green road until you reach Route 97, at the "JR Fukuma Station West" intersection turn right. You'll see the big neon sign about 300 meters away on your left. Bath hours are 7am-1am. ¥490 per person. Bring your own towel or buy one there. For ¥1000 they offer a sand-bath from 10am-10pm. Tel 094-043-4126. Web: [www.suwa-yu.com](http://www.suwa-yu.com).

**Togo Park and Lighthouse** is a fun sightseeing spot with an excellent view of the Genkai Sea and its surrounding area. It is also great in early spring when the sakura are in full bloom. From Tsuyazaki Station get onto Route 533. The road will dead-end into a marina, but if you turn sharply to the right it will continue across a little bridge. Take the first left after the bridge. Go straight about 100 meters and turn right up a steep hill. Togo Park is at the top. It is quite a hike from Tsuyazaki Station, but well worth it!

**Tsuyazaki Beach** is conveniently located only a two-minute walk away from Nishitetsu Tsuyazaki station. Exit the station and turn left onto the main road. Walk down the road a bit and by this point the beach should be right in front of you. You'll see some small boats for rent along the sidewalk just before you reach the beach.

**Tsuyazaki Church** is the perfect place to go for Christmas Eve service. It's held every year on December 24 at 6:30pm. To get there, follow Route 495 towards Tsuyazaki. At the second traffic signal after the Mini Stop, you should be able to see the beach and a big *tonii* on your left. Turn right at this intersection, and make the second left, down a narrow road. Follow it and you'll see the church on your left. Alternatively from Nishitetsu Miyajidake station head towards the beach on the main road. Follow the directions above, except turn right at the second little street before the intersection. The church sits on a wide piece of land. If you're coming by car, knowing where to park can be confusing. Drive past the church and turn left. You'll see a wide parking lot and road on your left that loops around to the church. The church itself is not visible from the main road, but once you follow the narrow road back, you can't miss it. Tel 094-052-1102.

**Yuhikan Community Center and Public Bath** is located on Tsuyazaki Beach. A few minutes walk from Nishitetsu Tsuyazaki station. Turn left onto the main road in the direction of the beach. Cross the street at the second intersection. You should see a blue and silver landmark design. The bath is about 100 meters beyond that on your right. Head left towards the beach. It's a brand new facility, and offers an indoor bath and jacuzzi, a deck area facing the beach where you can relax watching the sunset, and a big tatami room with Japanese-style tables where you can bring your own lunch or dinner. Admission is ¥300. Bath hours are 11am-8pm. Tel 094-052-3353.

### HISAYAMA-MACHI 久山町

Hisayama town is mostly known among JETs for the Torius shopping complex (home to Costco), but there is more to Hisayama than just shopping. Hisayama is also well-known among locals for its abundance of natural mountain *onsen*. Visit the town's website for more information on local shrines and festivals. Web: [www.town.hisayama.fukuoka.jp/](http://www.town.hisayama.fukuoka.jp/)

**Torius Mall トリアス** is a big shopping complex that includes a variety of shops, cafes, restaurants, a cinema, and a sports facility. Shops include Nafco, Uniqlo, Best Denki, three or four camping/outdoor/ski shops, a general supermarket, Daiso (¥100 shop), as well as many clothing stores. The highlight of Torius Mall is Costco Wholesale. By car, take Route 35 and follow the road that curves along side the mountain. Make sure you have a map before you go. The Torius Mall complex has a yellow bridge crossing the road and has a lot of neon lights. By bus, take bus 27B directly to Kogabashi Torius-mae from two locations: Kashii-Sando and the Central Post Office in Tenjin. By train, take the JR Fukuhoku-Yutaka line to Sasaguri Station. From there cross the tracks and catch the Nishitetsu bus to the mall. Buses run once every hour at the top of the hour.

**Yu Ami Chaya Onsen - Tsurezure No Yu** ゆあみ茶屋つれづれの湯 is good place to relax after shopping, especially in winter. The baths are spacious and clean and there are two saunas and a small outside rotemburo. The price is ¥700 between 10am-9pm and ¥500 after 9pm. The baths close at 2am. 991 Yamada, Hisayama-machi. Tel 092-931-9222. Web: [http://www.supersentou.com/6\\_kyushu/tsurezurenoyu.htm](http://www.supersentou.com/6_kyushu/tsurezurenoyu.htm) (Japanese).

## MUNAKATA-SHI 宗像市

Munakata city is famous for Munakata Shrine and the encompassing natural beauty of the Genkai seaside. It includes Akama, Togo, and, as of 2005, Oshima Island. For more information on Munakata and the surrounding area, visit [www.city.munakata.fukuoka.jp/English/index.html](http://www.city.munakata.fukuoka.jp/English/index.html).

**Cycle Oshima** offers fantastic scenery, cattle ranches, a windmill, lighthouse, observatory deck, *onsen*, and more. In the cooler months of winter or early spring, the high sky coupled with Oshima Island's location makes for some spectacular views. It will cost ¥600 round trip to take your bike onto the ferry or for the same price you can rent one at Oshima Port for three hours. (Three hours may be enough exercise for one day when you see the hills you'll be pushing it up.) Maps of the island can be picked up at either port. To get to the ferry take Route 495 through Tsuyazaki Town and follow the big blue ferry sign. Ferry tickets are ¥500 each way. For a ferry schedule visit [www.vill.ooshima.fukuoka.jp/](http://www.vill.ooshima.fukuoka.jp/) and click on the boat. The first column lists departing times to Oshima Island, the second column lists departing times from Oshima Island.

## SASAGURI-MACHI 篠栗町

Sasaguri is a pilgrimage town nestled in the mountains about 20 minutes east of Hakata and famed for its big bronze Buddha. Teachers may be familiar with Sasaguri for its Fukuoka Prefecture Education Center, which hosts the Fukuoka JET Mid-Year Seminar every November. To get here by train take the JR Fukuhoku-Yutaka line from Hakata (platform 9) and get off at Sasaguri Station. The journey takes 20 minutes and costs ¥270. By bus take the 310 from stop 19A outside the Central Post Office in Tenjin. The bus leaves every half hour and takes about 35 minutes to Sasaguri (¥350). Bus 31 also

goes there using surface streets which take about 50 minutes (¥520). For the Education Center get off at Sasaguri Kamimachi 篠栗上町 (two stops after Sasaguri). [www.town.sasaguri.fukuoka.jp](http://www.town.sasaguri.fukuoka.jp)

**Create Sasaguri** is the town community center where you can get more information and leaflets on shrines and temples, as well as information on other events and activities happening in the town. Take the pedestrian overpass to get there from JR Sasaguri Station. Closed Mon. Tel 092-948-2222.

**Hasamiwa** はさみ岩 is a double rock formation located right at the top of Wakasugi Mountain which overlooks Sasaguri-machi. From the station it takes 15 minutes to drive up the mountain and on foot it's a good two-hour hike. At the top, follow the signs pointing to Hasamiwa or ask at the shrine or shop. Historically only a *zennin* or virtuous person could pass through the narrow gap between the two rock faces. Now there are metal chains to help the less virtuous through so anybody can do it! It isn't a big challenge, but it is still a nice area ornamented with statues of the Buddha and steps leading up to other shrines in the forest.

**Kanaide (J.ichimen) Kanondou** 金出(十一面)観音堂 is also known as temple number 27 and is an easy stroll along a mountain road. This was once the second home of a Sasaguri mayor and is considered one of Sasaguri's masterpieces. At the top there is a small waterfall and some statues. You may be greeted by an obachan offering tea and snacks (she doesn't speak English, but that's no problem). From the station turn left onto the 607, and walk for 10-15 minutes, then turn left onto Route 92 (Kamimachi 上町). Stay on Route 92, cross Route 201 and keep walking up the winding road for ten minutes or so. The shrine will be on your left, opposite shrine number 87 (弘照院 K.sh. in). If you have a car there are many more shrines to explore further up this winding mountain road.

**Nanzoin (the reclining Buddha)** 南蔵院 is home to the biggest bronze statue in the world. According to the locals, the man who

built the Buddha won the lottery and wanted to leave something for posterity. In addition there are scores of tiny Buddha statues all with individually sculpted faces, modeled after patrons. You can walk inside the Buddha for ¥500 and see sand from each of the 88 shrines, so essentially you will have "visited" them all. Write your wish on a wooden stick and feed it to the Buddha's bones as you stand in the heart of the Buddha. For kitsch value, you can get a *purikura* of your face superimposed on the Buddha's body as a souvenir. The adjoining temple is also worth strolling to. By car Nanzoin is accessible from Route 201 (not the by-pass) about 2km outside Sasaguri on the way to Iizuka. By train, get off at Kido Nanzoin-mae Station 城戸南蔵院前駅.

**Shrines** There are 88 shrines in Sasaguri, which is one of Japan's designated holy sites. If you are interested in seeing all 88 shrines, the full circuit takes three days and you can go alone or as part of a tour group. Pick up a valuable brochure with all the shrines marked on it from the tiny tourist information box outside Sasaguri Station (9am-3pm Mon-Sat). Some of the shrines are within walking distance of the station, but be ready to walk many kilometers if you follow the pilgrimage routes on foot. If you just want to see a few temples it is much quicker and easier by car.

## EATING & DRINKING

### CAFÉS

**Cafe de Bocco** is a chic little café perched on Fukuma Beach offering all the coolness of a city café on the beach. Wed-Sun 11:30am-8pm. Tel 094-043-2628. ¥¥

**Pantai Bagus** is another snack stand with food, drinks, and Reggae music. They also have windsurfing classes, jet-ski rentals, and banana boat and inner tube rides. ¥¥

**Sakaeya** is a cake shop that offers a free

bottomless cup of coffee as you're shopping for confections. It's located on the corner of the Nissan Red Stage intersection, just past the Nishitetsu Store. From JR Fukuma Station, turn left out of the station. At the next traffic signal, turn right. Follow the road and you can't miss it. Tel 094-043-3977. Web: [www.sakaeya.co.jp](http://www.sakaeya.co.jp) (Japanese). ¥¥

### JAPANESE

**Fukagawa** is a hole-in-the-wall *izakaya* in Fukutsu City that specializes in *motsunabe*, but also has a plethora of other tasty food items along with reasonable prices and friendly service. Around the corner from the Nishitetsu Store (Sanki). Mon-Sat 5pm-10:30pm. Heading north on Route 97, turn left at the "Green Town ENT" intersection, just before the Nishitetsu Store. Fukagawa will be on your right at the next traffic signal. Tel 094-043-8922. ¥¥

**Jizo Tofu** 地藏とうふ is a gem if you happen to be in Sasaguri at lunchtime. It serves a fantastic set lunch for ¥850 and *udon* and *soba* dishes for ¥550. Perfect for vegetarians. If you are heading away from Sasaguri on the 201, cross the 92 about a kilometer from Sasaguri town and the restaurant is on the right-hand side next to the 7-Eleven. Lunch only. Tel 092-948-1225. ¥ ¥

**Sanyoken** 三洋軒 doubles as a highly recommended *ramen* and *gyoza* shop during the day and an *izakaya* at night. As you are heading into Sasaguri from Hakata on Route 607, look for the upside down *ramen* sign, about a kilometer from Sasaguri station on the right. Mon-Sat 11am-12am, Sunday til 11pm, and Tuesday til 2:30pm. Tel 092-947-7070. ¥

**Stamina Taro** is the number one all-you-can-eat *yakiniku* restaurant. It also offers a *sushi* bar, salad bar, soup bar, desserts and more. Lunch is just under ¥1000 for one hour. Dinner is around ¥1700 for 90 minutes. Located in Shingu on Route 3, it is best to go by car. The restaurant is on your right as you head towards Fukuoka. The building resembles a small castle. You can sometimes smell the barbeque and see the

smoke. Look for the Sun Self gas station on your left at the Hirayama intersection. You'll need to make a U-turn here. It will be the third restaurant in the row; don't miss the tiny entrance. Tel 092-962-6555. ¥

**Uokichi 魚吉** is a great *izakaya* that serves fantastic food including fresh fish, *sushi*, *sushi* salads, as well as *nabe* in winter. The owners are very welcoming and enamored with Hawaii so their restaurant has a life-size cardboard hula girl as well as numerous Hawaiian shirts and palm trees. From Sasaguri Station turn right, walk 100 meters, and the restaurant is on your left, with fairy lights outside. Tel 092-947-7739. ¥¥

**Yumeya** serves western and Japanese cuisine at a medium price. The service is great, the people are friendly, and the food is absolutely delicious. Walk straight out of the Sasaguri Station, past the Lawson. Cross the main road, go one block, turn left, walk one more block, and you will see it on your left. Closed Mon. Tel 092-947-3137. ¥¥

## OTHER

**Chili Joe's** is a Mexican restaurant in Shingu. The owner lived in America and speaks fluently in a So-Cal accent. Coming from Fukuoka by car, exit Route 3 near Kashii onto Route 495. Pass McDonald's, turn left at the Wajiro intersection heading towards Uminonakamichi Seaside Park. You'll cross a railroad. It's located between the first and second traffic signals, on your left. The restaurant is on the 1F of an apartment building next to Lawson. Coming from Shingu, turn right at the Wajiro intersection, just before McDonald's. By train, get off at Nata Station on the JR Kashii line. Exit the station and go right, walking towards the Sunny supermarket. The restaurant is on your right. Tel 092-608-2828. ¥¥

**Ciao** is a great Italian place with a lunch special that include pasta, a mini salad and coffee or tea for under ¥1000. Dinner starts at ¥800 per entree. Located between Togo and Akama in Munakata on the main bus route, or a 10-minute walk from Munakata High School, just past the Togo Bashi bridge/

intersection. It looks like a log cabin, so it's difficult to miss. Tue-Sun 11:30-10:30pm. Tel 094-035-5030. While you're there, check out their new stone bath next door. Owned by the same company, it's ¥1000 for one hour. You will be surprised at how much you can really sweat, not to mention the benefits to your skin! Everyday 10am-10pm, last bath at 9pm. Tel 094-033-1849. ¥¥

**Enak Bagus** is a spacious *izakaya* just around the bend and down the street from the Fukuma Harbor/Seaside Park fishing pier. The atmosphere and food have strong Southeast Asian influence, and offers separate seating arrangements for large groups. Everyday 6pm-12am. Tel 094-038-4030. Just across the street are two stores sharing the name Bagus specializing in goods from Thailand, Nepal, and Indonesia. Everyday 11am-11pm. ¥¥

**Enzo** is a beautiful Italian restaurant with two locations serving up some great food right on Tsuyazaki Beach. Follow Route 495 north through Tsuyazaki Town until you see a sign for "Enzo" on your left. Follow the sign down a narrow road to the beach. You can also get there from the Munakata-Togo area by turning left at the Togobashi West intersection along Route 69. Follow this road for about a 15-minutes. Turn left at the third traffic signal (you should see a "Welcome to Genkai" sign on your right). Go about 500 meters and you should see the "Welcome to Fukutsu" sign and the small Enzo sign, you'll need to make an immediate right. The lunch set starts from ¥1500 including pasta, salad, a drink and dessert. Closed Tuesdays and the first Monday of the month. 11:30am-4pm, 6pm-11pm. Tel 094-062-0948. ¥¥

**Enzo Deli** is new to Akama and is affiliated with Enzo in Genkai-machi. Breakfast includes two choices from the deli, soup, or breads, plus coffee for ¥500. Lunch includes three choices from the deli, pasta, or breads, and includes a drink for ¥1000. Dinner includes six choices from the deli, pasta, bread, or salads, plus a drink for ¥1800. Catering is available for parties. If you're taking public transport, it's three blocks down from the

Sunlive in Akama on the main street. Tel 094-033-6823. ¥¥

**Haipo** is a log cabin steak restaurant just across the railroad tracks past Enak Bagus in Fukutsu. They offer a ladies' lunch for ¥1500 which includes dessert, otherwise the lunch sets run from around ¥1000. Everyday 11:30am-10pm. Tel 094-043-2200. ¥¥

**Sai Kitchen** is located in Anzunosato Park in Fukutsu. Lunch specials for ¥1000 including dessert and coffee. Wed-Mon 11:30am-3pm. ¥¥

**Siesta** is not far from the JR Shingu Station. Walk to the T-intersection and turn right. At the next traffic signal, it will be on the right-hand corner, on the 2F, next to Tsutaya Video Rental Shop. 1415-2-2F Shimonofu, Shingu-machi. Tel 092-962-1410. ¥¥

**Todoroki Tei** is a French restaurant across the street from the front entrance of JR Togo Station. Reservations are recommended. Dinner sets begin at ¥4000, and the last order is at 8pm. The Japanese chef's lovely wife is Brazilian and speaks English. Tel 094-037-2140. Munakata-Togo. ¥¥¥

## SHOPPING

### ELECTRONICS

**Best Denki** is open from 10am-8pm with video/DVD rentals by GEO available til 3am. Exit JR Fukuma Station, go straight and follow the green road until you reach the intersection for Route 97. Turn right onto Route 97 past the Nissan Red Stage intersection and Best Denki will be on your left. You will need to purchase a member's card before you can rent stuff, so be sure to bring your alien registration card with you. Tel 094-043-0996.

**Matsuya Denki** doesn't have as much selection as some of the bigger electronic stores, but makes up for it by sometimes having better prices. Exit JR Fukuma Station to the right and walk for about two blocks. You should see it on your right, just before the "Fukutsu

City Hall Fukuma Branch" intersection.

### GROCERY STORES

Marche Supermarket More than just a grocery store, Marche in Fukutsu City also has a ¥100 shop, pharmacy, dry cleaners, tea stand, bakery, etc. The big sale day is Wednesday. A 5-minute walk straight out of JR Fukuma Station. It will be on your left. 10am-9pm.

**Nishitetsu Store (Sanki)** in Fukutsu City also has a ¥100 shop on the 1F. Their big sale day is on Sunday. It is about a 10-minute walk from JR Fukuma Station. From JR Fukuma Station, exit the station, go straight and follow the green road until you reach the intersection for Route 97. Turn right onto Route 97 and go straight. You will see it on your left right before the big intersection. 10am-8pm everyday.

### GENERAL

**Torius** A listing of shopping complexes wouldn't be complete without mentioning the crowd favorite Torius. Better known as "that place with Costco," Torius also has a Uniqlo, Nafco, Toho Cinema, Asics outlet, Best Denki, Village Vanguard, and Daiso (¥100 store) to name a few. From the Tenjin bus station in front of the main post office catch bus 27B and get off at the Torius stop. Web: [www.torius.co.jp](http://www.torius.co.jp)

### OTHER

**Costco Wholesale** is a great place to go and stock up on foreign products including fresh, frozen, and canned foods, snacks, alcohol, bread, household items, electronics, toiletries, clothes, appliances, office supplies, and plenty of free samples. Costco also has cheap one-hour film developing service. The snack bar sells all the usual Costco junk food like pizza, chicken bakes, and polish hot dogs. Membership costs ¥4200 a year and entitles you to bring three guests. Costco will also deliver your purchases for a small fee. 811-2502 Fukuoka-ken, Kasuyagun, Hisayamacho, Ooaza-Yamada, Aza-Takayanagi 1152-1. Tel 092-931-9092. If you can't make it to Costco and still would like to check out their products see [www.theflyngpig.com](http://www.theflyngpig.com).

**Daiso** is a 100 yen shop directly across the street from Sunlive on Route 97 in Koga. There is also one in the Torius shopping complex. Everyday 10am-8pm.

**Fadie Coffee and Wholesale Shop** specializes in coffee and other restaurant supplies. Located next to Daiso in Koga. Stop by for a free cup of coffee. Tel 092-944-1500.

**Roger's Warehouse** is located in the plaza across from the MC Restaurant on Route 97 in Koga. Well-known for its low prices, including ¥500 film developing.

**Nafco** is a must for buying things for your apartment. Ask a friend to take you there by car. On Route 97 in Koga on the ocean side heading towards Fukutsu City.

**Home Wide** is located next door to Sunlive in Munakata-Akama and sells things for the home. There is also a location within a five-minute walk from JR Chidori station in Koga.

**Haruya Shoten** is a cute stationery store located next to Sunlive in Munakata-Akama. **100 yen Dry Cleaning** at HiTech & Ozone Cleaning. To get to the Fukutsu City location, from the Nishitetsu Store head straight towards Best Denki on route 97. Turn left at the Nissan Red Stage intersection. It's located one block farther down on your right, across the 7-11. Five locations: Fukuma, Koga, Koga Minosato, Munakata Minami, and Munakata Togo Hinosato. Everyday 8am-8pm.

**Fureai Hiroba Fukuma** has a local farmers' market with fresh fruit and vegetables at good prices. From JR Fukuma Station, turn right out of the station and go about 300 meters until you reach the "Fukutsu City Hall Fukuma Branch" intersection. Turn right and follow the road past Munakata Suikokai Hospital and under the Route 3 overpass. It's at least a 20-minute walk. The market will be on your right. Wed-Mon 8:30am-5pm. Tel 094-043-7790.

## ENTERTAINMENT

**TOHO Cinema** lies on the opposite side of Torius from Costco and runs all the latest movies on its 14 screens. The usual ticket price is ¥1800 but if you show your alien registration card, you can get tickets for just ¥1000. In addition, ¥1000 tickets are available on the first day of every month and on Wednesdays for ladies' night. All shows after 9pm are ¥1200. Tel 092-957-5555.

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Cross Pal Koga** opened in April 2005. It is located inside Koga Green Park off of Route 35. It has two studios, a basketball court, a swimming pool with heated floors, and an onsen-style bath. A bus from JR Koga Station is available; but it is much easier by car. Closed Tue.

**Fitness Club REX** is located on the new Route 3 on the left-hand side as you head towards Fukuoka-shi. It is a 10-15 minute walk from JR Koga Station. A variety of lessons are available including aerobics, Latin aerobics, hula, stereo hip-hop, stretch, and more. Pool lessons include water aerobics and swim classes. All classes are included in the monthly membership fee, which ranges from ¥5500-7000 depending on the program. Rex also has a training gym, walking pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, and individual showers. A one-day trial is available. The staff are friendly to foreigners and speak some English. Closed Thu. Tel 092-942-1277.

**Stage 9** is a newly opened gym at Torius in Hisayama. It has a pool, machines, and a studio with two to three classes every evening, as well as swimming lessons. Different level memberships are available depending on peak/off peak times, but all facilities are open to you once you are a member. The full peak membership is ¥9000 per month.

The staff are really friendly and many speak English. Tel 092-976-3990.

**Well Sanpia Fukuoka** is a gym and sports complex located past the Mini Stop near Fukuma Beach going towards Tsuyazaki Town. It will be on your right. You'll see the blue sports sign at the entrance (within sight of the Mini stop). Monthly membership is ¥5000 unlimited (free pass) or ¥600 for three hours use. Mon-Sat 1pm-9:00pm. Sunday and holidays 10am-6pm. Tel 094-042-2105.

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

**Hot Time Internet Cafe** is located on Route 97 near Roger's Warehouse on the same side of the road, in Koga, as you head towards Fukutsu-shi. 24 hours.

**Tech Bomb Internet Cafe** provides internet access at a rate of ¥300/hour. From JR Akama station, go out the front exit and turn right. Walk about one block to the main road and look to your right. You'll see it just across the road. 24 hours.

## HEALTH

**Dr. Hayashi** is a dermatologist whose office is located in Munakata Suikokai Hospital on the 1F. She doesn't speak English, but will attempt to communicate and is very kind to foreigners. Monday-Friday 9am-12pm, plus the first and third Saturday of the month with the same hours. An appointment isn't necessary but it's best to arrive early as she has many patients. From Fukuma Station, turn right out of the station, walk 300 meters until you reach the "Fukutsu City Hall Fukuma Branch" intersection, turn right and follow the road. It's about a 15-minute walk. **Dr. Kubota** is a female gynecologist who speaks a fair amount of English. Mon, Tue, Thu and Sat 9am-12pm.

**Dr. Mizukami's** dental office is conveniently located near the JR Fukuma Station. Turn left out of the station. At the next intersection turn right. The office is just before the next traffic signal on your right in a light blue, one-story building. It's hard to miss! Several dentists speak fluent English. You'll need to make an appointment. Mon, Thu, Sat 9am-11:30am, 2pm-5pm. Tue, Wed, Fri 9am-11:30am, 2:30-6pm. Tel 094-043-7366.

**Dr. Sagara** speaks excellent English and will have you in and out of his office in just a few minutes. The best time to go is in late afternoon; his office is open until 5pm. Located near JR Togo Station. Go out the front exit and turn right. Walk down the hill for about five minutes. He's in a two-story building, fairly new and large, on the right-hand side of the road. If you reach the next busy intersection you have gone too far. His name is written in hiragana on the side of the building (さくら). Tel 094-032-3269.

## SOUTHERN FUKUOKA

## CHIKUSHINO-SHI 筑紫野市

You don't need to go all the way to Beppu to enjoy a great onsen, soak your troubles away at Futsukaichi's hot springs. **Futsukaichi** is an area of Chikushino famous for onsen. Visitors have been enjoying its relaxing waters since the Nara Period (710-794). If you're new to onsen, it's a cheap and convenient place to get started. If you're already a fan, it offers a multitude of bathhouses for you to sample. Most of the onsen are in one area. To get here by train, take the JR Kagoshima line from Hakata to Futsukaichi Station 二日市. There is a large tourist information map just outside the exit. The onsen are a ten-minute walk from the station. Alternately,

take the Nishitetsu Omuta Line from Tenjin to Futsukaichi 二日市. The walk to the *onsen* from the Nishitetsu station is a bit further than from the JR station, but you can take the loop bus to the area. "Futsukaichi Onsen" is written in romaji on the bus. It costs ¥100 to the *onsen*, but if you get off before that stop, it will (confusingly) cost more. Most *onsen* cost around ¥500. Call the Chikushino City Tourism Bureau for more information. Tel 092-922-2421

## FESTIVALS

**Kangetsukai** is not huge, but you should still check out this lunar festival. Visit the foot of Mt. Tempai in the evening and enjoy traditional dancing, singing, taiko drumming, and general merrymaking under the moon. It's usually on the Monday closest to September's full moon, but dates vary. Getting there is a little complicated because the directions aren't very well posted, but on the day of the festival, the way will be obvious by the crowds. Take the Nishitetsu Futsukaichi loop bus to the Futsukaichi Onsen stop. Walk to the 7-Eleven and you will see a purple sign that points to an alley on the right. Keep walking towards the mountain till you see it.

## DAZAIFU-SHI 太宰府市

Formerly the capital of Kyushu, few relics remain that attest to the city's once greatness. These days, it's known primarily for Dazaifu Tenmangu (Dazaifu Shrine) and its *umegaemochi*. Exiting the station at Dazaifu, you are already hit by the smells and fanfare of Tenjinsama-dori, which you follow all the way up to the shrine. To get here by from Tenjin, take the Nishitetsu-Omuta line to Futsukaichi station and transfer to the local Dazaifu line. Dazaifu is the last stop on this line (two stops). On Tenjinsama-dori right outside of the torii to the shrine is **The Tourist Information Center** which has English maps and bicycles available to rent. For more information call 092-925-5801. Web:www.dazaifu-nhc.or.jp/.

**Tenmangu Shrine** is dedicated to the God of learning and calligraphy, and every year, millions of students from all over Japan come to visit the shrine to pray for good luck on upcoming entrance examinations. It's a great place for a day trip, and hosts a number of spectacular and well-attended festivals throughout the year, particularly the **Fire Festival** in January and the **Water Poetry Festival** in March. In addition, the entrance to the Kyushu National Museum is accessible through the grounds of the Tenmangu. Tel 092-922-8225.

**Komyozenji Temple** is great to escape the crowds at Tenmangu. Built in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century, it is famous for its *kareansui no niwa* (rock gardens). If the words "rock garden" bring to mind gravel and parking lots, gazing at the peaceful and picturesque garden and letting your mind wander is sure to change your perspective. It is especially dramatic in the fall. To get to the temple, walk towards Tenmangu shrine from the train station and make a left just before entering the shrine complex. Tel 092-922-4053.

**Tenjinsama-dori** is a charming shopping street that begins just outside Nishitetsu Dazaifu station. The famous Omoshiroiichi (interesting market) is held there once a month in the summer and is full of bargains. From the station, you can see exactly where the fun begins. Check out the many easy hiking paths and the small amusement park tucked away in the hills behind Tenmangu.

## FESTIVALS

**Kyokusui-No-En** is a Water Poetry Festival that takes place on the first Sunday of March at Tenmangu Shrine. Ladies and gentlemen in ceremonial Heian-era court robes compose poems beside a stream as vermilion lacquered cups of *sake* are set afloat down the stream. They must complete their poems before the cup reaches them, then drink the *sake*. If the weather is bad, the ceremony will be postponed or canceled.

## KASUGA-SHI 春日市

Kasuga's blue reservoirs and green parks makes it a great place to spend a sunny day outdoors. It is famous for being known as the birthplace of rice-growing in Japan, and for its annual "Bride Spanking" Festival. To get here from Tenjin, take the Nishitetsu Omuta line to Kasugabarū station. From Hakata, you can either take the JR Kagoshima line to Kasuga Station or the JR Minami line to Hakata-Minami Station.

**Shirozuoike Park** is one of several large reservoirs in Kasuga. Originally created to aid rice farming, the tree-rimmed reservoir is now a popular place for biking and jogging. **Ruins** are scattered throughout the town, such as those in Okamoto and Hihaizuka. Many date back to the Stone Age and you can even see ancient earthenware, pit dwellings, and glassware.

## FESTIVALS

**Andon Matsuri** is definitely a festival worth checking out. A beautiful fireworks display is held towards the end of August in Kasugakoen, which is just next to the JR Kasuga Station.

**Mukoshi Festival** caters to those who prefer to see some living artifacts. Held at Kasuga Shrine, Mukoshi is one of the most interesting and unique traditional festivals Kasuga has to offer. At this festival, on January 14, the community offers its blessings to the couples that were married in the previous year. It's not all good tidings though. The congratulations are balanced by bride-spanking and groom-pushing portions of the festival.

## ONOJO-SHI 大野城市

If you're a hiking fan, Onojo offers several interesting trips through its many forests. To get to Onojo from Hakata, take the JR Kagoshima line to Onojo Station. From Tenjin, take the Nishitetsu Omuta line to Shimoori or Kasuga-baru. **Prefectural Citizens' Forest** was built to commemorate

the 100th anniversary of the Meiji Era. It contains a cherry tree forest and 3000 apricot trees. The forest is located in the northwestern part of town near Nishitetsu Kasugabarū station.

**Rest Forest & Campground** centers on the Ushikubi Dam and mountain. This spacious area was established in 1992 as a place for relaxation and recreation in the southern part of town. Ask at the station for the best way to get there.

## SHIME-MACHI 志免町

Shime is a medium-sized town about a 15-minute bus ride southeast of Fukuoka Airport. It's adjacent to both the city and the countryside and offers a wide variety of stores as well as easy access to the parks and mountains of the surrounding towns. The Shime *kyoshokuin jutaku* is located at the junction of Shime, Umi 宇美町, and Sue 須恵町 towns. Shime has a main street running northwest-southeast that connects it with Umi and Dazaifu. It's the largest, busiest road in the town hosting many points of interest to the curious. At the northwest end is the Shime Town Office and beyond that lies Diamond City, a huge, unmistakable mall that hosts the local movie theater, Uniqlo, dozens of shops, and a foreign food pipeline. To the southeast lies Umi Town. All directions in Shime are given from the Tadamishimofuka intersection on this main street. To get to this road from JR Sue Chuo Station, turn right out of the station, cross the tracks, and continue straight for about 1.5km. The road will eventually dead-end at the main road in Shime, just in front of a large orange building, The Home Center (written in *katakana*). You will also find a Ringer Hut at that intersection. To go east towards Umi, turn left; to go west turn right. To reach Tadamishimofuka from the Shime-higashi *kyoshokuin jutaku*, go right out of the apartments, pass Shime Higashi middle school, and make your first right down the ramp. Continue straight down the hill until you reach the intersection. From Hakata, take the JR Fukuohoku-Yutaka line

to Chojabaru Station and change to the JR Kashii line to reach Sue Chuo Station. Buses are more convenient for getting into the city; there are several major Nishitetsu bus routes that run in this area. It takes 40 to 60 minutes to get to Tenjin, depending on traffic. Take #370 express bus from Tenjin Bus Center or #37 bus from Hakata or the airport. All of these buses can be caught from the main street of Shime; going east. Most buses also stop at Umi Hachimangu on their way to Umi Town. To reach Shime bus stop from the main intersection, turn right and walk about ten minutes. You will see it in front of a Fukuoka Bank. There are also bus stops for the 5, 32 and 34 on the main road, in front of the Best Denki. Note that if you are in Tenjin, all buses that run to Shime, Sue, or Umi will leave from bus stand 19B in front of the Tenjin Chuo Post Office; in the Hakata Bus Center they leave from platform 14. Taxi fare from Tenjin at night should be around ¥2500-3500.

There is a **pleasant walking trail** running from Shime to Umi, complete with the Shime-Umi Friendship Monument at the town line. This path is great in *sakura* and *ume* season, and is lined with beautiful flowering plants throughout the summer and autumn. It's a good place to jog or walk in the evening and makes for a nice trip to the store on the main road. It runs parallel to the main road on the east, from Best Denki in the north to Umi Park in the south, and you can enter from any side street in between. **Railway Park** is an abandoned train station lying along the path in Shime, in the Best Denki/Seiyu area.

**Koshoji** is a particularly large *kofun* (ancient burial mound) in the southern Shime/northern Umi area. It is clearly visible from the trail as you cross into Umi. There is a display detailing its history and what has been excavated from it. Koshoji is a great place to climb up to for cool breezes in the summer, a beautiful sunset, and some conversation with the locals.

**Sarayama Park** 皿山公園 is in Sue/Sasaguri, and home to four mountains (from tallest to shortest): Wakasugi Yama 若杉山, Kome

noYama 米ノ山, Takejou 岳城, and Sara Yama 皿山. It's a pleasant place to have lunch, as there are numerous picnic areas and pavilions in the park. You may be accosted by picnicking locals who demand that you join their party and have some *otsumami* and beer. Take them up on it! There is no better way to make fast friends than through the glorious icebreaker that is alcohol. The mountains make for some fantastic hiking, with amazing views from Kome no Yama and Takejou. Despite being the tallest (681 meters) and pointiest, Wakasugi has no real view from the top; it does, however, have a sprawling shrine complex, as well as a Buddhist temple accessible by crawling through a rock crevice. See the Sasaguri section for more info. To access the park, turn left as you come out of JR Sue Chuo Station and walk straight for approximately 30 minutes. Sarayama Park will be on the left, and there are signs pointing at where to turn off the main road to get to it, though they may be in *kanji* only. If you want a real challenge, you can hike to the adjacent mountain range that runs behind Sue and Umi from the top of Wakasugi; there is a map at the shrine detailing how you can make your multi-stop pilgrimage. Beware of the maps throughout the park though, as they are absolutely not to scale and can't be completely trusted.

**Umi Hachimangu** is the most well-known of the many shrines and temples in the area. Because "*Umi*" is reminiscent of "*Umi umu*" (the *umu* verb for bearing children), women write the names of their babies on rocks in the hope that they will grow up strong and healthy; one can see the enormous pile of rocks with children's names behind the shrine. To get there, start at the main intersection and turn left. Once you reach Umi Town, you'll see a relatively busy intersection. Head straight through the light and cross the bridge. The shrine is just up ahead on your left. This is a long walk, so it might be best to go by bicycle. It's also possible to take a bus from the main road in Shime; in fact, most buses going to Umi Town also stop at Umi Hachimangu.

**Shime** also has a shrine near the 7-Eleven on the main road; you can't miss the big stone *torii* that marks the street. A small art gallery in Sue is free and rather hard to find, but has small wooden signs pointing it out in *kanji* along the way. It's near Sarayama Park.

**Tsuki no Yu** 月の湯 *onsen* can be reached from the Higashi Hirao 東平尾 stop on the #37 bus; walk away from the airport up the side street, and it will be on your left. It's almost always open and is inexpensive.

**Yu no Ko** 湯の湖 *onsen* is located in the Lakeside Hotel in Hisayama, near Sasaguri. It's expensive but worth it. When you need a little luxury, spend an evening here. Wednesday is ladies' night, meaning a discount for women. To get here, take the JR Fukuohoku-Yutaka line to Sasaguri station, then take a taxi to the Lakeside Hotel (around ¥900). There is also a bus that runs to the hotel from behind the station.

## EATING & DRINKING

### JAPANESE

**Chikushino Ivy Hotel** in Futsukaichi has a vegetarian buffet that is all-you-can-eat for about ¥850. It has an amazing variety of food and desserts, but drinks are separate. To get there from the Nishitetsu Futsukaichi Station, take the loop bus to the Futsukaichi Onsen stop and it is literally right in front of you. The owner gets really excited when foreigners come in. The hotel itself is very nice if people want to stay the night. They give you a free pass to the onsen next door. Rooms are spacious and run about ¥6000 a night for a single. ¥¥ ¥

**CoCo Ichi Curry House** sits across the street from the Shime town hall. From the main intersection, turn right and walk about 15 minutes. You can see it on your left, past the Best Denki. ¥

**Danbo** serves classic *tonkotsu ramen* and

has been recognized as one of the best in Fukuoka! The shop won a competition and has been famous ever since. Take the JR Futsukaichi line and go straight out of the station. Follow the road until you get to the traffic signal (at the "Sugi" Hospital). Turn right and you should see the ramen shop. ¥

**Isshin-Tei** 一心亭 is particularly recommended out of Shime's many *ramen* shops, most if not all offering *tonkatsu*, *ramen* and *champon*. Located in the Meirindo plaza just south of the Tadamishimofuka intersection, they have fresh garlic and a press for you to squeeze it into your *ramen*. Their staff is also very friendly and there is a wide variety of choices, including a *ramen-champon* mix called *rachan*. Open for lunch, closes around 9pm. ¥

**Mokkei** offers traditional *izakaya* fare with a modern twist in a trendy setting. From the Nishitetsu Futsukaichi station, exit the station from the East exit, walk to the main street and turn right. At the first traffic signal, turn left and then follow that road for three minutes. It's on the corner right before the 7-Eleven. ¥

**Najima Yakitori** is known for their Italian roll, but also features delicious skewers for less than ¥150 a stick, has a good variety of food, and the beer is good and cheap. Go out the West exit of Nishitetsu Futsukaichi Station and walk straight to the main street (half a block in front of exit) and turn right on to the main street. At the first street light, cross to the left side of the road and it is directly in front of you. ¥¥

### OTHER

**Portata** possesses Italian charm and a vast selection of delicious pastas and pizzas. Prices are reasonable and the owners speak excellent English. Turn right as you come out of the West exit of the Nishitetsu Futsukaichi Station and turn right at the second light. Portata is on your right just before Yamada Denki. ¥

**Premier Cafe** is a cute restaurant that serves a plethora of caffeine-laced goodies and breads and offers a wonderful set menu. Go out the East exit of Nishitetsu Futsukaichi

station, cross the tracks, and make your first right just after Fukuoka Bank. ¥

**Shime Sushi** lies about a block east of the main street, just north of the Shime kyoshokuin jutaku. ¥¥

**Son House** has the best burgers in Chikushino. They are huge and cheap! They have foreign beer and soda, and chicken wings. The owner loves to speak English and welcomes foreign visitors. The lunch special for about ¥800 is huge. ¥

**Sunshine** is a small, cute Italian place on the road that runs north-south between Seiyu and Best Denki. ¥

### **BARS**

Most of the local bars in Shime are of the snack variety. **A Local Izakaya** is recommended (and despite its popularity, its name remains a mystery). It has a very friendly atmosphere, and if you have trouble deciphering the handwritten menu, you can ask the cooks to make you one of their specialties. This bar is located in the plaza to the left of Maruki and Family Mart, and is the only non-snack bar in the plaza.

**D's House** is a dart bar across the street from Best Denki, next to the bike repair shop in Shime.

## SHOPPING

### **ELECTRONICS**

There is a large **Best Denki** at the Oteki intersection near the Shime town hall, and a good rental selection run by **GEO** is next door. To get there from the main intersection, turn right and walk straight for 15 minutes.

### **GROCERY STORES**

**Maruki** is the closest grocery store to the Shime kyoshokuin jutaku. It is a small grocer to the left of Meito. They don't carry much in the way of non-food items, but are a good bet for inexpensive produce. It is located at Tadamishimofuka intersection.

**Marukyo** is across the street from Nafco in Shime. **Seiyu** is also in Shime, located just

west of the Shime Hon-machi intersection. To get there from the Tadamishimofuka intersection, walk right for about ten minutes, past Fukuoka Bank. Turn left at the following intersection and you will see it. They have a decent grocery selection, and their wine and beer selection is the best in town.

**Red Cabbage** is located in Shime, just as the main road enters Umi, on the left. Although unremarkable in other aspects, this Red Cabbage is a great source of food from home: nuts, peanut butter, spaghetti sauce in a jar, vegetarian mixes, and Indian cooking sauces, among other things.

### **FURNITURE & HOME**

Shime is a great resource for shopping for basic apartment supplies without having to go to Tenjin.

**Nafco** is west of the main road at the Sakaida intersection in Shime. From the main intersection, turn right. Walk for about ten minutes. Turn left at the intersection just before Fukuoka Bank. Go straight for a few blocks and you should see it.

**Meito** (orange store with a beaver logo), at the Tadamishimofuka intersection in Shime, is recommended for all kinds of gardening supplies and plants.

### **GENERAL**

Two inexpensive stores for various necessities are **Cosmos** and **Direx**, located across the street from each other on the main road in Shime. Cosmos has a great selection and is reliably cheap. There is also a daily **farmer's market** for much of the year in the Direx parking lot. To reach them from the main intersection, turn left and go straight for a few blocks.

### **SHOPPING COMPLEXES**

**Saty Shopping Center** is just a short walk from Nishitetsu Kasuga-baru station, conveniently housing a place to work out, go shopping, and take in a movie. To get there, exit the station and take a left. There are signs in English and Japanese, and the center itself is extremely visible.

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Konami Sports Gym** provides a decent sized gym, pool, and an array of aerobics and exercise classes. If you live in the vicinity and need a good gym, check out Konami. It is located next to the Saty shopping complex in Kasuga-baru (listed above). Membership is required and costs ¥8400 per month.

**Action Fukuoka** アクション福岡 is a great sports club that is about 15 minutes away from Shime by #37 bus (it has its own stop, in katakana). It's ¥350 for two hours to use the various facilities, which include a training room with resistance machines, free weights, elliptical machines, treadmills and bikes. There is also a nice bathing area in the locker room and a relaxation corner with massage chairs. There is no fee to join and you pay per two hours, with an extra fee per hour if you go over; you can either buy a card for one use, or a "get one free" 11-use card for ¥3500. If it's your first trip, you must attend an orientation which is held hourly until 7 pm. Most of the staff speak at least some English and are very friendly and helpful.

**Kasuya Sports Gym** requires a membership fee to join and is across the street from Best Denki in Kasuya.

**The Prefectural Pool** is a beautiful facility located next to Action Fukuoka gym but is a little expensive (almost ¥1000). The people who use it seem to be there for serious swimming rather than fun, and a bathing cap is required. Located near Action Fukuoka, 15 minutes away on the #37 bus.

## WESTERN FUKUOKA

### MAEBARU-SHI 前原市

Maebaru City is the largest of three cities (Maebaru, Shima, and Nijo) that make up the Itoshima Peninsula, an area rich in natural attractions and historical significance. Just far enough from Fukuoka City to be called *inaka*, it's easily reachable by subway or bus, and is a great choice for an afternoon outing. The city's symbol is a copper mirror, owing to dozens of such mirrors brought over from China in ancient trade missions. Kyushu University will open a campus in Maebaru in the near future, and residents anticipate exciting developments to be built along with it. Fukuoka Now Magazine has done an excellent review of the area, titled "Tour d'Itoshima." Complete with some excellent descriptions of many fine and unique restaurants located along the appropriately named Sunset Road (サンセットロード).

**Maebaru Tourist Information Center** is located just across from the North Exit of the Chikuzen-Maebaru train station. Although most of Itoshima is accessible by bus, sites tend to be far from each other. A car is especially useful for touring the coast along Sunset Road and for those hard-to-reach restaurants. Take the subway train westbound for Chikuzen-Maebaru 筑前前原 or Karatsu 唐津 and get off at Chikuzen-Maebaru station for ¥560. To reach the bus center from the station, walk out the North Exit and cross the road. Turn left down IRS (イリス) road and walk to the end. The Maebaru Bus Center is on your right. Otherwise, by bus from outside the Tenjin Center Building 天神センタービル or from the Hakata Bus Terminal, take the green Showa bus to Maebaru 前原. Get off at the Maebaru Bus Center, ¥620. Web: [www.city.maebaru.fukuoka.jp/city/files/homepage/top\\_e.html](http://www.city.maebaru.fukuoka.jp/city/files/homepage/top_e.html).

**Keya** 芥屋 is a beach, a party, and a big ol' hole in a rock. Consistently voted the best beach in the prefecture, Keya Beach is a great place to do some surfing or just kickback and soak up some sun. Sticking out from the beach is a giant naturally formed cave, **Keya no Oto** 芥屋の大門, the largest of its kind in Japan. For a fee, tour boats will take you right through the middle of this geological wonder [April- November]. Keya is also host to the yearly mega-party, **Sunset Live**, usually held in late September. **Futami Gaura** 二見浦 are the husband and wife rocks, located near Keya Beach. It's a good place for romantics to watch the sunset or catch some waves. From the Maebaru Bus Center, take the bus for Keya (芥屋) and get off at the last stop

**Raizan** 雷山 is the hike to do in Itoshima. Called Thunder Mountain in tribute to the Thunder god, the views at the top are breathtaking. Take the Raizan 雷山 bus from the Maebaru Bus Center to the last stop (Raizan Sennyō Temple). Be sure to check the bus schedule as the buses stop running around 3pm.

**Shiraito** 白糸 meaning "White Thread," is a beautiful waterfall and the pride of Itoshima. Especially popular in the summer, visitors can rent fishing rods, dip somen noodles in the fresh running water, or just go for a dip. From the Maebaru Bus Center, take the Showa Bus for Shiraito 白糸 and get off at the last stop.

**Mamushi Onsen** is a fairly new facility with nice outdoor pools. Take the train to Fukuyoshi 福吉. When you get to the station, call them up, and they will pick you up in their shuttle bus for free. Web: [www.kmel.jp/fukuoka/le/mamushi-onsen/2p.htm](http://www.kmel.jp/fukuoka/le/mamushi-onsen/2p.htm)

**Raizan Sennyōji Daihiouin Temple** 雷山千如寺大悲王院 is located atop of Raizan (Thunder Mountain). This temple is home to a thousand-armed wooden statue of Buddha, a designated cultural asset. This is the only temple in Japan to be founded by someone from India, and is particularly popular in the first week of December, when the leaves in the area start to turn red.

There are many surrounding trails to hike, and a mini snowboard park to boot. There is a great traditional *toge* (pottery) workshop, **Raizanbo**, at the base of the mountain as well, with great French-style lunches. Take the Raizan 雷山 bus from the main Maebaru City Bus Terminal to the last stop (Raizan Sennyō Temple). Be sure to check the bus schedule as the return buses stop running around 3pm.

**Sakurai Jinja** 桜井神社 is owned and run by the Toyama family. This fairly large shrine complex is located deep in the mountains and is an official national treasure. Once a year, it plays host to a *yabusame* (mounted archery) event. This means that a guy on a horse shoots an arrow at a target while riding the horse in full gallop. Take the Nogita 野北line Showa bus to Sakurai 桜井. Get off and walk about 10 minutes total. Other temples and shrines include **Kinryu Temple**, famous for its spring azaleas and **Takasu Shrine** featuring Takasu dancing during the festivals in April and October.

## FESTIVALS

**Kumano Shrine** hosts 100 loincloth-clad men who run into a cold river to wash rice on December 17 at the stroke of midnight, in an ancient purification ceremony. Soon after, worshippers are treated to freshly made *anigiri* (rice balls).

**Maebaru Shimin Matsuri** 前原市民祭り is a good place to see the people of Maebaru at their wacky best, in drag and various bizarre costumes, with a prince and princess to watch over the festivities. It's also known as the Citizen's Festival, and is held in early fall. **Sunset Live** is an annual world music festival held at Keya Beach, usually in late September. [www.beachcafesunset.com/index2.htm](http://www.beachcafesunset.com/index2.htm).

## EATING & DRINKING

It's best to have a car or a guide for this section. If you follow the web links, you can

usually find a pretty decent map on the restaurant's homepage.

**Herb Garden's** main bay window overlooks a spectacular view of its pastoral setting. The restaurant features the freshest organic produce from its surrounding gardens. Nice food and friendly service. Take a left at Book Off on Route 202. Keep walking until you see the katakana sign for ハーブガーデン. Web: [www.herbgarden.co.jp/restrantinfo.htm](http://www.herbgarden.co.jp/restrantinfo.htm) (Japanese). ¥¥

**Itoshima Ham** is a cabin-in-the-woods kind of place. Always popular, this restaurant serves only the finest and freshest cuts of meat and allows you to grill them yourself on your old-fashioned table-grill. Nice decor. Web: [www.itoshimaham.co.jp/](http://www.itoshimaham.co.jp/) (Japanese). ¥¥

**Lox Diner** is a small but friendly American style diner with good burgers and maple syrup floats. Their Hawaiian loco moco is a must. Opposite GooDay on Route 202. Ask the owner to tell about his blues-playing adventures across the United States, but only ask about his favorite TV show if you really like Star Trek. Web: [www.loxdiner.com/](http://www.loxdiner.com/). ¥¥

com/. ¥¥

**Sokkyo Shijin Bakery** is the place to go when you're finally sick of eating those big white squares of Japanese bread. Located in a Cretan-style farmhouse, owner Masaaki Kusayanagi bakes his bread the old-fashioned way. The proof is in the pudding people. Everyday 9:30am-5:30pm. Closed Fridays and all of August. 507 Taku Road. Web: [www.remus.dti.ne.jp/~ijumi-k/sokkyo-pan.html](http://www.remus.dti.ne.jp/~ijumi-k/sokkyo-pan.html). ¥¥

**Chez T** is yet another strictly organic restaurant, and also has a good selection of beers from around the world. ¥¥

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Imazu** イマズ Set in front of beautiful views of ocean side cliffs, is a huge open-air park and sports facility with a lot of space for any kind of activity.

## WHEN THE BOTTLES START TALKING...



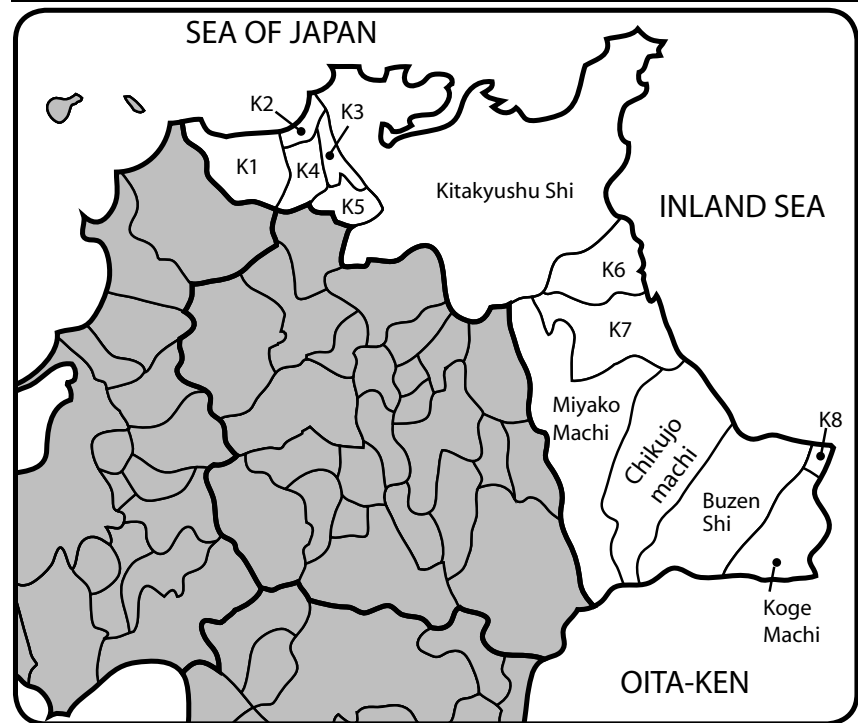


# KITAKYUSHU REGION 北九州



KITAKYUSHU

# KITAKYUSHU REGION 北九州



# KITAKYUSHU 北九州 MAP KEY

KITAKYUSHU 北九州				
Kitakyushu-Shi	北九州市 *	Okagaki-Machi	岡垣町	K1
Kokura	小倉	Ashiya-Machi	芦屋町	K2
Moji	門司	Mizumaki-Machi	水巻町	K3
Tobata	戸畑	Onga-Machi	遠賀町	K4
Wakamatsu	若松	Nakama-Shi	中間市	K5
Yahata	八幡	Kanda-Machi	苅田町	K6
Miyako-Machi	みやこ町 *	Yukuhashi-Shi	行橋市	K7
Chikujō-Machi	築上町 *	Yoshitomi-Machi	吉富町	K8
Buzen-Shi	豊前市 *			
Koge-Machi	上毛町 *			

KITAKYUSHU

# KOKURA 小倉

## LANDMARKS, RETAIL, ETC.

- IBOX Internet Café ① D1
- Bus Stop for Ferry Port ② D1
- La Foret Harajuku ③ E1
- Budget Rent-a-car AMU Plaza ④ E2
- Post Office ⑤ D2
- McDonalds ⑥ D-E2
- Super Ticket Store ⑨ D2
- Uomachi ⑩ D3
- Kinko's ⑪ E3
- Fukuoka Bank ⑫ C3
- McDonalds ⑬ D3
- Fukuoka City Bank ⑭ E3
- Lawson ⑮ D3
- Lawson ⑯ D3
- am/pm ⑰ D3
- 7-11 ⑱ D3
- Heiwadori Monorail ⑳ D3
- Family Mart ㉑ C3
- Yatai area ㉒ C-D3-4
- Kinko's ㉓ D3-4
- Cine City ㉔ C4

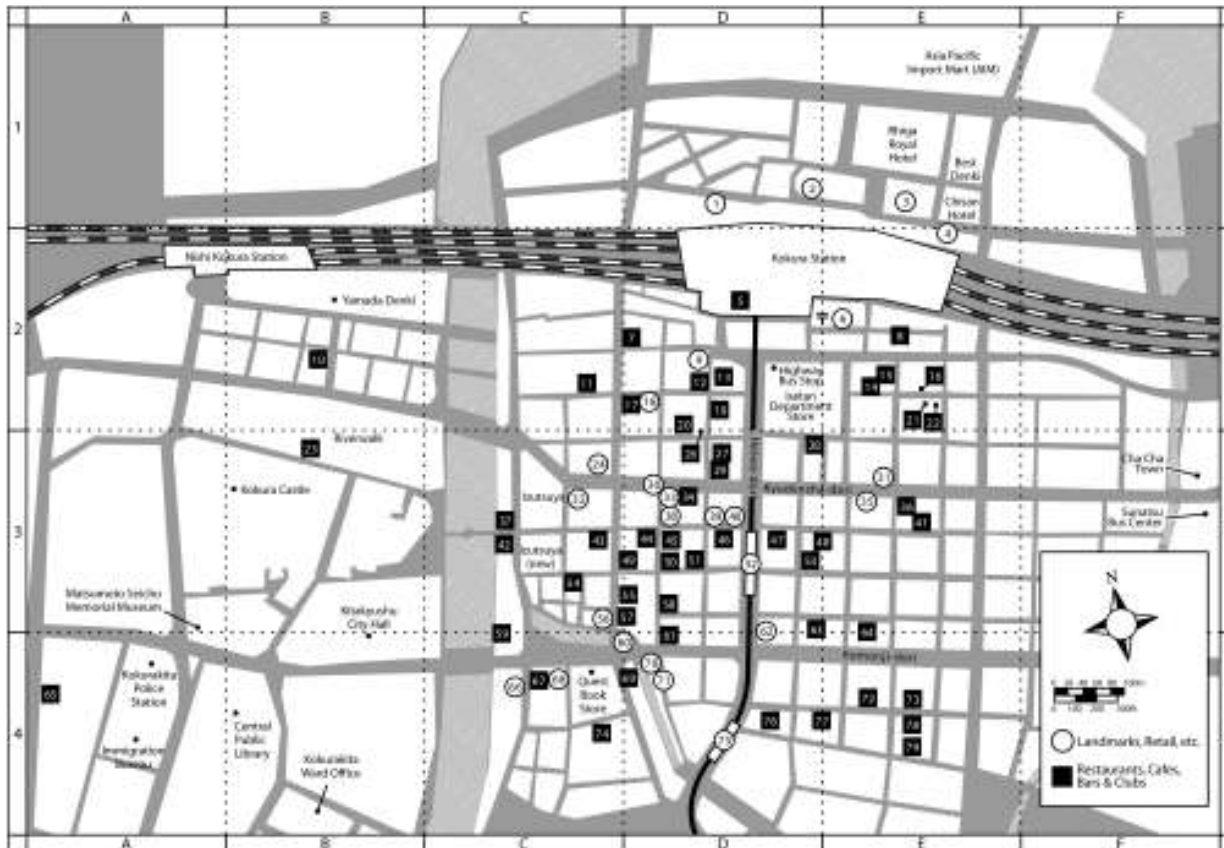
- Muji ㉕ C4
- Maruwa ㉖ D4
- Tanga Market ㉗ D4
- Tanga Monorail ㉘ D4

## RESTAURANTS CAFÉS & BARS

- Prison Hall 7 D2
- Pangaea 8 E2
- Mojo Hand 10 D3
- Café Maya 11 C2
- Yoshinoya 12 D2
- Starbucks 13 D2
- Xelha 14 E2
- Bar Gitane 15 E2
- Bumblebees 16 E2
- Tsijiri 17 D2
- Doutor 19 D2
- Ichiran 20 D2
- Fujiyama Mama 12 E2
- The Loop 22 E2
- Starbucks 23 B3
- Booties 24 D3
- Café Bongo 26 D3

- Grassroots 27 D3
- Yakyu-dori 28 D3
- Kurofune 29 D3
- Nanak 34 D3
- Soap Bar 36 E3
- Shin Yah 37 C3
- Tully's 39 C3
- Jam 41 E3
- Kyatoru Sazon 42 C3
- OCM 43 C3
- Pronto 44 D3
- Doutor 45 D3
- Yanoya 46 D3
- Lucky Moon 47 D3
- Cross Club 48 D-E3
- Kitchen Q 49 D3
- Gane-sha 50 D3
- Tio Pepe 51 D3
- Chao Chao 53 D3
- Sai's Anak 54 D3
- Bakubakuya 55 C3
- Nonbe's Café 56 D3
- Beer's Sun 58 D3
- Okonomiyaki ISHIN 59 D3
- Espresso Bar Moonbeams 60 D3
- Tsujiri 62 D3
- Mojo Thai 63 D3
- Tenpera 64 E3
- Gallery Andes 65 A4
- Airstream 67 C4

- Kurofune 69 D4
- Shisaya 72 E4
- Patoco Tower 73 E4
- Equipe 74 C4
- Round 5 76 D4
- Aguri Shunyu 77 D4
- SDR 78 E4
- Megahertz 79 E4
- AIM E1
- Best Denki E1
- Central Public Library A-B4
- Cha Cha Town F3
- Chisan Hotel E1
- Highway Bus Stop D2
- Immigration Bureau A4
- Isetan D2
- Izutsuya C3
- Kitakyushu City Hall B3-4
- Kokura Castle A-B3
- Kokura Station D-E2
- Kokurakita Police Stn. A4
- Kokurakita Ward Offic B4
- Matsumoto Seicho Memorial Museum A3
- Nishi Kokura Station A-B2
- Quest Book Store C4
- Rihga Royal Hotel E1
- RIVERWALK Kitakyushu B2-3
- Sunatsu Bus Center F3
- Yamada Denki B2

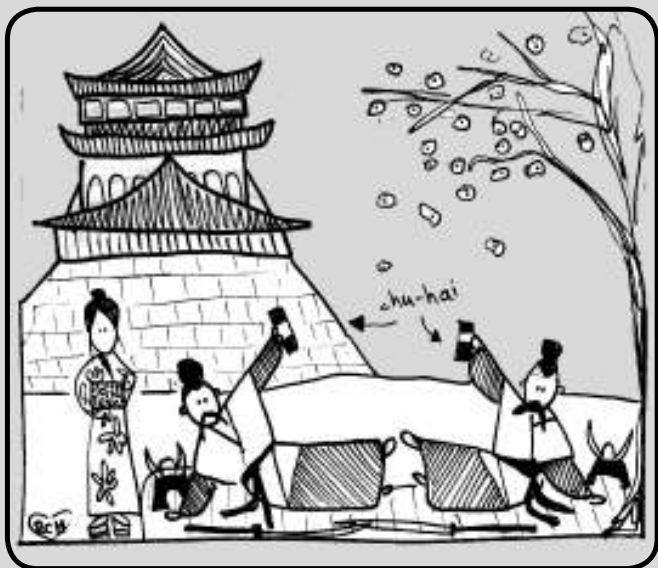


# KOKURA 小倉

## KITAKYUSHU - LIVING LIKE A LOCAL

The Kitakyushu region is composed of four cities—Kitakyushu City 北九州市, Buzen City 豊前市, Nakama City 中間市, and Yukuhashi City 行橋市. Kitakyushu City is the second largest city in Fukuoka Prefecture and has just over one million residents. The remaining cities are surrounded by smaller towns and have a bit of countryside charm.

### EVEN SAMURAI CAN ENJOY HANAMI AT KOKURA CASTLE



If you're living in the Kitakyushu area, why not try to spice up your Japanese with a little local dialect?

Kitakyushu-*ben* (dialect) is most easily recognized by three main sounds: the *n* sound, the *cha* ending (in Kokura), and the use of *ya*. Negatives in Japanese end in *nai*. But in Kitakyushu they can end with the *n* sound. *Shiran*—"I don't know," which comes from *Shiranai*. *Wakaran*—"I don't know/understand" from *Wakaranai*. *Ikan*—"I'm not going" from *Ikanai*...and so on. To make these sound specifically Kokura, add *cha* at the end.

As well as negatives, some other Japanese words end with *nai*. These are also shortened. *Arien*—"Impossible" from *Arienai*. *Shinjiraren*/*Shinjiren*—"Unbelievable" from *Shinjirarenai*. The *ya* sound often replaces *desu*, but is also found in other spots. Here are a few commonly heard uses of *ya*—*Sou ya ne*—"Yeah, that's right" which is *Sou desu ne* in regular Japanese and *~ya nai*—is a replacement for *~ya nai*.

Two other expressions are important to learn. One is Kitakyushu-*ben*, and the other is just a good phrase to use. The first is *Ah~ne*—"I see" which comes from *Ah, naruhodo, ne*. The second is *Majide*—"Really!/?/Seriously!/?" This is found all over Japan, and is a good word to use. It probably came from the word "*majime*" which means serious, or seriously. So try to add these words to your vocabulary to sound more like a local. *Ganbatte ne!*

## KITAKYUSHU-SHI & AROUND

Kitakyushu was created in 1963 with the world's first five-city merger. This city of one million has abundant nature, exquisite culture, and continues to develop as an international industrial hub through cutting-edge technologies.

throughout the year so come down with your family and friends! Buses running between Yahata, Tobata and Kokura stop near the park entrance. 9am-5pm, closed Tuesdays (the following day if Tuesday is a holiday). 4-1 Kamiitozu Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-651-1895.

### KOKURA 小倉

The heart of the city, Kokura, is home to Kitakyushu's central government, economy and cultural affairs. Kokura had been an important region for land transportation and once flourished as a castle town. From the bustling streets in the north (Kokurakita) to the peaceful landscapes down south (Kokuraminami), Kokura offers many fun places to visit!

**Matsumoto Seicho Memorial Museum**  
松本清張記念館 Seicho Matsumoto is one of Japan's greatest modern novelists. He was born in the present Kokurakita-ku of Kitakyushu. His narratives and explicit simplicity have earned him immense support from readers all over Japan. The museum offers all you need to know about this Akutagawa Prize winner—you will instantly be swept into his mysterious world! 9:30am-6pm, closed December 29-31. Tel 093-582-2761. [See map]

**Hiraodai Countryside Park** 平尾台自然の郷, open since 2003, is a new park in the middle of Kitakyushu's 10 000-year-old Hiraodai karst tableland. At this uniquely accessible limestone plateau thousands of boulders on the grassland create a beautiful landscape that evokes flocks of grazing sheep. Visitors can participate in hands-on workshops and fun outdoor activities. For more information, please ask at the Tourist Information Center in JR Kokura Station. 9am-5pm, closed Mondays (the following day if Monday is a holiday), December 29-31, January 3. 1-1-1 Hiraodai Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-452-2715.

**Kokura Castle** 小倉城 was originally built in 1602, but the castle that stands today was reconstructed next to the original site roughly 40 years ago. There is a small interactive museum inside and the view is breathtaking from the top floor! Various festivals are held on the castle grounds throughout the year and the cherry blossoms in the surrounding park make this an excellent area for *hanami* (cherry blossom viewing) in spring. Open April to October 9am-6pm, November to March 9am-5pm, closed December 29-31. Tel 093-561-1210. [See map]

**Itozu-no-mori Zoological Park** 到津の森公園 Opened in 2002, this is an educational zoo where visitors can actually interact with all kinds of animals. Various events are held

**Sugao no Taki** 菅生の滝 This waterfall is 30 meters in height and is located near Hiraodai Countryside Park. A beautiful lush valley leads you past a reservoir up to the

waterfall. You can rent bicycles from Dobaru Cycling Terminal and cycle around the whole area for a few hundred yen. Take bus #37 from Kokura Station and get off at Dobaru bus stop.

**Yamada Ryokuchi (Green Park and Zone)** 山田緑地 is a good place to go for a relaxing afternoon in the park. There are walking trails, a playground, and a large grassy field for playing sports and lounging around. There are buses running from Kokura, Tobata and Kurosaki Station; get off at Yamada Ryokuchi bus stop. 9am-5pm (admittance until 3pm), closed Tuesdays (the following day if Tuesday is a holiday), December 29-31, January 1-3. Yamada-cho, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-582-4870.

**Mt. Fukuchi** is near Kokuraminami's southern limit and is a bit difficult to access, but is beautiful and worth the trouble of getting there. For more details see the Tourist Information Center at JR Kokura Station.

## FESTIVALS

**Kokura Castle Cherry Blossom Festival** runs from late March until early April, during which time the castle becomes home to constant festivities under its 100 cherry blossom trees. Many people celebrate the symbolic end of winter with *hanami* picnics and parties around the castle. Buy some *sake*, bring some friends, and enjoy the blossoms like the locals!

**Kokura Gion Daiko Festival** is a *taiko* drumming event held annually on the third weekend of July, and is a period when Kokura really comes to life. Drums and cymbals carried on floats ring out day and night for this two-day summer event. Join the excitement and decide which group has the best drumming performance!

**Wasshoi Summer Festival** is a huge event where citizens gather to celebrate a grand night out. Held every year during the first week of August, thousands of people in traditional *happi* coats parade through the streets near Kokura Castle until a great fireworks show signals the end.

## MOJI 門司

Moji is known as a historic international trading port due to its location on the Kanmon Strait, the body of water separating Kyushu and Honshu (across the Kanmon Strait, on the Honshu side, is the city of Shimonoseki). Home to Japan's first banana sales in a Dutch auction style, Mojiko, the port town of Moji, has many interesting historical buildings with European influence, and is also known as the place which Dr. Albert Einstein and his wife visited in the 1920s. A great place for a romantic date!

**Adachi Ridge Trail** includes the Komonji, Adachi, and Tonoue mountains forming a 400 meter high ridge with a trail that extends from Kokurakita-ku all the way to Mojiko. Ask the Tourist Information Center inside JR Kokura Station for more information.

**Mekari Park** can be found at the northernmost point of Kyushu. It houses the Mekari Shrine, the Waterfront Promenade, and the undersea one-kilometer tunnel connecting Kyushu and Honshu. From Mojiko Station, take a bus heading for Mekari Park and walk toward the bridge. To get to the Mekari Promenade walk across the Kanmon Strait's undersea tunnel for about 20 minutes.

**Mekari Shinto Shrine** in Mekari Park shows a traditional Shinto rite performed every year in the middle of the night on the lunar calendar's New Year. The World Peace Pagoda and Shiranoe Botanical Gardens are also located here and are accessible by bus.

**Mojiko Retro District** offers a stroll around the romantic harbor area. It has old European-style buildings, shops, restaurants, and trendy coffee shops. Blue Wing Drawbridge, the only pedestrian drawbridge in Japan, is also located here. From the Mojiko Observation Deck, visitors can enjoy an incredible view of the Kanmon Strait, Shimonoseki and Mojiko. Take the

JR Kagoshima Line to Mojiko, the last stop in Kyushu. Observation Deck open from 10am-10pm (admittance until 9:30pm), closed irregularly four times a year. 1-32 Higashiminato-machi, Moji-ku. Tel 093-331-3103.

**Mt. Tonoue** is the highest mountain in Moji and provides a great view of the entire ward from the top. It is an easy half-day hike starting from Moji Station. From the main intersection in front of the station, cross the street and walk up the hill. At the large overhead pedestrian crossing, turn left. Walk down the road until you see signs for the Expressway saying "Shin Moji." Make a right at this intersection. Stay on the right side of the road and you'll pass the Tonoue Shrine on your right. Watch for the Mount Tonoue sign (it takes about 30 minutes).

## FESTIVALS

**Kanmon Kaikyo Summer Fireworks** is held in August, and is a spectacular fireworks showdown held in Mojiko and Shimonoseki. See both displays and decide which side puts on the best show! A must-see if you love fireworks, but be prepared for the huge crowd at the station when the show is over.

## TOBATA 戸畑

Geographically located in the center of Kitakyushu, Tobata is the smallest ward of Kitakyushu. Tobata was a major steel producer in the 1960s, and although it is no longer the steelmaking center it once was, it remains a fairly industrial area.

**Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art** has its main gallery located in Tobata with over 6000 pieces of artwork and special visiting exhibitions. Take bus #40 from Tobata Station to Komine and get off at Bijutsukan-guchi. 9:30am-5:30pm (admittance until 5pm), closed Mondays (the following day if Monday is a holiday). 21-1 Nishisayagatani-machi, Tobata-ku. Tel 093-882-7777. Web: [www.city.kitakyushu.jp/~k5200020/outline/index\\_en.html](http://www.city.kitakyushu.jp/~k5200020/outline/index_en.html) [English]

**Mother and Child Library** has children's books and occasionally holds small performances and craft sessions on weekends and holidays. Catch the bus from Kokura Bus Center and get off at Yomiya Iriguchi. One minute walk from the bus stop. Located beside the Tobata Gymnasium on Tenraiji-dori. 9:30am-7pm weekdays and 9:30am-6pm weekends and holidays, closed Mondays (the following day if Monday is a holiday), December 29-January 3. 3-1 Kannonji-cho Tobata-ku. Tel 093-881-5155.

**Yomiya Park** has a youth center and Japanese archery grounds. It is also famous for its hundreds of irises that bloom every June. 1 Yomiya Tobata-ku. Ask at JR Kokura Station's Tourist Information Center for more information.

## FESTIVALS

**Tobata Gion Festival** is designated as a national cultural asset and is famous for its towering pyramids of illuminated lanterns called *yamagasa*. Held the fourth weekend of July, don't miss the parade where the floats are carried through the streets.

## WAKAMATSU 若松

Wakamatsu has a population of 88 000. It is known primarily for its beaches, which are small but suitable for a day on the beach or a bit of windsurfing.

**Green Park** is a large green space—a rarity in Japan. It includes a Japanese garden, a children's play area, an "Animal World" complete with kangaroos, a tropical house with rare fish, plants, and birds, an herb garden, a rose garden, boating facilities, and an observation tower. Take the bus from Orio Station to Green Park Kitagate bus stop. 9am-5pm, closed Tuesdays (the following day if Tuesday is a holiday). Oaza Takenami, Wakamatsu-ku. Tel 093-741-5545.

**Waita Fisherman's Wharf (Shioiri no Sato)** is a new hangout area on the Waita Coast. It has a community hall for weddings and

concerts, and a romantic restaurant for parties. You can also buy freshly caught local seafood at the market for reasonable prices. See the Tourist Information Center inside JR Kokura Station for more information. Market hours 10am-4pm, closed every Tuesday. 3710 Oaza An-ya, Wakamatsu-ku. Tel 093-741-0111.

**Iwaya Beach** can be a great place for windsurfing if you've got your own gear, but watch out for the jellyfish! You can catch the Kitakyushu City bus #41 from JR Kokura and Orio Stations and #40 and 41 from the JR Wakamatsu Station. Get off at the last stop, Iwaya.

## YAHATA 八幡

Yahata is famous for being the more international section of Kitakyushu and for its Space World Amusement Park. Yahata's main features are the Kitakyushu International Association and the Kyushu Kokusai Daigaku, an international university. Yakata is a very convenient center for foreigners.

**Kitakyushu Museum of Natural History & Human History** 北九州市立自然史・歴史博物館 is based on the concept of *Inochi no Tabi*, or life journey, offering visitors the chance to travel through every time period in history and learn the mysteries of nature. Open since 2002, the museum is an exhilarating learning experience for people of all ages. Two-minute walk from Space World Station, JR Kagoshima Line [about 10 minutes from Kokura Station]. 9am-5pm [admittance until 4:30pm], closed end of June. 2-4-1 Higashida, Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-681-1011.

**Ajisai no Yu** あじさいの湯 has a variety of *onsen*, including private baths, open-air baths, saunas, and family baths. The outdoor bath has a beautiful view of the surrounding mountains, which is especially impressive when covered in snow and is a great star-

gazing spot at night. Delicious food is available from three different restaurants within the building; try the *onsen-tôfu* at the handmade *soba* shop. Catch the shuttle bus from Itozu-no-mori Zoological Park or JR Yahata Station (picks up hourly at the last bus shelter on the left side as you exit the station). 10:30am-10pm [admittance until 9:15pm], closed irregularly. 2-3-36 Kawachi, Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-653-4126.

**Kawachi Reservoir** has a great running and biking path encircling the reservoir. Tire yourself out, then head to the *onsen*. Beyond the dam is a park area filled with cherry trees, a nice spot to check out in spring. Also in the area is a craft village where you can watch and try activities like leatherworking, metalworking, pottery, and making glass beads and stained glass. Accessible via the free Ajisai no Yu shuttle mentioned above.

**Mount Sarakura** is the highest mountain in Kitakyushu and offers hiking and biking trails as well as a camping spot. On a clear day, you can see South Korea. There are cable car services going up and down the mountain, and you can transfer to the ropeway lift and go to the summit. You can also enjoy a nice hike to the top, which takes two hours or less. There is a snowboarding area in the winter until the end of February. For more information, contact Hobashira Company. 6 chome Hobashira, Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-671-4761.

**Space World** is Japan's first space-themed amusement park and is open year round. Children who meet the height requirements can enjoy Space Camp, where they can try all the exciting equipment astronauts use to train before their missions. There is also a cheaper entrance pass with no rides included. Group discounts for 15 people or more. English brochure available. Take the JR Kagoshima Line to Space World Station. Direct buses are also available from Kokura and Kurosaki Stations. 10am-5pm all year. Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-672-3600. Web: [www.spaceworld.co.jp/english/index.html](http://www.spaceworld.co.jp/english/index.html).

## FESTIVALS

**Kurosaki Gion** takes place in Yahatanishi-ku

from July 20 to 23. This popular festival includes colorful *dashi* (floats), *taiko* (drums), and many booths lining the road to the station.

**Nagasaki Kaido Festival** lasts two days and is full of fun and festivities. It is held in October near the Prince Hotel in Kurosaki, Yahatanishi-ku.

## EATING & DRINKING

### CAFÉS

Kitakyushu has a wide variety of coffee shops wherever you go. Some of the well-known chains are Starbucks, Pronto, Mister Donut and Doutor, all within walking distance from JR Kokura Station and in other wards.

**Bee Honey** is a chain store that is famous for its 50 kinds of honey made from orange, avocados, wild flowers, *soba* and more. You must try their honey ice cream. Three-minute walk from JR Mojiko Station, on the first floor of the Kaikyo Plaza. 10am-8pm everyday. Tel 093-332-3720.

**Coco Café** near JR Mojiko Station has a patio facing the beautiful Kanmon Strait. If you want to escape the bustling streets of Kokura, sit back, enjoy the scenery and savor their french banana roll and a smoothie. From JR Mojiko Station, cross the street towards Kanmon Strait and you'll see "Coco Café" on the right side. 11am-9:30pm everyday except Monday. Saturday, Sunday and holidays until 10pm. Tel 093-322-5539.

**Espresso Bar Moonbeams** is the place to go for an outdoor cafe alternative to chain coffee conglomerates, serving alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks alike in a riverside location. Try their Irish beer with a hot dog. 12pm-12am everyday. Tel 093-541-7700. [See map]

**St. Marc Café** is a fashionable spot that will grind fresh coffee beans only after you

order. Coffees are cheaper than Starbucks and their famous *choco kuro* (chocolate croissants) are excellent. 7:00am-9:30pm everyday. Tel 093-512-7309. [See map]

**Tully's** is across the river from the RIVERWALK shopping center, and is a nice place to sip a latte and take in the scenery from the patio. They have seasonal coffee beans and healthy soy swirls in addition to nice snacks. Open everyday, 9am-10pm. Tel 093-533-1755. [See map]

**Yamaguchi's** is an excellent cake shop in Tobata with very friendly owners. They make great birthday cakes and have a small area for customers to sit down and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and some cake. Good to call before you go because they close irregularly. 2-8-34 Tenraiji, Tobata-ku. Tel 093-861-0765.

**Tenbinza** is a bakery in Mojiko where you can buy real homemade breads that have no preservatives. You have to buy their delicious *kome pan* (rice bread), which is made from rice flour and has an addicting chewy texture. 5-2 Sakae-machi Moji-ku. Tel 093-321-3411.

**Tsujiri** is the place to go for Japanese-style desserts. With its main store in Kyoto, the Kokura branch is famous for its *maccha* (green tea) ice cream served a variety of ways. They also sell nice Japanese teapots, tea cups and tea leaves, which make great gifts for your friends and family back home. Two locations in Kokura. Everyday 9am-8pm. Tel 093-521-1215. [See map]

### JAPANESE

**100 Yen Kaitenzushi** in Kurosaki is the place to go for good sushi on a tight budget. From Kurosaki Station, turn left and walk towards Izutsuya department store; stay on *Sango-sen* (Route 3) going towards Yahata. You'll see it on your right. A bit far, but worth it. About half a block before McDonald's. ¥

**Aguri Shunyu** あぐり旬遊 is a famous restaurant that serves something that you might not see back home: intestine hot pot,

or *motsu nabe*. Cow intestines are cut up into bite-size pieces, grilled with vegetables, then simmered in a special sauce. This is one of the finest versions of Fukuoka's popular hot pot dish. The *motsu nabe* course (¥2500/person) is recommended. 5:30pm-12am, closed Sundays and holidays. 3-3 Wisteria Building (1F) Konya-machi, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-533-7520. ¥¥¥ (See map)

**Baku Baku Ya** ばくばくや is an *izakaya* offering all kinds of great Japanese and Western dishes. The second location is next to the Monorail Kawaraguchi-Mihagino Station's northwest entrance, away from Kokura's core. Lunch 11:30am-2:00pm, dinner 5:30pm-12:00am. Both in Kokurakita-ku (See map for first location). Tel 093-551-8920 (for first location). Lunch ¥ Dinner ¥¥

**Kurofune** 黒船 is a chain *yakitori/izakaya* restaurant and a great place to celebrate the end of a workday. The larger, more popular one is near Book Off in Kokura. The other is located around the corner from Ichiran near JR Kokura Station. Every night 5pm-11:30pm. ¥¥ (See map)

**Kyatoru Sezon** キャトルセゾン is the place to go for healthy Japanese dishes using all organic vegetables. Here you can eat different kinds of Japanese *teishoku* everyday that are hard to find at other restaurants. The daily lunch special is recommended (¥860). Across from Tully's along the Murasakigawa River. Lunch ¥¥. (See map)

**Mama-san's** is rumored by some to have the best *yakitori*, *tempura*, and vegetables in Kitakyushu. From Yahata Station, take the first right. It's the first shop on the right. ¥¥

**OCM** is a cool little sandwich shop in Kokurakita-ku where you can choose from a wide selection of meats and vegetables. There is also an English menu on the wall. Located on the second floor. Everyday 10am-8:30pm. 093-522-5973. (See map) ☺

**Okonomiyaki ISHIN** お好み焼きいしん serves Japanese-style pancakes with choices of vegetables, meat, seafood and more. You have to try Kokura's original *yaki udon* (fried

thick noodles) using their special sauce! Everyday 11:30am-11:00pm (last order 10:15pm), closed New Year's Eve and New Year's. 3-2-20 Mikiya Building B1F Uo-machi. Tel 093-541-0457. ¥ (See map)

**Shisaya** シーサー屋 is the place to go for Okinawan food. Wait awhile and the owner will get out his *sanshin* and play a tune or two for you! Two locations in Kokurakita-ku. One near Fujiyama Mama (see map). 3-12-12 Eki-Mae Sun Heights (2F) Kyo-machi, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-531-4388. The other location is in Konya-machi (see map). Tel 093-551-8945.

**Take-chan's Yakitori Restaurant** in Moji offers regular *yakitori* fare as well as fish and vegetarian options available on request, served by the entertaining English-speaking owner. From Moji Station cross the main street toward Mister Donut. Turn left, follow the main street and turn right at the first corner. After about a minute, Take-chan's will be on your right. Look for the red lantern hanging outside. 4-11 pm everyday. Tel 093-371-2551. ¥¥

**Tenpero** 天瓶炉 is a do-it-yourself *tempura* restaurant. Order sticks of raw meat, fish, vegetables, and more, swirl them in batter, and stick them in the oil pot at your table until they're fried to your liking. The buffet course is ¥2480 for 90 minutes, and includes sushi and yummy desserts too! Mon-Sat 5pm-4am (LO 3am), Sun & holidays 5pm-1am (LO 12am). ¥¥¥ (See map) ☺

**Yakyuudori** 野球鳥 "Baseball Bird" is a not-to-miss *yakitori* restaurant with a friendly owner. Has an English menu and reasonably priced *yakitori*. The owner will grill up lots of vegetarian options! Look for the neon baseball diamond above the door. Tel 093-521-6663. ¥¥ (See map) ☺

**Yanoya** やのや is a great *udon* and *donburi* shop where the *udon* soup is made from fish broth and some items on the menu are vegetarian-friendly. Located near the Monorail Heiwadori Station inside the Uomachi covered walkway. 11am-8pm, closed Tuesdays. Tel 533-0420. ¥ (See

map) ☺

## **RAMEN, RAMEN & RAMEN!**

**Ichiran** 一蘭 is a famous *tonkatsu ramen* shop with locations in Kokurakita-ku and Kurosaki (in Yahatanishi-ku). It's open til the wee hours of the morning and is great for a post-drinking snack. After buying your meal ticket (about ¥600) from the vending machines outside, seat yourself at an empty seat and fill out the form to determine the tenderness of your noodles, the richness of your soup, the amount of garlic and spice, and what toppings you'd like. The Ichiran in Kurosaki is located between the Hikinoguchi bus stop and the bar called Andy Live (see map for Kokura location). ¥

**Ramen Road** on the basement floor inside RIVERWALK shopping complex is the fastest way for you to try ramen from all over Japan. Shops change every so often, so it's something you will never get tired of all year round! See map under "Riverwalk." ¥

**Fujio** 藤王 is one of few ramen shops in Kyushu that serve *shoyu* and *shio* ramen. The *tan tan men* is also great if you like your soup spicy. Buy a ticket from the vending machine on your left as you walk up the stairs to the second floor. Located next to Lawson convenience store in Uomachi. 11am-9pm, closed irregularly once a month. Tel 093-511-2800. See map under "Lawson." ¥

**Detan Ramen** であたんラーメン is a chain *tonkatsu ramen* shop located in the SATY department store near Tobata Station. They are known for their rich soup and thin noodles. They also have *musubi* rice balls and you can even do a *kaedama* (extra serving of noodles) for a hundred yen more. Just don't forget to NOT drink all the soup if you're doing the *kaedama*! Tel 093-871-2322. ¥

## **ASIAN (NON-JAPANESE)**

**Chao Chao** チャオチャオ is a *gyoza* potsticker specialty shop in Kokurakita-ku. Counter seats and a few table seats make it a very cozy atmosphere, great for striking up a few conversations with the locals. Grab a glass of cold beer and snack on their popular soup *gyoza*, under ¥500 per serving. There are

various kinds of *gyoza* and delicious side dishes too. Everyday 4-11:30pm. Tel 093-521-7456. See map. ¥¥

**Gane-sha** is a non-chain Indian restaurant with quaint and comfortable atmosphere. The server, Rajesh, speaks English and is very friendly. The excellent lunch and dinner sets will really fill you up, and the samosas are recommended for vegetarians. Located in Uomachi. Look for a painted sign with an orange rabbit and blue moose motif. Walk down the stairs and straight ahead. 12-9pm everyday except Mondays. Tel 093-541-2608. See map. ¥¥ ☺

**Hot Point** is a stylish restaurant in Uomachi with all varieties of food from spaghetti to Korean bibimba. You can ask for no meat when ordering a bibimba. They also have occasional live music on the third floor. Located near the Ganesha sign. 11am-10pm (LO 9:30pm). Tel 093-541-1484. ¥ ☺

**Mojo Thai** serves authentic Thai food, such as chicken with cashew nuts and chilis, spicy green curry, and tom yum soup, among other things. There's a handy picture menu and friendly waitresses to offer suggestions if you need help. Located on the second floor. Closed Mondays. Tel 093-551-5889. See map. ¥¥

**Mojo hand** is a Thai restaurant near Riverwalk with a funky atmosphere, good music, and excellent food. Try the minced pork lettuce wraps, spicy seafood salad, or the chicken and holy basil stir-fry. Lunch from 12pm-3pm, dinner from 6pm-11pm, closed every Tuesday. Tel 093-591-8751. See map. ¥¥

**Nabi-san** ナビさん Craving hummus? This is the place to go for Middle Eastern food! Only takeout is available. Take bus #1 or 22 from Kokura and get off at Yahatahigashi Kuyakushohita bus stop. Located just beyond the bus stop on the left-hand side. Better to call before since their hours are irregular. 1-1-17 Chuo-machi Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-661-2010. ¥¥

**Nanak** ナーナック is another great place for authentic Indian cuisine and a mean mango lassi, though portions are small and a bit pricy. Set meals start at ¥1500 and include curry, rice, and naan. It's best to go for their naan lunch specials. In between Mister Donut and McDonald's on the 2F. ¥¥ (See map)

**Shin Yeh** is a great Taiwanese restaurant in Kokura that offers an all-you-can-eat lunch buffet for ¥1050. The charming atmosphere and Taiwanese chef make for an authentic and pleasant meal. Right above Kyatoru Sezon. Everyday, 11am-11pm (lunch until 2pm). Tel 093-522-3720. ¥¥ (See map under Kyatoru Sezon)

**Shichirinyaki Yaoki** 七輪焼やおき will get you hooked once you eat their *yakiniku*, which is grilled over a *shichirin* (clay charcoal stove). Famous for their *motsu nabe* (intestine hot pots) too! Located on the second floor of Kannon Building. 5-11pm, closed Sundays and holidays. 1-4-20 Kannon Building, Kajimachi Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-551-9440. ¥¥¥(See map)

## EUROPEAN

**Aletta** serves a variety of pastas, seafood dishes, salad, and desserts buffet-style. Located in Mojiko on the 2F of the Kaikyo Plaza near Deli. Lunch 11am-2pm (weekday ¥1580, weekend/holiday ¥1780) and dinner 5:30-9pm (weekday ¥1980, weekend/holiday ¥2280). 5-1 Kaikyo Plaza West Wing (2F). Tel 093-321-5551. ¥¥

**Aqua Vitae** is an Italian restaurant in a quiet district in Yahatahigashi-ku., the place to go when you're craving authentic Italian food. Lunch Fri-Sun (12-2pm) and dinner every night (5-10:30pm). There are no fixed holidays, so it is better to call before going. From Yahata Station, cross the first big street and you will see a grocery store called Red Cabbage. Keep walking straight up Kokusai-dori to the sports gym called Sawarabi F&C Club on the right side. Aqua Vitae is right behind the sports gym. 4-12-2-1F Yahatahigashi-ku, Nishihon-machi. Tel 093-662-5412. ¥¥

**Booties** satisfies those craving a pint of Guinness or Yebisu, great fish 'n' chips (made from blowfish) and shepherd's pie in an Irish pub atmosphere. In Kokurakita-ku. Sun-Thu 5pm-2am; Fri, Sat, day before holiday until 3am. Tel 093-551-6160. ¥¥ (See map)

**Capricciosa** is on the 4F of Riverwalk in Kokurakita-ku. Variety of pastas to choose from and great, inexpensive house wine. There are also special birthday plans that include free drinks and a piece of cake! 10am-11pm everyday. Tel 093-573-1891. ¥

**Pietro Corte** is a nice Italian restaurant across the river from Riverwalk. Buffet with a variety of salads and lunch specials available. 2F above Tully's coffee shop in Kokurakita-ku. 11am-10pm everyday (LO 9:30pm). Tel 093-533-1830. ¥¥ (See map under Tully's) ¥

**tio PEPE** presents Italian fare at its finest! From creamy pastas and thin-crust pizzas to plenty of vegetarian options, this place has it all. Try a decanter of the house red wine. 11:30am-3pm everyday (LO 2:30pm), 6-11pm (LO 10pm) Tel 093-513-5505. ¥¥ (See map) ¥

## MEXICAN

**El Mirador** is a beautifully decorated Mexican-themed restaurant on the 7F of the Nissan Senpaku Building across from JR Mojiko Station. It has an amazing view of the water and bridge. Although the menu doesn't quite reflect the Mexican ambiance, the food is still delicious with especially good prices at lunch (\800). Open 11am- 10pm. 1-4-3 Nishi Kaigan, Moji-ku, Nissan Senpaku Building (7F). Tel 093-321-6363. ¥¥

**Gallery Andes** serves Mexican cuisine on the 1F and hosts festive parties on the third Saturday of every month with live music and salsa dancing on the 3F. Reservations are a must for dinner. On warm summer nights the patio on the rooftop makes a nice place to enjoy a Corona. The owner is very friendly and speaks Japanese, English, and Spanish. Located in Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-592-6530. Web: www.sol-andino.net. ¥¥ (See

map)

**La Rosita** has been in business for more than 30 years and serves great Mexican food. The cozy atmosphere makes you feel like you are actually in Mexico and the owner is very friendly. A bit pricey, but if you're craving authentic Mexican food, this is a great option. Located just off the Monorail Kawaraguchi-Mihagino Station in Kokurakita-ku. Open 4pm-2am everyday. Opposite from Kitakyushu Chuo Byoin (Kitakyushu Chuo Hospital). Tel 093-951-6102. ¥¥¥

## OTHER

**Beer's Sun** is especially good for large groups. It has a wide selection of food and beers, including Sapporo's own black stout and pale ale. For the adventurous type, there is the "half & half" draft beer, which is a happy blend of stout and pale ale. Two locations in Kokurakita-ku (see map) and Moji. The one in Moji is right next to Moji Station in Moji-ku. 5pm-12am every night. 1-25 Naka-machi Moji-ku. Tel 093-381-0104. ¥¥ (See map for Beer's Sun in Kokura)

**Café Bongo** provides a trendy atmosphere, great drinks, and an *izakaya*-style menu. There is also an ¥880 all-you-can-eat brunch everyday 11:30am-2pm. Dinner 5pm-1am Sun-Thu, til 3am Fri-Sat. Tel 093-533-5780. ¥¥ (See map)

**Center River** センターリバー is a hamburger steak and steak restaurant in an old-fashioned steamboat on the harbor in Mojiko. It offers a set menu starting from ¥880 and for lunch time specials, coffees are only ¥100. 11am-10pm everyday (LO 9pm), Lunch from 11am-3pm. Tel 093-322-3360. ¥¥¥

**Izutsuya** in both Kokura and Kurosaki has food shops on the basement floor offering everything from *bento* to juice bars made from fresh fruits and vegetables! (See map for directions to Izutsuya) ¥

**Kitchen Q** has excellent lunch specials for ¥1000 or less. Try the delicious *takoraitsu*, a Mexican-style salad with rice. 11:30-12am

everyday except New Year's. Tel 093-533-1645. ¥¥ (See map)

**Mojiko Beer and Restaurant** 門司港地ビール工房 serves delicious lamb and vegetable hot pots on the first floor, with another restaurant serving local brew beer and great sides on the third floor overlooking the Kanmon Strait, all with an English menu. They have three microbrews including the 2002 Japan Beer Cup silver medalist .11am-10pm (LO 9:15pm). Near the pedestrian drawbridge in Mojiko. Look for the large beer sign. Tel 093-321-6885. ¥¥

**Nonbe's Cafe** has an original menu, specialty drinks and lively English-speaking staff that make this cafe and bar a must if you're in the area. Try the herb chicken or pizza washed down with a green tea cocktail for a real treat. Near Kitchen Q. ¥¥ (See map)

**Prison Hell** プリズンヘル is probably the only restaurant in Kitakyushu modeled after a punk-horror house/jail, similar to the Lock Up in Fukuoka City. You can play billiards and it's a great place to plan parties! Course runs at around ¥3000. 2-2-19 Kyo-machi Kokurakita-ku. Open from 3pm. Closed December 31 & January 1. Tel 093-511-3373. ¥¥¥ (See map)

**Sai's enak** 菜's You'll experience a different world once you step into this funky restaurant in Kokurakita-ku, offering both private rooms and a big room suitable for parties. The menu is mostly creative Japanese dishes using fresh seafood caught from the Genkainada Sea as well as organic vegetables. A mysterious cat statue beckons you in. 5pm-11pm (LO 10:30pm), closed second and fourth Mondays of each month. Tel 093-522-8313. Web: www.sais.co.jp. ¥¥¥ (See map)

## BARS

There are little bars scattered throughout Kitakyushu, though the more popular ones are located primarily in the downtown areas of Kokurakita and Kurosaki (in Yahatanishi). Most places tend to be cozy and filled with character. Let's *kampa!* Cheers! Mabuhal!

**Airstream** has a good atmosphere most nights. A great place for group gatherings on Friday and Saturday nights. Tel 093-533-1258. [See map]

**Kakuuchi Style ARIARIDE** is a standing only bar where you can casually go in for a few drinks after work to drink your favorite *sake* and *shochu*. Many unique styles of alcohol to choose from, purchased with tickets from the vending machine by the door. A little past Pronto [see map under Pronto] toward Heiwa-dori Monorail Station. There is a big light bulb outside the shop. Tel 093-522-8066.

**Live House Bar ANDY** is a blues bar with live music on the weekends. From Kurosaki Station, follow Route 3 heading towards Orio, Route 200 to Hikino-guchi, follow Route 200 right and it's just after the Ichiran ramen shop on your right. Or take any bus to Hikino-guchi and walk parallel to the expressway along Route 200. Coming off the expressway, take Kurosaki exit and head for Orio/Nakama and as you come off the flyover it's on the right. 2-6-7 Hikino Yahatanishi-ku. Tel 093-642-8861.

**Bar Gitane** is a tiny, cool place for listening to good music, hanging out and getting away from crowds of people. Happy hour 7pm-9pm. Tel 093-531-7160. [See map]

**Standing Bar KAMIKAZE** opened recently to the left of Nishi Kokura Station. It's a modern-style *kakuuchi* (standing bar) and they have good *yakitori* and *shochu* for reasonable prices [see map].

**Bar Marquesas** is a great place for drinking in Kurosaki [in Yahatanishi-ku], with an English menu and a few vegetarian options. Walk down the stairs at the station, go through the covered walkway, and take the second right. It's on the left, next to the bookshop. There's a statue of a man holding the sign. 2-6-17-2F Kurosaki, Yahatanishi-ku. Tel 093-645-2032. **V**

**Birdman House** is not in central Kokura, but many people make the trip down to Kokuraminami-ku to relax at this down-to-

earth cafe and bar. You can enjoy a chaitea or beer while sitting under a *katatsu* in the winter. Located near Kitakyushu University and across the street from Kokura Hospital. Get off at Kitagata Monorail Station. Exit to the left of the wickets and walk towards the Guinness pachinko parlor. Turn left at the corner of the pachinko parlor. Turn left again at the third stoplight and walk down about seven minutes. The hospital will be on your right and Birdman House on the left. 1-6-11 Kitagata, Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-922-2092.

**Bumblebees** lets you enjoy your drinks at patio tables outside. Great for people watching in summer. 7pm-3am. Tel 093-513-7393. [See map]

**Equipe** is a trendy Brazilian-themed bar and restaurant with a refreshing selection of music. They offer a course meal popular amongst ALTs. You can also challenge your friends to a game of Jenga or a slightly more sophisticated version of tic-tac-toe. Tel 093-551-3584. [See map]

**Fujiyama Mama** is another popular spot among foreigners. The small, cluttered and loud atmosphere makes it one of the more colorful places around. For those daring people out there, there are free drinks for topless women and naked men! On the second floor. Tel 093-521-1639. [See map]

**Grassroots** is an unpredictable, popular late-night spot with reggae music and friendly bartenders. If you bring your own music (mostly reggae-based) they might play it for you! Tel 093-512-7722. [See map]

**Jam** is a great place to unwind and catch a game of *deko-pin*. The staff are a bunch of interesting characters and those who are fluent in English will teach you about the Japanese psyche over a pint—go on Sundays to get in on that action. Draft beer ¥500. The ancient Greek statue will beckon you in.

**The Loop** is a sophisticated yet unpretentious bar with good beats. From JR Kokura Station, follow the directions to Xelha. Walk past Xelha and it's just after Fujiyama Mama on the 2F. [See map]

**Lucky Moon**, dubbed an "international" bar, has long been a hangout for foreigners in Kitakyushu. The Lucky Moon shake comes highly recommended. Tuesdays and Thursdays all cocktails are ¥500 for ladies. Miki Building 2F. Open from 7:30pm. Tel 093-533-5776. [See map]

**Memphis Train** is a very cool blues bar in Kurosaki with plush seats. It's rare to hear blues in Japan and even rarer to find Samuel Smith's Grolsch beer. It's small, but probably the best bar in Kurosaki. 1-1-44 Kumade, Yahatanishi-ku. Tel 093-645-0676.

**Mighty Mouse** is a great place and easy to find in Kurosaki. It's on the same street as Marquesas and Morry's. Look for the white sign outside. It's on the 2F.

**Morry's** is a small but warm bar in Kurosaki where Bob Marley rules the sound waves. Two doors down from Marquesas, next to the flower shop. Look for the sign and follow the long staircase up. Tel 093-622-4456.

**Pangaea** is a small reggae bar with an island-style atmosphere. Food and drinks, including Red Stripe Beer, are served from 6pm-1am. All-you-can-drink meal course for ¥3500. 10-7-3 Kyo-machi, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-533-3555. [See map]

**Patico Tower** is a bit difficult to find but the journey through "snack" land is definitely worth the trip. Relax and enjoy specialties like Indian curry or tuna-mushroom pasta while playing a game of pool. Azabu Building, 8-16-3F Konya-machi, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-512-5222. [See map]

**Round 5**, run by the mastermind behind Lucky Moon, is a bit off the beaten track, but is perhaps the friendliest little bar in all of Kokura. Have a chat with Bob, relax with a bottle of California wine and get lost in karaoke. On the second floor of the Wysteria Building. [See map]

**SDR** caps off the evening with "Sex, Drugs, and Rock & Roll" every night. Small, noisy, and loudly decorated, but still a rather cool

bar. From JR Kokura Station, follow the directions to Round 5. Walk past Round 5 and it's on the right-hand side in the Oak Building [3F], across the street from Patico Tower. [See map]

**Soap Bar and Cafe** is an alternative coffee shop during the day and a bar in the evening. A good place for relaxing and even studying. There's a bar, some tables, and a few couches for lounging. Everyday 2pm-12am, Fri & Sat til 2am, Sun til 8pm. Closed Jan. 1-3. 7-8-23 Kaji-machi. Tel 093-551-5522.

**Xelha** has a good mix of Asian dishes as well as pub standards like fish 'n' chips and meat pies, all served *izakaya*-style from ¥600-800. This is a well-known bar and restaurant among foreigners and is a great place for dancing if you bring the party with you. International soccer games are often played on the big screen TV. Sun-Thu 5pm-12am, Fri & Sat til 2am. Arima Building 1F, 3-6-23 Kyo-machi, Kokurakita-ku. ¥ [See map]

## BEER GARDENS

Usually found on rooftop terraces, beer gardens are great places to go with a large group of people. Most offer *nomihodai* and *tabehodai* options. Locations include Izutsuya, Toei Kaikan, Chuo Kaikan, Rihga Royal Hotel, and several other hotels in downtown Kokura. Open in the summer from June to September.

## NIGHTCLUBS

Although places to dance might seem few and far between, the locals really make an effort when they host an event. Bar owners are more than happy to push tables aside and put some tunes on if you really want to dance. The atmosphere at any given dance spot can seem a bit unpredictable, often depending on the night and whether or not an event is being held there. It's usually a good idea to bring the party with you when you go clubbing.

**Cross Club** is a great late-night spot for dancing with a bunch of friends. Located around the corner from Lucky Moon on the next parallel street. Kaji-machi 1-3-3, 3F. [See map]



**Megahertz** occasionally has live music and small "raves." Good on weeknights if you like drum and bass. The monthly schedule is posted on the door. On the 2F, 7-17 Konyamachi, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-531-1906. [See map]

**Sumix Hall** is a new event hall overlooking the river behind JR Kokura Station. Recent events have included an art expo of local talent and an all-night Reggae Party. Keep your eyes open for upcoming events usually posted in bars around town. It's a two-minute taxi ride from Kokura Station, or a brisk walk just beyond the river. 1 Konomi-machi Kokurakita-ku. [See map]

## SHOPPING

### BOOKSTORES

Department stores such as Isetan and AMU Plaza have a big bookstore with a wide variety from children's to foreign language books.

**Quest** is the largest bookstore in Kitakyushu complete with a decent section of novels, books on Japanese culture, language study materials, teaching materials, and magazines (2F). There are also maps on CD-Rom, a print shop, a computer book search service, a stationery shop, and ample parking. Locations in Kurosaki (in Yahatanishi) and in Kokura. For more information on Quest in Kurosaki, see the Izutsuya department store entry. [See map for Kokura location]

**Book Off** is a major chain bookstore that buys and sells used books, CDs, DVDs and video games. Located right next to Kurufune in Kokurakita-ku [See map for Kurufune]

### DEPARTMENT STORES

**Izutsuya** in Kokura is a large department store that sells all your basic needs as well as foreign foods in the basement. The annex is right across from the main store and has a cute café called Afternoon Tea. A bit pricey but they have the best fresh hot apple pie a la mode. During hot summer months, the rooftop turns into a beer garden. [See map]

The Kurosaki location is on the left as you exit the station.

**Isetan** is a fairly new department store in Kokura, located to your left directly across from the station. You will find a bookstore, music store, restaurants, and a gym called Big Bang Sports Club on the upper levels of the building, with a grocery store in the basement. Shelves are stocked with the usual Japanese fare, as well as wine, champagne, cheese and some foreign foods. There is also a Kodama Natural Foods store with a variety of organic and natural foods and supplements.

**AMU Plaza** is a cute department store inside JR Kokura Station. There's a bakery, Sony Plaza, music store, and book and stationery store.

**Muji** sells clothing, cosmetics, appliances, bicycles, stationery, household items, furniture, and health food. Located past Quest bookstore [Kokurakita-ku] on the left-hand side. [See map]

**Saty** is an all-in-one chain department store. The location in Tobata has a food court, exercise center, cinema, and supermarket offering some western products. The department store has good prices on men's suits and children's clothing. There is a small Comme Ca store on the 1F as well. On the 4F is the Konami Sports Club and Warner Mycal cinema with an American-style atmosphere. Next to Tobata Station. 10am-midnight. Tel 093-871-1121

### ELECTRONICS

There are many chain stores with locations throughout Kitakyushu carrying products ranging from cell phones to MD players to DVDs.

**Best Denki** (see map) tends to be on the higher end of the price scale; **Deo Deo** products and prices are similar to Best Denki; **Yamada Denki** (see map) and **Kojima Denki** tend to be cheaper than some of the others.

### GROCERIES (FOREIGN GOODS)

A good selection of foreign goods can be

found in Sony Plaza (in Kokura Station) and in the basement grocery stores of Riverwalk, Izutsuya and Isetan. Please see individual entries for more information.

### SHOPPING COMPLEXES

**Asia Import Market (AIM)** has many foreign goods including clothing and household decor from Southeast Asia selling for reasonable Japanese prices. [See map]

**Cha Cha Town** is a shopping center within walking distance of Kokura Station. Shops include UNIQLO, Comme Ca, Right On Jeans, a 100 yen shop, food court, grocery store, game center and multiplex cinema. Look for the giant red ferris wheel. [See map]

**Kyo-machi** and **Uo-machi** are the maze of streets lined with a variety of restaurants, bars, shops, and *pachinko* parlors located just outside the south exit of JR Kokura Station. Head toward the covered walkway just to the left of McDonald's and the big outdoor TV (the walkway runs parallel to the monorail line), to enter the shopping area. The first section is Kyo-machi and as you walk further away from the station it turns into Uo-machi. Here you can find a Starbucks, a 100 yen plaza, and a discount ticket shop where you can buy almost any ticket imaginable.

**La Foret** is behind JR Kokura Station (take the north exit), connected by a walkway on the second floor exit. There are many clothing and accessory stores, a Tower Records, Best Denki, and Media Internet Café Popeye.

**THE MALL Kokura** is a western style indoor shopping mall located in Kokuraminami-ku. You can find Seibu Department Store, clothing shops, Muji, Toys-R-U's, a food court including Baskin Robbins, game center, bowling alley, and free parking. Take the JR Nippo Honsen line from Kokura or Nishi Kokura to Shimosone Station. Stores until 8pm, restaurants until 10pm, bowling 12.

**Riverwalk** is the funky-looking complex next to Kokura Castle, across the river from Izutsuya. Various stores include GAP, Sports Authority, Comme Ca, Baskin Robbins,

Starbucks, Ramen Road, a food court, restaurants, and T-Joy digital multiplex cinema. Daiei Gourmet City is a grocery store in the basement that carries various foods and drinks. [See map]

### OTHERS

**All Most New** is a recycle shop in Kokurakita-ku that buys and sells used goods in quality condition. Furniture, appliances, knick-knacks, clothing, household items, and accessories are often in stock here. Tel 093-921-1551. Closed Wednesdays.

**Enjoy Cycle Sport** in Moji is a shop near the station offering good deals on bicycles. Turn right out of Moji Station and walk about 5 minutes. The shop is on the left near the *pachinko* parlor. The owner, Shirai-sensei, teaches an *aikido* class that is popular among JETs.

**Tanga Market** is across the street from Uo-machi and is a lively area with fresh meat, fish, vegetables, and *bento*. **Maruwa**, a 24-hour grocery store, is also located here. [See map]

## ENTERTAINMENT

### CINEMAS

General Admission: ¥1800  
College/High school: ¥1500  
Elem./Middle: ¥1000  
Senior (Over 60): ¥1000

First Show: ¥1200  
Late Show: ¥1200  
1<sup>st</sup> of every month: ¥1000  
Ladies' Day: ¥1000 (Wednesdays)  
Men's Day: ¥1000 (Fridays)

**Cha Cha Town CINEPLEX** is a ten-minute walk from JR Kokura Station. Ten screens. Web: [www.cineplex.co.jp/kokura/index.html](http://www.cineplex.co.jp/kokura/index.html)

**RIVERWALK T-JOY** is a five-minute walk from Nishi Kokura Station or 10-minute walk from Kokura Station and is the first digital cinema complex in Fukuoka Prefecture. Eight

screens. Web: [www.t-joy.net/KITAKYUSHU/0216index.html](http://www.t-joy.net/KITAKYUSHU/0216index.html)

**Warner MYCAL CINEMA** can be found at SATY in Tobata. See the "Shopping" entry for more information. Web: [www.warnermycal.com](http://www.warnermycal.com)

## **KARAOKE**

Many places in Kokura have a great English song selection. Most places offer an all-you-can-drink option that can be included in the hourly rate (about ¥1000 per person). Don't be afraid to go wild with the complimentary tambourines!

**Festa** lets you game, *purikura* (print club photo booths), and *karaoke*! From JR Kokura Station follow the monorail line and turn right at the first major street (Katsuyama-dori), then turn left at McDonald's into the covered walkway lined with shops. Located just before the Lawson. There is a crepe shop outside the entrance. *Nomihodai karaoke* is ¥900-1000 per hour. 2-4-20 Uo-machi. Tel 093-512-3367.

**Shidax** is a bit cheaper than Festa with nicer rooms and more songs. From JR Kokura Station, follow the monorail until you reach the first major street (Katsuyama-dori), take a left, and it'll be on the right. Everyday 11am-6am (next day). 1-4-1 Kaji-machi Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-513-8225.

## **OTHER**

**Cafe Maya** is a restaurant that hosts salsa lessons after hours with a group of very friendly Japanese. Monday 8-9:10pm for beginners, 9:10-10:10pm for advanced. On Wednesdays they offer Cuban "rueda", 8-9pm beginners, 9:10-10:10pm advanced. One lesson for free. Tel 093-521-1090. 1-6-30 Kyo-machi, Kokurakita-ku. Web: [www.web-press.co.jp/cielo/](http://www.web-press.co.jp/cielo/)

**Enjoy Cycle Sport's** owner, Shirai-sensei, teaches an aikido class popular amongst JETs. See "Shopping" for more information. **Kitakyushu Bowl** has two locations, one at the Shisuiikaikan (2-1-72 Nakatsu Guchi, Kokurakita-ku), and the other inside The Mall in Shimosone (Kokuraminami-ku, next to JR

Shimosone Station).

**Kitakyu U.S. Bowl** in Kurosaki (Yahatanishi-ku) is near both a karaoke place and a video store. Located just above the arcade and marked by a giant bowling pin, you can see it from the road. From Kurosaki, head along Route 3 to Orio; it's on the left just after Joyfull. From Orio, head along Route 3 to Kurosaki; it's on the right-hand side just after the Route 281 intersection.

**Kokura Bowl** is easily accessible by both train and bus. Five-minute walk from JR Nishi Kokura Station, just across the train tracks from the Daimon bus stop.

**Well Tobata** is right beside Tobata Station, and includes a theater complex which hosts a number of traditional Japanese and non-traditional theater performances every year.

## **SPORTS & FITNESS**

### **GYMS**

Various gyms located around Kitakyushu-shi have free weights, cardio machines, pools, exercise classes, and showers.

**Big Bang Sports Club** provides treadmills, bikes, elliptical and weight machines, but not many free weights. A variety of exercise and dance classes are offered, as well as a 25 meter pool, a spa, a sauna, and steam rooms in the locker rooms. Located on 10F of Isetan, across from JR Kokura Station. Mon-Sat 9:15am-11pm, Sun 9:15am-8pm. Closed 15th and last day of every month. ¥8925/month for anytime use.

**Konami Sports Club** offers variety of price plans, though full membership with access to both the gym and pool generally costs around ¥8400 per month. Access to the pool only costs ¥6825 per month. Locations include Tobata (4F of SATY. Tel 093-884-0860) and Tokuriki in Kokuraminami-ku (2-8-9 Moritsune, Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-

963-4777); both are next to Saty.

**Mihagino Taiikukan** (gymnasium) has courts for volleyball, badminton, basketball and a ping pong table. ¥260 per person for use under two hours or you can buy a book of tickets for ¥2340 (10 times). There are cheaper rates for certain hours. Mon-Fri 9am-9pm, closed December 29-January 3. 3-4-1 Saburomaru Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-923-0823.

**Orio Sports Center** has special rates for using badminton, table tennis, and basketball facilities depending on the day and time. Call beforehand to find out the week's schedule. They have a swimming pool and a training room. Showers are also available. 9am-9pm (pool from 10am-8pm), closed during New Year's and every Monday except in July and August. From JR Orio Station, catch the Oura 3 chome bus, or walk 20 minutes from the station. 3-9-1 Oura, Yahatanishi-ku. Tel 093-691-0812.

**Prince Hotel** opens its adjoining gym complex to the public. There is a nice indoor pool and a large selection of weights and cardio exercise machines. There is also an ice skating rink here open from November to April. Fifteen-minute walk from JR Kurosaki Station or six-minute ride by shuttle bus from bus stop #5 at JR Kurosaki Bus Center. 3-1 Higashimagari-machi, Yahatanishi-ku. Tel 093-631-7702.

**Raxy** is a rather small gym and the staff speak minimal English, but it has a large heated indoor pool and offers different classes including aerobics and yoga. Weekdays 10am-10pm; weekends 10am-5:30pm; holidays 10am-7pm. Closed December 29-31. Across the street from Moji Station, next to Mos Burger. 1-4-23 Takada Moji-ku. Tel 093-391-0888.

**Sawarabi F&C Sports Center** is a sports gym in Yahatahigashi-ku, not too far from JR Yahata Station. ¥9800 a month for anytime usage, ¥8000 for weekday afternoons and evenings, and ¥5800 for college students, all plus an enrollment fee. 4-13-5 Nishihon-machi Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-671-

3800.

## **COURTS**

Most tennis courts do not require reservations. However, please call in advance to find out if there are any courts available for the time and day you'd like to play.

**Bunka-Kinen Tennis Courts** are ¥330 for two hours. Lights cost ¥400. 8am-9pm everyday. 5-1 Tahara, Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-472-4693.

**Katsuki-Chuo Tennis Courts** are ¥330 for two hours. Lights cost ¥50 for 30 minutes. 8:30am-10:30pm everyday. 4-1 Katsukinishi, Yahatanishi-ku. Tel 093-617-9355.

**Kokuraminami Tennis Courts** are ¥200 for two hours. 9am-5pm everyday. 5pm-7pm from May til the end of August. 2-5 Hindemachi, Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-963-2675.

**Mihagino Tennis Courts** has lights available and is two hours for ¥330. Mon-Fri 8:30am-7pm. At 5:45pm, a lottery is held to decide who can play until closing. Sat & Sun are usually busy due to games. Located in Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-951-3950.

**Moji Tennis Courts** has lights available, two hours for ¥200. 8am-6pm everyday. 1-2-3 Tani-machi, Moji-ku. Tel 093-321-1066.

**Momozono Tennis Courts** ¥330 for two hours. 8am-sunset everyday, but weekends are usually busy. 3-1 Momozono, Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-671-3503.

**Shiroyama Tennis Courts** ¥200 for two hours. 8am-9pm everyday. 2-14 Yashiki, Yahatanishi-ku. Tel 093-642-9575.

**Tobata Taikukan Tennis Courts** ¥200 for two hours. 9am-5pm everyday. 3-1 Kannonjicho, Tobata-ku. Tel 093-881-8177. **Tobata Tennis Courts** ¥200 for two hours. 9am-6:30pm everyday. 1-1 Senbo, Tobata-ku. Tel 093-882-9771.

**Wakamatsu Tennis Courts** ¥330 for two hours. Lights cost ¥50 for 30 minutes. 9am-9pm everyday. 5 Kyonan-machi, Wakamatsu-ku. Tel 093-751-9242.

## POOLS

There are several pools in the area, including one next to the Board of Education in Kokura. The outdoor pools are usually open from July to September but most indoor pools operate year round.

**Kenritsu Kitakyushu Kinrou Seishonen Bunka Center (Kitakyushu Palace)** is ¥170 for two hours. July 8 to September 7, 9am-8:30pm. Closed Mondays. 5-1-3 Ibori, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-651-4600.

**Momozono Civic Pool** is an outdoor pool open everyday in July and August from 9am-5pm. ¥260 for two hours. The indoor pool operates year round, ¥260 during July and August, ¥400 for other months. Mon-Sat 1-8pm, Sun & holidays 9am-8pm. Closed Mondays. 3-1 Momozono, Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-661-2365.

**Shiritsu Orio Sports Center** is open in July and August 10am-8pm everyday. ¥260 for two hours during the summer, ¥400 for other months. Closed Mondays except during July & August. Friday mornings are not open to the public. 3-9-1 Oura, Yahatanishiku. Tel 093-691-0812.

**Shin-Moji Onsui Pool** May & June, Tue-Sat, 1pm-8pm [admittance until 7pm], ¥400 for two hours. Sun & holidays, 9am-8pm. Closed Monday. July & August 9am-8pm everyday. ¥260 for two hours. 3-5 Shin-Moji, Moji-ku. Tel 093-481-2707.

**Sports Center for Handicapped People** July and August from 9am-5pm everyday. Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday are reserved for handicapped people and their caretakers. Open to the public Mon, Wed, Fri and Sat. two hours/¥240. 10-5 Harugaoka, Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-922-0026.

**Wakamatsu Gymnasium** is generally ¥400 for two hours, but ¥260 during July and August. 10am-8pm everyday, closed Monday. 1-1-1 Furumae, Wakamatsu-ku. Tel 093-761-1983.

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

**Immigration Bureau (Kokura Godochosha)** 小倉合同庁舎 is the place to go for visa extensions and re-entry permits (necessary if you are traveling outside of Japan). Located in a white building just before the Katsuyama park. The sign is written in kanji only. Mon-Fri 9am-12pm, 1pm-4pm. 5-3 Jonan, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-582-6915, ext 6931. [See map]

**Kitakyushu Central Library** 小倉中央図書館 houses a fair collection of English books of Japanese history and literature. 9:30am-7pm weekdays and 9:30am-6pm weekends. Closed Mondays. Tel 093-571-1481. [See map]

**Kitakyushu Driver's License Test Center** in Kokuraminami-ku is where you'll go if you wish to obtain a Japanese license. To get here, take the monorail to Kitagata Station and exit to the left after passing through the wickets. Walk straight toward the giant Guinness pachinko parlor, turn left at the corner of the parlor, and go straight down this street until you reach the second stop light and turn right. You'll pass the Self Defense Force on your left (first stop light) and Kitakyushu University on your right (second stop light). At the second stop light, turn left and walk straight following the curvy road. On your right-hand side after the public gymnasium. 2-4-1 Hinode-machi, Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-961-4804.

**Kitakyushu International Association (KIA)** had a renovation recently and is ready to greet foreigners with a nice lounge. The KIA offers many services including Japanese classes, various language tables, meeting rooms, and a library. The library has over 6000 books in English, Korean, and Chinese, and newspapers such as the Japan Times and Herald Times. It's also a great resource for travel guides. Books can be checked out for two weeks at a time. Located in the KIA, 3F. There is always a staff member present who speaks English. 9am-5:30pm. Closed

Mondays, December 29 and January 3. From JR Yahata Station, walk straight towards Kyushu International University (about 15 minutes). It's in a mirrored building; signs will lead you there. International Village Center 3F, 1-1-1 Hirano, Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-662-0055. Web: [www.inf.ne.jp/kia/index\\_e.html](http://www.inf.ne.jp/kia/index_e.html)

**Ladies Yahata** offers Japanese classes every Tuesday evening from 6:30-8:30pm. This course is recommended by previous JETs because the instructors are qualified and very nice. Ten lessons will cost you about ¥15 000. Near the Kitakyushu International Association (KIA). Walk up the road from JR Yahata Station, pass the roundabout; it's just a little further up on the left-hand side of the road. 2-6-6 Ogura, Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-651-2101.

**Orio Community Center** in Kurosaki holds Japanese conversation lessons every Tuesday (1-3pm) and Wednesday (7-9pm); closed during major holidays. Cultural field trips and cooking courses are also available. 2-2-50 Komyo, Yahatanishi-ku. Tel 093-601-8991.

## INTERNET CAFES

**I-BOX** is a great place to go if you'll be surfing the net or chatting for a while. Private individual booths or pair booths are available. Soft drinks, coffee, tea, magazines, and Japanese comics are free of charge. Food is also available upon order. There are two locations in Kokura, one near the north exit of JR Kokura Station (see map), the other along the Monorail line between Keibajo-mae and Moritsune stations. It is a big complex complete with a game center and karaoke booths.

**Internet Cafe Light** is located in Kokurakita-ku, Ki-machi 3-6-16-102. Tel 093-561-7883.

**Popeye Media Café** is a good place to surf the net, play video games, read your favorite comic books and simply relax and sleep! The basic rate is under ¥300 for first 30 minutes and about ¥100 every 15 minutes after that. There is also a reasonably priced night pack. Shower rooms, pool table, dart

room and even cozy booths for couples available too. LAFORET 1F (see map).

**Kinko's** is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Along with color copying, binding, and film developing services, internet access is also available at both locations in Kokurakita. Tel 093-513-6506. [See map]

## HEALTH

**Emergency Medical Clinic** provides services for sudden illnesses day or night in two locations: 1-7-1 Bashaku Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-522-9999; 4-18-1 Nishihon-machi, Yahatahigashi-ku. Tel 093-662-1759.

**Hamaguchi Women's Health Clinic** provides birth control, STD testing, prenatal care, check ups, and PAP smears. Dr. Hamaguchi speaks English well as he attended school at UCLA in the U.S. Seeing a gynecologist in a foreign country can be a little more uncomfortable than usual so it is a good idea to bring a friend along. Nishitetsu Bus #4 passes directly in front of his office. For an appointment and more information call 093-561-0776. 2-14-24 Kiyomizu, Kokurakita-ku.

**Yoshitake Hospital** 嘉武病院 has a doctor who is kind and speaks some English. 7-23 Minamiwakazono-machi, Kokuraminami-ku. Tel 093-962-1288.

**Kuroki Hiro Clinic** Dr. Mika Migita speaks English pretty well and prefers to prescribe Chinese medicine and herbs rather than general antibiotics. 9am-1pm; 2:30pm-6pm everyday except Wed, Sun and holidays. Dr. Migita is there only on Mon, Thu and Sat. Take the bus to Itozu Zoo (Itozu-nomori Koen). From the front of the zoo head towards Kokura. There will be a used car lot on the left-hand side with a large sign for the clinic near it. 3-8-11 Kami Itozu, Kokurakita-ku. Tel 093-651-3847.

## BUZEN-SHI & AROUND

## BUZEN-SHI 豊前市

Buzen was an old province of Japan, and dates as far back as the early eighth century, although the city itself became official in the 1950s. Buzen-shi has a population of roughly 29 000. Although semi-urban, Buzen's small town atmosphere makes for a more relaxed pace, and the people are generally very friendly and helpful. It is also famous for having the best oysters in the region. The main station of Buzen is Unoshima Station.

**Aisanshou** is a traditional Japanese house with a beautiful Japanese garden located in nearby Koge-machi. Entry prices start from ¥3000.

**Kubote-san** is a mountain perfect for hiking and also a great spot to have a picnic. It is known for its fire walking ceremony in April. It is located in Buzen-shi and is an hour bike ride from City Hall. Follow Road 32; the route is clearly signposted. Otherwise, a car is necessary.

### FESTIVALS

**Hon-machi Gion Festival** is held around Golden Week and lasts for three days, making it the biggest special event in Buzen. In conjunction with Children's Day, there are many small cars with lots of children tugging on ropes. The main attractions are the large floats of the two main towns, Hon-machi and Uo-machi. The whole neighborhood pitches in to move the 20-25 foot tall float up and down the street. This festival provides for an exciting atmosphere, especially for the guys lifting the floats, who are given free beer during breaks.

**Karasutengu Festival** celebrates the Buzen-shi mascot, a colorful cartoonish crow. The highlight of the day is a citywide tug-of-war and the appearance of the giant Karasutengu

hot-air balloon. Held at Tenchizan Park on November 2.

**Otaue Festival** is held at the end of March. This rice planting festival was determined an "intangible cultural asset" in 1971. At Mount Kuonte, sacred dancing and music narrate the rice planting process. Located at Kubotesan Chugo-Mae Hiroba. Tel 097-982-1111.

## CHIKUJO-MACHI 築上町

This newly merged town of Chikujo (formerly Shida-machi and Tsuiki-machi) has a population of around 22 000. It possesses the beautiful Tsunashiki Tenmangu Shrine, which is known for its 1000 plum trees planted around the structure. Lots of nature to see, including Japan's third oldest Japanese cinnamon tree (said to about 1900 years old).

**Tsuiki Air Base** is a local Self Defense Force Air Base that hosts an annual air show featuring the famous Blue Impulse Flying Team in a display of precision aerobatics. There's also a small but interesting museum about the base's history.

## KOGE-MACHI 上毛町

Koge-machi is a new town of about 8500 (formerly Shin Yoshitomi-mura and Taihei-mura). Koge is the former region of the Nakatsu clan during the *Edo* Period, and because it is located in the easternmost part of Fukuoka-ken, it possesses a very similar culture to Nakatsu-shi in neighboring Oita-ken and maintains a strong relationship.

**Gozu Tennou Kouen (Park)** is located on the borderline between Oita and Fukuoka Prefecture near the Yamakuni River. The Sakura Festival is held here from the end

of March through the beginning of April. Observation deck and playgrounds too.

**Kagura wooden mask-making group** A *kagura* wooden mask-making group meets on Thursday evenings. For information call Koge-machi Board of Education. Tel 0979-72-3111. A nine-member team of *taiko* drummers is based here and performs for many events within Fukuoka Prefecture. For more information call Yoshitomi Yakuba. Tel 097-924-1122.

**Koge-Machi History Hall** (上毛町歴史民俗資料館) displays agricultural tools, machinery, and excavated pottery. Every second and fourth Wednesday 9am to 4pm. Tel 0979-72-4719.

**Taiheiraku** is a huge complex with hot springs, sports grounds, gift shops and a lodge cabin. Mon-Thu & Sun 9:30am-10pm, Fri, Sat & holidays 9:30am-11pm. 1625 Shimotobaru Koge-machi, Chikujogun. Tel 0979-84-7654. Web: <http://www.taiheiraku.jp> (Japanese only, pictures included)

### FESTIVALS

**Bamboo Lantern Festival** is held at the end of September with over 1000 lit bamboo lanterns brightening up the night scene.

**Gyurashi Festival** is held on the first Sunday of November. This festival is a must see that includes a spectacular fireworks display to conclude the night.

**Sakura Festival** is held from the end of March to the beginning of April. More than 100 cherry blossom trees are lit up during the night.

## YOSHITOMI-MACHI 吉富町

This town of about 7300 has a small puppetry troupe that uses very old, traditional rod puppets. Located just between Fukuoka and Oita, Yoshitomi has a lot of nature and fun places to visit.

**Aoi Ryu no Mon (Ao no Domon 青の洞門)** has a large number of voracious carp awaiting you in the ponds. Many Japanese come here to enjoy the beautiful spring and autumn seasons. Traffic is usually really bad on weekends and holidays. Located in Honyabakei-machi, Nakatsu-shi in neighboring Oita-ken.

**Hachimen-zan 八面山** is noted for the *kamikaze* planes that crashed into it. Some say that it is haunted, but if you dare go up, a beautiful panoramic view of the surrounding city awaits you. It has a flying site if you are into paragliding, as well as several interesting boulders and climbing pitches. Also noted for its sleeping Buddha. Located in Sanko-mura in Nakatsu-shi, Oita-ken.

**Jishoji Temple 自性寺** is located in neighboring Nakatsu-shi in Oita-ken, where *zazen* is performed twice a month (every first and third Friday from 7-9pm). No *zazen* in August. 3-1903 Shin Uomachi, Nakatsu-shi, Oita-ken. 20-minute walk from JR Nakatsu Station. Tel 0979-22-4317.

**Pottery kilns** of two famous craftsmen are located in Koge-machi. Originally from Tokyo, potter Hiruma Yaki Mondayo made Koge-machi his home and established his studio in a former elementary school where he also offers lessons. He uses a lot of gold and silver glazes and his pieces are often displayed at the Nakatsu Culture Center. Tobaru Yakimono's studio is a bit more traditional and produces Karatsuyaki style pottery. The slope kilns, built into the mountainside and surrounded by tea bushes, make the location picturesque. There's a brewery in the area faring European-style beer and great pizza.

**Rakanji Temple 裸感寺** Decorated with many jizo statues, is the famous *shamoji* (rice ladle) temple carved into the side of the mountain. Either stairs or an elevator will

take you to the top of the mountain. There is also a great little garden and an outdoor unisex *onsen* at the edge of one of the main rivers, a great way to finish off your day of sightseeing. Located in Honyabakei-machi, Nakatsu-shi in Oita-ken.

## EATING & DRINKING

### RESTAURANTS

#### JAPANESE

**Bun Buku** is a famous local *yakitori* shop in Buzen-shi and is popular enough to have launched a franchise with locations in Kanda and Kokura. Open everyday, it is very large and easy to find. Located just off Route 10 on the same road as Unoshima Station but going the opposite direction. Look for the big sign in English with a cat on it. ¥¥

**Fukinoto** 茶房ふきのとう lies at the base of Kubote Mountain in Buzen-shi. Famed as the best restaurant in Buzen, but accessible only by car. Very Japanese, and known for having the best *tempura* in Japan. Located just off of Route 10, the major road running through Buzen-shi. Closed every Tuesday and Wednesday (open during national holidays). Tel 0979-88-3200 ¥¥ ㊦

**Kuraya** is a wonderful barn-like restaurant with a wide range of hand-made noodles and other Japanese foods. Just off the former Route 10 in Yoshitomi-machi. Tel 0979-24-6050. ¥¥ V

**Kurumajaya** 俵茶屋 serves western steaks as well as traditional Japanese food (*dango jiru*) in Yoshitomi-machi. Steaks are served from 12pm-2pm and 5pm-9pm. The *dango jiru* is served from 11am-10pm. 72-1 Naoe Oaza Yoshitomi-machi. Tel 0979-24-9088. ¥¥

**Sushihide** 寿し秀 is a nice little *sushi* bar in

Yoshitomi-machi, which serves Nakatsu's Famous eel dish (*hamo/unagi*) and does take-out/delivery orders. On former Route 10 across from Family Mart. Tel 0979-23-3445. ¥¥¥

## SHOPPING

Sunlive, Sogo, or Daiei are good places to shop for food, clothing, household items, and some furniture. They are all located on Route 10.

**Book** has a good selection of videos available. It is opposite Joyfull restaurant (in Buzen-shi).

**Trial** is near Buzen Shoe station (on former Route 10) offering a wide and cheap selection of food, daily life items, and clothes (including T-shirts adorned with unlikely English).

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Buzen Community Sports Center** offers a wide variety of sports including *aikido*, *judo*, *kendo*, and *karate*. You can also play volleyball, badminton, and tennis. The local *taiko* group meets here three times a week and welcomes foreigners. It is located near Masuda Home Living Center.

**Pool** can be found opposite the Learner Driver's center in Buzen-shi (next to Trial Superstore). ¥110 for a swim. July 20-August 31, 9am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-5pm (except August 15 and typhoon days).

## NAKAMA-SHI & AROUND

### NAKAMA-SHI 中間市

Nakama-shi has a population of more than 47 000. This predominantly suburban area feels like an extension of Kitakyushu-shi, as the two are neighbors. It almost became one of the wards of Kitakyushu, but the city councilors canceled the plans at the last minute. If it had become part of Kitakyushu, 18 of the 21 councilors would have lost their jobs. Nonetheless, the councilors maintained that the decision was made for the good of the people, despite the fact that 70% of its residents wanted to become part of Kitakyushu-shi.

**Habu Koen** is the largest park in Nakama-shi and has lots of greenery all year long. It is said that as you walk across the red bridge over the pond, you are passing into the realm of the gods. You can also find models of ancient style burial mounds. This park is a great place for a *hanami* picnic in the spring.

**Yane No Nai Hakubutsukan** (The Roofless Museum) is a small green park area with sculptures by artists from around the world. It runs along the road for a few blocks. Located near the JR Nakama Station.

#### FESTIVALS

**Chikuzen Nakama Cherry Blossom Festival** runs every year towards the end of March and beginning of April, crowds of people come to Habu Koen to take part in this festival. You can see Japanese dancing and *taiko* performances and also enjoy the beauty of the cherry blossoms. Many families also sing *karaoke* at their *hanami* picnics here.

**Chikuzen Nakama Yacchare Festival** was once held near Onga River, but has been moved to Harmony Hall, down the street from Daiei in the direction of JR Nakama

Station. Nakama's biggest festival of the year features events such as a bicycle race on Saturday and an open market and *karaoke* competition on Sunday. The festival is held on the third weekend of October.

**Chikuzen Nakamagawa Festival** In celebration of the *Obon* season (praying for the ancestors), a *bon* dance is held near the Onga River every year on August 15. Many people from out of town gather in Nakama to enjoy this event. A fireworks festival is held that night as well.

**Kisshoji Temple Wisteria Festival** is quite the sight in the spring with delicate purple wisteria blooming overhead, decorating the path toward the temple. The temple is located in Yahatanishi-ku, near Nakama High School, and presents its festival on April 27 to 29.

### ASHIYA-MACHI 芦屋町

Ashiya-machi is famous for *hamayu* flowers, which bloom in July and August, and Ashiya *gama*, cast iron boiling pots. It has a population of about 16 000. It is also known for its annual sand sculpture festival. During the summer it is a popular seaside destination for local families. It is also the location of the Ashiya Air Base, famous for its lead role in the filming of Tora Tora Tora.

**Ashiyagama no Sato** is a studio where you can watch the famous pots being handcrafted the same way they have been made for centuries.

**Ashiya Race Boat Center** is where you can catch an exciting speed boat race or check out the morning market held here on the second and fourth Sundays of every month, offering fresh fish and vegetables at reasonable prices.

**Cycling Ashiya-machi** is considered one of the best cycling routes along the coast in Fukuoka. There is a road you can cycle down that starts on the west side of Ashiya-machi

and continues through Okagaki to Munakata-shi.

**Nagayamon** is a scenic Japanese garden complete with teahouses where you can try a traditional tea ceremony.

**Senkoin Dai Sotetsu** is said to be one of the three biggest *sotetsu* (Japanese *sago* palm tree) in Japan and is recognized by the prefecture as a natural monument.

**Shiroyama Park** overlooks the ocean and is especially beautiful in spring when the cherry trees, and later azaleas, are in bloom.

**Water sports** Ashiya has a nice beach with a swimming area and is a great place to play water sports, based at the mouth of the Onga River. The beach extends for close to eight kilometers into Okagaki. Some of it is good for swimming and some of it for surfing.

## FESTIVALS

**Gion Yamakusa** presents an impressive fireworks display over the mouth of the Onga River. Shoulder a portable Shinto shrine alongside other city residents during this festival. On August 15 observe *Shoronagashi*, small model boats sent out to sea with a candle to help the spirits of ancestors return to the spirit world after *Obon*. These lantern lights illuminate the *Obon* river.

**Ashiya Sand Sculpture Festival** is held at the end of August on the beaches of Ashiya. Check it out in the evening when a laser light show highlights the sculptures.

**Hassaku no Sekku** is the Ashiya Straw Horse Event, a cultural festival in which households with boys display straw horses and those with girls display dumpling dolls.

## MIZUMAKI-MACHI 水巻町

Many legends and folktales specific to Mizumaki-machi have been passed down over the years. The most famous folktale is "The Kinuta Princess." Be sure to visit Midorin

Park next to Onga River and Miyojingatsujii Nature Park if you're in the area. Autumn is a great time to visit as the annual Cosmo Flower Festival is held throughout the town. Mizumaki-machi has a population of roughly 32 000. For more information about the town as well as local folktales, check out Mizumaki-machi's official website in English: [www.town.mizumaki.fukuoka.jp/eng/index.htm](http://www.town.mizumaki.fukuoka.jp/eng/index.htm)

## OKAGAKI-MACHI 岡垣町

Okagaki-machi has a population of approximately 31 000.

**Budou no Ki Village** (Grape Tree Village) is a quiet place that has a bread shop, wine shop, café, a buffet yakiniku restaurant and a traditional Japanese style restaurant. You can rent your own little villa for lunch or dinner, with *karaoke* included. Great if you are with a group. Run by the same company that owns Yahata Ya Mankai no Yu (see below) and located just a few minutes away. To get here, turn right at Serita intersection. At the next small intersection, Teno, turn left. It's on your right. You can't miss it.

**Hatsu Beach** is known for its surfing and has many surfers visiting. In the spring and summer, there are often good waves just as a high (usually bringing good weather) comes in to replace a low (usually bringing rainy weather). In the winter, you can expect good waves on days when the weather suddenly becomes cold.

**Yahata Ya Mankai no Yu** is a small Japanese style inn along the beautiful Okagaki coast, featuring an *onsen* and organic restaurant, where the food is grown by the locals. The restaurant is open 11:30am-3pm for lunch and 6pm-10pm for dinner and features an all-you-can-eat-buffet for ¥1600. 5:30-10pm weekends and national holidays. Relax and watch the sea in either the 1F or 4F outside baths (*rotemburo*). On even numbered days the women's bath is on the 1F and men's on the 4F. 10:30am-11pm except national

holidays when it's open 5:30-10pm. One visit ¥800, or six tickets for ¥4000. Take the local JR (not the *kaisoku*) to Ebitsu Station and catch the bus to Yahata Ya. By car get on Route 495, pass through Genkai Town, and turn left at Serita intersection. You'll come down a little hill and around a curve. It's opposite the sea on your left. Look for the guard directing parking. Website (in Japanese, but with pictures): [www.budounoki.co.jp/](http://www.budounoki.co.jp/).

## FESTIVALS

**Okagaki Festival** is held on the third Sunday of October. Join the fun at the "world restaurant" street, where interaction with communities, cultural exchanges, and events related to health and social welfare are carried out. Activities take place mostly at the Sanri-Ai Fureai Plaza.

## EATING & DRINKING

### JAPANESE

**Ariran** is a chain, but this location in Ashiya-machi is a nice place for *yakiniku*. From Jieitai-mae, follow the bus down the road for a short while. At the traffic light by Fukuoka Bank, make a shallow right, follow that road for a bit, and Ariran will be on your left. ¥¥

**Chobei Yakitori** is rated best of the cheap restaurants in Ashiya-machi. The place only seats 10 or so around the bar, but it is definitely an authentic down-home place. From the center of town head down the arcade and turn right at the traffic signal half-way down. It's on the left at the blinking traffic signal. ¥

**Heishiro** is a good *kaitenzushi* spot located in Nakama-shi along the road running next to Daiei and leading through the tunnel back towards Einomaru. ¥¥

**juju:** is a good but expensive *yakiniku* restaurant in Ashiya-machi. Follow the directions to Chobei Yakitori and turn left at the blinking light; it'll be right in front of you at

the bend in the road. ¥¥¥

**Kaede** serves homemade Japanese cooking at a reasonable price. Fun stuff to look at. A regular hang out for people from the air base. The curry is delicious, if possessed of a little too much cardamom. Located in Ashiya-machi at the far end of the arcade on the right. ¥

**Keijo** 京城 has the best *yakiniku* in Ashiya-machi. A small place with traditional seating. Their ox tail soup is delicious but always in limited supply. Many of their house specials are made in advance in small quantities. From Jieitai-mae bus stop, go across the parking lot toward the side street to your right, and it's pretty much in front of you. ¥¥

**Sushi** can be found on the beach in Okagaki-machi, just across the street from Yahata Ya Mankai no Yu. It is housed in a train car and has great views of the ocean from the inside window. Twelve pieces of sushi for ¥2500. 11:30am-9pm. Closed Wednesday unless it's a national holiday. ¥¥

**Sushi-Q** 寿司きゆう offers good *sushi* in a nice atmosphere. Very little English spoken, but even a novice can get by here. Located in Ashiya-machi. If you are catching the bus from Orio it is immediately to your left as you exit the bus at Jieitaimae. ¥

**Taisho Yakitori** 大将 rates as the best *yakitori* place in Ashiya-machi. This restaurant has a traditional atmosphere. Located right across the street when you get off the bus at the Junior High School. There is another location in Okagaki-machi, which is usually fully booked on the weekends except for some space at the bar. A five-minute walk from JR Ebitsu Station. ¥¥

There are many places to eat *yakitori* and *yakiniku* around the Daiei in Mizumaki-machi.

### OTHER

**Fruit picking** Famous for its fruit, Okagaki offers you the chance to enjoy the experience of picking your own fruit. Enjoy grape-picking from mid-August to mid-September, mandarins from mid-October to mid-

December, and strawberries from mid-April to mid-May. For more information, call the Chiiki Zukurika (Regional Promotion Section) at 093-282-1211 (English spoken).

**The Joy Factory** is one of two places in Ashiya-machi that is actually a bar and not a snack bar (the other is a small place called The Ron). They have a wide variety of drinks and pub food of both the Japanese and American variety. Nori, the owner, speaks very good English. It is at the main intersection in town. ¥¥

**Wendy's** nurses cravings for a familiar, oh-so-greasy burger from home, and you can find it in Nakama-shi near the AMC cinema entrance. ¥

## SHOPPING

**Daiei** is a chain store offering both food and household goods. Located in Mizumaki-machi.

**Daiei Shoppers Mall** is located in Nakama-shi near Touritani Station on the Chikuhō Dentetsu line. There are many retail shops and a food court, as well as a Best Denki and grocery store in the same building.

**YouMe Town** is a shopping complex that has groceries, clothing and accessory stores, restaurants, and many other shops. Located in Onaga Town.

**Morning Market** is held in Ashiya-machi at the Ashiya Race Boat Center. See Ashiya Town for more information.

## ENTERTAINMENT

**AMC Cinema** sits near Daiei in Nakama-shi, with a 16-theater complex.

**Mizumaki Ceramic Facility & Kiln** is located at 2-15-1 Korosue-kita in Mizumaki-machi. Tel 093-201-6812.

## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Nakama** is open Mon-Fri 9am-12am, Sat 10am-10pm and Sun/holidays 10am-8pm. Closed Wednesdays. Raven 21 Plaza, Touritani 1-36-8, Nakama-shi. Tel 093-243-3270.

**Mizumaki Public Gymnasium** is located at 33-1 Okanodai in Mizumaki-machi. Tel 093-201-3936.

**Tennis Courts and Multi-Purpose Sports Ground** can be found at 3-10-1 Korosue-kita in Mizumaki-machi. Tel 093-201-4000.

**Swimming Pool** is accessible at 3-10-1 Korosue-kita in Mizumaki-machi. Tel 093-201-4000.

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

**Mizumaki Central Community Center** offers Japanese cultural classes. 1-1-2 Korosue-kita in Mizumaki-machi. Tel 093-201-0403.

**Mizumaki South Community Center** can be a resource for Japanese cultural classes. 3-3-21 Shimo-Futa-Higashi in Mizumaki-machi. Tel 093-202-2472.

**Sanri-Ai** is a community center that offers a variety of classes on pottery, *ikebana*, painting, etc. Okagaki-machi. Tel 093-282-1515.

**Mizumaki Library & Historical Museum** is found at 3-18-1 Koga in Mizumaki-machi. Tel 093-201-5000.

## YUKUHASHI-SHI & AROUND

### YUKUHASHI-SHI 行橋市

Although considered a city with a population of roughly 70 000, Yukuhashi is a laid-back place with a countryside feel. It is the birthplace of Suematsu Kencho, a Cambridge University graduate who was a famous politician, statesman, and translator during the Meiji era. Yukuhashi-shi is also famous for figs and peaches. Minoshima and Nagaihama are known for seaside shellfish and oysters.

**Biking** in the area in general is very pleasant, but for the ambitious, you can head up Hiraodai Mountain, about a 40-minute hike.

### FESTIVALS

**Cosmope** コスモツペ is a festival in August held near the Imagawa River that features fireworks.

### KANDA-MACHI 苅田町

Kanda-machi has received a lot of attention lately thanks to the new Kitakyushu Airport that opened off the shore on March 16, 2006. It has a population of roughly 35 000.

**Kanda-machi Oaza Yamaguchi Aza Seriyu** is located in the northwestern part and is part of Hiraodai's limestone cave in Kitakyushu-shi. It was once a sacred place for the practitioners of Tokakuji Temple. That belief still remains in the existing stone Buddhist images to this day. Designated a national natural treasure in 1962.

### FESTIVALS

**Kanda Port Festival** is an amazing fireworks show held at Saiwai-machi, a ten-minute walk from JR Kanda Station. On the third Saturday in May, tons of people attend this annual event which also includes a laser show and music. Traditional Japanese dances are performed on stage prior to the fireworks. It's definitely a must see!

**Tokakuji Matsuri** originally served to predict the future and is held mid-April at the Hakusan Taga Shrine. There is horseback archery and religious ceremonies including recitals, prayer, and purifications. This ritual was designated a Prefectural Cultural Asset in 1956. Tel 093-436-1645.

**Yamakasa Festival** is held the first weekend in October at the Kanda Yakuba (Ward Office). This is also called "Fighting *Yamakasa*," where people bang their own *yamakasa* floats against others'. About 500 years of tradition and the town's biggest festival.

### MIYAKO-MACHI みやこ町

Recently formed when Katsuyama-machi, Saigawa-machi, and Toyotsu-machi merged to become a city of approximately 23 000 residents. Miyako-machi lies south of Yukuhashi-shi and possess many historical sites, great local specialties, sweets, rice, sake and beautiful forests.

**Hayashi Brewery** is famous for its award winning Kusugiku *sake*, which is recommended by everyone in the Saigawa region. The brewery is a great place to get tasty food and beer.

**Hiko-san** is the best hike in Fukuoka Prefecture. A well-defined trail leads from a large temple near the foot of the mountain to various interesting shrines and sites along the way. Great view, but the shrine at the top is a little disappointing. Give yourself the day to enjoy the hike, or stay overnight. Public transportation is quite limited, so it is better to drive. You'll need a map.

**Honjo-ike** is located at the heart of Miyako-machi, and was originally a reservoir for the rice fields that has since been developed into a beautiful park with a pleasant walking course. Visitors enjoy fishing, picnics and various activities. Fifteen-minute walk from the Heisei Chikuhō Railroad Saigawa Station.

**Jabuchi no Taki Waterfall and Campsite** is located in the far south district of Hobashira bordering Oita Prefecture and on the way to Hikosan. Bungalows are available at cheap rates over the summer period. For more information, please contact Miyako Town Office's Industry Promotion Section (Sangyo Shinko-ka) at 0930-32-2512.

**Kofun** in this area can be readily found by following the road signs. There are numerous kofun (ancient graves) here, often of royalty or people of high status here.

**Matsuki Fruit Farm** is located on the western side of town on the road leading to neighboring Aka-mura. They also run a log house style café called EFU, which serves delicious cakes made from fresh fruits grown on the premises and has an extensive gourmet menu for both lunch and dinner. EFU is closed on Tuesdays.

**Mune Kannon Temple** has a collection of Buddha statues as well as a nice view of the surrounding area.

**Naganuma-Tei** is a Japanese house designated as the national heritage that dates back to the *Edo* Period. Located in the southern part of the Hobashira district near the border of Oita Prefecture. It is open to the general public. For more information, contact the Industry Promotion Section (Sangyo Sahinko-ka) at 0930-32-2512.

**Swimming holes** are located in several locations along Route 496 heading towards Oita Prefecture.

**Toyotsu Historical Museum** contains ancient artifacts dating from the feudal period of the Buzen Kingdom. Adults ¥210 and children from elementary to high school

¥100, discounts for groups. 9:30am-5pm (admittance until 4:30pm), closed Mondays (next day if Monday is a holiday) and December 29-January 3. 1122-13 Toyotsu, Miyako-machi, Miyako-gun. Tel 0930-33-4666.

**Yotteko Shikisai-kan** For fresh vegetables and local produce, visit this market next to the Daily Yamazaki on the junction along the Imagawa River.

## FESTIVALS

**Culture/Agriculture/Fireworks Festival** is held on the third weekend of November.

**Himawari Festival** Sunflowers are in full bloom during August, where visitors can enjoy the scenery and relax, all in thanks to the locals who took the time to plant them. Located in the same area as the restaurant Kisshuan in Miyako-machi (see "Eating and Drinking").

**Irei Festival** (慰霊祭) held on August 21 is where people present offerings to the dead. Includes a bon dance and a spectacular fireworks show.

**Jinkosai Festival** is held in late April at temples across the region.

**Kagara Festival** involves dancing for the gods and is held on the first weekend in May.

**Mikoshi Festival** is located at one of the heaviest shrines in Fukuoka. Held on the second weekend of May.

## EATING & DRINKING

### JAPANESE

**Azumaya** is an *izakaya* in Yukuhashi-shi just two blocks from Yukuhashi Station. ¥¥

**Gyosha** is a *yakiniku* restaurant in Yukuhashi-shi near Obase Station. ¥¥

**Kishuuan** serves exotic *inoshishi* (wild boar), *unagi* (eel) and *suppon* (turtle) dishes. Enjoy a hearty meal in natural surroundings. For groups of four or more only; reservation required. Prices from ¥2500 per person. On the western side of town on the road heading to Genjii no Mori Onsen in Aka-mura. Tel 0930-42-0738. 25-minute walk from Heisei Chikuhō Railroad Sakiyama Station.

**Miya** is a place in Yukuhashi-shi where you can try Okinawan food. One block from Yukuhashi Station. ¥¥

**Shigemitsu** serves tonkatsu and is two blocks from Fukuoka Bank in Yukuhashi-shi. ¥¥

**Ton-ton** dishes out *ramen* at this location across from Miyako High School in Yukuhashi-shi. ¥

### OTHER

**Big Bear Pizza** is a take-out/delivery restaurant in Yukuhashi-shi next door to Red, Hot and Blue. ¥

**Aoi Ringo (Green Apple)** is good for pub food, and is near Fukuoka bank in Yukuhashi-shi. There are also locations in Toyotsu and Katsuyama. ¥¥

**Garam Garam** serves authentic Indian food. Located along Route 201 in Yukuhashi-shi. ¥¥

**Pizza Cities** serves authentic tasting pizza and calzones. Located in Yukuhashi-shi. ¥¥

**Pizza Plain** provides friendly service with all orders. Located opposite of Shin Yukuhashi hospital on Route 10. 1420 Dojoji Oaza Yukuhashi-shi. 0930-23-9788. ¥¥

**Pomodoro** is an Italian restaurant located in Kanda-machi on Route 10. ¥¥

**The Red, Hot, and Blue Bar** is a must for those craving Mexican food! This bar has a casual and friendly atmosphere with a bartender/chef/DJ who is quite adept at making tacos and nachos. Patrons are encouraged to look through the CD library

and make requests. Located in Yukuhashi-shi.

## SHOPPING

### SHOPPING COMPLEXES

**Sun Pal** is currently being revamped but now has a NAFCO 2-1 style.

**Rumieru** is said to be the cheapest place to shop and sells just about everything including groceries and household goods. Located in Kanda-machi, on Old Route 10 opposite Gusto restaurant (about 40 meters from the intersection where Old Route 10 and the new Route 10 meet).

**Trial** in Yukuhashi-shi (on former Route 10) sells just about everything including groceries and household goods at cheap prices.

**YouMe Town** is a huge shopping complex in Yukuhashi-shi where you can buy food, clothes and other things for your daily life at reasonable prices.

### OTHER

**Red Farm** is a good vegetable shop supplied by local farmers. About 400 meters from Rumieru in Kanda-machi.

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Cosmate Center** in Yukuhashi-shi sometimes shows movies. Please see "Services & Information" for more details.

**K's Sports Dance** is located on Route 10 in Kanda-machi. The instructors at this dance studio are qualified to teach a variety of dances for competition. Lessons are once a week and cost ¥4000-5000 a month. You can take a taxi there upon exiting JR Kanda Station, but once you learn the route, it is walkable.



## SPORTS & FITNESS

**Prior** is located in Yukuhashi-shi and has a 25-meter indoor pool and aerobics/step classes. Full membership is about ¥9000 per month. From Yukuhashi Station, go out the main front entrance to the traffic signals. There is a Sakae-ya cake shop on the left opposite corner. Go straight through the traffic light and walk about 300 meters until you get to the intersection with the Yukuhashi Arcade Shopping Mall on your left. Turn right and walk down that road about 120 meters. The gym is on the corner on your right.

There are two **public swimming pools** located in Yukuhashi-shi but they are only open during the summer months.

Sports facilities in Miyako-machi are located at each of the three districts (Katsuyama, Saigawa and Toyotsu) and are usually equipped with weight training and aerobics equipments. Sports arenas are also available for hire, and swimming pools can be used for cheap prices.

## SERVICES & INFORMATION

**Cosmate Center** is the Yukuhashi Library and Culture Hall. A large collection of CDs, videotapes, and laser discs are available, many in English. You have to be a resident of Yukuhashi to take any of the media home with you, but there are usually monitors, cassettes, and CD players available in the audio-visual area of the library. Alternatively, you can rent videos, CDs, and video games at Sunday Home Video. 4-3 Gyouji, Yukuhashi-shi.

**The Culture & Community Center (Chuo Kouminkan)** offers Japanese and culture classes in Yukuhashi.

**Acupuncture Clinic** is in Sadamura, Kanda-machi. 1-10-14 Kanda-cho, Kanda-machi, Miyako-gun. Tel 093-436-0173.

**Tourist Information Center** is located at the heart of Toyotsu district in Miyako-machi.

## HEALTH

**Ryousai Hospital** specializes in sports, ligament, and bone injuries. Limited hours, patients admitted from 8:15-11am only. Located in Shimosone. Tel 093-471-1121.

**Shirakawa Clinic's** Dr. Shirakawa is very kind and speaks decent English. His clinic is located in Yukuhashi-shi on Old Route 10 about 150 meters north of Nafco and Sun Pal, next to 7-Eleven. His name is in *hiragana* on the front of the building.

**Takazaki Hospital** just off of Route 10 services dermatological needs. It is opposite Mos Burger in Nakatsu-shi, Oita Prefecture.

## E.S.I.D.

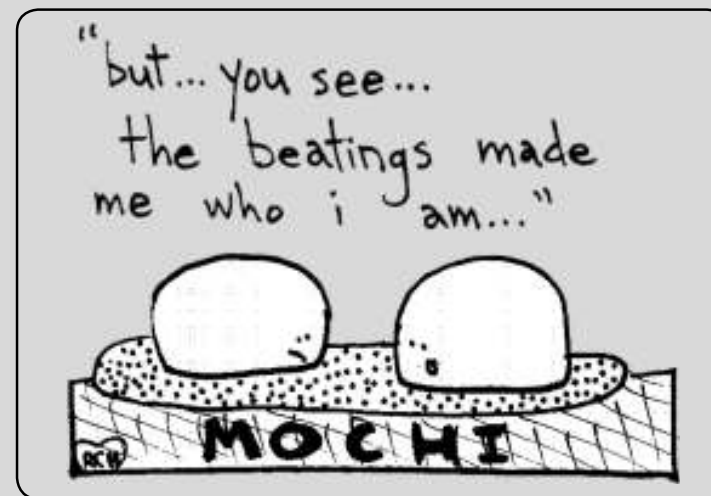
Every Situation Is Different. True dat. You will undoubtedly hear this truism repeated ad infinitum most likely making you want to tear this page out and use it to mop up the sputum with which you just sullied your desk. Don't. Or at least read this first. Merely because you will hear this cliché over and over again, this does not make it any less true. While not wanting to derisively mock what you may perceive to be cultural insensitivity on the part of your superiors, coworkers, neighbors, random *samurai*, et alia, please, above all: Be Patient!

You will more than likely hear tales - some far-fetched, some not - of "cultural leave," hot water and/or showers in friends' apartments, and ALTs being allowed to accompany students abroad on school trips, etc. These and many other occurrences will never happen to you,...probably. They are rare instances of peculiar situations blown up to appear as the norm. They are not. Most likely the few instances of said luck came because the ALT has a harder life than most, for instance a higher than normal *mukade* count, living in a town with no train service, having to teach hundreds of cute though insensitive screaming brats the same, "I'm from Canada. It snows there and we eat seal morning, noon and night." lesson until the kids begin to get bored of *kancho*-ing you (not likely).

So, take it easy. Relax. Everyone is very happy you're here, you included, hopefully. Regardless of where and with whom you live and work, your situation largely depends upon your own attitude, which is good, because that means you - not your teachers, your peers, nor the entire population of Japan - decide how your experience in Japan will be.

Cool. Have a blast.

## "HEY HEY WE'RE THE MOCHEES..."





# BEYONDFUKUOKA... KYUSHUGUIDE

You are one lucky CAT! Kyushu is brimming with history, culture, natural beauty, and best of all-hot springs. Go out and experience your island.



Did you know that according to myth, it was from Kyushu that Japan's first emperor began his efforts to unify the country? Japanese therefore view the island as their nation's birthplace. Kyushu also boasts a long history of ties to Europe and China, which affords you historical sights and delicious food.



You have seven prefectures to discover, each offering a unique glimpse of Japan. This section lists some of the most popular and accessible destinations traveled by Fukuoka-JETs over the years. We encourage you to explore beyond the bounds of Fukuoka (and this Guide) and see what the rest of Kyushu has to offer. **がんばってね!**

# KYUSHU'S FINEST

## Hot-air Balloon Festival

With its soft sea breezes and vast, open skies, Saga-ken is a balloonist's paradise, so much so that it is sometimes called the "home of the hot air balloon." Saga has hosted a Balloon festival every year in late November since 1980.

## Nagasaki Peace Park

Nagasaki Peace Park is a poignant reminder of the savagery of war, commemorating the horrific events of the atomic bombing of the city in 1945. On August 9 each year, a solemn ceremony is held in remembrance of those who died. The park is well signposted throughout the city. Nagasaki can be reached from Hakata station or by car on the Saga Expressway.

## Ibusuki's Hot Sand Baths

Ibusuki, located in the southeastern end of Kagoshima prefecture, is especially known for its natural steaming sand baths heated by subterranean geysers. One hour by train from Kagoshima-chuo station. Taxis run from the station to the sand baths just five minutes down the road.

**Yakushima Island** is covered in primeval forest and boasts incredible hiking. You can catch a ferry in Kagoshima from the Kita-Kagoshima port. The island is small and buses are available. However, a car is certainly a bonus. You can take cars on the ferry, but book in advance as it does get busy. The best months to go are March and April to avoid the blinding heat and bugs of summer or the torrential rain of winter.

**Kirishima National Park** is a nature-lovers paradise, home to a number of crystal clear lakes and exquisite onsen. From Nishi-Kagoshima Station, 50 minutes by JR Nippo Honsen Limited Express to Kirishima-jingu Station.

- ☆ Capital City
- Tourist Place
- △ Mountain / Volcano
- == Toll Road
- Non-Toll Road
- Express Train
- Shinkansen
- - - Ferry

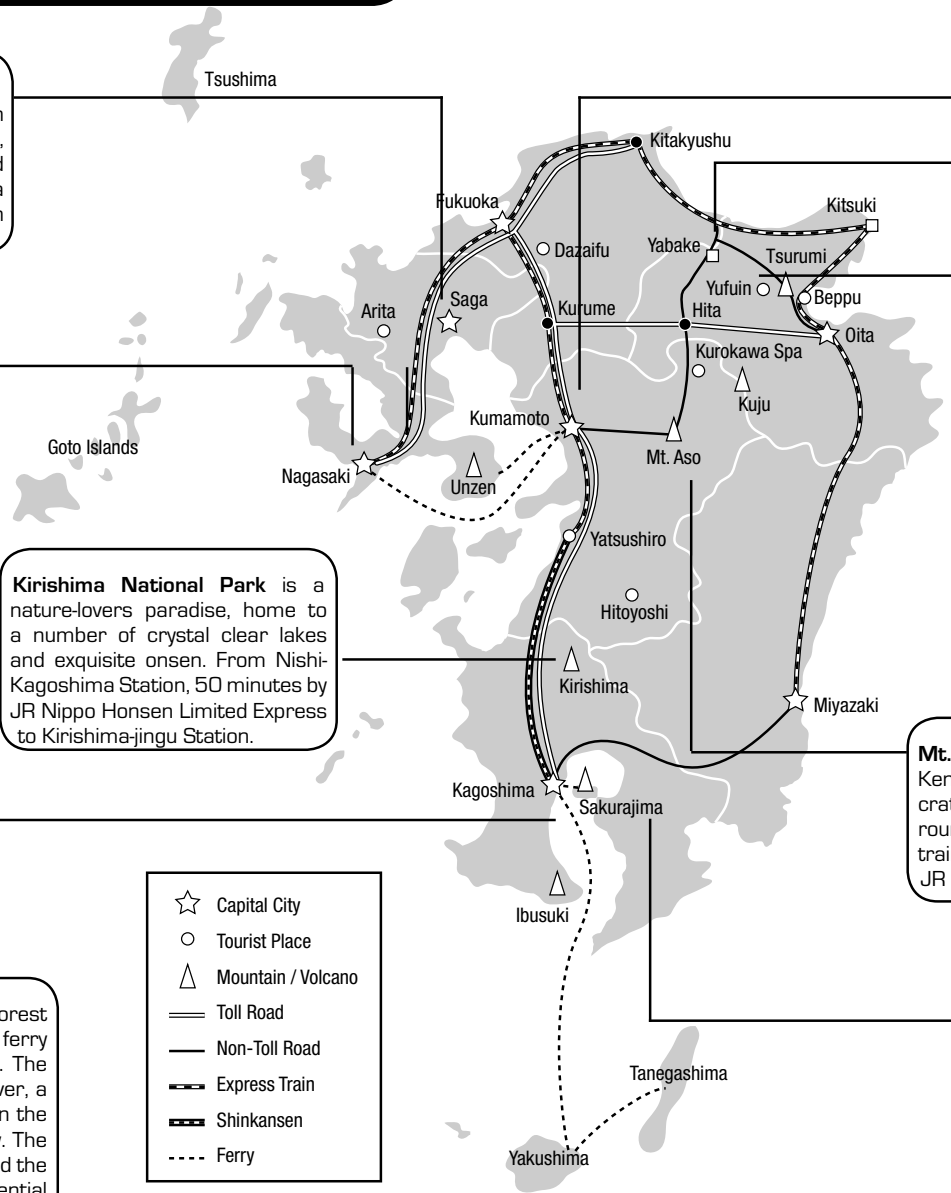
**Kumamoto Castle** is noteworthy as Japanese castles go, not for its aesthetic qualities, but rather for its pragmatic design. Suizenji-joju-en, a beautifully landscaped garden famous throughout Japan, encircles the castle grounds. The site is well signposted in English throughout the city.

**Yufuin** in Oita prefecture is a veritable onsen extravaganza, and despite other areas being lauded as the top destinations for this pastime, tiny Yufuin is arguably the most authentic. 45 minutes from Oita to Yufuin by a Limited Express train on the JR Main Kyudai Line.

**Yabake Waterfall Jumping** is an absolutely incredible experience in the summer. A car is necessary for this little trip to Oita-Ken. Located off Route 10 past Yabake town, turn right on Route 2 and follow this small country road until you see a stone swimming pool marking the entrance on your left. The waterfall itself is located a short walk through the bamboo nearby.

**Mt. Aso** is located in Kumamoto-Ken. It is the world's largest volcanic crater and an excellent option year-round. An hour by Limited Express train from Kumamoto to Aso on the JR Hōhi Line.

**Sakurajima Volcano & Furasato Onsen**  
Home to one of the most scenic onsen in Japan, Furasato onsen is a must. It is an outdoor unisex onsen that is in fact a shrine. Entrance is only ¥600. A ferry takes you to the island from Kagoshima-kita port, leaving every 15 minutes. Buses or taxis can take you to the onsen from Sakurajima port.



# KYUSHU DELIGHT

## FUKUOKA-KEN 福岡県

The gateway to Kyushu, Fukuoka-ken is an exciting blend of Japanese culture and futuristic trends. The capital, Fukuoka-shi, combines the urbane sophistication of Tokyo with the more relaxed, provincial feel of the Kyushu countryside. Check out the Kurume Hanabi Festival in August which will blow your mind with excessive fireworks and young ladies in beautiful summer yukata and the Yamasagasa Festival in Hakata, where teams race brightly colored floats through the streets. Historical sites such as Tenmangu Shrine in Daizafu and Kokura Castle are beautiful examples of Kyushu's rich history. With a well-developed train and road network, access to most areas in Fukuoka-ken is relatively easy.

## NAGASAKI-KEN 長崎県

Nagasaki-ken has been an entry point for foreign influence for centuries. The surreal Dutch theme park, Huistenbosh, is an example of Nagasaki's history of cultural fusion. Arguably the most important historical city in Kyushu, Nagasaki-shi is a must-see. Nagasaki abounds with delicious, eclectic foods like: Chinese sweet and sour pork, buttery Portuguese castella cake, and champon (a noodle dish native to Nagasaki). In spring, you can enjoy a beautiful hill-top, kite-flying festival.

## OITA-KEN 大分県

Perhaps best known for its steaming hot springs, Oita is an excellent destination for Fukuokans looking for a quick weekend getaway. The capital city, Oita-shi, is a small version of Fukuoka, but it is the thousands of onsen that are of most interest to the visitors. Beppu is probably the most famous onsen spot in Japan; the hillsides are dotted with white tufts of volcanic steam and tourists can enjoy the brightly colored, strangely named Hells. Many Japanese people however, prefer nearby picturesque Yufuin to old-timey Beppu. You can also view the historic castle town of Kitsuki and Usuki, and take a visit to see a cluster of 60 stone Buddha images carved into rock. Wakeboarding is available in Kitsuki. All of these towns and sights are accessible by rail.

## KUMAMOTO-KEN 熊本県

Located on the west side of Kyushu, Kumamoto has thrived since the early 1600s under a succession of powerful leaders. Today, Kumamoto-shi is known for its castle and charming Suizenji Park. The city feels bigger than it really is, allowing you the pleasures of shopping and entertainment, without the hassle of getting lost. Kumamoto-ken is also known for Mount Aso and the onsen surrounding it. Check out Kurokawa Onsen for a romantic, idyllic hot spring town.

## SAGA-KEN 佐賀県

Famous for its Arita porcelain and excellent agricultural conditions for making sake, Saga is a place where traditional Japanese culture seeps from the ground. Don't miss the Saga Balloon Festa in Autumn for a colorful day of hot air balloons and culinary awesomeness.

## MIYAZAKI-KEN 宮崎県

Considered by some to be the birthplace of Japan, Miyazaki is famous for its many sites associated with Japan's first emperor, Jimmu. Miyazaki Shrine is dedicated to the emperor, while Heiwadai Park contains the Peace Tower which was built in 1940 to commemorate the 2600-year anniversary of the mythological founding of Japan. On a

non-historical note, consider checking out the beautiful beaches or Ocean Dome, the world's largest indoor water park.

## KAGOSHIMA-KEN 鹿児島県

Kagoshima-ken is blessed with a mild climate and incredible natural beauty. The capital city, Kagoshima-shi, ranks as one of Japan's most attractive cities and boasts one of the world's most impressive sights: Sakurajima, an active volcano that faces the city from across the sea. The volcano, along with Kagoshima's sister-city relationship with Naples, has earned the city the nickname "Naples of the Orient." Kagoshima abounds with scenic spots and hot springs, as well as historic sites, many of them tied to the remarkable Shimazu clan who ruled Kagoshima for nearly 700 years. Scuba diving (no license required) is available at Triton Diving, which is listed in the phone directory at all hotels. A word of caution: there are no 7-Elevens. Plan accordingly.

## GOLDEN (WEEK) POSSIBILITIES

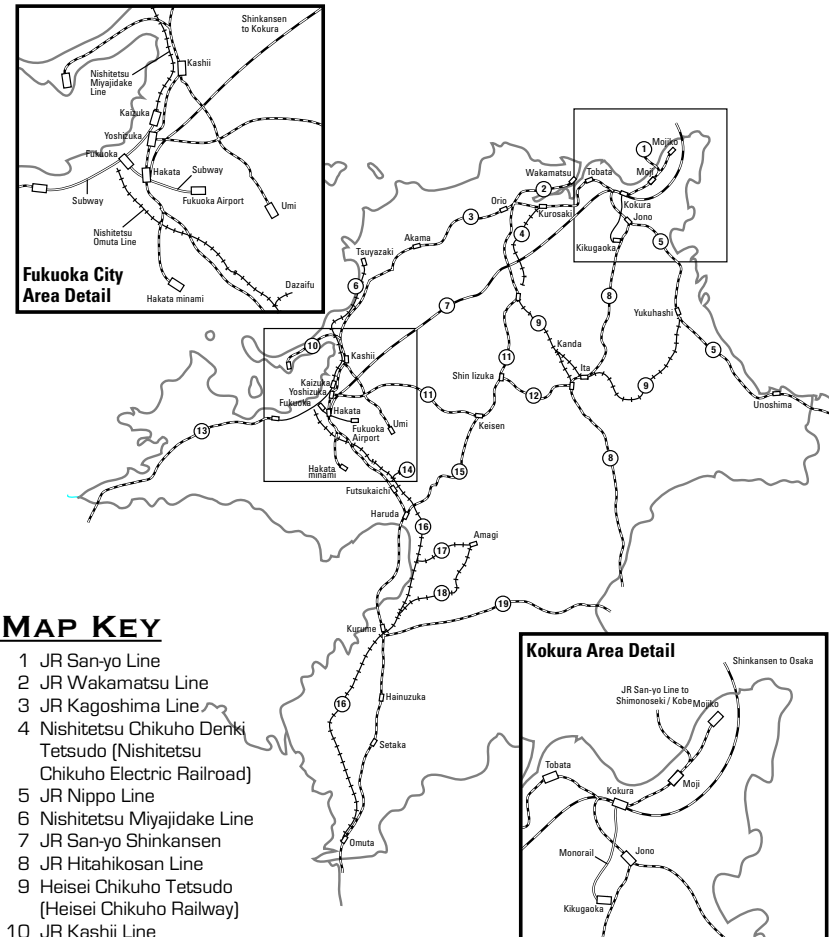


# \* APPENDICES \*



# APPENDIX A - TRAINGUIDE

## FUKUOKA-KEN RAILWAY MAP



### MAP KEY

- 1 JR San-yo Line
- 2 JR Wakamatsu Line
- 3 JR Kagoshima Line
- 4 Nishitetsu Chikuho Denki Tetsudo (Nishitetsu Chikuho Electric Railroad)
- 5 JR Nippo Line
- 6 Nishitetsu Miyajidake Line
- 7 JR San-yo Shinkansen
- 8 JR Hitahikosan Line
- 9 Heisei Chikuho Tetsudo (Heisei Chikuho Railway)
- 10 JR Kashii Line
- 11 JR Fukuohoku-Yutaka Line
- 12 JR Goto-ji Line
- 13 JR Chikuhi Line
- 14 Nishitetsu Gojo Line
- 15 JR Haruda Line
- 16 Nishitetsu Omuta Line
- 17 Amagi Tetsudo (Amagi Railway)
- 18 Nishitetsu Amagi Railway
- 19 JR Kyudai Line

## JR CHIKUHI LINE 筑肥線

Meinohama ○————○ Karatsu/Nishi-karatsu

Meinohama	姪浜	
Through service to Fukuoka Subway Kuko Line(D)		
Shimo-yamato	下山門	
Imajuku	今宿	
Susenji	周船寺	
Hatae	波多江	
Chikuzen-maebaru	筑前前原	
Misakigaoka	美咲が丘	
Kafuri	加布里	
Ikisan	一貴山	
Chikuzen-Fukae	筑前深江	
Dainyu	大入	
Fukuyoshi	福吉	
Shikaka	鹿家	
Hamasaki	浜崎	Saga-ken
Niji no matsubara	虹ノ松原	Saga-ken
Higashi-karatsu	東唐津	Saga-ken
Watada	和多田	Saga-ken
Karatsu	唐津	Saga-ken
Nishi-karatsu	西唐津	Saga-ken

## JR GOTO-JI LINE 後藤寺線

Shin-lizuka ○————○ Tagawa-gotoji

Shin-lizuka	新飯塚	
Kamimio	上三緒	
Shimokamou	下鴨生	
Chikuzen-shonai	筑前庄内	
Funao	船尾	
Tagawa-gotoji	田川後藤寺	

## JR HARUDA LINE 筑豊線 (CHIKUHO LINE)

Haruda ○————○ Keisen

Haruda	原田	はるだ
Chikuzen-Yamae	筑前山家	ちくぜんやまえ
Chikuzen-Uchino	筑前内野	ちくぜんうちの
Kamihonami	上穂波	かみほなみ
Keisen	桂川	けいせん

## JR FUKUHOKU-YUTAKA LINE 福北ゆたか線

Orio ○————○ Keisen, Sasaguri Line: Keisen ○————○ Yoshizuka

Orio	折尾	
Transfer for JR-Kyushu Kagoshima Line, JR-Kyushu Wakamatsu Line		
Higashi-mizumaki	東水巻	
Nakama	中間	
Chikuzen-habu	筑前垣生	
Kurate	鞍手	
Chikuzen-ueki	筑前植木	
Shinnyu	新入	
Nogata	直方	
Transfer for Heisei Chikuho Railway Ita Line		
Katsuno	勝野	
Kotake	小竹	
Namazuta	鯨田	
Urata	浦田	
Shin-iizuka	新飯塚	
Transfer for JR-Kyushu Gotoji Line		
lizuka	飯塚	
Tento	天道	
Keisen	桂川	
Transfer for JR-Kyushu Haruda Line		
Chikuzen-daibu	筑前大分	
Kurobaru	九郎原	
Kido-nanzoin-mae	城戸南蔵院前	
Chikuzen-yamate	筑前山手	
Sasaguri	篠栗	
Kadomatsu	門松	
Chojabaru	長者原	
Transfer for JR-Kyushu Kashii Line		
Harumachi	原町	
Yusu	柚須	
Yoshizuka	吉塚	
Transfer for JR-Kyushu Kagoshima Line		
Hakata	博多	
Transfer for JR-Kyushu Kagoshima Line, San-yo Shinkansen(D,C), Fukuoka Subway Kuko Line, JR-West Hakata-minami Line(D,C)		

## JR HITAHIKOSAN LINE 日田彦山線

<b>Kokura</b> ○	—————		○ <b>Hita</b>
Kokura	小倉		
Nishikokura	西小倉		
Minami-kokura	南小倉		
Jono	城野		
Ishida	石田		
Shiikoen	志井公園		
Shii	志井		
Ishiharamachi	石原町		
Yobuno	呼野		
Saidosho	採銅所		
Kawara	香春		
Ipponmatsu	一本松		
Tagawa-ita	田川伊田		
Tagawagotoji	田川後藤寺		
Ikejiri	池尻		
Buzen-Kawasaki	豊前川崎		
Nishisoeda	西添田		
Soeda	添田		
Buzen-Masuda	豊前樹田		
Hikosan	彦山		
Chikuzen-iwaya	筑前岩屋		
Daigyoji	大行司		
Hoshuyama	宝珠山		
Otsuru	大鶴	Oita-ken	
Imayama	今山	Oita-ken	
Yoake	夜明	Oita-ken	
Mitsuoka	光岡	Oita-ken	
Hita	日田	Oita-ken	

## JR KYUDAI LINE 久大線

<b>Kurume</b> ○	—————		○ <b>Hita</b> ○	—————		○ <b>Oita</b>
			きゅだいせん			
Kurume	久留米					
Minami Kurume	南久留米					
Kurume Daigaku Mae	久留米大学前					
Mii	御井					
Zendoji	善導寺					
Chikugo-kusano	筑後草野					
Tanushimaru	田主丸					
Chikugo-Yoshii	筑後吉井					
Ukiha	うきは					
Chikugo-Oishi	筑後大石					
Yoake	夜明	Oita-ken				
Mitsuoka	光岡	Oita-ken				
Hita	日田	Oita-ken				
.						
.						
Oita	大分	Oita-ken				

## JR KAGOSHIMA LINE 1 鹿児島本線

<b>Mojiko</b> ○	—————		○ <b>Hakata</b>
Mojiko	門司港		
Komorie	小森江		
Moji	門司		
Kokura	小倉		
Nishi-kokura	西小倉		
Kyushu-kodai-mae	九州工大前		
Tobata	戸畑		
Edamitsu	枝光		
Space World	スペースワールド		
Yahata	八幡		
Kurosaki	黒崎		
Jinnoharu	陣原		
Orio	折尾		
Mizumaki	水巻		
Ongagawa	遠賀川		
Ebitsu	海老津		
Kyoikudai-mae	教育大前		
Akama	赤間		
Togo	東郷		
Higashi-fukuma	東福岡		
Fukuma	福岡		
Chidori	千鳥		
Koga	古賀		
Chikuzen-shingu	筑前新宮		
Kyusandai-mae	九産大前		
Kashii	香椎		
Chihaya	千早		
Hakozaki	箱崎		
Yoshizuka	吉塚		
Hakata	博多		

## JR KAGOSHIMA LINE 2 鹿児島本線

Hakata ○————○ Omuta

Hakata	博多	
Takeshita	竹下	
Sasabaru	笹原	
Minami-fukuoka	南福岡	
Kasuga	春日	
Onojo	大野城	
Mizuki	水城	
Tofuro-minami	都府楼南	
Futsukaichi	二日市	
Tempaizan	天拝山	
Haruda	原田	
Keyakidai	けやき台	Saga-ken
Kiyama	基山	Saga-ken
Yayoigaoka	弥生が丘	Saga-ken
Tashiro	田代	Saga-ken
Tosu	鳥栖	Saga-ken
Hizen-asahi	肥前旭	Saga-ken
Kurume	久留米	
Araki	荒木	
Nishi-muta	西牟田	
Hainuzuka	羽犬塚	
Funagoya	船小屋	
Setaka	瀬高	
Minami-setaka	南瀬高	
Wataze	渡瀬	
Yoshino	吉野	
Ginsui	銀水	
Omuta	大牟田	
Arao	荒尾	Kumamoto-ken

## JR KASHII LINE 香椎線

Saitozaki ○————○ Umi

Saitozaki	西戸崎	
Uminakamichi	海ノ中道	
Gannosu	雁ノ巣	
Nata	奈多	
Wajiro	和白	
	Transfer for Nishitetsu Miyajidake Line	
Kashii	香椎	
	Transfer for JR-Kyushu Kagoshima Line	
Kashii-Jingu	香椎神宮	
Maimatsubara	舞松原	
Doi	土井	
Iga	伊賀	
Chojabaru	長者原	
	Transfer for JR-Kyushu Fukuhoku-yutaka Line	
Sakado	酒殿	
Sue	須恵	
Sue-chuo	須恵中央	
Shimbaru	新原	
Umi	宇美	

## JR NIPPO LINE 1 日豊線

Kokura ○————○ Kagoshima

Kokura	小倉	
	Transfer for San-yo Shinkansen(D,C), JR-Kyushu Kagoshima Line, Kita-kyushu Toshi Monorail; Through service to JR-Kyushu San-yo Line	
Nishi-Kokura	西小倉	
	Transfer for JR-Kyushu Kagoshima Line	
Minami-Kokura	南小倉	
Jono	城野	
	Through service to JR-Kyushu Hita-hikosan Line	
Abeyama-Koen	安部山公園	
Shimosone	下菅根	
Kusami	朽網	
Kanda	苅田	
Obase-Nishikodai-mae	小波瀬西工大前	
Yukuhashi	行橋	
	Transfer for Heisei Chikuho Tetsudo	
Minami-Yukuhashi	南行橋	
Shindembaru	新田原	
.		
.		
Nakatsu	中津	Oita-ken
.		
.		
Oita	大分	Oita-ken

## JR SAN-YO LINE 山陽線

Kobe ○————○ Shimonoseki ○————○ Moji

Shin-Shimonoseki	新下関	
Moji	門司	
	Through service to JR-Kyushu Kagoshima Line	
Kokura	小倉	
	Transfer for San-yo Shinkansen(D,C), Kita-kyushu Toshi Monorail; Through service to JR-Kyushu Nippo Line	

## JR WAKAMATSU LINE 若松線 (CHIKUHO LINE)

Wakamatsu ○————○ Orio

Wakamatsu	若松	
Fujinoki	藤ノ木	
Okudokai	奥洞海	
Futajima	二島	
Honjo	本城	
Orio	折尾	
	Transfer for JR-Kyushu Kagoshima Line, JR-Kyushu Fukuhoku-yutaka Line	



## NISHITETSU AMAGI LINE 西鉄甘木線

Amagi ○————○ Miyanojin

Amagi	甘木
Mada	馬田
Kamiura	上浦
Hongou	本郷
Oozeki	大堰
Kaneshima	金島
Ooki	大城
Kitano	北野
Koganchaya	古賀茶屋
Gakkou-mae	学校前
Goromaru	五郎丸
Miyanojin	宮の陣

## NISHITETSU GOJO LINE 西鉄五条線

Futsukaichi ○————○ Dazaifu

Nishitetsu Futsukaichi	二日市
Transfer for Nishitetsu Omuta Line	
Gojo	五条
Nishitetsu Dazaifu	太宰府

## NISHITETSU CHIKUHO ELECTRIC RAILROAD 西鉄筑豊電鉄道

Kurosaki ekimae ○————○ Chikuho-nogata

Kurosaki ekimae	黒崎駅前
Nishi-kurosaki	西黒崎
Kumanishi	熊西
Hagiwara	萩原
Ano	穴生
Morishita	森下
Imaike	今池
Einomaru	永犬丸
Sangamori	三ヶ森
Nishiyama	西山
Toritani	通谷
Higashi-nakama	東中間
Chikuho-nakama	筑豊中間
Dotenouchi	土手ノ内
Chikuho-katsuki	筑豊香月
Kusuboshi	楠橋
Shin-koyanose	新木屋瀬
Koyanose	木屋瀬
Ongano	遠賀野
Ganda	感田
Chikuho-nogata	筑豊直方

## NISHITETSU MIYAJIDAKE LINE

### 西鉄宮路岳線

Kaizuka ○————○ Tsuyazaki

Kaizuka	貝塚	→地下鉄箱崎線
Najima	名島	
Nakano	名香野	
Kashiimiyamae	香椎宮前	
Nishitetsu Kashii	西鉄香椎	
Kashiikaenmae	香椎花園前	
Tonoharu	唐の原	
Wajiro	和白	→JR香椎線
Mitoma	三苫	
Nishitetsu Shingu	西鉄新宮	
Koga golf jo mae	古賀ゴルフ場前	
Nishitetsu Koga	西鉄古賀	
Hanami	花見	
Nishitetsu Fukuma	西鉄福岡	
Miyajidake	宮地岳	
Tsuyazaki	津屋崎	

## HEISEI CHIKUHO TETSUDO TAGAWA LINE

### 平成筑豊鉄道田川線

Tagawa-ita ○————○ Yukuhashi

Tagawa-ita	田川伊田
Kami-ita	上伊田
Magarikane	勾金
Kakishita Onsen-guchi	柿下温泉口
Uchida	内田
Aka	赤
Yusubaru	油須原
Genjiinomori	源じいの森
Sakiyama	崎山
Saigawa	犀川
Higashi-Saikawa-Sanshiro	東犀川三四郎
Shin-Toyotsu	新豊津
Toyotsu	豊津
Imagawa-Kappa	今川河童
Miyakoizumi	美夜古泉
Yukuhashi	行橋

## HEISEI CHIKUHO TETSUDO ITA LINE

### 平成筑豊鉄道伊田線

Nogata ○————○ Tagawa-ita

Nogata	直方
Minami-Nogata Gotenguchi	南直方御殿口
Akaji	あかぢ
Fujidana	藤棚
Nakaizumi	中泉
Ichiba	市場
Fureai Shoriki	ふれあい生力
Akaike	赤池
Hitomi	人見
Kanada	金田
Kami-Kanada	上金田
Hoshii	糰
Tagawa ichiritsu byoin	田川市立病院
Shimoita	下伊田
Tagawa-ita	田川伊田

## HEISEI CHIKUHO TETSUDO ITODA

### 平成筑豊鉄道糸田線

Kanada ○————○ Tagawa-gotoji

Kanada	金田
Buzen-Okuma	豊前大熊
Matsuyama	松山
Itoda	糸田
Oyabu	大藪
Tagawa-Gotoji	田川後藤寺

## AMAGI TETSUDO 甘木鉄道線

Amagi ○————○ Kiyama

Amagi	甘木
Takata	高田
Tachiarai	大刀洗
Yamaguma	山隈
Nishi-Tachiarai	西太刀洗
Imaguma	今隈
Matsuzaki	松崎
Ooitai	大板井
Ogoohri	小郡
Tateno	立野
Kiyama	基山

## NISHITETSU O MUTA LINE 西鉄太宰府線

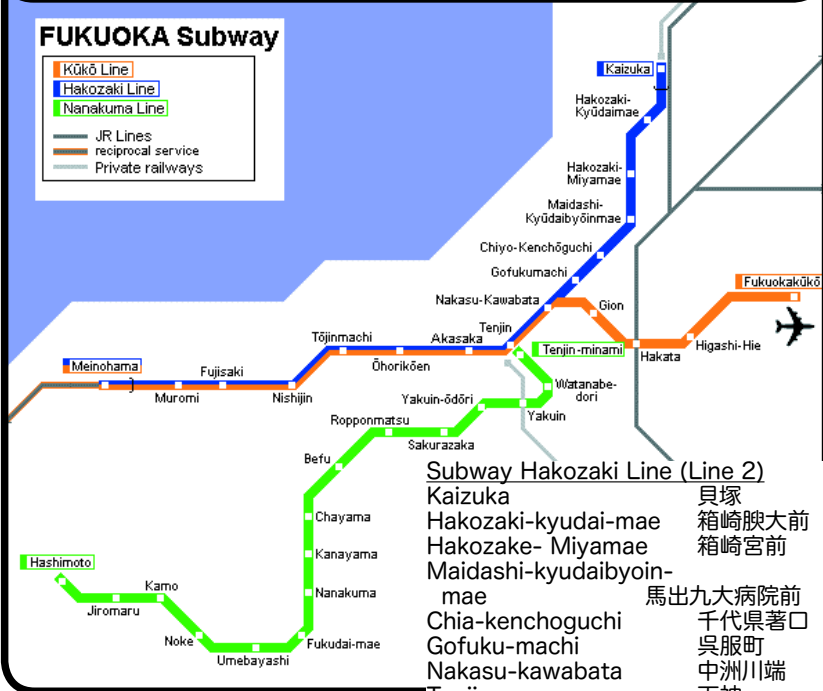
Nishitetsu Fukuoka Tenjin ○————○ Omuta

Nishitetsu Fukuoka (Tenjin)	福岡(天神)	
Yakuin	薬院	
Nishitetsu Hirao	平尾	
Takamiya	高宮	
Ohashi	大橋	
Ijiri	井尻	
Zasshonokuma	雑餉隈	
Kasugabaru	春日原	
Shirakibaru	白木原	
Shimoori	下大利	
Tofuromae	都府楼前	
Nishitetsu Fustukaichi	二日市	→西鉄太宰府線
Asakuragaido	朝倉街道	
Sakuradai	桜台	
Chikushi	筑紫	
Tsuko	津古	
Mikunigaoka	三國が丘	
Mitsusawa	三沢	
Oho	大保	
Nishitetsu-Ogori	小郡	→甘木鉄道線
Hatama	端間	
Ajisaka	味坂	
Miyanojin	宮の陣	→西鉄甘木線
Kushiwara	櫛原	
Nishitetsu-Kurume	久留米	
Hana-batake	花畑	
Shikenjyo-mae	試験場前	
Tsubuku	津福	
Yasutake	安武	
Daizenji	大善寺	
Mizuma	三漕	
Inuzuka	犬塚	
Omizu	大溝	
Hacchomuta	八丁牟田	
Kamachi	蒲池	
Yakabe	矢加部	
Nishitetsu-Yanagawa	柳川	
Tokumasu	徳益	
Shiotsuka	塩塚	
Nishitetsu-Nakashima	中島	
Enoura	江の浦	
Hiraki	開	
Nishitetsu-Wataze	渡瀬	
Kuranaga	倉永	
Higashiamagi	東甘木	
Nishitetsu-Ginsui	銀水	
Shinsakaemachi	新栄町	
Omuta	大牟田	→JR鹿児島本線

# FUKUOKA SUBWAY

## FUKUOKA Subway

- Kōkō Line
- Hakozaki Line
- Nanakuma Line
- JR Lines
- reciprocal service
- Private railways



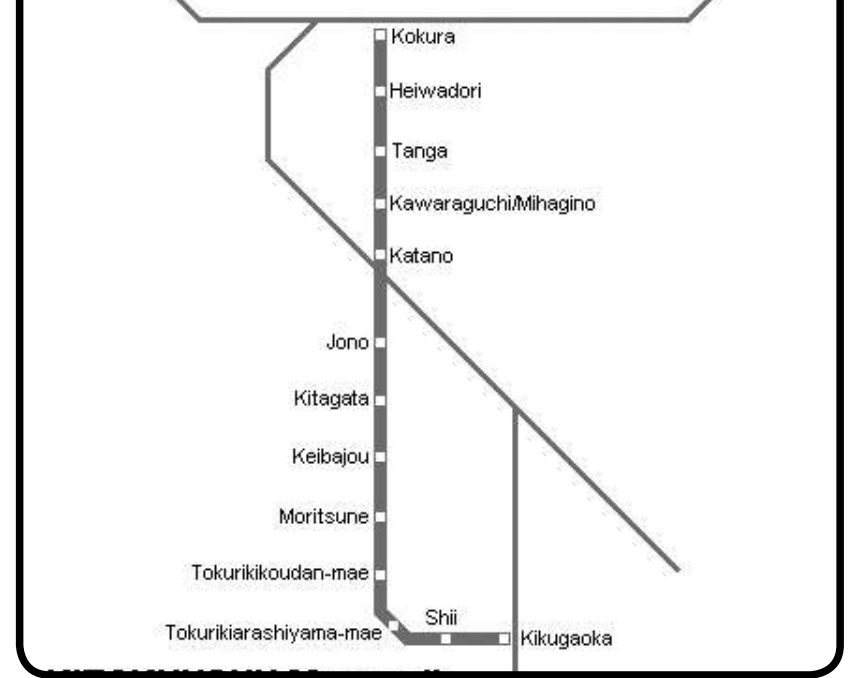
**Subway Hakozaki Line (Line 2)**  
 Kaizuka 貝塚  
 Hakozaki-kyudai-mae 箱崎腓大前  
 Hakozake- Miyamae 箱崎宮前  
 Maidashi-kyudaibyoin-mae 馬出九大病院前  
 Chia-kenchoguchi 千代県著口  
 Gofuku-machi 呉服町  
 Nakasu-kawabata 中洲川端  
 Tenjin 天神  
 Akasaka 赤坂  
 Ohori-koen 大濠公園  
 Tojin-machi 唐人町  
 Nishijin 西新  
 Fujisaki 藤崎  
 Muromi 室見  
 Meinohama 姪浜

**Subway Kuko Line (Line 1)**  
 Higashi-hie 東比  
 Hakata 博多  
 Gion 祇園  
 Nakasu-kawabata 中洲川端  
 Tenjin 天神  
 Akasaka 赤坂  
 Ohori-koen 大濠公園  
 Tojin-machi 唐人町  
 Nishijin 西新  
 Fujisaki 藤崎  
 Muromi 室見  
 Meinohama 姪浜

### Subway Nanakuma Line (Line 3)

Hashimoto  
 Jiromaru  
 Kamo  
 Noke  
 Umebayashi  
 Fukudai-mae  
 Nanakuma  
 Kanayama  
 Chayama  
 Befu  
 Ropponmatsu  
 Sakurazaka  
 Yakuin-odori  
 Yakuin  
 Watanabe-dori  
 Tenjin-minami  
 Tenjin

# KOKURA MONORAIL



Kokura	小倉
Heiwadori	平和取り
Tanga	旦過
Kawaraguchi/Mihagino	香春口/三萩野
Katano	片野
Jono	城野
Kitagata	北方
Keibajou	競馬場前
Moritsune	守恒
Tokurikikoudan-mae	徳力公園前
Tokurikiarashiyama-mae	徳力嵐山口
Shii	志井
Kikugaoka	企救丘

# APPENDIX B - GLOSSARY

**aikido** (合気道) martial art derived from judo in which holds and throws are made using the opponent's joints.

**anka** (行火) electric foot-warmers

**anshōbangō** (暗証番号) ATM PIN number

**ayu** (鮎) a sweet fish

**azukeire** (預け入れ) deposit money

**azuki** (小豆) Japanese red beans often found in Japanese desserts

**bento** (弁当) Japanese style lunchbox

**betau betau** (別々) going dutch.

**bibinba** (ビビンバ) Korean bi bim bap, a dish of rice, kim chee, vegetables, egg and meat

**bijin** (美人) beautiful women

**Bon odori** (盆おどり) dance for Obon season

**bunraku** (文楽) Japanese puppetry

**champon** (ちゃんぽん) a noodle dish with seafood, vegetables & meat

**chanko nabe** (ちゃんこ鍋) traditional stew that sumo wrestlers eat

**chin chin densha/romen densha** (ちんちん電車・路面電車) small electric tram

**chirikamikokan** (ちり紙交換) is a tissue/toilet paper exchange truck

**chōjō** (頂上) summit

**conbini** (コンビニ) convenience store

**dani** (ダニ) insectus that live in the Tatami

**dashi** (山車・だし) parade floats

**denki kapetto or hotto kapetto** (電気・ホットカーペット) electric carpets

**denki katori senko** (電気蚊取り線香) electric or battery operated devices with liquid mosquito repellent

**denki mofu** (電気毛布) electric blankets

**dohyo** (土俵) sumo ring

**dojo** (道場) martial arts center

**doyo** (土用) summer heat wave

**enka** (演歌) Japanese folk music

**fukikae** (吹き替え) dubbed

**furikae** (振り替え) transfer money between your accounts

**furikomi** (振り込み) ATM wire transfer

**furikomi madoguchi** (振り込み窓口) payment counter at the bank or post office

**fuzai haitatsu tsūchi** (不在配達通知) non-delivery notice from the post office

**futsu** (普通) regular/ordinary; also refers to the local (slow) trains

**gaijin/gaikokujin** (外人・外国人) literally translates as 'outsider' and is a term used to refer to foreigners

**gaikokujin tōroku shōmeisho** (外国人登録証明書) alien registraion card

**gokiburi** (ゴキブリ) cockroaches

**gokiburi hoi hoi** (ゴキブリ ホイホイ) cockroach motels or traps

**gokiburi no barusan** (ゴキブリのバルサン) mini chemical bomb used to kill cockroaches

**gokiburi supurei** (ゴキブリ スプレー) cockroach spray

**gyoza** (ぎょうざ) Chinese-style filled

dumplings usually eaten with ramen

**haikingu** (ハイキング) hiking

**hanabi** (花火) fireworks

**hanami** (花見) cherry blossom season

**happi** (法被・はっぴ) half length kimono style jacket

**higashi** (東) west

**hikidashi** (引き出し) money withdrawal

**hinamatsuri** (ひな祭り) doll festival held in March

**hokuto kaze** (北東風) northeast winds

**hosan dago** (ホウ酸ダンゴ) are small poisonous disks that can be left in the corner of rooms to kill cockroaches

**hotaru** (蛍) fireflies

**ikebana** (生け花) Japanese flower arrangement

**ikkatsu barai** (一括払い) pay the balance in one go when using a credit card in a store

**inaka** (田舎) a term used for rural areas

**inkan** (印鑑) personal seal

**inkan tōroku shōmeisho** (印鑑登録証明書) personal seal (inkan) registration certificate

**izakaya** (居酒屋) Japanese-style pub

**jibasangyo** (地場産業) local trade or industries center

**jidohanbaiki** (自動販売機) vending machine

**jidōkōza** (自動口座) automatic withdrawal or direct debit from you bank account for bills and payments

**Jidōsha Unten Menkyo Shikenjo** (自動車運転免許書試験場) driving license test centers

**jimaku** (字幕) subtitles

**jiyu seki** (自由席) non-reserved seat

**jockey** (ジョッキ) beer mug

**jururi** (浄瑠璃) comes from bunraku and is a style of recitation that uses different vocal inflections

**judo** (柔道) a martial art based on throwing techniques and groundwork

**ka** (蚊) mosquito

**kabitori** (カビ取り) mold remover

**kabuki** (歌舞伎) traditional Japanese theater

**kaiseki** (会席) traditional Japanese set meal made of many small dishes

**kaisoku/kyuko** (快速・急行) express (train)

**kaitenzushi** (回転寿司・回転すし) conveyer belt sushi restaurant

**akebuton** (掛け布団) a duvet

**kama** (釜) cast iron pots

**kansozai or shikketori** (乾燥剤・湿気取り) demoisurizers

**kappa** (河童・かっぱ) a mythological river sprite

**kapuseru hoteru** (カプセルホテル) capsule hotel

**karate** (空手) a style of martial art focused on striking techniques

**karutetto** (カルテット) discount tickets for the shinkansen

**kata** (形) a series of movements that are used to practice certain techniques in karate

**katori senko** (蚊取り線香) green incense coils with almost no odor

**kawa kudari** (川下り) canals

**kei jidosha** (軽自動車) cars with engines of 660cc or smaller

**keitai** (携帯) mobile phone

**kendo** (剣道) the art of Japanese fencing

**kim chee/kimuchi** (キムチ) spicy Korean pickled cabbage

**kimono** (着物・きもの) a Japanese traditional formal dress made of layers of robes and ties

**kippu** (切符) ticket

**kita** (北) north

**koban** (交番) police box

**koen** (公園) park

**kofun** (古墳) ancient burial mound

**kotatsu** (こたつ) low table with a blanket and electric heater used in winter

**koto** (琴) a traditional wooden Japanese harplike instrument with 13 strings

**koyo** (紅葉) autumn leaves turning red

**kumite** (組み手) sparring; one of the main training components of karate

**kushi** (串) things on skewers

**kyogen** (狂言) traditional Japanese comedic theater

**kyoshokuin jutaku** (教職員住宅) teacher housing

**kyudo** (弓道) Japanese longbow archery

**kyushu jidoshado** (九州自動車道) Kyushu Expressway

**kyuyu pompu** (給油ポンプ) siphons for keronese heaters

**makura** (枕・まくら) pillows filled with buckwheat chaff (sobagara) designed to keep the head cool

**mamaikuko** (ママイクコ) traditional Japanese gifts

**mamushi** (マムシ) a type of poisonous snake

**manga** (漫画) Japanese comic book

**mattorusu** (マットレス) mattress

**megane** (眼鏡) eyeglasses

**mentaiko** (明太子) seasoned cod roe, a Fukuoka specialty

**michi** (道) hiking trail

**michini mayou** (道に迷う) get lost

**mikan** (みかん) mandarin oranges

**minami** (南) south

**minshuku** (民宿) hostel

**miso ramen** (みそラーメン) ramen soup made with a miso-based broth

**mochi** (餅・もち) pounded rice cake sweets

**mofu** (毛布) ordinary blankets

**mukade** (ムカデ) centipede

**mushi yoke supure** (虫除けスプレー) basic mosquito repellent spray

**nabe** (鍋・なべ) a winter dish with a variety of ingredients, but usually including a base stock, shitake mushrooms and tofu

**nama biiru** (生ビール) draft beer

**nama gomi** (生ごみ) raw rubbish

**nanba purēto** (ナンバープレート) license plate

**nanohana** (菜の花) rape blossom

**nashi** (梨) Japanese pear

**natsumono** (夏物) essentially the “summer sales,” shops have discounts on their products throughout July

**nenkyu** (年休) paid annual leave

**nihongo nōryoku shiken** (日本語能力試験) Japanese Language Proficiency Test

**nimai/yonmai kippu** (2枚・4枚きっぷ) are two/four pack discount tickets for limited express/Kyushu Shinkansen

trains

**nishi** (西) west

**noh** (能) Japanese theater

**nomihodai** (飲み放題) ALL-YOU-CAN-DRINK!

**obaachan** (おばあちゃん) translates as “grandma,” but is also used as a term of endearment to older ladies

**obi** (帯) decorative belts for kimono or yukata

**obon** (お盆) unofficial holiday in which families pay respects to their departed ancestors

**ouendan** (応援団) special section of a baseball stadium for cheering, where fans do choreographed chants at different parts of the game

**ofuro** (お風呂) Japanese-style bath

**ohiya** (お冷) proper term for ice water in a restaurant

**okonomiyaki** (お好み焼き) Japanese style pizza or omelets

**omiyage** (お土産) souvenir presents

**omoshiroi-ichi** (面白い市) Dazaifu's special monthly market

**onigiri** (おにぎり) filled rice balls, often triangle shaped, wrapped in seaweed

**onnagata** (女形) an actor who plays all of the female characters in a kabuki performance

**onsei kirikae** (音声切り替え) bilingual switch found on TVs, video or audio systems

**onsen** (温泉) Japanese-style bath filled with heated water from hot springs

**oshiire** (押入れ) top shelf used for storing futon

**ozeki** (大関) the second highest rank attainable in Sumo

**pachinko** (パチンコ) Japanese pinball

machine parlor

**pori yoki** (ポリ容器) containers for kerosene

**purikura** (プリクラ) small photo stickers

**ramen** (ラーメン) a dish made with a base stock and containing noodles

**rikishi** (力士) sumo wrestler

**rotemburo** (露天風呂) an outdoor onsen

**ryokan** (旅館) traditional Japanese inn

**sagemon** (さげもん) decorative hanging dolls

**sashimi** (刺身) sliced raw fish, usually pronounced with an “o” at the beginning

**seimonbarai** (正門払い) a prelude to the New Year sales, this is a small sale shops hold in December

**sekiyu** (石油) kerosene used for sutōbu heaters

**sekiyusutōbu** (石油ストーブ) freestanding kerosene heaters

**sensei** (先生) teacher

**shabushabu** (しゃぶしゃぶ) a hot-pot dish of thinly sliced beef cooked in broth and served at the table

**shaken** (車検) the official government inspection for all automobiles and motorcycles larger than 250cc in Japan

**shamisen** (三味線) traditional guitar-like Japanese musical instrument

**shikibuton** (敷布団) under-futon

**shikifu** (敷布) an under-sheet

**shinkansen** (新幹線) Japan's famous bullet train that goes over 200km/hr and covers most of the length of Japan

**shitei seki** (指定席) reserved seating

**shiyakusho** (市役所) city hall

**shochu** (焼酎) an alcoholic drink distilled from rice, buckwheat or sweet potatoes

**shorinji-kempo** (少林寺拳法) a mixed martial art

**shuccho** (出張) business trip

**shukin nin ni shiharau** (集金人に支払う) a payment collector for bills

**shumai** (シュウマイ) steamed Chinese pork dumpling

**soba** (蕎麦・そば) buckwheat noodles

**somen** (そーめん) fine wheat noodles

**soroban odori** (そろばん踊り) abacus dance

**sukuutaa mōshikomomi** (スクーター申し込み) license form for a scooter

**sumo** (相撲) Japanese wrestling

**tabehodai** (食べ放題) ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT

**taiko** (太鼓) Japanese drumming

**taikukan** (体育館) local municipal gym

**takenoko** (竹の子・筍) bamboo shoots

**takkyubin** (宅急便) luggage carrier service

**takoyaki** (たこ焼き) balls made of batter, filled with octopus and served with mayonnaise, special sauce and bonito flakes.

**taoruketto** (タオルケット) a terry cloth blanket

**tataki** (叩き・たたき) used to beat the dust out of a futon

**teikiken** (定期券) are commuter passes for use between two designated train stops

**teishoku** (定食) a set meal

**togeti** (陶芸) the art of pottery and ceramics

**tokkyu** (特急) limited express (super fast train)

**tonkotsu ramen** (とんこつラーメン) Fukuoka's specialty is ramen where the broth is made from pork bones

**torii** (鳥居) the gateway at the entrance to a Shinto shrine

**toyu** (灯油) kerosene fuel used in heaters during the winter

**tozanguchi** (登山口) trailhead

**tsukai sutei** (使い捨て) disposable pocket warmer, normally activated by shaking and is usually thrown away after use

**tsutsuji** (つつじ) Azalea flowers

**udon** (うどん) fatty flour noodles

**umegae mochi** (梅ヶ枝餅) Dazaifu's toasted rice cakes with sweet bean filling

**yabusame** (流鏝馬) the sport of horseback archery

**yaki** (焼き) ancient Kyushu pottery

**yakiniku** (焼肉) Korean barbeque-style dish

**yakitori** (焼き鳥) small sticks with meat, fish, and vegetables skewered and grilled on them

**yakuba** (役場) town or village office

**yakusho** (役所) public office

**yama** (山) mountain

**yatai** (屋台) famous in Fukuoka, street stalls that serve various foods, but usually yakitori and ramen

**yokozuna** (横綱) the highest possible rank in Sumo

**yuko kigen** (有効期限) validation sticker

**yutanpo** (湯たんぼ) hot water bottle

**zazen** (座禅) meditative discipline practiced in Japan

## APPENDIX C - BEST FESTIVALS IN FUKUOKA-KEN & BEYOND

\* Indicates that these festivals take place outside of Fukuoka prefecture.

### AUGUST

1<sup>st</sup> Weekend

Kurume Water Festival and Chikugo River Fireworks, Kurume-shi  
Fireworks, Amagi-shi

2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend

Obon festivities everywhere!

Aug 13-15

Kitakyushu Summer Festival, Kokura Castle, Kitakyushu-shi  
Chikuzen Nakamagawa (Dance by the Onga River), Nakama-shi  
Gion Yamakasa (Lantern Boats and Fireworks), Ashiya-machi  
Rope Hauling Festival, Chikugo-shi

\* All Souls Lantern Festival, Nagasaki-shi, Nagasaki-ken

3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend

Isla De Salsa (Caribbean and Latin Music Festival), Nokonoshima  
Island (Fukuoka-shi)

\* Mid-Summer Waterfall Climb, Nanayama, Saga-ken. 0955-58-  
2405

4<sup>th</sup> Weekend

Fireworks, Iizuka-shi, Kasuga-shi, Mojiko (Kitakyushu-shi)

### SEPTEMBER

All Month

Asian Month, Fukuoka-shi

1<sup>st</sup> Weekend

Sunset Live International Music Festival, Keya Beach, Maebaru-shi  
New Wine Festival, Kyoho Winery, Tanushimaru-shi

Sep 4

Yakitori Festival, Kurume-shi

2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend

Kusano Furyu (Good Luck Parade), Kurume-shi

Sep 12- 18

Hojoya (1000 year old Shinto-Buddhist Ritual), Hakata, Fukuoka-shi

3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend

Himawari Festival (Sunflower Festival in Onsen Town), Haki-machi

Sep 21-22

Yoroningyo (Performances and Stalls), Yame-shi

Sep 25

Jinkoshiki Taisai (God Precession Festival), Tenmangu Shrine, Daizafu

### OCTOBER

1<sup>st</sup> Weekend

\* Nagasaki Kunchi (Nagasaki-Culture Parade), Nagasaki-shi,  
Nagasaki-ken

Mokkosai (3-day Festival), Okawa-shi

Oct 9

\* Beef Eating and Yelling Contest, Yufuin-shi, Oita-ken. 0977-85-4464

3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend

Okagaki Festival on Sunday (World Food), Okagaki-machi  
Chikuzen Nakama Yacchare (Big Street Festival), Nakama-shi  
Omunach Shrine Okunchi (2-days for Hakata's Guardian God),  
Fukuoka-shi

Hinashiro Okunchi (Lion Dancing), Amagi-shi

Also in Oct

Don Kyan Kyan Drumming Festival, Setaka-machi

Nagasaki Kaido Festival, Yahata, Kitakyushu-shi

Onigie Festival, Yanagawa-shi

### NOVEMBER

1<sup>st</sup> Weekend

Hakushusai (Festival for Great Poet), Yanagawa-shi

\* Saga International Balloon Festa, Saga-ken

Nov 12-26  
3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend Karasutengu Festival for Buzen's Mascot, Buzen-shi  
Kyushu Grand Sumo Tournament, Fukuoka-shi  
Culture/Agriculture/Fireworks Festival, Saigawa-machi  
Koga

4<sup>th</sup> Weekend \*Ohara Festival (20 000 Dancers in Kimonos), Kagoshima-shi,  
Kagoshima-ken  
Mojiko Marathon on Last Sunday, Mojiko, Kitakyushu-shi

## DECEMBER

All month \*Takachicho Night Kagura Dances, Miyazaki-ken. 0982-72-3181  
1<sup>st</sup> Weekend Mochi Pounding, Tsuiki-machi  
Dec 8 Kurogi Town Festival, Kurogi-machi  
3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend Kumano Shrine (Bare-ass River Dip), Maebaru-shi  
Dec 24-26 \*Aso Christmas Balloon Festival, Aso-Shi, Kumamoto-ken. 0967-32-1960  
Dec 31 New Years Countdowns and Fireworks everywhere!

## JANUARY

Jan 1 Bata Bata Ichi, Amagi-Shi  
Jan 1-4 \*New Years Bull Fighting Festival, Oshima Island, Kagoshima-ken.  
0997-86-2911  
Jan 3 Tamaseseri (Good Luck Ball Race), Hakozaki Shrine, Fukuoka-shi  
Jan 5 Kumano Shrine Tsuina Festival, Chikugo-shi  
1<sup>st</sup> Weekend Oniyo Fire Festival, Tamataregu Shrine, Kurume-shi  
Jan 9 Geisha Parade, Toka Ebisu Jinja Shrine, Fukuoka-shi  
2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend Mukoshi Festival (with Bride Spanking!), Kasuga-shi  
3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend Kowakamai Dance, Setaka-machi

## FEBRUARY

1<sup>st</sup> Weekend Setsubun (Bean Throwing), Kushida Shrine & Tochoji Temple,  
Fukuoka-shi  
2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend Sakagura Sake Brewery Festival, Jojima-machi  
\*Kokonoe Symphony of Ice, Oita-ken. 0973-76-2111  
3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend \*Fugu Festival (cooking lessons available), Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi-  
ken. 0832-23-8331  
\*Nagasaki Lantern Festival for Chinese New Year, Nagasaki-ken  
4<sup>th</sup> Weekend Kinoka Marathon, Okawa-shi. 0944-87-2101

## MARCH

All month Hinamatsuri (Doll Festival), Yanagawa-shi  
1<sup>st</sup> Weekend Kyokusui No En (Water Poetry Festival on Sun), Daizafu-shi  
4<sup>th</sup> Weekend Chikugo River Rapeseed Blossom Festival (Sun), Kurume-shi  
Mar 28 Haki Mud Festival, Haki-machi  
5<sup>th</sup> Weekend \*Yoshinogari Rapeseed Blossom Walk, Saga-ken. 0952-25-7099

## APRIL

1<sup>st</sup> Weekend \*Meiji Restoration Kaikyo 30K Walk, Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi-ken.  
0832-31-1350  
2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend Umi Festival, Umi-machi  
3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend Togakuji Matsuri (Prefectural Cultural Asset, Sun), Maebaru-shi  
4<sup>th</sup> Weekend \*Arita Ceramics Fair (Biggest in Kyushu), Arita-shi, Saga-ken  
Giant Wisteria Festival, Kurogi-machi

## O-HANAMI

### END OF MARCH/ BEGINNING OF APRIL

*O-Hanami* parties everywhere!

JET Hanami Party, Chikuzen Nakama *Hanami*, Nakama-shi  
Kokura Castle *Hanami* Festival, Kitakyushu-shi  
Maizaru-koen and Nishi-koen, Fukuoka-shi



## MAY

1<sup>st</sup> Weekend Suitengu Shrine Floating Parade, Yanagawa-shi  
Hakata Dontaku, Fukuoka-shi  
Hon-machi Gion, Buzen-shi  
2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend \*Hitoyoshi Onsen Shochu Festival, Hitoyoshi-jo Castle, Kumamoto-  
ken. 0966-22-1111 (Call for exact dates)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend Fireworks Festival (Sat), Kanda-machi  
Jinkosai, Tagawa-shi  
4<sup>th</sup> Weekend \*Firefly Festival, Kobayashi-shi, Miyazaki-ken. 0984-22-8684

## JUNE

(Too Rainy for Fun)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend Waterfall Season Opening, Chuon-no-taki Kōen, Ukiha-machi  
4<sup>th</sup> Weekend Lavender Festa, Harazuru Onsen, Haki-machi

## JULY

2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend Hakata Gion Yamakasa, Fukuoka-shi  
Gion Yamakasa, Amagi-shi  
Yamakasa Festival, Izuka-shi  
3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend Kokura Gion Daiko (Drum Festival), Kitakyushu-shi  
Kurosaki Gion, Kurosaki, Kitakyushu-shi  
Jul 25 \*Isahaya Festival, Isahaya-shi, Nagasaki-ken  
4<sup>th</sup> Weekend Daijyama Summer Festival, Oruta-shi  
Tobata Gion Yamagasa, Kitakyushu-shi  
Ushinohi Eel-Eating Festival, Yanagawa-shi

# APPENDIX D -

IMPORTANT  
CONTACT  
INFO

## EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES

Australia (Fukuoka Consulate General)	092-734-5055
Canada (Fukuoka Consulate)	092-752-6055
China (Fukuoka Consulate General)	092-713-1121
Korea (Fukuoka Consulate General)	092-771-0461 / 3
New Zealand (Embassy in Tokyo)	03-3467-2271
United Kingdom (Osaka Consulate Office)	06-6120-5600
United States (Fukuoka Consulate)	092-751-9331 / 4

For other numbers please see the back of the JET Programme General Information Handbook.

## FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBERS

JET Line	03-3591-5489
Rainbow Plaza (Fukuoka)	092-733-2220
Kokusai Hiroba (Fukuoka)	092-725-9200
Kitakyushu International Association	093-662-0055

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Municipal ALTs and CIRs		
Ken Lee	092-643-3201	fukuokapa@gmail.com

## EMERGENCY CALLS

Police	110
Ambulance	119

Green Pay Phones -Lift the receiver, push the red emergency button, then dial.  
Grey Pay Phones -Lift the receiver and dial.

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