

ehime

2015 Guidebook

愛媛へようこそ！



Created by Ehime JETS
for Soon-to-be Ehime JETS!

❖ TABLE OF CONTENTS ❖

- **WELCOME TO EHIME P. 3**

- ABOUT THIS GUIDEBOOK
- THE CLIMATE
- EHIME JET SUPPORT NETWORK
 - PAs/RAs

- **BEFORE YOU LEAVE P. 9**

- YOUR APARTMENT
- CLOTHING
- THINGS TO BRING
- PACKING
- HOMESICKNESS
- LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS

- **AFTER YOU ARRIVE P. 12**

- TOKYO
- SCHEDULE
- JOURNEYING TO YOUR NEW HOME
- GIFT GIVING
- EHIME ORIENTATION

- **YOUR LIFE IN JAPAN P. 14**

- HOME AWAY FROM HOME
- CULTURE SHOCK
- TRANSPORT
- SETTling INTO YOUR JOB
- AT SCHOOL
- ENKAI
- STUDYING JAPANESE/TEFL
- USEFUL WEBSITES
- GROCERY SHOPPING

- **LIVING IN EHIME P. 25**

- AJET
- INAKA LIVING
- INVISIBLE IDENTITY
- IN THE BIG CITY
- GETTING YOUR PHONE
- HEALTH
- TRAVELING
- THE OUTDOOR REPORT
- SKIING AND SNOWBOARDING
- BEING VEGETARIAN
- LGBT LIFE IN EHIME
- CHRISTIAN/RELIGIOUS GROUPS
- JAPANESE SIGN LANGUAGE

TOWN GUIDES

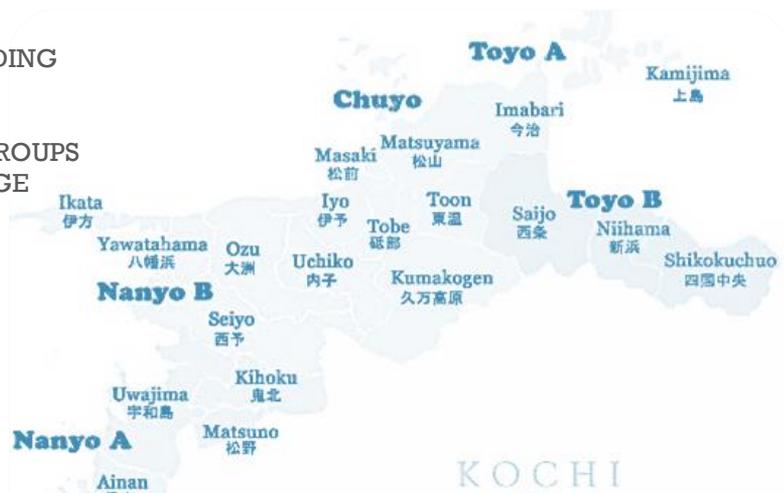
NANYO A
P. 41

NANYO B
P. 58

CHUYO
P. 87

TOYO A
P. 109

TOYO B
P. 149



Welcome to Ehime!



Ehime (pronounced *eh-hee-may*, written 愛媛) is on the northwestern side of Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's four main islands. While Ehime is largely a rural prefecture, it boasts the largest city on Shikoku - Matsuyama (over 500,000 people) and is home to some of Japan's cultural treasures, including Matsuyama Castle, Dogo Spa, and Oyamazumi Shrine. The "Love Princess" (which is the literal translation of Ehime's name) is truly a hidden treasure – a place where culture and natural beauty intertwine.

About this Guidebook

Ehime boasts a wide variety of cities and towns and this inevitably leads to very different living situations. We are spread far and wide – from the industrial cities of the east to the coastal communities of the south-west, and all there is in between - like the mountainous villages of the central regions and the tiny island communities in the north! (And let's not forget Matsuyama!)

This guidebook has been created to give you an idea of what to expect (and not to expect) as you start your new life in Ehime. It contains information taken (and updated) from old versions of the guide, as well as several new sections and bits of information. Hopefully it will answer some of the questions you may have – but if not, please feel free to get in touch one of us current JETs!

A big thanks to past and present JETs for contributing ideas, materials and suggestions for this guidebook – you have helped to make it what it is!

Did you know?

- About 70% of Ehime is forested
- Ehime has **the highest peak in western Japan**: Mount Ishizuchi 1,982m
- Ehime was originally called "The Land of Iyo"
- Japanese "**haiku**" originated in Ehime
- The population of Ehime is about 1,500,000 (1.18% of the nation's population)
- Ehime is famous for **mandarin oranges** (a.k.a. mikan)
- There is a region of Ehime that is famous for making towels
- **Matsuyama Castle** is one of only three large-scale, multi-wing castles remaining in Japan
- Ehime is home to Japan's oldest hot spring – **Dogo Onsen**
- Dogo Onsen was the inspiration for the bath house in the Studio Ghibli film '**Spirited Away**'
- **Kenzaburo Oe**, who hails from Uchiko Town, is one of only two Japanese writers to win the Nobel Prize in literature.

The Climate



Summer is hot, humid, and sticky. Air conditioning is not often found in classrooms, but it's in offices and (hopefully!) your apartment. At times, Ehime has been recorded as the hottest place in Japan. Temperatures can get up to the mid-thirties (Celsius) / nineties (Fahrenheit).

Autumn is beautiful. The air is crisp, but not too cool. The maple leaves change colour and the fall festivals are plentiful. Autumn also brings typhoon season, which means it rains, a lot. When the rain stops, the cool weather begins to settle in.

Winter is mild and in general, there is only light snow that melts upon touching the ground...except in the mountains, where

some areas may receive up to a meter of snow! Be warned, heating is hard to find in Ehime! (This means winter can feel very cold!) Schools may not have heaters in the classrooms and your apartment may have a space heater, but not central heating.

Japan is a very weather-oriented country, with fashion, food and festivals greatly influenced by the coming and going of the seasons. In Ehime, the temperatures can vary greatly depending on what region you live in, but here's a general guide.

Spring is full of flowers, cherry blossoms and (again) rain. The weather mercifully begins to warm back up, and the rains come down. Days alternate between beautiful sunshine and downpours.

Rainy Season is late spring, early summer (the Japanese will tell you they have five seasons). It rains – a lot! All day, for days on end! For those of you from dry regions, expect to get wet.

Ehime JET Support Network

Prefectural Advisors

Prefectural Advisors (PAs) are appointed by the prefecture and are trained by CLAIR on the workings of the JET Program(me). From taxes to mental health counseling to medical bills, PAs can help you with the nitty gritty parts of living abroad. For 2015-2016, Ehime has two PAs.



The PAs work with the Ehime prefectural government division that is in charge of JET. Together the JET PAs and Japanese PAs plan seminars for JETs and supervisors, as well as disseminate important information and announcements throughout the year. PAs are here to provide support for the JET community.

3rd year JETs and 1st year PAs, **Jen Cerna** and **John Wheeler** will be your advisors for 2015-2016.



Jennifer Cerna

Hi, everyone! Welcome to Ehime! I'm so excited to meet you guys! I'm Jen, a third-year ALT from the U.S., currently living in Ikata.

My hobbies include longboarding, lifting, running, karate, cooking, drawing, writing, and playing and writing music.

I'm super stoked to be one of your prefectural advisors this year! As such, I'm here to help make the transition to living in Japan as smooth as possible. Please don't hesitate to contact John or I with any questions you may have! I look forward to a fantastic year with you!

Prefectural Advisors



John Wheeler

Hello everyone and welcome to Ehime, one of the most beautiful, friendliest places in Japan! My name is John and I'm a third-year Saijo CIR hailing from California.

Things I like to get up to in Saijo are hiking around the Ishizuchi mountain range, playing basketball, and seeing movies at our one and only cinema in Niihama. Look out for my emails with local event information, and please don't hesitate to hit me up with suggestions of your own. Here's to a great year in Ehime!

Regional Advisor System

In Ehime, we also have a support network called the 'Regional Advisor' system. The JETs in Ehime have been divided into 5 groups based on the region they live in: Nanyo A, Nanyo B, Chuyo, Toyo A, Toyo B. Each region has at least one Regional Advisor (RA) – an experienced, volunteer JET who wants to help out other JETs in his/her area.

The RAs can help you out with many region/job related questions - information about your area, ideas for teaching, traveling in/out of your region, services available, etc. The RAs are JETs who have lived in their region for at least a year and know what it's like to be a 1st year JET there!! Feel free to contact the RAs in other areas to find out about their region.

Here are your RAs for the 2015-2016 year!

Nanyo A



Nathan Bernart

Hello and welcome to Ehime Prefecture! My name is Nate and although I now call Uwajima (in Nanyo region of Ehime) home, I'm originally from the San Francisco Bay Area in California. I love watching movies, cooking, beer and karaoke (often together). I also love *onsen* and luckily they are plentiful in Ehime! There's nature aplenty here in Ehime, so I hope you're not afraid of bugs. If you want to hang out, just drop me a line, I'm game for anything. I look forward to meeting you all, and once again, welcome to Ehime!

Nanyo B



Jessica Reid

Hey future Mikans! Are you getting PUMPED for life in our wonderful little corner of Shikoku?! My name is Jessica Reid, and I am going into my third year as an ALT in Ozu City. Collectively, I've lived in Japan about six years, so feel free to ask me anything! I'm originally from Rochester, New York (the state, NOT the city!). I spend most of my time outdoors, and I love camping, hiking, and cycling, but also planning events and cooking for my friends. I also really enjoy drinking coffee and craft beers, especially in good company (or in front of a campfire). Things I don't like include shellfish, peanut butter, and cats. But if you DO like cats, you should definitely check out cat island in the Nagahama area of my city, Ozu! (I'll hook you up!)

Chuyo



Abdulla Zokari

Hello and welcome to Ehime! I'm one of your two RAs for the Chuyo region. My name is Abdulla Zokari. Originally I'm from Yemen but have lived in Ontario, Canada for 12 years. I've been living in Ehime for 5 years now, so I'd like to think I know some of the inner workings of this place! I love sports, video games, cooking, and playing with my baby girl <3 If you ever have any questions or just need some advice, then by all all means drop me a line any time :). Hope we have a lot of fun this year together, and can't wait to meet you all!

Chuyo



James McKay

Hey ya'll! I'm Jamie, a second time JET entering my 5th year in the mountains of Kumakogen and I'm one of the Chuyo RAs. Kumakogen has a couple nearby ski slopes so if you're into skiing or boarding or just need to escape your apartment during the cold, cold winter let me know and I'll meet you on the slopes! I was born and raised in Atlanta, GA in the U.S., but have lived in a number of places like Washington, D.C., Edinburgh, and Kumamoto among others before settling in Ehime. I love exploring Shikoku and Japan by getting outside and having new adventures and experiences, inevitably making new friends along the way. I'm excited to meet everyone this summer and get to know you all better through a variety of events, festivals, drinks, and karaoke sessions.

Toyo A



Jessica Ogasawara

Hello everyone and welcome to Ehime! My name is Jessica and I'm from Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA! I'm a 3rd year ALT living in Imabari City and I will be one of your Toyo A RAs this year. Ehime is a beautiful place--life is easy-going, the people are friendly and welcoming, and the hospitality is excellent! You will love it here! I love hanging out, shopping, eating, exercising (once in a while, haha), fashion and make-up, wasting time watching YouTube videos, traveling, and cooking. I'm looking forward to meeting you all! :) I hope you have an amazing time here in Japan!

Toyo A



David Quach

Greetings and a BIG welcome to Ehime! I'm David Quach from Sydney, Australia and am currently live on Yuge Island, Kamijima (the most northeast group of islands of Toyo A). I enjoy anime, the piano, video games, sports, dancing, hiking and most important of all, eating!

Yuge and the islands along the Shimanami Kaido are great for escaping the "city" life, so feel free to get in touch with us island ALTs whenever you feel the need for some panoramic ocean scenery. We're all here to help you guys have a great time in Japan, so don't hesitate to contact us. I hope that you guys will be able to enjoy your time in Japan as much as I have so far, and am looking forward to meeting you all. Yoroshiku ~



Mykel Scheussler

Hello everyone and welcome to Ehime!
My name is Mykel Schuessler and I'm from California. I'm coming up on my third year as an ALT and currently reside in Niihama, the center of Toyo B. My hobbies include playing all sorts of video/board games, watching TV and studying Japanese. I also enjoy going out to my local yakiniku or yakitori restaurant to eat, grab a few drinks and chat with friends.
Newcomers! I hope to make your transition to Japanese/JET life as smooth as possible, so please contact me with any questions you may have. Also, feel free to let me know of an event that's happening near you or something you'd like to do and I'll help you let others in Toyo B know about it.
I hope you enjoy your time in Japan and are able to make the most of it!



Before You Leave

Your Apartment

Housing arrangements vary greatly from JET to JET (rent, furnishings etc). If you have a predecessor, find out if they want to sell you their goods, but remember to check cost and condition. You are not under any obligation to buy anything/everything from your predecessor. You may be required to pay “key money,” which is essentially a deposit that will (probably) not be refunded. Not everyone has to pay key money, so find out if you do and how much it will be.

Clothing

If you are larger than the average Japanese person, you will have difficulty shopping in Japan. The larger the city, the more options you have. Clothing can also be quite expensive. It's a good idea to stock up a bit on those necessary everyday items, like undergarments, pantyhose, jeans, t-shirts and shoes. In general, clothing is more reserved in Japan. If you wear revealing clothes (i.e. show a lot of skin) you will draw attention to yourself.



Big and Tall
There are stores specializing in plus sizes, especially in the bigger cities. For a start in Ehime, check out “4L” (Google: フォーエル) in Matsuyama.

For work, you probably won't have to wear a suit every day, but be sure to dress professionally. A black suit will be a must for the more official occasions. Bring a pair of indoor shoes – most schools will require you to remove your footwear at the door and put on indoor shoes (rubber sole shoes or slippers). Revealing clothing (sleeveless or low-cut tops, short skirts, etc.) is not acceptable! Also, bring one set of sports clothes; these come in handy for your school's sports days, club activities, and P.E. classes.

In summer, think cotton! Guys – cotton slacks with short sleeve dress shirts are fine (you may need to wear a t-shirt underneath). Girls – tops with sleeves, slacks, knee-length skirts are okay (cover your shoulders!).

Modesty Tip!

Do the bend over/stretch test to see how much skin you show – you might consider buying longer shirts or wearing singlets, etc., that cover your middle no matter what you do.

In winter, think layers! Long underwear, turtlenecks, wool socks, and big cardigan sweaters all help! In the rainy season, a good raincoat can be a godsend (rain suits can be easily purchased after you're here), especially if you have to commute to work by bike.

Elementary school is often less strict. If your elementary school says it's acceptable, comfortable clothes or tracksuits are the way to go (as long as you're covered up)!

Shoes are measured by the centimeter. For women, anyone larger than 24.5cm, and for men, anyone larger than 29cm, will have trouble finding decent shoes that fit. It's also a good idea to bring shoes that are easy to take on/off – you'll be doing it a lot!

Things to Bring

Toiletries

Deodorant: It's a good idea to bring your own as good deodorant is hard to come by in Japan.

Toothpaste: Most Japanese toothpastes now contain fluoride, but at lower concentrations than are likely found in your home country. You may wish to bring your own simply for taste!

Sunscreen: The sun in Japan is quite strong so a good sunscreen is a must. Sunscreen is widely available and high quality, but it's expensive and sold in small quantities. Some sunscreen may also include skin-whitening agents (look out for: 美白)! Consider bringing your own, especially if you have sensitive skin.

Cold Medicine: There are many cold, allergy and headache medicines available over the counter here. Most of them are supposed to be very good, but in general the ingredients are different from Western medicines, and dosages are usually smaller. If you bring your own medicine, be careful that it does not contain any medicine that is illegal in Japan (see the CLAIR JET General Information Handbook (GIH) for more details).

Contraceptives: Due to privacy, consider bringing your own although various contraceptives can be easily found. Visits to the doctor or drug store could be difficult and frustrating since small communities tend to know where you went and what you bought. Check your JET GIH about sending medication to Japan. Also, Japanese condoms run slightly smaller, so if you require a "magnum" size in your home country, it may be worth bringing your own supply.

Hair Care: Widely available, reasonably priced and generally good. As with most things, the products here are slightly different from back home, so if you are particular, you should bring your own. Dandruff shampoo in Japan will say フケ on the bottle and might be necessary during the



very dry winters. Gels, sprays, foams, and mousses are different, but can be fun to experiment with. Hair colour products are designed for dark hair and may affect blonde hair differently. If you have curly hair, it's a good idea to bring moisturizer and defrizzer/curl up products. Lastly, methods of cutting hair may be different. There are many sad stories and many good stories about a person's first hair cut in Japan. Consider bringing a picture of your hair after it's just been cut (or find something in a magazine you like) and asking friends or other JETs for recommendations on where to go. Some salons may also give discounts to first-timers!

Vitamins: Vitamins are available in Japan. However, if you don't read kanji, buying them may pose a problem. Again, doses tend to be small and prices high.

Contact Solution: Contact solution is available here. The ingredients may not be the same, but they work effectively. If you are concerned, the recommendation is to bring your own supply, or have it sent (especially if you live outside of Matsuyama).

Body Lotions and Moisturizers: You can easily find general moisturizers (hands & body, facial) over the counter. However, if you have certain skin care needs or allergies, bring your own. Lotions can be expensive and Japan may not have the type you want. Also, Japanese brands are designed for Asian skin, so they may take moisture out instead of putting it in. Some may also include skin-whitening agents! If you use a major cosmetic brand for skin care, you can find counters in Matsuyama at either Mitsukoshi or Takashimaya (department stores). Other skin care stores like Lush can be found in the shopping mall Emiful near Matsuyama.

Tampons and Pads: Widely available and well priced. Some familiar Western brands are also available. However, menstrual cups may be more challenging to find.

Facial Wash: Available and good. Like back home, prices vary depending on the brand.

Shaving Cream: Available and good, however most have strong scents. Razors are also available. If you use shaving cream and are particular about the brand, consider bringing your own.

Make-Up: Although you can generally find all major brands (as mentioned previously) and lots of good Japanese brands of make-up here, it is very expensive. It is also meant for Japanese skin tones, so shades are limited.

Miscellaneous

Japan Guidebook: Lonely planet, etc.

Travel-size Japanese dictionary

Laptop computer: If you travel between schools and want to be able to work on materials or have all your materials in one place, a laptop is an excellent tool for keeping your productivity hassle-free. It also saves you from having to learn your way around a Japanese keyboard.

Self-Introductions

Photographs (family, home, friends, food, country, school-life, holidays, etc.). If space is an issue, you may consider scanning these items and printing copies once you arrive.

Information about your hometown/country (maps, currency, flag, famous items, postcards, etc.)



Gift Ideas

Use your judgment and don't go beyond your means to bring something for everyone when a group gift will do just as well. Keep in mind that something from your home town/state/country will be the most appreciated. You may like to save your 'special' gifts for your supervisor, principal, etc. You can also ask your predecessor for details of who best to buy gifts for. Don't go overboard and use up all your luggage space on presents! People know that you have just made an international move and even the smallest gift (like a bitesize candy) will fulfill most obligations.



Biscuits, jerky, sweets (chocolate, toffee etc.), alcohol, calendars, photo books, coasters, food from your country (Vegemite, maple syrup, etc.), key rings, magnets, macadamia nuts, dried fruit, tea, etc.



If possible, using gift-wrap that reflects the area you are from (koala printed wrapping paper; hula girl gift bags, etc.) is a nice touch. However, you may wish to wrap your gifts after arriving rather than risk having them opened by airport security!

Prizes for Students

Postage stamps, pencils, flags, postcards, key rings, stickers, erasers, pins, seals, coins, etc.

Money

When you're deciding how much money you should bring with you to Japan it's a really good idea to contact with your predecessor for advice. You may potentially need key money, the first month's rent, cash to buy furniture or appliances, money to pay for your predecessor's things and money to live on. If you plan to buy a mobile phone before your first paycheck, you should also take that into consideration. Most carriers will discount and allow you to pay installments on your phone as part of your monthly bill, but the majority of contracts are for two years. If you only plan to stay for one year or would prefer to pay for your phone outright, budget anywhere from 20,000 yen (basic phone) – 60,000 yen (iPhone) for the purchase.

You may be able to access money from your home country's bank by using an international 7-11 ATM. However, not all places have this.



Packing

It's not necessary for you to bring everything with you from your home country – you are able to get most things in Japan. If you want something for when you arrive and can't carry it on your flight, consider shipping it before you leave. Simply let your contracting organization know that you are shipping things. **Surface shipping** can take between 1 – 3 months (remember to pack your shipped boxes well!) Note: if you send chocolate in shipped boxes, it'll probably melt! It travels better in your suitcase. A more expensive alternative (and the only option for U.S. JETs) is sending things by **airmail or parcel delivery service** (UPS, FedEx, etc.)

Homesickness

Don't hesitate to bring **personal items** that remind you of home, family, and friends. On those inevitable days when your carefully prepared lesson is met with bored yawns, or you misread (or can't read) the kanji and get on the wrong bus, you'll appreciate having some comforts waiting for you at home. If you know your Japanese address before leaving your home country, be sure to share it with your family and friends (or send out e-mails or postcards after you've arrived). Tell people to write to you, especially after the first month or two. Once you're settled in and the newness has begun to wear off, you may begin to feel a little homesick and finding a **postcard or letter from home** in your mailbox is always a nice pick-me-up. You may even consider setting up an exchange with friends/family back home – they send you some familiar goodies (magazines, favourite foods etc) and you send them a box of novelties from Japan (Pocky, dried squid, plastic Gundam, etc.) Needless to say, having a computer with Internet is highly useful and advised. Keeping in touch with family and friends can really help you get through culture shock. You can use Skype to call home for free or very cheaply.

Long Distance Relationships

Long distance relationships are very possible (though difficult) romantic or otherwise. Before departing, you will likely feel a lot of anxiety in relation to leaving your loved ones behind. However, there are many perks to long distance relationships and being away is almost never as bad as you anticipate it to be! The Internet is overflowing with ways to keep the love in a long-distance relationship. However, every relationship is different so take some time to figure out expectations for how often to communicate and how. Remember that because most of your communication will likely be done on the phone or over text, there is a lot of room for misinterpretation. It helps to be aware of that and adjust accordingly! You can still do things together, such as watch a movie at the same time on Skype. Sending packages or fun e-mails to each other is another great way to reaffirm the love in a relationship and let them know you're thinking of them. Remember to be creative and have fun, as a weekly phone call is not enough for many relationships to thrive.

After You Arrive

Tokyo

Orientation is an eye-opening experience. Apart from the fact you've just arrived in a foreign country and you're in one of the largest cities on earth, there are tons of other JETs to meet as you attend your various seminars. Things to watch out for at the orientation:

- Day 1:** Meet other new Ehime JETs at the official opening ceremony
- Day 2:** Ehime Prefectural meeting (you'll be given important info, like your arrival schedule!!)

The most important thing to do in Tokyo is look after yourself, both physically and emotionally. If you need to rest then do so. If you're really missing your loved ones back home try going to the CLAIR table at orientation and talking to an assistant there, or using the hotel wifi to make a Skype call. Use your time in Tokyo to gather what information you can via the workshops, presenters, and AJET Centre. These things can be useful but anything that's really important will be covered again at Ehime Orientation. Just try to relax and enjoy the experience.

Schedule

You will receive a short-term schedule at the Tokyo Orientation (2-3 days). After that, it's impossible to tell you what your schedule for the first few weeks will be like – that's entirely up to your school/office. You may find that you are given short notice before being taken away for something. Be flexible and keep smiling. Have an introductory speech/set phrases prepared and practiced so you have something to say.

After your arrival and before school resumes, you may do some of the following:

Meet teachers/town officials
Open bank/billing accounts
Alien registration application
Summer English camps
Furniture Shopping

Welcome parties
EPIC Intensive Language Course
Office time
Get a phone
Enkai

IMPORTANT DATES

13 –14 August

18 – 29 August

Late August/Early September

Ehime Prefectural Orientation in Matsuyama

EPIC Intensive Language Course in Matsuyama

School resumes

Journeying to Your New Home

When you arrive in Matsuyama you'll be meeting your supervisor(s), so **dress appropriately**. Don't worry about having a big speech prepared – if you're not confident with Japanese, the following tidbits will get you through that first meeting!

JAPANESE	READING	ENGLISH
はじめまして	hajime mashite	How do you do? / Nice to meet you.
私の名前は	watashi no namae wa...	My name is...
...から来ました	...kara kimashita	I'm from...
よろしくお願ひします	yoroshiku onegaishimasu	(like "please", but untranslatable; important to use; try to say it at the end of each self-introduction!)

Don't be shocked if your supervisor doesn't speak English – think of it as a great way to practice intercultural communication! They'll try their best too!

Gift Giving

What to give? Who to give it to? When to give it? This is an issue that can stress a lot of new JETs out. Don't worry! It's not necessary to give presents on day one, or even week one. Your co-workers know that you have just arrived and have lots of things to get used to! It's okay to give your gifts (a.k.a. omiyage) once you have settled in and you know whom you work with. A word of warning – people living in rural areas may be taken to meet the mayor (or other town dignitaries) on their first day – thus you may want to have something small with you that you can give. Check with your predecessor to see if this is the case.

Getting Your Phone

One of the first things you're likely to be taken to do is get a mobile phone. There are four major carriers in Japan – **Docomo, Softbank, AU, and Willcom**. In the end, prices are similar and it won't matter much which company you go with, but if you are in a rural location you may wish to ask around to make sure your chosen company has good reception in your area. You might be required to pay for the entire phone up front, so be prepared with cash or a credit card.

The type of phone you get is ultimately up to you, though smartphones are highly recommended. With a smartphone, you are able to keep many survival tools on the same device, including a Japanese/English dictionary, voice translator, access to the Internet, train schedules, GPS, and interactive maps of Japan. As a newcomer to Japan, you will almost certainly find yourself searching for information and it's infinitely more convenient to have it all in your pocket. Smartphone plans average between 5500 – 7800 yen a month and allow for almost-unlimited data transfer. Some phones and plans also include tethering (the ability to use your phone as a computer modem) as part of the price – very useful if you plan on bringing a laptop to work.

Pro Tip:
99% of
communication
in Japan occurs
via LINE.

If you do get a smartphone, you will likely wish to download the **LINE application**. An extremely popular instant message program, it also allows you to call other LINE users for free, regardless of their carrier. And since nearly everyone in Japan uses LINE, you'll practically never have to use your phone's minutes.

Ehime Orientation

Soon after you arrive in Ehime you will attend a two-day orientation for all the new JETs in the prefecture. It's very exciting to see everyone you met in Tokyo again, but it's also where you'll receive a lot of good information about life and work specific to Ehime. Most people find that Ehime Orientation is very relevant as the presenters are from situations close to yours. The 2015 Ehime Orientation will be held from **August 13-14** in Matsuyama.

Your Life In Japan



Home Away From Home

Japan can be an expensive place, but you don't need to spend a fortune setting up your new home. Check out the **100 yen shops, second-hand stores**, and ask your teachers if you can borrow things. Stores like **Jusco and DAIKI** have many things to make your house a home – and they deliver too!

In Your Neighborhood

- **Find a convenience store** (7-11, Lawson, Circle K, Family Mart, Sunkus, etc.)

- Find the nearest ATM** (make note of its opening and closing times, which may vary by bank)
- Find a grocer or supermarket** (Fuji, Jusco, Marunaka, etc.)

**Call 110 in an emergency for police.
Call 119 for an ambulance or fire
brigade.**

- Find the nearest bus and/or train station**
- Find the nearest *koban*** (police station)

Personal Administration

- Learn how to use the ATM / Bank Machines**
Click on this link and save it for your reference: [Japanese ATM Guide](#)
Note that bank and ATM hours in Japan are likely much more restricted than in your country.
- Organize how you want to pay your bills.** Cash when they are paid at convenience stores/post office, or automatic deduction (*kouza furikomi*) from your bank account – get your supervisors to help. (Automatic deduction may not be available for all bills).
- Learn how to send money home.** “GoRemit Shinsei” and the local post office are two common remittance services.

In Your Spare Time

- Explore, explore, explore!**
- Study Japanese**, including applying for the CLAIR language courses.
- Read the Team Teaching Handbook or Planet Eigo**
- Make contact with friends and family back home** (snail mail is time consuming but it's great to get a reply)
- Make contact with the JETs in your region**
- Relax, watch English TV, read a book etc.**

Culture Shock

Adjusting to life in another country can be quite hard and many JETs experience culture shock to some degree. It's important to be aware of it so that you can find ways to counter the effects of the stress it causes. Signs of culture shock include: panic attacks, lack of self-confidence, and excessive anger/anxiety. Some coping strategies are: eating well and exercising, getting a good night's sleep, meeting with friends, exploring your area, relaxing (taking time out for yourself), keeping in touch with friends, keeping a diary, and talking about it. Check out your General Information Handbook for more detailed information about culture shock.

Transport

Public Transport

IC Card: Usable on Iyotetsu buses, trains, trams and taxis (Matsuyama area). They offer a 10% discount on travel. Available at the Iyotetsu office at Matsuyama City Train station.

The JR Young Weekenders' Card: Used for a 40% discount on round-trip train travel greater than 50km. You can use it Friday (after 5:00pm) – Monday (before 10:00am).

Cars

Kei cars (yellow plates) are much more economical than a standard sized car. Fuel economy is much better, and tax and *shaken* (car inspection fees) are much less. Full size cars (white plates) generally have more space and more power, which may be useful for heavy mountain driving or long trips. If you are interested in a white plate car, try to find one with two or more years left on its *shaken*. An **international driver's license** is good for one year and usually relatively easy to acquire in your home country, so you might consider bringing one and deciding after a year if you'd like to apply for a Japanese license to keep driving.



Pedal Power



Things to consider:

- Mountain or city bike?
- Gears?
- Basket (good for shopping)?
- Mud guards?

Bicycle laws have recently become stricter across Japan. You are liable to receive a citation if you break cycling rules such as riding while holding something (umbrella, etc.), passing on the wrong side, riding on the sidewalk in prohibited areas and cycling while intoxicated.

Settling into Your Job

After the excitement of your first few days/weeks in Japan, you may find the amount of time you have to spend in the office (especially during school holidays) overwhelming. Here is a list of some things you could do to keep yourself busy at the office:

- Go through any information/files left behind by previous ALTs.
- If you are in the BOE: Ask if you can go and meet some of the teachers at your schools
- Make an office name plan – ask the teachers to fill in their names (hiragana/kanji). Some schools/offices also have seating charts. This can help you match names to faces.
- Introduce yourself to as many teachers as possible.
- Walk around your school – chat with the students, check out club activities.
- Introduce yourself / talk to your teachers – show them pictures of your home country, etc.
- Read through your schools' English textbook.
- Make an information display (or a newsletter) about your country in simple English for students and teachers alike (be careful not to give away all your self-intro materials! Only put in information you feel comfortable telling to strangers).
- Plan your self-introductions – ask your JTEs for their opinions/ideas.
- Ask and use the schools' laminator and laminate pictures for your self-intro
- Brainstorm games you can make for future lessons and MAKE THEM!
- Search the net for game/lesson ideas.
- Study Japanese. Asking co-workers questions about the Japanese you learn can help start conversations.
- Organize an English club for the teachers (at lunch time or during free periods).
- Have a cooking lesson demonstrating a favorite western food for your teachers.

At School

Teachers' Meetings

Teachers' meetings are held every morning before classes for 5 – 15 minutes. It's a time for general notices and for the day's schedule to be given (ask a JTE after to tell you what was discussed). At one of these meetings, you will need to do a self-introduction for your teachers in Japanese. This is a good time to let your teachers know your interests!



Ceremonies

Ceremony is big in Japan, and this is true for school, too. There will be an opening ceremony following all extended vacation periods (winter/spring/summer) and a closing ceremony before vacations. It will likely be in the gym and will almost certainly last for a while - try and stay focused!

As a new arrival to the school (for ALTs based at a school), you will take center stage at some point in the autumn's opening ceremony. In almost all cases, you will enter the school gym with the principal and you will be greeted by a standing ovation from the students and teachers. Do not be surprised if the students seem extremely enthusiastic at your arrival. Your entrance may be accompanied by your national anthem or any catchy tune by the Beatles. Following a rendition of the Japanese national anthem and the school song, you will be led to the stage where you will be welcomed by the school principal and the student president. Now comes the important bit: you will address the school. It is best to keep the speech short and snappy. If possible, try to prepare something in Japanese. Otherwise, one of the English teachers will translate for you. Once you finish speaking, you will receive more applause, be led to your seat and the rest of the ceremony will pass in a blur. Breathe a sigh of relief, as you will have survived the most important part of your first day at school.

School Trips & Sports Days

Many schools schedule their school trips for the beginning of September (although some do happen in spring). Try not to be surprised if you find yourself in an empty school for a few days (why not ask if you can go?). Also, most schools will have a Sports Day sometime in September (although this has been changing to spring in some areas). Leading up to the Sports Day, most classes are cancelled and you may find yourself watching marching practice and cheering practice.



These seemingly endless drills overwhelm many ALTs, although the day itself is a lot of fun. Enjoy it as best you can and be sure to join in the fun. You can join the teachers' team and race against the PTA or you can volunteer to dress in costume. Make sure to bring sunscreen and a baseball cap as glare can be a huge problem and most schools will not allow you to wear sunglasses.

Schedules

There really is no such thing as a regular schedule. The regular schedule seems to often serve as a model that is modified according to whether the first year students need to spend a period practicing the school song or the second year students need extra swim practice or moral education, etc. Lessons are generally forty-five or fifty minutes in duration. Some schools may hold a regular morning assembly once every week and this may result in changes to the schedule. All changes to the regular schedule will appear on the blackboard at the front of the staff room. This is where the kanji for the days of the week comes in useful as you can check changes in the school timetable without bothering your JTE's. However, if you see radical departures from the norm, it might be a good idea to check if a school event or meeting has been scheduled.

Regardless of whether you work in a school of fifteen students or five hundred, your teachers will often be busy with homeroom duties, administrative work, meetings, club activities, grading tests,

counseling and lesson planning. This heavy workload means that even the best-intentioned teacher will not always have time to pass along important information. There is a stereotype of the newly arrived ALT who suddenly looks up from his/her computer to realize that there is nobody left in the staff room. If you should find yourself in this situation, go to the school gym ASAP.

School Lunch

If you are an elementary school or junior high school ALT, you will generally embark on the thrilling adventure that is school lunch, or “**kyushoku**” as it is known in Japanese. Should you have the opportunity to eat with the students, the lunch itself is often an excellent conversation starter and this is a great way to learn Japanese. Those of you who teach in high school will be deprived of this excellent gastronomic adventure.



School lunches are portioned out by the students and can average 800+ calories per meal, which may be too much for those ALTs no longer hurtling through puberty. There are expectations that everyone – students and staff alike – should finish everything on their trays, meaning that school lunch can be a problem for ALTs with smaller appetites or lower caloric needs. Some schools will allow you to request smaller portions or to give some of your portion to a hungry student. However, others may discourage or forbid this behavior. Speak with your predecessor to find out about your school lunch and the policy concerning it. If this sounds like it will be too much food for you, speak with someone **before** the start of the semester when you sign your kyushoku contract; it may be far more difficult to change things later in the year.

If you are a vegetarian, have specific dietary needs, or find that you dislike the quality, contents, or portion size of your school lunch, you may prefer to bring your own lunch from home. Once again, be sure you make this decision clear to your school or else you may find yourself required to pay for school lunches you haven't eaten. If you do decide to bring your own lunch, don't worry – you can still eat with the students. In fact, you'll likely find your food choices to be a constant source of conversation!

School Cleaning

Either after lunch or before club activities, everyone in the school participates in the school-cleaning period (or “**souji jikan**”). You will be assigned a location and you will clean that area with some other teachers and students. Even the school principal takes part in the daily cleaning ritual. If you are not assigned an area don't just sit at your desk! Ask for a spot to clean or just pick up a broom and get to it!

Self-Introductions

As a newly arrived foreign teacher, the students and teachers will be anxious to know all about you. At this stage, most of you will have to make self-introduction speeches to your classes. The important thing here is to make your introductions as dynamic as possible. Most classrooms have televisions and you may be able to create a Powerpoint or digital photo album to show in class. Before you commit to the high-tech approach, make sure it will be available to you and that your computer of choice will link properly to the TV. Or just play it safe and go analog.



Use lots of photos of family, friends, pets, and vacations, and try to involve the Japanese teacher and the students as much as possible. Pass the photos around but be aware that some classes may tear and rip things in their excitement. With this in mind, it might be a good idea to get some materials laminated or make large color copies and glue them onto sturdy cardboard. Also, try to vary the content of your materials. For example, you might play some of your favorite music and then ask the students what music or popular singers they like. In terms of language, it is good to

check what English has been taught and try to use this where possible in your self-introductions. Finally, expect the unexpected. You may be asked if you have a “partner” or asked what your “size” is. Humor is usually the best defense. Answers such as “one hundred and eighty centimeters” (in reply to a boy’s “size”) or “bigger than a sumo wrestler’s” (in reply to a girl’s “size”) will generally get a laugh and move the conversation along.

SELF-INTRO HINTS

Whatever you talk about remember to do it **SLOWLY** and **CLEARLY** while using **SMALL WORDS**. Avoid jargon, slang, and expressions, as even very experienced non-native English speakers may not know their meaning. If your audience can't understand you then they'll lose interest. Just remember how much interest you pay to what is said every morning at the staff meeting and you'll get the idea.

Try to stick to **topics that you have props for**. Where you live, your family, their jobs, the family pet, etc. General facts about your country, some brief notes on its history, geography, weather, culture, holidays, etc., is usually enough. The rest you can tap dance your way through.

Relate facts back to Japan. To say that Australia is 7,682,300 km² with a population of 18,173,600 is not as meaningful to a thirteen-year-old Japanese student as saying; Australia is twenty times larger than Japan, but has only one-sixth the population (and even that statement might need a blackboard demonstration).

Think of **VERY SIMPLE questions** that you can throw back to the students or teacher. The trap to avoid is you talking about yourself for fifty minutes.

One easy technique is to **make the class work for the answers to their questions**. Opening with, "Hello everyone. Guess which country I'm from!" generates more interest and activity from the students than them passively sitting there while you state "Hello everyone. I'm from New Zealand". You can easily waste a few minutes by choosing someone, making them stand (actually, they'll do that themselves) and then letting them whisper in consultation with their friends before coming to the (hopefully wrong, so you can do this again) consensus on your country of origin. **Don't overuse questions**, and try to keep things moving as prolonged silences can also get pretty tedious. Involving the students in your talk from the start is more fun for them (they get to try English) and it provides a little variety for you.

Club Activities

Apart from teaching academic subjects, Japanese schools offer many different clubs (*bukatsu*). Students learn to be good citizens through club activities and these activities often take absolute precedence over everything else in their lives. Depending on the school and the club activity, some students may do club activities every day of the week. Many of us find the absolute importance of these clubs difficult to relate to but they can also be useful in helping you to settle in and develop a rapport with your students. If you have an interest in a sport, you may be allowed to join the students in their practice sessions. Alternatively, you might wander from club to club and observe the various activities on offer. However, if you officially join a club, you will be expected to attend at the expense of your social life.

Teaching

After your self-introductions, you'll settle into your 'regular' teaching. You may have to plan games for all your lessons OR your teachers could plan everything and then just tell you what to say OR you may get to plan with your teacher. Every situation is different. Try and make the most of yours! Talk to your JTEs and find out what they want from you. Communicate with your students; study their textbooks so you know



exactly what words and grammar they know. They usually don't know too much outside of this. You'll probably feel a bit like Jane speaking to Tarzan, but it's important that they can understand you through easy English and gestures.

Spare Time?

Again, every situation is different. You may be an ALT who has to teach 5 lessons a day with little time to prepare, or you could be an ALT who is averaging less than 5 lessons a week. If you find yourself with time on your hands – for whatever reason (scheduling changes, no classes ever scheduled, exams etc.), try and make yourself useful (this will help your sanity). Below are some ideas for filling your empty work hours:

- Let your teachers know you want to come to lessons!**
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help**
- Join other classes – PE, Home Economics, Homeroom**
- Talk to the teachers**
- Walk the corridors**
- Study Japanese (and ask the teachers for help!)**
- Make a regular newsletter or bulletin board about yourself (your adventures, home country, etc) or something else!**
- Make activities to accompany the textbook and ask if they can be used in class. If at first you don't succeed – try, try and try again!**

Enkai

What is it?

Enkai (party) is a very important part of the Japanese work culture – this is one of the few occasions that your co-workers can let their hair down and relax with one another. Because so much alcohol is involved, you see a different side of your co-workers. You may find yourself having conversations with teachers you've barely shared two words with, or may discover that beer causes your principal to magically speak nearly-fluent English. This is the quintessential Japanese bonding experience and a great chance to build a relationship with the other teachers and school staff.



Paying

In most cases, you'll simply pay for the event in full, either ahead of time or at the venue. However, your school or office may instead take a monthly collection of around 2000 – 4000 yen per month to be applied to the next enkai. This is something that your Japanese co-workers pay without hesitation, so they may be a little shocked if you choose not to contribute. Keep in mind that the money you contribute is for more than parties – it also goes towards gifts for things like births, deaths, marriages and retirements.

Attire

Wear clothes that you are comfortable sitting down in (business attire is usually worn) as enkais are often on tatami (you'll also have to take off your shoes so make sure to do a hole check on your socks!). The big end- and start-of-year enkai will usually have a more formal dress code.

At the Enkai

The official enkai (which everyone will go to) lasts for about 2 hours. You will get a set meal and a steady flow of alcohol. If you don't drink, let your colleagues know and ask for tea or soft drinks. People rarely eat all of the food they are given as they are busy socializing with co-workers. It is commonplace at enkais to go around and pour drinks for other people (don't pour your own!) and have a chat to them. You will notice that the enkai will begin with a few speeches and typical office deference, but quickly become more relaxed as the evening proceeds. Everyone will do

'kanpai' (cheers) together before taking their first drink. During the next 2 hours you will see a change in the people around you. At first people might be too shy to speak to you, but after about half an hour, you will most likely turn into a celebrity, with everyone wanting to speak to you. Don't be afraid to try out your Japanese either!

Non-Drinkers

Japan has a big drinking culture and your colleagues may be surprised to find out you don't drink. Be prepared for questions as to why. If you drink but don't wish to get drunk, just take small sips and never let your glass look empty – this is usually an invitation for someone to fill it up. It is very unlikely that you will be the only person at an enkai who isn't drinking, so don't worry about it.

Safety

With the amount of alcohol that flows during enkais, it is no wonder people start acting very differently. People may comment on your appearance and ask you personal questions. Answer the ones you feel comfortable answering. Try and keep your wits about you and if you find yourself in a situation you don't like, try and remove yourself from it as diplomatically as you can. One idea might be to carry a bottle of beer with you as an excuse to leave a situation (so you can go and pour for someone else).

The Nijikai - "Second Party" (and Sanjikai... and Yonjikai...)

Once the enkai is over, many people often wish to continue partying. This is called 'nijikai' or the '2nd party'. There is no obligation to go to this, but it's a good chance to socialize with your co-workers and hopefully build some friendships. Popular places for after-enkai-parties are karaoke, drinking bars, darts, dessert, etc. Your enkai fund does not cover this – you will have to pay!

Business as Usual

The day after the enkai is just like any other. Don't be surprised if the person you were best buddies with the night before barely acknowledges you. At the same time, you may also find that you get a lot more people saying 'ohayoo gozaimasu' or 'morning' to you. Either way, you will have shown yourself to care about your co-workers and to be part of the group, which is appreciated by everyone involved!



Studying Japanese

What better time to learn Japanese than when you are living in Japan? If you are looking for something to motivate you – why not take the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)!! There are 5 kyus, or levels. Level 1 is the hardest and Level 5 is the easiest. Tests for all levels are held every year on the first Sunday in December and July. The application deadline for the December test is in early September the deadline for the July test is in April. The JLPT fee is 500 yen for the application, and 5,500 yen for the test.

Also, EPIC (Ehime Prefecture International Center) in Matsuyama and Niihama offers intensive courses during Summer and Spring. Ask your supervisor for details when you get here. Please bear in mind that not all supervisors are able to let their JET attend **without** requiring that the JET using paid leave. Larger towns may also have their own language courses or private tutors (ask at EPIC). EPIC also maintains a list of organizations offering Japanese lessons and tutoring across Ehime Prefecture: <http://www.epic.or.jp/english/japanese.html>

TEFL Certification

If you enjoy teaching English, this is also a great time to become TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) certified. There are many online programs that you can complete in your free

time to improve your teaching skills and gain valuable credentials to help you continue to teach after your time with JET. The JET Program now offers 200 partial grants toward TEFL programs of 100 hours or more each May, so keep an eye on your email for more information when spring rolls around!

Useful Websites

Ehime JETs stay in contact with each other over the [Ehime AJET Facebook page](#). It's a place for JETs to ask questions, let people know about festivals and to give/receive JET Programme info (and much more!).

Feel free to join before you arrive!

Life as a JET

Ehime AJET
National AJET
CLAIR
JET Programme

<http://www.ehimeajet.com/>
<http://www.ajet.net/>
<http://www.clair.or.jp/e/>
<http://www.jetprogramme.org/>



Life in Ehime

[Ehime Government](#)

[Town Website Database](#)

[Matsuyama City](#)

[Ehime Prefecture International Centre \[EPIC\]](#)

(The "Guide to Living in Ehime" has lots of useful sections including how to get your Japanese drivers license!)

[Matsuyama International Centre \(MIC\)](#)

[What's Going On?](#)

(MIC's publication for foreigners with information about local events!)

[Outdoor Japan](#)

(With information on surfing and other outdoor activities!)

[Japan Meteorological Agency](#) *Weather, Natural Disasters, and Emergencies*

Medical Centers in Ehime

[Medical Centers](#) (Japanese)

Cinemas

Click on the theater name to go to that area's movie listings.

Tip! If you have a Fuji (the supermarket) card, you get a slight ticket discount.

Movies are discounted on the 1st day of each month and women may receive discounts on Wednesdays.

Location	Cinema
Emiful	Cinema Sunshine
Imabari	Cinema Sunshine Independent Theater
Kinuyama	Cinema Sunshine
Okaido (Matsuyama)	Cinema Sunshine Independent Theater
Ozu	Cinema Sunshine
Shigenobu	Cinema Sunshine
Niihama	Toho Theater

Travel

Need to get around? Need to get away? Check out the travel services below!

Air Travel	
Matsuyama Airport	Domestic and International flights
JAL	Japanese Air Lines
ANA	Air Line
Jetstar	Offers cheap flights from Matsuyama to Narita Airport and beyond
Peach	Offers cheap flights from Matsuyama to Kansai International Airport (Osaka); good jumping-off point for international travel

Buses and Trams	
Iyotetsu	Bus, train, and tram information; Japanese only
Setouchi	Bus service for the Toyo area as well as night buses to major cities; Japanese only
Uwajima Bus	Bus service for the Nanyo area as well as night buses to major cities; Japanese only

Train and Ferry	
Hyperdia	A great resource! Type in your starting and finishing destinations and Hyperdia will find the best trains for you!
Jorudan	
Ekikara	Japanese only
JR Shikoku	Japanese only
Ferries	A guide to ferries around Japan.

Travel Agencies	
STA Travel	Offers special deals for JETs!
Number 1 Travel	
Rakuten Travel	Japanese only
AB-Road	Japanese only
Willer Travel	

Online Shopping

Can't find what you need at Daiso or the town co-op? Try looking online!

Food Shopping	
The Meat Guy	Every kind of meat you can imagine from cow to crocodile to kangaroo! There are special sections for organic and halal meats, as well a selection of cheeses and frozen veggies.
The Flying Pig	Resells Costco products within Japan
Foreign Buyers Club	
Yo Yo Market	

Miscellaneous Shopping

Amazon Japan	Great for getting English books; has an English interface; fast shipping
Play Asia	Video games
Shurui	Alcohol and liquors; Japanese only
iHerb	Vitamins and health supplements; cheap shipping to Japan
Victoria's Secret	Women's clothing; bras in additional sizes
ASOS	Clothing and shoes in Western sizes; free delivery to Japan

Sending Money Home/Accessing Money From Home

Financial Services

GoRemit	Remittance service; send money back home to your main account
Japan Post Office Bank	Offers international ATM service

Japanese and English Education Resources

Resources to help you become a better teacher and a better student.

Japanese Study Resources

Rikaichan	Browser plug-in that translates Japanese text on mouse-over
WWWJDIC Online Japanese Dictionary	
Space ALC	
JLPT Website	Includes information, testing dates/locations, and online registration for the Japanese Language Proficiency Test
JLPT Study Resources	
Japanese Drills	

English Teaching Resources

Cross Currents	Bilingual Japan & USA info
Dave's ESL Café	Lesson ideas, tips, and job listings
Englipedia	Great forums and lots of activities
ESL Galaxy	Powerpoint templates for games
ESL Kids	Flashcards and worksheets
GenkiEnglish	Elementary School Activities
JTR: Japanese Teaching Resources	Facebook page started by a Shikoku ALT
The English Resource	Online bookstore
Ultimate Camp Resource	Good listing of games and ideas for the classroom

English Language Newspapers

[The Daily Yomiuri](#)

[Asahi Shimbun](#)

[The Japan Times](#)

[News on Japan](#)

Googlemaps

The following links below are googlemaps with locations of places of your interest. It has been created by the PAs, RAs, and current JETs, and will continue to be updated throughout the year.

Maps

[Restaurants in Ehime](#)

[Ehime Shopping](#)

[Ehime Necessities](#)

[Prefectural Offices, Immigration Offices, etc.](#)

Grocery Shopping

Entire aisles at Japanese grocery stores are devoted to seaweed or just-add-water ramen bowls, as well as the expected fish section and the number of unidentifiable (at first) ingredients that look strange and complicated to use. Things are almost the same once you get used to the labels and realize that slight differences are mostly irrelevant. Check out all the stores over time to find ones

that carry most of the things you eat or cook with. You may be watched a bit as you shop. Some people are curious what you'll want to buy, but if you have a problem, people are mostly happy to help; especially if you try out your Japanese. You can also order foreign foods from a number of places. **Flying Pig** is a branch of Costco (a wholesale foods store) selling mostly American foods (think macaroni and cheese, popcorn, and crisps), refrigerated and frozen goods, as well as a selection of miscellaneous other goods. **Foreign Buyers Club** is similar, but may carry more Australian and British foods as well as some teaching aids. They all ship to your home and buying in bulk is

advantageous, so get some friends together and order away! **The Meat Guy** is great if you're looking for a particular type of meat you can't find at your local store (turkey, lamb, venison, big steaks, proper sausages, organic, halal, etc.)

Check out
the **Being
Vegetarian /
Vegan Guide**
on page 31!

Living in Ehime

AJET

Ehime AJET is a volunteer, non-profit organization that services the local JET community. Their aim is to enrich your experience in Japan by keeping you informed of important & fun things happening within Ehime-ken and the JET program at large. Ehime AJET is the prefectural branch of National AJET (the Association for Japan Exchange and Teaching) and represents your voice as well as supporting you throughout your time in Japan. Through social, sports, volunteering and cultural events AJET aims to create a strong JET network, providing opportunities for you to meet other JETs and get involved in your local communities. Ehime AJET also publishes **The Mikan** newsletter and maintains a great website which contains lots of useful information about living and teaching in Japan.



Inaka Living

The word *inaka* (田舎) in Japanese means *rural* or *country*. And just like everywhere else in the world, country folk tend to be more conservative and provincial, but also warmer and not as formal. For many new JETs arriving from urban areas, the combination of Japanese life and rural life provides a double shock. Living in Ehime inaka, however, presents the unique opportunity to see traditional Japan close-up and become part of a community unavailable in an alienating metropolis.

Standing Out

The Japanese word for foreigner is *gaikokujin* (外国人), more commonly shortened to *gaijin* (外人) and literally meaning “outside person.” You will learn this word quickly. You may hear it whispered as you walk down the street, or shouted when you arrive at school. Since Japan is so homogeneous, any difference really stands out. And while the Japanese are shy about many things, they may not be shy about staring at you. Also, you may find that people you have never met before will know your name, where you work, what country you are from, and what day you do your washing. This might be surprising at first but it soon becomes one of things that amuse you about living in Japan. Yes it can be irritating sometimes, but try to enjoy the celebrity. It comes from a genuine curiosity and neither malice nor rudeness is intended. You are in a place where people just want to know you.

Invisible Identity

With the exception of race, most differences in identity or lifestyle, from religion to LGBT status to veganism, are neither expressed nor discussed in public life in Japan. For JETs who are used to navigating the volatile world of identity politics back home, this can be a source of both relief and frustration.

The inaka is more conservative and more homogenous than the cities, but there is little need to worry about your dress, customs, or mannerisms triggering an existing prejudice as such actions do not communicate difference the way they do back home. In Japan, they will almost without fail be read as personal or “foreign” quirks. The downside is that you may feel a meaningful part of yourself has become invisible, and being in a foreign country can lessen your opportunity to connect with a broader community. Speak with the PAs or understanding friends in your area (or online) if you need to let your identity “breathe” and be sure check the [national AJET website](#) for relevant special interest groups and organizations.

Getting Away

When it all gets a bit claustrophobic it’s a good idea to get out of town for the weekend. To see some new scenery but also be somewhere where everybody doesn’t know your name. The transport system in Japan makes this really easy. The ferry routes in particular make it cheap and easy to get out of Ehime to **Kyushu, Hiroshima and Osaka** for those times when you crave urban life. Getting in touch with other JETs is essential to happy living in Japan. Everyone here understands the ups and downs of rural life and getting to know your fellow JETs provides you with empathy and a place to nip off to for a weekend. The rural towns of Ehime hold a variety of festivals in the summer. These range from the traditional to the outright strange. The festivals in your area offer a good opportunity to invite some JET friends to your town for some fun.

Going to the Store

In a small town you’re bound to run into someone you know at the grocery store once in a while. You may find your inaka neighbors inordinately



curious about what you are buying. They may ask you 'what are you buying?' Or, just have a look in your basket. No matter what you are buying, they will be surprised; either to find that gaikokujin use soy sauce, or that for breakfast we eat cereal.

If you live in the inaka, be prepared to go without some things. There may not be a video store in your town. Some places will have restaurants that close around 8 p.m. This may take some getting used to, so use the opportunity to discover the people and places around you. Also, get an Internet connection and do some online shopping. Foreign food, English books, video games, etc., can all be shipped to your cozy, country home. Things that seem elusive at first can usually be found with some effort. As you get to know your area and other people around you, you will find sources for most of the things you crave.

Minding Your Business

In rural Ehime, it can seem like every move you make is town news. From whom you had over to your house to what illnesses you have had. It's not necessarily that people are nosy; it's more that having a gaikokujin in their midst is exciting. If you are seen with someone of the opposite sex, foreign or Japanese, you will be asked if they are your boyfriend or girlfriend. And despite your answer (this is my friend/colleague/father) you may not be believed. **Don't worry!** No one really cares about your social habits; it's just something to make conversation about.

If you get sick, it may be big news in town. Folks will immediately wonder why you weren't at school. And your supervisor, the doctor and nurses will tell them exactly what you had. Don't be surprised if when you return to work, someone asks how's your diarrhea? This isn't just the treatment for foreigners. When it comes to conversations about health in Japan, there is no such thing as too much information and doctor/patient confidentiality is most likely not at the levels you're used to! However, it is at times of ill health and such problems, that the kindness and generosity of inaka people is displayed. You will have a whole hoard of office secretaries and school nurses ready to take your temperature, visit you and fluff your pillow.

Mental Health

Living in a foreign country, not to mention in a rural area, can be very stressful. Culture shock, seasonal depression, and homesickness are issues that many JETs face. Remember that you are never alone and that there are places you can go for counseling.

This year, CLAIR has rolled out a new mental health counseling system for JETs through an online counseling company. As this program is brand-new to the JET Program(me), there may be some difficulties getting it off the ground at first, but it is expected to be a marked improvement over the former counseling system. Through this service, you will be able to e-mail or Skype with licensed mental health professionals. You will receive detailed information about this service at Tokyo Orientation and again at Ehime Orientation. Note: This service is not meant to be a long-term solution, and the professionals you speak with might recommend therapy and other treatment.

PAs and RAs are not trained to provide mental health counseling. However, PAs are able to assist you in finding help with the resources listed in this section.

In most cases, mental health counseling is **not covered** by your national health insurance in Japan. However, if you are considering counseling, CLAIR offers a one-time subsidy for counseling of up to 10,000 yen that must be applied for through your Contracting Organization. However, if you need to see a psychiatrist, it is likely that insurance **will** cover your costs, and the JET Accident Insurance can be used as well. Make sure to check before you proceed with your treatment.

Remember: Exercise, proper nutrition, and a stable routine are effective natural remedies in many cases of mental stress.

Other ways to find the help you need are as follows:
Talk to a close friend or someone you trust.

AJET Peer Support Group (PSG) is a confidential listening and referral service that operates from 8pm to 7am, 7 days a week. You can reach them at **050-5534-5566** or on Skype.

Tokyo English Life Line (TELL) is a free and confidential counseling available for to everyone (you don't have to be a part of JET). They are available from 9am to 11pm every day. You can contact them at **03-5774-0992**.

Keeping it Together

There are many ways to cope with the lack of urban distractions and many ways to take advantage of living in the country. It helps to have something to fill your evening, rather than another night of Japanese TV and bean paste ice cream. The first few months you will have less to do, but as you find things of interest and get invited along to clubs and groups, you will be wondering when you will have the time to go to sleep.

Hiking

Ehime has kilometres of beautiful coastline and acres of mountain forest. It is usually only a short walk or bike ride from your town to some really spectacular scenery.

Local Sports

It should be no problem to ask to join your favourite sports club at school. Schools offer a wide range of clubs for the students such as tennis, volleyball, basketball, aikido, kendo and many other things. If eight hours with the students is enough for one day, you can join similar sports in the community and meet like-minded Japanese people in the process.

Cultural Activities

If sports aren't your thing, take up a Japanese art form. There are many opportunities to learn Japanese culture. For example: **woodblock printing, ikebana (flower arranging), sho-do (calligraphy), sa-do (tea ceremony)** as well as an array of traditional Japanese music including **taiko drumming and koto playing**. Taiko drumming is popular in Ehime and many JETs in this area belong to a Taiko group. Most groups are delighted to have a foreigner join their number and people will go out of their way to make you feel part of the group.

Drinking



If you like alcohol you are at an advantage in the inaka. Drinking in bars and in people's homes is a popular pastime here. Alcohol loosens inhibitions and someone who was too afraid to speak to you in the office will suddenly throw his arm round you and tell you about his wild college days. Going to the same bars on a regular basis is a good idea. You will get to know the staff and they will introduce you to an array of interesting people. It's much easier in Japanese society to make friends through a third party introduction. So, it is good if you can make your face well known in a few local places. As always, please remember to drink responsibly.

Taking Advantage

All in all, living in the inaka presents a unique opportunity. You will be surprised each day by the kindness of people and by their genuine interest in the most banal aspects of your life. Living in Ehime is what you make of it and it's a great chance to get an inside view of Japan.

In the Big City

There are two groups of ALTs residing in Matsuyama – Matsuyama City ALTs (junior high ALTs) and Ehime BOE ALTs (senior high ALTs). In total, there are about 20 JETs living in Matsuyama. Each group of ALTs is run differently as they are looked after by different contracting organizations. Matsuyama City ALTs have monthly meetings with their chief supervisor and occasional enkais, whereas the SHS ALTs deal with their school-based supervisor and don't have the opportunity to meet up with other SHS ALTs through work.

There are lots of things to do in Matsuyama to keep you occupied – something to keep in mind if you are disappointed to not be in a more rural place. You can create your own sense of community while living in the big city – it just takes a bit more time and effort.

A great thing about living in Matsuyama is the support network you have right at your fingertips. There are lots of other ALTs you can talk to and get advice from.

Health

In Japan, when people want to see a doctor, they go to a hospital. On days when you are sick, your school may expect you to go to the hospital to be seen by a doctor and (more often than not) get a medical certificate. Talk with your supervisor as to what protocols they expect you to follow when you are sick and what steps are needed in order to take **byokyu** (sick leave).

There is a HIV testing service available in Matsuyama. They are offered free of charge and privacy is assured. The test is simple, but you must return one week later to the health centre in person to ask for the result. They will not tell you over the phone. You can take the test three months after the time you think you might have been infected. For locations, check out the **Ehime AJET site**.

For more information on locating hospitals within Ehime, check out the link in the **Useful Websites** section of this guidebook.

Finding a good dentist in Japan may be difficult, so it's probably a good idea to get a general check-up before you leave.

-Who do you need to see?-

Kanji	Reading	English
内科	Naika	internal medicine (general practitioner)
外科	Geka	surgical (breaks/sprains etc)
胃腸科	Ichouka	stomach/intestinal medicine
眼科	Ganka	optometrist
歯科	Shika	dentist



Reproductive Health

Some foreign women in Japan don't tend to go for check-ups (STDs, the pill, gynecological tests), preferring to wait until they are at home. But if you want or need to be seen, services are available.

For infections or other immediate concerns, visit your local hospital or the women's health center attached to the main hospital in Matsuyama. If you have a rural placement and privacy is essential, you may wish to visit another city for your examination.

It's important to note that hospital doctors – even gynecologists – in Japan do not generally handle basic contraceptive health. If you would like to talk to a doctor about contraceptive options or begin a prescription, you will need to go to a private women's health clinic. Most Ehime JETs use the [Mariko Women's Clinic in Matsuyama](#) for regular check-ups and prescriptions - they even have friendly, English-speaking staff!

Traveling

There are many places within Ehime to check out (see the sections on each town in the second half of this guide), but if you are planning on touring Japan (or other countries), you first need to get out of Ehime. There are a few different ways to get out of Ehime and there are at different locations.

Plane

Ehime has one airport – and that is in Matsuyama. There are domestic flights to just about anywhere and international flights to Korea and China. Catch bus number 52 from Okaido, Matsuyama City Station (Shieki) or JR Station. Birthday specials are available – check out the airlines for their specials. In addition to bus #52, you can take the blue limousine buses, they're more frequent and quicker.

Bus

Bus travel is available to all prefectures in Shikoku and to several different destinations on Honshu. If you can sleep sitting up, you might want to consider an overnight bus (Kyoto, Kobe, Osaka, Fukuoka or Tokyo). Not only is it an inexpensive way to cover long distances, but it also lets you start early in the day without having to pay for a hotel the night before. Overnight buses leave from Uwajima, Yawatahama, Saijo, Niihama, and Matsuyama. In general, you have to make reservations for overnight buses, but you can show up at the bus center and hope that someone cancelled. One overnight bus to Osaka & Kobe also runs through Ainan, Yoshida, Unomachi and Ozu.

Train

The train is generally more expensive for trips out of Shikoku. *Tokkyuu* (express) tickets can be purchased from vending machines or at the ticket window of any large train station. Note that you will need two tickets, a 乗車券 *joushaken* and a 特急券 *tokkyuukun* to board express trains. One covers the basic fare, and the other covers the extra charge for riding an "express" train.

There are also two types of tickets, reserved (指定席) and non-reserved (自由席). Each car is labeled with the appropriate kanji, so be sure to check when you get on the train. The Shinkansen works more or less the same way. The train can offer you a smoother ride and save you from having to reserve a ticket. You can sometimes get a Shikoku schedule for free by asking at the Matsuyama station ticket window.

The word for schedule in Japanese is *jikokuhyou* (時刻表) and once you learn the kanji for place names they are not hard to use.



If you will be traveling frequently inside Shikoku and are under 30 years old, you can save money by getting a Young Weekend Card. It costs ¥1000, and grants a 40% discount on round trip train fares, providing you both leave and return on a weekend or holiday, and that the trip is no longer than four days long. You can buy one at major train stations in Shikoku.

To find out train schedules for anywhere in Japan (including some subway systems) go to [Hyperdia](#). You can also get a Hyperdia application for iPhones and Android capable phones.

Ferry

From various ports in Ehime, you can take a ferry to Kyushuu, Hiroshima or the Kansai area.

Accommodation

An inexpensive option for accommodation is a youth hostel. Prices average around ¥2500-¥3000 per night, plus an additional charge if you are not a Youth Hostel member. For more information, visit the following websites:

Hostel Sites	
Japan Youth Hostels	
Hostel World	
Hostel Bookers	
K's House	Hostels in Tokyo, Kyoto, Mt. Fuji, Hiroshima, and Nagano
J-Hoppers	Hostels in Kyoto, Hiroshima, Osaka, Takayama
KHAOSAN	Hostels in Tokyo, Kyoto, Beppu, Fukuoka

An alternative is a *ryokan* (旅館) or traditional Japanese inn. Prices can be as low as ¥3000-¥4000 per night for a single room and can provide more of a “Japanese-style” experience. Business hotels are also available. “Ladies hotels” catering to women also exist. <http://www.ryokan.or.jp/> is a good link, especially for Kansai area *ryokan*. Remember that tipping is not customary in Japan. If you decide to stay at a ryokan and are not familiar with Japanese etiquette for shoes, bathing, etc., research the customs before you go. Have a look at <http://www.sentoguide.info/etiquette> for more on this subject.

Yet another place you can find reasonably priced accommodation is at a capsule hotel. They are cheap and many have great accommodations. This is a good idea if you don't mind using a locker room to store your things and sleeping in a small “capsule” without an actual door. If you are a light sleeper, however, this may not be a good idea as you are not really separated from the other people on your floor. The only thing between you and them is a curtain.

For more information on any of the above – check out the website section or go straight to the [Ehime AJET](#) site for links.

The Outdoor Report

Go outside! You are among the chosen few with a unique opportunity to enjoy what rural Japan has to offer. You already live in scenic part of Japan and with a few tips it is easy to enjoy.

Much of Shikoku is planted forest (sadly), but this is a unique opportunity: the loggers need to get the timber in and out so most of Japan's mountains have some sort of road access. It's not trail hiking but it is an easy way to get out and enjoy nature. Be sure to tell someone roughly where you are going or better yet invite a friend.

There are also hiking trails throughout the island for more seasoned hikers. Try the Lonely Planet hiking guide for more details or try asking about hiking around town. You can also try saying, “*haikingu ni ii basho wa doko desu ka?*” (Where is a good hiking place?) The mountains are pretty safe although there are wild boar and monkeys in a few areas. Try not to startle them, as you are on their turf. Be careful during the typhoon season as the planted cedar forests have made the mountains very prone to landslides. Ishizuchi, the highest peak on the island, is a good

hike with cool climbing chains and is right here in Ehime. Public transit from Saijo Station is possible, but finding someone with a car is ideal. (http://wikitravel.org/en/Mt._Ishizuchi)

Shikoku has some of the better surfing in Japan, though the majority of surf spots are in Kochi. [The Outdoor Japan website](#) has maps of all the major breaks in Japan along with information about their levels. The whole site is pretty good and gives an overview of the possibilities in Japan. Surf beaches are a good place to camp as well as they tend to have public bathrooms and sometimes coin showers. The coastline from Ashizuri Cape to Nakamura (now Shimanto City) is probably my favorite spot in Japan I would recommend if possible for you all to check it out.

Skiing and Snowboarding

General Winter Sports Info

Ehime is the southernmost prefecture in Japan with a number of ski slopes to choose from. While they won't satisfy powder hounds, they are great for learning, fine-tuning your skills, and snow sport people who just need to get back on a slope. They are also a way of getting outside and having some fun in the cold, harsh winter.

There are two snowboard-only shops in Matsuyama/Tobe: [Home Grow Materials](#) near Fukuon Elementary school and Fukuonji station. Will organize multiple trips to various slopes throughout the season.

[Voltage](#) next to the Tobe Grand Fuji. Snowboard and Skateboard-focused shop. Voltage will set you up with all the gear you need for your first time on the slopes (except for gloves) for free if you call them to set it up. Will organize multiple trips to various slopes throughout the season.

Additionally [Murasaki Sports](#) and [Xebio Sports](#) in Emiful Masaki sell a limited selection of gear for boarders.

For skiers, gear can be bought at [Alpen](#) and [Himaraya](#) in Matsuyama near Kinuyama Cinema Sunshine or [Xebio Sports](#) in Emiful Masaki



Ishizuchi

Highest field (steep and narrow). Ishizuchi ski slope has the most natural snowfall due to its elevation but the runs are quite short and the access is limited. It's the closest ski resort to Saijo, Niihama, and Shikokuchuo.

All-day lift ticket: 5000 yen

Half-day: 3900 yen

Night ski: 2000 yen

Kuma Ski Land

<http://www.kumax.co.jp/04sl/framepage2.htm>

Convenient access via the Kumakogen Line (久万高原町線) of the JR Shikoku Rosen Bus (JR 四国路線バス). Get off at the Rokubudo teiryujou bus stop (六部堂停留場). Once you're off the bus give a call to the staff (0892-21-0100) and they'll send a van down to pick you up. There are three runs (plus a beginners slope that can be used free without buying a lift pass) that are short but wide and vary slightly in the incline of the run. They have a small mogul run and a technical flag course as well. The snow park is small and limited. Kuma is the recommendation for those brand new to snow sports as its cheap, wide, and not too challenging which allows a beginner to progress and build confidence while practicing the basics.

Entry: 1000 yen, 4-hour lift pass: 3300 yen, 6-hour lift pass: 3800 yen, 8-hour lift pass: 4300 yen,

Lift (Per trip) 270 yen
Ski/board set rental: 3500 yen

Sol-Fa Oda

3 slopes: beginner is short, narrow, and next to the trick park, and the intermediate run can be very difficult for beginners. The intermediate run is longer with many jumps and/or moguls along the way on the side of the run. The advanced run is only open if there is enough fresh snowfall covering it. There is a wide variety of different sized kickers and boxes and/or rails for the snow park junkies. Basically Sol Fa Oda is great if you already have the basics down and/or want to progress to bigger and bigger jumps. It's better (and cheaper) to learn at Kuma Ski Land if it's your first time strapping in.

Other places to hit the slopes in Japan:

Geihoku and Mizuho (Shimane Pref), numerous resorts in Hiroshima Pref., Daisen in Tottori, Dynaland/Takasu in Gifu Pref., and of course there are the most famous resorts located in Nagano Pref. (Hakuba, Nozawa onsen, Shiga kogen) and Hokkaido (Niseko)

Being Vegetarian

Staying vegetarian in Japan can be a daily challenge. The concept is not commonplace and many people will simply not understand your restrictions or convictions. Even seemingly innocuous veggie dishes may contain *dashi* (a type of fish stock) or meat-based roux, and the Japanese person you are asking may not consider this meat. As a general rule, **even if meat is an invisible ingredient and not a feature, the Japanese will probably call it “vegetarian.”** However, with careful diligence and patient explanation, it is possible to remain a successful vegetarian or even vegan in Japan.



School Lunch

School lunch in Japan is a fixed meal prepared in bulk for the entire school. Meat will be a daily, unavoidable staple and the menu cannot be altered to accommodate your diet. Establish as soon as you arrive that you will be bringing a *bento* (outside lunch) to school instead, invest in a lunchbox, and start curating a selection of recipes you can prepare in the mornings or the evening before.

Books and Catalogues

[Japan's Vegan Restaurant Pocketguide](#)

A good guide to eating out as a vegan in the larger cities of Japan. When you are traveling this is well worth the money. It can be used in Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Tokyo, and even the one listing in Shikoku for Magnolia (see below). Great recommendations and the maps are actually useable.

Hokkaido AJET's Veg Out Guidebook

Has some good recipes, and information about food. Some of the restaurants are quite outdated and the directions are not always the best, but still fun to look through. It can be ordered from the [Hokkaido AJET website](#) but the easiest way to get it is at AJET Centre during Tokyo Orientation.

Local Vegetarian Cafés and Restaurants

Matsuyama

Fumikaden



A small restaurant that is run by a very cute couple. Great service. Macrobiotic based (meaning vegan and lots of veggie and wholegrains). The restaurant offers lunch, café time, and dinner. Both lunch and dinner consist of 3 choices: macrobiotic set, healthy set, and vegan curry. All are served with brown rice. Beware, however, that not *all* dishes on the menu are vegetarian. The macrobiotic and healthy set have a main dish (tofu or tempeh usually, and the healthy one is often fish or chicken), and many vegetable side dishes and miso soup. This café offers great cakes, all vegan and refined sugar free. Try the baked cake or mochi pudding, you won't be sorry! We've heard that they can run out of food from time to time, so if you're going to go, make sure you arrive earlier rather than later! Walk all the way down Gintengai (starting at Shi Eki end). Keep walking in a straight line until you are outside. Go straight and cross the one street with traffic. Keep going for about 10 second. It's on the corner on your left. Open from about 12-3 for lunch sets, and 18.30-21.30 for dinner sets. Closed one day of the week. Café time in between meals.

Kanjirushi

A great café. Very small and hard to find, but well worth it. A very nice couple runs this café. They make fresh scones, muffins, brownies, and the cutest cookies you have ever seen. Most are vegan - just ask. They offer soymil for their lattes. On the big street that runs behind Takashimaya and Gintengai. Head towards Jusco. It's on the left side of the road, maybe a 2-3 minute walk. There is a white awning for a hair salon. It is just past that up a small set of stairs, on the third floor. There is usually a small wooden sign. They are open most days of the week from noon-8pm.

“Deutches Café Bluhén” German Bakery

This café/bakery makes delicious vegan bread. Just make sure to mention you cannot eat eggs or dairy, and they can point you in the right direction. A bit difficult to find. Between EPIC and Shi Eki. Near Honmachi. Scroll down to the bottom of the following link for a map.

Four Seasons Thai Restaurant

Some tofu and vegetable dishes. Make sure to confirm that the tofu dishes have no meat in them – often here in Japan tofu is **NOT** a substitute for meat, but rather another fun food to eat with it. It's a very brightly coloured house near Mitsuhama Junior High School.

Takashimaya Basement	Located beneath the department store adjacent to Matsuyama Shieki (the one with the gigantic Ferris wheel on the roof). A bit pricey, but many of the bakeries and food stalls have charts up showing common allergens (dairy, egg, meat etc), which is great if you are looking to avoid these things. The French bakery has lots of vegan bread.
Charlie's Vegetable	A bit expensive, but an amazing spread of vegetables, beans, soups, bread etc. Buffet Style. You can now also order a rice or pasta dish from the menu as well. Really fresh. Some of the hot dishes may not be vegetarian-safe. However, the manager can speak English fairly well and will gladly show you which soups, etc. not to eat. All salad dressings are on a chart with allergens listed. Look for ones without dairy etc if you are a vegan. Just off the ropeway near the music instrument shop.
Indian / Southeast Asian Restaurants	Most of the Indian and Southeast Asian restaurants around Ehime are run by expatriates, meaning they come from countries where vegetarianism is actually "a thing." They often have at least a few vegetarian dishes on their menu and will be more understanding of your restrictions when asking if something is "vegetarian friendly." Some of the favorites are Everest, Namaste, and Ladki.

Ozu	
Sosaku Italian Restaurant	From Iyo-Ozu station, take a right after you exit the station building, and walk about one minute. The restaurant is in its own small building on the right. Good variety of pasta and pizza dishes, excellent eggplant pasta.

Imabari	
Magnolia	A bit of a drive to get there, maybe 20 minutes north of Hojo. Find a friend with a car and get there for a lovely view and delicious vegan lunch set. Pasta options and a sandwich option also available.
Yoshida	
Tandoor Indian Restaurant (Tandoru)	One of the best Indian restaurants in Ehime, with a section in the menu for vegetarians. Located in Seiyo, inside of Shoppers.

Shopping for Vegetarian Foods

Great places around the prefecture to stock up on all your vegetarian cooking needs!

In Ehime

Natural Greens



Great place for things like rice milk, some gluten free mixes and breads, tempeh, beans, and lots of wholegrains including rice crackers etc. They also have some organic vegetables and fruit, as well as veggie meat products! You can find lots of dehydrated wheat gluten, canned faked sausage, canned fake tuna, fake hamburger steaks, fake meatballs in pouches, vegetarian ham, vegetarian instant ramen, vegetarian ready-to-eat curry packets, and other charming hippie and/or import products. They even have frozen Amy's pizza and imported whole wheat bread from time to time. A bit pricey, but nice if you need something and don't want to order online. On the big road that Junkudo is on. Head towards Shi Eki from Junkudo (keeping on Junkudo side of the street). Walk for about 30 seconds. Cross at the first lights (going towards Shieki now). It's right on the corner. It's visible from Junkudo.

Pantry

Baking supply store, that provides big bags of nuts and dried fruit for the cheapest prices around. 1kg of nuts for about 1000yen. Also a great spice selection, and of course, baking supplies. Walk from Shi Eki straight towards the castle park main entrance (the entrance by the French restaurant). Follow the trams, staying on the right side of the road. You will be walking on the opposite side of the road from Mr. Donuts. Keep walking past Ladki's. At the very last intersection before the intersection on the busy street you cross to get to the moat, turn right. It's on the left hand side.

Kaldi

(Locations at Fuji Grand and Emifull)

Here you can find dry and canned beans, grains, dried fruit and nuts, nice pasta sauce and pastas, and of course, a plethora of tea and coffee and treats from all over the world. Be careful, it's a dangerous place to visit with a full wallet.

Your local grocery store

Check out all the aisles at your grocery store. Most have some plain dried beans, seaweeds, etc. Familiarize yourself with the kanji for eggs, dairy, and meat and you can discover many fun things close to you. And of course, there are lots of different vegetable and tofu products.

Online	
iHerb	Really cheap natural food products (like oats, gluten free grains, dark chocolate with no milk in it!!) and supplements (teas, herbs, probiotics, vitamins, bath salts, you name it). You can select delivery with Yamato (kuroneko), and even pay COD (cash on delivery). They list on the website which products you cannot bring into Japan, so convenient! Orders usually arrive within 3-days!! Use coupon code ROP008 to get a \$5 discount on your first order.
Yoyo Market	Amazing customer service, flat shipping rate no matter (doesn't matter about location or about cold shipping). They carry many of the Flying Pig Items, with some of the ones listed on FBCUSA as well. Great place to buy raw almonds in a big bag, and large bags of frozen berries.
Tengu Natural Foods	Great shop based in Saitama area. Can pay online or COD. Great for whole grains and beans.
Warabe Mura	A favourite for vegan / macrobiotic based foods. Amazing selection of miso, seaweed, vinegar, oils.
FBC	Can choose between "Deli and Learning Center" or "General Store" shop. The "General Store has a much greater selection, but comes directly from the U.S. via ship, so can take about 6 weeks, Deli and Learning Center ships really quickly. Some healthy things, and lots of yummy treats, including Amy's pizza and burritos!
The Flying Pig	Online COSTCO wholesale website. Great frozen berries, and trail mixes etc.

Useful Phrases

"I am a vegetarian. I do not eat pork, beef, or chicken."

→ Watashi wa bejitarian desu. Butaniku ya gyuniku ya toriniku o taberaremasen.
(To add more, 'sakana' means fish, 'ebi' means shrimp, etc etc...)

"What do you recommend from this menu?"

→ Kono menyu de o-susume wa nan desu ka?

"Does this have X meat in it?"

→ Kore wa X niku ga haite imasu ka?

"Can you make it without meat?"

→ Niku o irenai de tsukuremasu ka?

"Can I substitute X for Y?"

→ X no kawari ni Y o koukan dekimasu ka?

"Without X"

→ X nashi de

Vegetarian Kanji

The following is a list of the common kanji and hiragana for meats and animal products to aid in shopping and reading menus. It is, however, by no means comprehensive (there are hundreds of types of fish, for example), so please be careful and use a dictionary when unsure.

魚： Fish This will rarely be on a menu, but the kanji is used as a basic radical for many other fish kanji, such as 鮪 (tuna), 鰹 (mackerel), or 鰯 (sardine). Learn the basic kanji and then double-check anything in which it appears.

子： Child Many times when this appears, it refers to eggs, such as 玉子 (chicken egg), 鱈子 (pollock roe), or 白子 (cod milt). However, it also appears in lovely vegetarian options such as 唐辛子 (red pepper) and 茄子 (aubergine/eggplant). In short, this kanji should be a warning to investigate, but doesn't necessarily mean a non-vegetarian item.

牛	beef
豚	pork
鶏, チキン	chicken
肉, にく	meat
海老, えび	prawn, shrimp
かに	crab
まぐろ	tuna
さけ, サーモン	salmon

だし	fish stock
ルー	roux
卵, 玉子, たまご	egg
チーズ	cheese
牛乳, 乳	milk, dairy
ゼラチン	gelatin



LGBTQ Life in Ehime

Compared to your home country, you may find that sexuality and LGBTQ issues are brought up much less in Japan. Because of this, some people who identify as LGBTQ may feel as though they do not have much of a support system in Japan. But the truth is, coming out here is not much different from coming out in your home country. Think about it, and if you feel comfortable coming out to certain people, then by all means, do so! Coming out will always be your own decision.

Below are some support networks within the JET and Japanese communities with lots of resources.

AJET Stonewall is a community of LGBTQ and ally JETs. They have discussion forums and information on LGBTQ communities in cities around the country.

Japan: <http://stonewall.ajet.net/>

Ehime: <http://stonewall.ajet.net/prefecture-guide/block5/ehime/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stonewalljapan/>

For those who identify as transgender, there is a very informative PDF on being trans in Japan: <http://stonewall.ajet.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Transgender-guide-final-1.pdf>
Hokoishi Clinic in Matsuyama provides hormone therapy in conjunction with the Okayama University Hospital's Gender Center.

Rainbow Pride is an active and well-regarded LGBT organization in Ehime. They have outreach programs to schools across Ehime and lots of useful links on their website. However, the website is in Japanese: <http://rainbowpride-ehime.org/Site/TOP.html>

They also have a LGBT Center called Nizikara Space in Matsuyama: <http://rainbowpride-ehime.org/Site/nizikaraspace.html>

Kagoshima (Kyushu) also has a great website on being LGBTQ in Japan: <http://kagoshimajet.com/living/social-inner-life/lgbtq/>

Religious Groups

If you are living in the Nanyo area and are looking for a church or a fellowship group, Tsutako Nakamura in Tsumi is a good contact and her email address is tsutakko@hotmail.com and she's very kind and friendly (and her English is pretty good). She attends a service in Uwajima (Uwajima Alliance) across the street from Shiritsu Byouin and also has a women's group in her home once a month... both are open to anyone- Christian or otherwise. She is also a good person just to spend time with if you are looking for a friendly face. If you don't wish to regularly attend, but want to go to a Christmas service out of tradition, please get in touch.



Daiichi Puraza Kyoukai in Yawatahama seems to be the most alive church and the pastor and his wife know a little bit of English and their daughter is quite fluent.

National AJET also has a forum where people can communicate with others of a similar faith. Currently there are forums for **Japanese Religion and Meditation, Jews, Muslims and Christians**.

Japanese Sign Language

Want to learn something a little different while in Japan?

How about Japanese Sign Language?

Ask at your local community centre and see if they have a **shuwa saakuru** (sign language circle)

❖ TOWN INFORMATION ❖

Here are concise overviews of the five areas we've divided Ehime into. Each section further divides regions into towns and includes various information on subjects from restaurants to shopping to festivals to nightlife.

• NANYO A

- UWAJIMA CITY (宇和島市) P42
- MIMA TOWN (三間町) P47
- YOSHIDA TOWN (吉田町) P48
- TSUSHIMA TOWN (津島町) P50
- KIHOKU TOWN (鬼北町) P51
- MATSUNO TOWN (松野町) P52
- AINAN TOWN (愛南町) P53

• NANYO B

- SEIYO CITY (西予市) P59
- UWA TOWN (宇和町) P59
- MIKAME TOWN (三瓶町) P62
- SHIROKAWA (城川町) P64
- NOMURA TOWN (野村町) P65
- AKEHAMA TOWN (明浜町) P66
- YAWATAHAMA (八幡浜市) P67
- HONAI TOWN (保内町) P71
- OZU CITY (大洲市) P73
- KAWABE VIL. (河辺村) P79
- HIJIKAWA TOWN (肱川町) P80
- NAGAHAMA (長浜町) P81
- IKATA TOWN (伊方町) P82
- SETO TOWN (瀬戸町) P84
- MISAKI TOWN (三崎町) P84
- UCHIKO TOWN (内子町) P85

• CHUYO

- KUMAKOGEN (久万高原町) P88
- TOON CITY (東温市) P90
- TOBE TOWN (砥部町) P91
- IYO CITY (伊予市) P92
- FUTAMI TOWN (双海町) P94
- NAKAYAMA (中山町) P96
- HOJO (北条) P97
- NAKAJIMA TOWN (中島町) P98
- MATSUYAMA (松山市) P100

• TOYO A

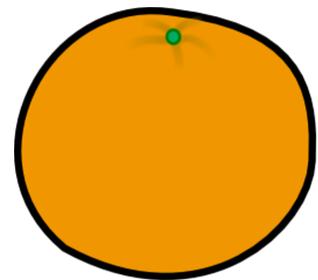
- IMABARI CITY/AREA P110
- DESCRIPTION P110
- FAMOUS FOR P110
- WHAT TO SEE/DO P110
- DINING OUT P114
- SHOPPING P117
- GET AROUND P118
- GET OUT P119
- GENERAL TRAVEL INFO P123
- OTHER USEFUL INFO P123
- TAMAGAWA (玉川町) P124
- SAKURAI TOWN (桜井町) P125
- NAMIKATA TOWN (波方町) P127
- ONISHI TOWN (大西町) P129
- KIKUMA (菊間町) P130
- OSHIMA (大島) P131
- HAKATA ISLAND (伯方島) P133
- OMISHIMA (大三島町) P136
- KAMIJIMA TOWN (上島町) P138
- YUGE TOWN (弓削町) P142
- IKINA ISLAND (生名島) P144
- UOSHIMA VILAGE (魚島村) P146
- IWAGI ISLAND (岩城島) P147

TOYO B

- SAIJO CITY (西条市) P150
- KOMATSU TOWN (小松町) P153
- TANBARA TOWN (丹原町) P154
- TOYO (東予市) P156
- NYUGAWA (壬生川駅) P156
- NIIHAMA CITY (新居浜市) P158
- SHIKOKUCHUO (四国中央市) P161
- KAWANOE (川之江) P161
- MISHIMA (三島) P163
- DOI TOWN (土居町) P167



Incorporating the areas of Ainan, Uwajima, Matsuno and Kihoku.



Nanyo A

Uwajima Area 宇和島

Includes Uwajima, Mima, Yoshida, and Tsushima.



Uwajima City [宇和島市]

Description

Uwajima is one of the larger cities in southern Ehime with a population of about 90,000. It is surrounded by the beautiful scenery of the Uwakai sea and Onigajou mountain. Uwajima is famous for its fishing industry, pearls, mikans, Bull-fighting, sex shrine, and annual Gaiya Festival in July.

Website: <http://www.city.uwajima.ehime.jp> (Japanese)

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: *To/From Matsuyama.* Under 2 hours on the expressway, but the tolls will add up.

Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* 1 hour 20 minutes by express (*tokkyu*) train; 2950 yen
The price varies depending on whether or not you purchase a **Young Weekenders' Card**, which is recommended if you plan on traveling by train a lot.

Bus: *To/From Matsuyama.* 2 hour trip with buses leaving every hour; 1800 yen; buses from Matsuyama will continue onto Ainan

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Taga Jinja. Very famous (and phallic!) fertility shrine and sex museum – prepare to be shocked! Cross the bridge in front of Warei shrine and turn left. 5 mins walk. In addition to the shrine with the huge penis, there is a sex museum. Museum material is primarily older-style, such as ukiyo-e prints and aboriginal art. The museum has been described by some as “a dirty old man’s porn collection.” Entry fee is 800 yen if you dare...



Warei Shrine. Large, beautiful shrine with a remarkable stone Torii gate at the entrance. There is a nice park with gardens in front of the shrine. It is located behind the train station on Route 56.

Gaiya Festival. 22nd-24th July every year. Modern and traditional dancing, amazing fireworks and Ushioni (demon-cow) parades. This is the largest event in Uwajima, and many come to take part in the festivities.

Uwajima Castle. What it lacks for in size, it makes up for in authenticity, beauty, and great views of the city. The castle is one of 12 in Japan that has not been reconstructed since the Edo period (1603-1868). The castle is visible on the hill in the middle of Uwajima. The interior has an array of pictures of other Japanese castles. The view of the surrounding area from the castle is lovely. Below the castle is a nice park for cherry blossom viewing in the Spring. There are two entrances to the castle, and the Northern entrance is well marked with signs. There is a parking lot next to the North (main) entrance.

Bull Fights. Uwajima holds bull fights several times a year. These tournaments differ from Spanish-style bull fighting, because there is no matador in the ring. The two bulls fight in a ring until one bull turns and flees, marking it the loser. It is a rare practice in Japan, and an exciting event to watch. The Bullfights take place at the Bull Ring on Maruyama, accessible by bus from the JR Uwajima Station.

Dandan Batake. These terraced fields are both scenic and ingenious. The terracing method was used to make the hillside arable, but nowadays it is often visited by tourists. There are festivals held here occasionally. (Access by car only)

Nanrakuen. This beautiful park is located in Tsushima. It makes for a lovely place to take a stroll amongst the flowers and scenery. Certain festivals are held to celebrate seasonal blooms. (Access by car only)

Tenshaen. This charming park is located in the city center of Uwajima. The traditional Japanese garden is a nice place to stroll, or just sit and take a break from it all. Occasionally, night illuminations are held at the park, so find a friend and take a stroll through the candle-lit park.

Date Museum. Located across the street from Tenshaen Park, this museum features many historically important objects tied to the history of the region and the Daimyo family Date which ruled the region. 2015 is the 400 anniversary of the establishment of the domain!



Dining Out

Kita Fuji Area

McDonald's.

KFC.

Mr. Donuts.

MOS Burger. Japanese-based burger joint; slightly higher quality than McD's.

Sweet Sticks. Large selection of pastas, hamburger steaks and Italian-style pizza.

Donto. Good, inexpensive Japanese food. Great tonkatsu and chicken katsu.

Osaka Ohsho Chinese

City Center Area

Gourmet Avenue. Located five minutes' walk from the station. Features Donto, Shinatora Ramen (inexpensive ramen; open til midnight), and Janjaka Yaki-Niku (excellent Korean BBQ and other dishes – try the bibinba!)

Chinese

China Stop (中国亭). Chinese restaurant across from McDonald's, behind Bookland.

Italian

Grad. A small and intimate Italian style café located up the road to Hachiku, close to Kita Fuji.

Ebisu. Located just off the Shotengai to the right on the street before the Iyo Bank (coming from Ebisu Fuji). Good food, a little pricey, wine *nomihoudai* for 2 hours (lesser quality wines, ¥1500).

Café

Café Sucre D'Arigat. A stylish and cozy café with delicious western food and cakes. Try the ceaser salad and curry gratin. Located under the freeway, close to the AU Cellphone store.

TAO. This café has great pizza, pasta, coffee, and cakes. It is located in the Shotengai.

Japanese

Toyoken. Conveyor belt sushi and yaki-niku (under the overpass). Great food and 100 yen beer on Friday nights.

Sushiemon. A newly opened (Spring 2014) conveyor belt sushi restaurant located right at the port, near Kisaiya Hiroba.

Moco. This café and bar has great okonomiyaki and Hawaiian Loco Moco. The owners, Takashi and Miyuki, are very kind to ALTs, and host monthly events at their store.

Miwa. This tofu house has an assortment of healthy and home-made dishes. Located next door to the Shinbashi department store

Hachiku. Located nearby the city hall, this teishoku hole-in-the-wall is one of the best lunch options in town.

Mushashi. Delicious yakiniku and friendly owners, located nearby Higashi High School

Harajuku. Fantastic okonomiyaki near Ebisu Fuji and the shotengai.

Matsui. Hole-in-the-wall shop with great Tempura. Located close to Jungle Karaoke.

Daisuke Udon. All you can eat udon for 350 yen! One location is next to the City hall, another is along route 56 close to Joto Junior high school.

Raguman Ramen. Delicious ramen with a wide variety of choices. At lunch they serve free fried rice. Located near the city hall

Suginoko. Fantastic oden place located near Kiyō Ryokan and Bar Red Boots. The owners are very friendly and they make excellent food. Sit at the bar for conversation. A little expensive but worth it.

Pizza

Royal Hat Pizza. Wide variety of Japanese-style pizza. Delivery only. (Uwajima only)

Izakaya

Gaiya Izakaya. Fun atmosphere and great food, located near the Circle K Conbini near the Shotengai.

Route 56 Area

Family Restaurant

Gusto. Fast food at a reasonable price. Located on Route 56 towards Tsumima.

Joyfull. (x2) Cheap fast food; both on Route 56 towards Tsumima

Japanese

Sushi Ro. Cheap conveyor belt sushi (Route 56 towards Tsumima). Very popular, expect a small wait.

Marugame Udon. Newly built in 2013, good udon and a popular lunch spot

Sukiya. Fast food curry and beef bowl gyudon shop. Cheap and fast. Cycle south past Sushiro for about five minutes and it will be on your left.

Shopping

Marketplaces

Kisaiya Hiroba. This is the “*michi no eki*” or marketplace in town. It sells a number of Uwajima foods and souvenirs, as well as local produce. There is a food court and a bakery inside, and most city events will be held here. To get there from the train station, walk towards the ocean down the main street.

Kisaiya Shotengai. Covered shopping arcade, 5 minutes right of the train station; has lots of quirky shops. Doux sells a range of gifts Grand has western music and a wide range of video games. There is a good stationary shop near to Grand (same side). Shinbashi supermarket has a great 100yen shop on the 4th floor. Other shops sell various items – Japanese sweets, Kimono and accessories, hats etc..

Supermarkets

Ebisu Fuji. 5 minutes right of the station, on the corner of Route 56 and Route 320, this is much smaller than Kita Fuji but sells similar things. Upstairs is a store called "Space," which sells stickers, clothes, shoes, and stationary.

Kita Fuji. A bit of a walk north of the station, follow Route 56 towards Yoshida; this huge superstore sells everything – food, decent clothes, stationary, video games, bedding etc. There is a travel agency inside; good travel deals can occasionally be found there.

Sunshine. This grocery store is a bit higher quality, but also a bit more expensive. It's near Higashi High School, and there is a 100yen shop upstairs.

Shinbashi. Two locations. One is located in a large department store next to the shotengai. The other is located on Route 56 going south.

Marunaka. A large supermarket located south on Route 56

Electronics

Edion. Very large electronics store next to Kita Fuji. Sells phones, computers, household goods, iPods, televisions and a variety of other appliances.

Yamada Denki. Large electronics store in the far south of Uwajima – Has a larger selection of cameras and video games than Deo Deo, though not as many household items.

100 Yen Shops

Seria. 5 minutes right of the station around the corner on Route 56

Daiso. Out past Kita Fuji along Route 56.

Home Improvement

Daiki. Home center store with everything you could need around the house. 2 locations: One is nearby Kita Fuji. The other is located south on Route 56.

Conan Home Store near the southern Daiki, and another down in Tsushima along 56.

Sports Stores

Winning Edge. Sportswear store selling decent selection of quality and inexpensive athletic ware, including footwear and swimwear. Located behind Kita Fuji.

There are also two other sports shops in the city- one on Route 56 before Sushiro (as you're heading South) and another neighboring Higashi HS.

Clothing

Uniqlo. Located past RICH on the way to Tsushima; has good western-sized clothes at reasonable prices. Take a bus, drive, or cycle there.

Hair Salons

Oasis hair salon. Great place for a hair cut. Hidemi, the owner, speaks effective English. Near the main castle entrance.

Shimizu Hair Salon. Located next to City Hall and Hairdresser, Fumi speaks English.

Plenty of souvenir shops located near the station.

Jet Black. Located right next to the hospital on the Sunshine supermarket side. Really trendy. No English, but they do good work.

Baking Goods

Baking Goods Store. A small shop near Toyoken in the warehouse/harbor district. Sells bulk cooking supplies like flower, paper plates, packaging, spices and others.

Leisure

Uwajima Sports Center. Various sports available.

Ishimaru pool. South of Uwajima, take a right at the road after the Joyfull.



Hiking. Variety of trails leading into the mountains above the town. Onigajo Mountain – The trailhead to this hike starts near the Uwajima Youth Hostel. Search for the Youth Hostel to find the entrance to the trail. There is also hiking in Yakushidani- beautiful waterfalls and mountain trails that connect all the way to Nametoko in Matsuno. To get to Yakushidani, head South on Route 56, then turn left at the Yatsushidani sign (a bit further south on Route 56 past Sushiro).

Rock Climbing/Bouldering Gym. A house behind the Pachinko parlor on 56 before you get to Sushiro (again, heading South) who's garage has been converted into a 24

hour, come as you please bouldering gym. Operates on a trust payment system, 100 yen per visit.

Taisoubeya. Gymnastics, kickboxing, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and weight training gym. There is a 3000 yen membership fee and monthly fee of 3500 yen per month. The gym has weight equipment, a trampoline, and a foam pit. The owner, Ninomiya Kosuke, is very nice and tries to speak some English. Talk to him to start your membership! Located near Suisan HS.

Fishing. Fish for sea bream, squid, octopus, mackerel, sardines and others at various locations around town.

Yasuragi no Sato. Nice onsen in Tsushima, located just at the end of the freeway. There is a pool and a restaurant inside as well. (access by car)

Ooishi Yu. Local sento bathhouse in Uwajima. Run by a lovely family, and located in Uwatsu-cho
Cycling- in Uwajima and the surrounding areas, there are great cycling routes. Inugai Bike shop (located behind the train station) has lots of helpful information and friendly guys who will invite you to bike with them

Sun Plaza. A community center that has many options for getting involved: Japanese calligraphy, tea ceremony, hula, weight lifting, exercise classes, and Eikaiwa. It is located near Maruyama and Warei Elementary school

Maruyama Sporting Facilities. In the past, JETs have been involved with Japanese archery, martial arts, and other activities in this area.

Haraikawa Onsen Located off Route 4 past Mimaki village in Tsushima. Very small, very sulfurous baths.

Nightlife

Karaoke

Voice. In the Shotengai.

Jungle. Near the station is good for large groups.

MAX. Next door to "Horumon Mura" restaurant. Not far from Uwajima fire station.

Maneki Neko. Located above Circle K in the Warei District. Close to Johoku JHS. Quite cheap and you can bring in your own food and drinks.

Bars

Red Boots. About a block from the top of the shopping arcade. It features U.S. memorabilia and offers some decent food.

Hvala. Friendly sports bar with big TV screen showing various sports (especially English soccer), opposite the bus center.

Tip! There are plenty of other good bars around, but beware of the ubiquitous hostess bars (usually very small with dodgy names and neon signs) which will charge you a small fortune just for sitting down!

Accommodations

Uwajima Oriental Hotel TEL: 0895-23-2828

Kiya Ryokan TEL: 0895-22-0101
www.Kiyaryokan.com/top_en

Uwajima Hotel Clement TEL: 0895-23-6111
<http://www.jrhotelgroup.com/eng/hotel/eng144.htm>

Uwajima Kokusai Hotel TEL: 0895-25-0111
<http://www.shikoku.ne.jp/hotel/kokusai/>

Hotel Shirakabe TEL: 0895-22-3585
<http://www3.netwave.or.jp/~sirakabe/infomation.htm>

Uwajima Youth Hostel TEL: 0895-22-7177
<http://www2.odn.ne.jp/~cfm91130/eigo.htm>

Mima Town [三間町]

Description

Mima-cho is a small community known for growing rice, nestled in between the slightly larger towns of Kihoku, Yoshida and Uwa, on the west side of Ehime. The town has a population of about 6,500.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: To/From Uwajima Station. 15 minutes

Train: To/From Uwajima. 15 minutes by local JR. The main stations in Mima are Muden (務田) and Iyo-Miyanosita (伊予 宮野下).

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

88 Temple Pilgrimage. Two of the 88 temples are located in Mima: Ryukoji and Butsumokuji.

Historic Mima. Walk around to find several interesting historical places

Winter Illumination. Mima holds an illumination ceremony in the park in winter.

Cosmos festival. Takes place in November.

The *winter illumination* takes place at Nakayama-Ike (中山池) nature park. It's worth going out to see. They also sell cold weather festival foods there during the illumination.

Historic Mima. There is an historic building called "Mohri House." Built in the "Horned House" style of architecture, designed to welcome a feudal lord.

You can rent bicycles at the *Michi-no-Eki* and ride around Mima.



Shopping

Mima keeps your basics covered with an **A Co-op supermarket and two liquor shops.**

Dining Out

Cafés

Head into the center of town to find several small coffee shops.

Lunch Buffet

Michi-no-eki. The restaurant is open from 9:00-5:00 and serves a daily lunch buffet from 11:30-1:00 with lots of home-style dishes. Buy a ticket from the machine for 850 yen.

Korean

Togyu. Korean BBQ (yakniku) restaurant.

Yoshida Town [吉田町]

Description

Yoshida is home to about 12,000 people, and is surrounded by mountains on one side, and water on the other.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: Yoshida is located half-way between Uwa and Uwajima on Route 56.

Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* The express train to/from Matsuyama stops there every time at Iyo-Yoshida station. This train is hourly. Local lines also stop there. You can also ride the express train to Yawatahama from Iyo-Yoshida station or Uwajima station.

To/From Yawatahama. Hourly local train service

Bus: Extensive bus service to/from Uwajima, Johen, and also Matsuyama.
To/From Osaka. Overnight bus available

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Stunning scenery. Mountainside mikan groves and Yoshida Bay make for a pretty awesome bike around and out of town. Mikan season begins in late October, and the hills around Yoshida yield particularly tasty varieties.

Yoshida Park. A free animal park with rabbits, peacocks, and turtles and a long roller slide that weaves down the hill overlooking the park.

Kuniyasu-no-Sato. A replica village from 200 years ago, like an interactive museum encasing a selection of old tools, antique pottery and old sea faring artifacts.

Hoketsutoge. This pass looks out over the Yura peninsula, Hiburijima, Tojima and even Kyushu on a very clear day. The sunset over the Uwakai is famous.

Annual combined elementary schools *Halloween party!*

Ceramics. Yoshida has a nice kiln and workshop where you can make your own pots and other wares.

Mikan groves. Lovely steep-slope mountainside orchards abound, with many small roads winding through mountains and hills along the sea.



The mikan (orange) groves are especially beautiful in fall and early spring.

Mikan Picking (みかん狩). Yoshida is known for their mikan all over Japan. There are many different types of mikan and the best way to find out about them is to go picking for them yourself! Mikan is in season from about the middle of October to the middle of December. There are many different places you can pick them at!

Seike Farm	清家園	Phone: 0895-52-3797
Akamatsu Farm	赤松園	Phone: 0895-52-2944
Minami Shikoku Farm	南四国ファーム	Phone: 0895-52-0330

Raft Fishing (筏釣り). You can enjoy fishing for all the fish Ehime has to offer. If you make a reservation, the company will be able to provide lunch and all the gear you need to fish.

Yoshida Marine	吉田マリン	Phone: 090-1172 - 4788
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Cherry blossoms along the Tachima River.

Shopping

Supermarkets

Fuji Vesta on Route 56; groceries, clothing/stationary shops, small electronics store; French bakery; fresh fruit/vegetable stalls; Mini DIK (hardware); Bobson denim factory outlet

Dining Out

Indian

Tandoor. Excellent Indian cuisine in Shoppers in Seiyo, famous in southern Ehime. Located between Yoshida and Uwa.

Chinese

Chinese restaurant that serves an excellent stir-fry of mixed Asian greens and pretty decent ramen
Udon

Italian

Italian restaurant that serves Japanese-style Italian food, mainly spaghetti

Leisure

Sports centre. Extensive offerings including indoor and outdoor pool with a waterslide!

Nightlife

Karaoke

Look for a small karaoke corner on the main street!

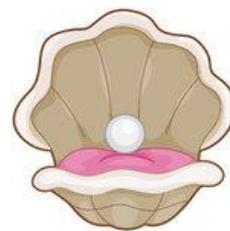
Bars

There is also a small pub on the main street.

Tsushima Town [津島町]

Description

Tsushima is a town with a population of about 13,000. It is famous for both pearl and fish farming.



Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: To/From Uwajima. 20 minutes. Newly opened (March 2015) extension of highway now goes to Tsushima proper.

Bus: Extensive bus service to/from Uwajima.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Ushioni Festival. Demon cow festival held in November.

Yasuragi-no-sato (やすらぎの里). Yasuragi-no-sato is an onsen as well as a michi-no-eki in Tsushima Town. The onsen is open from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm, with last entry at 9:30 pm. The onsen is closed on the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month, if there is a holiday that falls on those Mondays, the onsen will be closed the following day instead. There is also a restaurant and farmer's market that operates under the same times as the onsen.

Nanrakuen (南楽園). Nanrakuen is a park in Tsushima. There is an Ume matsuri that occurs from mid-February to the end of February. The Ume blossoms are really beautiful and just as nice as the sakura which bloom in late March to mid April at Nanrakuen. There are many different festivals such as mochi pounding in January, a furin (Japanese wind chime) festival in June, and an imotaki (potato hot pot) in September. For more information you can visit the website here (Only in Japanese): <http://www.nanreku.jp/site/nanrakuen/nanrakuen-event.html>

Tsushima Play Land (津島プレーランド). Tsushima Play Land has many different fun things to do. There is a go kart track that is open all year long with the exception of the New Year's holiday (Dec 29 ~ Jan 3). One lap costs 300 with a 6 lap ticket book costing 1,540. The go kart track is open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. There is also a tennis court that is 250 yen for one court for two hours. Open from 9:00 am to 10:00 pm. If playing in the evening there is a 410 yen fee to light the court. Lastly, there is a bird watching area. There is no entrance fee, so enjoy your time walking around and watching the birds in a free range environment. There are flamingos and bronze toki (glossy ibis).

Yamamoto Bokujou. Cute farm you can walk around and enjoy the animals and flowers.

Shirauo Matsuri. People gather to eat small fish alive! A **definite** culinary adventure! Held at the end of January along the Iwamatsu River.

Tsushima Summer Matsuri. Held August 16th and 17th in Tsushima town. On the second night there is a fireworks show along the Iwamatsu River. There are many different food stands, dances, and vendors to enjoy during the Tsushima Summer Matsuri.

There is a café attached to the farm that sells amazing ice cream!

Dining Out

Café

Je Taime. Great buffet on Sunday morning and good food/cakes.

Kihoku Town 鬼北町

Kihoku

Description

Kihoku is a broad town made up of amalgamated villages, primarily the two hubs of Hiyoshi and Hiromi. The population is about 11,600. Kihoku's local products are pheasant, yuzu, shiitake and rice. Websites: <http://www.ai-kihoku.jp/inner/> and <http://www.town.kihoku.ehime.jp/>

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: 20 minutes north of Uwajima

Train: The main station is Chikanaga (近永).
To/From Uwajima. 35-40 minutes for 350 yen.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Ushioni Festival. Devil cow festival in November.

Dechikonka. Town fair-style festival in October with booths selling local products, large taiko performances and various bands. The taiko performances are usually of very high quality.

Naganoichi. Festival in April.

Dechikonka Natsunojin, Kawanobri. Celebrate summer by running up a river! A very difficult race held in July, but a lot of fun. Not inconsiderable risk of injury. Participants will have some scrapes and bumps by completion.

Summer festival. Held in July.

Crying baby festival. A rather unusual ceremony where a man dressed as an *oni* is handed small children, and they cry or stare nonplussed. Early winter.

Fireflies. Common around the town's rivers in late May and early June. The best place to find them is in Aiji where they can be seen in veritable clouds.

Shopping

Supermarkets

Big Fuji, Direx and Shinbashi

Clothing

Shimamura. Clothing store across from the big Fuji

Home Improvement

Home Stock. Home furnishings and appliances

Books

Haruya. Chain bookstore with a decent selection; unfortunately, no foreign-language books.

Pharmacy

Two pharmacies, once located next to Fuji, one next to Haruya. A large selection of over-the-counter medicine and basic groceries.

Local Goods

Yumesanchi. Locally made products, farmer's market and souvenirs

Morinosankakuboshi. Locally-made products, including boar curry and yuzu juice

Video Rental

Dreamplace. Video rental place by Juju.

Dining Out

Korean

Juju. Good Korean BBQ restaurant

Toyoken. Korean BBQ and sushi

Izakaya and Bars

Mama. Japanese style izakaya

Ichi. Another izakaya

Yesterday. Café/bar with great atmosphere, often hosts live bands.

Haruya. Izakaya, primarily for large gatherings/enkai

Japanese

Nagashi somen. River of cold noodles; summer only

Hoka Hoka Ben. Decent take-out bento lunches/dinners

Family Restaurants

Joyfull. Chain restaurant with cheap, fast food.

Leisure

Narukawa Onsen. The town hot spring.

Narukawa Gorge. A beautiful nature area near the hot spring. There are several hiking trails near the Narukawa lodge area. Several of the trails lead to the many mountain peaks in the area. The lodge is well known for serving pheasant products.

BG Pool. Outdoor covered pool, open from early May to mid-September

Community Park. Large gym building near the JHS, has a small, inexpensive gym with some weights and treadmills. There is an interesting playground with large slides above the *taiikukan*.

Fitness Gym Athlete. A well-equipped gym with a variety of weights and machines. ¥30,000 annual fee, with discount for multiple sign-ups.

Camping. Recreation/camping sites on the far end of town in Hiyoshi and near Mishima.

Hiking. Areas and recreation areas of Nametoko and the Shimanto River are a 30-minute drive from the town.

Fishing. Several freshwater species live in the area, including eel and carp.

There are
tons of local
sports
teams and
clubs, too!

Matsuno Town 松野町

Description

Matsuno has a population of about 4,500, and is famous for river eel, peaches, and yearly half-marathon held in April.

Website: <http://www.town.matsuno.ehime.jp/>

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: Located on Route 381 near Kihoku
To/From Matsuyama. About 2 hours

Train: The station is Matsumaru (松丸).
To/From Uwajima. About 45 minutes; cost is 440 yen

Bus: To/From Uwajima. About 55 minutes from the roadside station Michinoeki Hijinomorikoen (道の駅虹の森公園); cost is 500 yen

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Togenkyo Half-marathon. Annual half-marathon, 5km and 3km race held in early April. The race winds through beautiful valleys and nooks of the town, often coursing through cherry orchards in full bloom. There are many hills and elevation changes during the race, making it more challenging than most half-marathons.

Matsuno Summer Festival. Every mid-August; beer garden over the town's main bridge, and stage set-up over the river



Shopping

Groceries

Farmer's Market. Fresh, cheap and seasonal vegetables, bentos, variety of bakery snacks as well as local souvenirs. Located next to the aquarium. Closed Wednesdays, open from 10 am to 5 pm.
A-coop. Open from 10am to 7pm

Home Improvement

Konan. Large home furnishings and appliance store (similar to Daiki); next to the hospital

Leisure

Nametoko Gorge. Beautiful scenic area, great for hiking and camping! But watch out for the monkeys, as they will steal anything near you, including out of your hands. There is also an onsen at the Morinokuni Hotel.

Poppo Onsen. A very nice onsen located right above Matsuno train station. There are multiple outdoor and indoor pools. Entry is 510 yen.

Aquarium. Entry is 800yen.

Glass blowing. Located next to the aquarium

The Shimanto River. One of Japan's biggest rivers and the last major undammed river in Japan, is a 20-minute drive from the town. In the summer it is an excellent place for swimming, kayaking and camping.

Fishing. Good catches in the Hiromi River

Taiko. Matsuno has a rather well-developed taiko team that practices every Wednesday from 7pm to 10pm. (Beginner's / children session go from 7pm to 8pm)

You can
even decorate
your own
glassware!

Ainan Town 愛南町

Description

Ainan is located in the southern most part of Ehime (bordering Kochi). The town has a population of around 23,000 (June 2014). About ten years ago, five towns (Uchiumi, Misho, Johen, Nishiumi, and Ipponmatsu) were joined together and are now known as Ainan. The area is famous for katsuo (bonito), pearls and mikan. Ainan is a great place to be outdoors; there are many good hikes and great spots to swim, snorkel, kayak, fish, or windsurf.

Although the town is well provided for in terms of facilities, Ainan is one of the more rural placements in Ehime and has suffered notable depopulation in recent years. Transport links are frequent and reliable, however Ainan's position at almost four hours south of Matsuyama makes it something of an isolated spot (but a beautiful one!) within the prefecture.

Website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ainan_Ehime or <http://www.town.ainan.ehime.jp/>

Location/ Access/ Transport

Train: Nearest JR stop is 45 minutes' drive/bus ride away in Uwajima. If you're travelling a lot at weekends, definitely invest in a **Young Weekender's Card** which provides 40% discounts on return train fares within Shikoku (though extending to Okayama) for weekend travel.

Bus: *To/From Matsuyama.* 3.5 hours; costs 2000 yen
To/From Uwajima. Costs 1650 yen
To/From Osaka. Night bus available from the Johen Bus Center!
You can check the bus timetables online at <http://www.uwajima-bus.co.jp/01bus/pdf/120311matuyama.pdf>

Taking the bus around Ainan itself is fairly expensive, and the bus is only available about once every hour. However, this is all the more reason to use your own two feet or two wheels and explore! From Misho and Johen, it is possible to bike or walk to any necessary amenities – you can survive without a car! From Sunokawa, you may have to rely on the bus or friendly neighbors and coworkers willing to give you rides in and out of town.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Festival for the Dead (Obon). August/September Fukuura, Nishiumi, Dancing and singing.

Autumn festivals. Found in every town when the leaves start to turn.

Spring Fish Festival. Part of the beach is netted off, fish and seafood are planted in this area, and hundreds of people barrel into the water with a net, hoping to catch anything!

Mud Soccer Meet. First weekend of September at Sasayama ES/JHS. Play soccer in the mud-filled rice paddies!

Ainan Triathlon. June every year in Nishiumi. Participate or come watch!

Fireflies. There are ferries to Kashima from Nishiumi (deer island, one of the several islands with the same name in Ehime) where it is possible to see deer, monkeys, and of course, fireflies. Fireflies are most abundant in early June and can also be viewed from other spots across Ainan.

Hanami. During cherry blossom season Amamori Mountain in Johen, near the baseball stadium, has over 1,000 cherry trees and numerous hiking trails.

Shopping

Supermarkets

Fuji supermarket. Located in Johen (with a Daiso conveniently attached!): if you shop here often, be sure to get a loyalty card!

A Max. Located in Misho: the largest grocery store in the area. It has a variety of things (food, toys, home goods, hardware, fishing, gardening, etc.) Loyalty card is also available here.

Shinbashi. Supermarket in Johen near the three way traffic light and across from Circle K.

Home Improvement

Daiki. Behind Fuji and JA in Johen (carry on past Fuji, take the road on the right and there it is!). This is a good store for general home goods: light bulbs, spare plugs, garden equipment and the like!

Clothing

Shimamura. Clothing store in Misho.

Local Goods

MIC. Sells local produce and omiyage Located in Misho off 56

Pharmacies

Big Yellow Pharmacy. Located on Route 56 in Misho opposite Lawson, offering a range of health goods and medicines (including insect repellent – important for the summer months!); there's also an in-house pharmacist available to help

Books, Music, and Gifts

Takashimaya Gift Shop. Good place for small gifts and birthday presents

Haruya. Located in Misho – has a great CD and DVD section, as well as a ton of books (though, obviously, all in Japanese, the manga and magazines can be interesting to look at nonetheless!)

Convenience Stores (Konbini)

A whole bevy of convenience stores (Lawson, Sunkus, Circle K) dotted all over town (where you can also pay for your Amazon goods, travel tickets (bus and plane) and utility bills)

Dining Out

Misho/Johen Area

Japanese

Bachikoi. Izakaya type food – great food, good drinks (alcohol and juice), and the owner is a nice guy, too! Good communication. Located on the right, a bit past Amax by the traffic signal.

Naniwa. Reasonable prices, nice atmosphere, traditional Japanese food. Located near Misho Junior High School and Sunkus.

Hana Karuta. Very nice izakaya type food, beer for 300yen and mixed drinks 450yen. Located up from Minamiuwa High School and Misho Bunka centre.

Roppo. Great izakaya style and food. English menu available. Located behind the Johen Community Centre.

Sakurazaka. Located in Johen near the three way traffic light

Yuzu. Located in Misho on the corner off of 56, close to Iyo Bank. Yuzu recently (Spring 2014) added two small karaoke rooms making it possible to once again do karaoke in Ainan without having to go to a snack bar!

Ranmante. Good food and reasonable prices. Located off of the main street in Johen.

Ramen shop. In the car park directly in front of Sun Pearl. Great ramen!

Aoikuni Hotel Buffet. (summer only), costs about 2000-2500 yen. Good selection and decent food, beer.

Sushi

Nishimura. Conveyor belt sushi place, great food. Located opposite the Misho police station.



Chinese

Pink Bamboo Blossom. Wide variety of good Chinese food. Located in the car park near Joyfull, it's the pink free standing building.

Korean

Chise. Located next door to the Aokuni Hotel. Big neon bull over the entry. 3,500yen for women, 4,000 yen for men gets you all the unlimited meat and drink (though seafood and vegetables are restricted)

French Bakeries and Cafés

Je Taime. Wonderful cakes and sweets. You can also order a lunch set. Upstairs is a wonderful area to sit, relax and eat. In the winter you can keep warm at your kotatsu. Located on the corner opposite Sun Pearl and the bowling alley.

Un Verre. (MIC's second floor café) great lunch menu, desserts, and a range of coffees from all over the world. Located on 56 across from sunkus.

Family Restaurants

Joyfull. The Japanese cheap-and-cheerful diner has its branch in Misho, near Amax. Burgers, pasta, steaks... all good food at good prices! Open 24/7.

Uchiumi Area

Japanese

Yurari. Japanese restaurant and onsen. Good food, great set menu for enkais. Located across from Sunokawa Park

Sapporo Ramen. Mom and Pop ramen chain; wonderful family and good ramen. Located on the left side of the road as you come out of the tunnel heading south.

56ya. This is a wonderful little roadside store run by a very nice couple. They sell ice cream, French fries, ramen, udon, frankfurters, and tako yaki. They also have a small display of Japanese antiques, and if you ask, they will show you more! Located on the left side of the road before the tunnel as you travel south towards Misho.

Italian

Alpha. Pizza and pasta restaurant, located just south of Kashiwa

Leisure

Marine Activities. A variety of ocean-oriented activities including snorkeling, swimming, kayaking, windsurfing, whale-watching, deep sea fishing, surfing lessons, glass-bottom boat tours, and scuba diving (need PADI certification).

Sunokawa Park. Located on route 56 has a place to rent snorkeling equipment, wet suits, and kayaks. There is beautiful coral right off the beach, a great place for snorkeling! A single kayak is 700 yen for two hours.

Kashima. Island located off of Nishiumi. To get there take the glass bottom boat out to the island. There is also great snorkeling! But beware of the monkeys!

Beaches of Ainan. Lots of beaches for lounging and relaxing.

Onsen. Ainan has three: Yamadashi in Sozu, Yurari in Sunokawa and Akebono in Ipponmatsu.

Misho Tower. Bird's eye view of the area from a lookout tower in Misho.

Waterpark garden in Misho.

Bowling. Alley in Misho.

Abbey Road. Large selection of cheap DVDs, VHS and video game rentals. Misho.

Camping. Excellent campground at Irino about an hours drive away in Kochi; go to a store/shelter to reserve a space. Green Park and Sunokawa park in Sunokawa, great places to camp and spend the day by the ocean

Surfing. Great locations at Ooki Beach in Kochi, down route 56, or at Irino Beach in Ogata.

For more information, visit their [website](#).



Grab your boots! Ainan also has great hiking!

Nightlife

There are an endless string of hostess bars (locally called “snacks”), particularly in Johen. Most tend to be very pricey, and you may find yourself roped into singing karaoke to the hostesses/buying her drinks (if you’re a male JET). If you’re out with friends, izakayas are much more preferable.

Considering that Japan’s drink-driving laws are extremely strict, if you’re driving you might want to take advantage of a “*daiko*” service. You drive your car to the izakaya, ring them and they drive you home in it! Simply ask the izakaya staff to call “daiko” for you and they’ll help.

Rain bartender on the Johen street is awesome! Will get out his English dictionary to chat with you and bring you blankets. This is also a popular nijikai/sanjikai spot for Johen teachers.

Dolphin. Located behind Rain, a popular nijikai/sanjikai spot for teachers. Drink wine and eat little pizzas while looking at pictures of dolphins.

Accommodation

Hotels are available in Sunokawa and Ipponmatsu

56ya has a great tatami style room for 2000yen/night. Dinner and breakfast are included!

Health

There is a wealth of hospitals and clinics in the area.

There is an **English speaking** doctor in Uchiumi. She is very helpful and fluent in English.

Big hospitals are located in Misho (Minamiuwa Hospital). There are also hospitals in Johen and Ipponmatsu.

Money Matters

ATMs are located at several of the supermarkets (**AMAX, FUJI**). They are also located throughout Ainan and generally all have English options.



Incorporating the areas of Ikata, Yawatahama, Seiyo, Ozu and Uchiko



Nanyo B

Seiyo City 西予市

Located smack dab between Ozu and Uwajima, Seiyo is made up of the towns of Uwa, Mikame, Shirokawa, Nomura, and Akehama. The Seiyo area is most famous for its spring Renge Festival (れんげまつり) held in the town of Uwa. If you only get to Seiyo once during your time in Japan, make it April 29th! While you're wandering through the dry rice patties eating matsuri food, checking out dance performances from traditional to R&B, and contemplating bull rides, be sure to stop by their 500kg mammoth made entirely of straw – you can't miss it!

Population: 42,000

Website: <http://www.city.seiyo.ehime.jp/>

Town of Uwa [宇和町]

Description

Uwa is the central town in Seiyo, and is home to Museum of Ehime History and Culture and the Renge Festival. Uwa is agricultural and is known for its rice, beans, and soy products.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: Uwa is located on Route 56, between Ozu and Uwajima. There is an entrance/exit to the expressway along Route 29 between Uwa and Nomura. The expressway is free from Uwa to Uwajima

Train: Unomachi Station (卯之町駅) Uwa is 15 minutes south of Yawatahama and 15 minutes north of Uwajima. Express and non-express lines available.

Bus: *To Matsuyama/Uwajima.* Multiple stops available.
To Matsuyama Airport. 3 buses in the morning to, and 3 in the afternoon from the airport
To Nomura, Ozu, Akehama, Mikame Multiple stops available.
To Osaka/Kobe. Overnight buses are available.

Shopping

Supermarkets

Fuji Grand. Located on Route 56 next to a 100-yen shop, *Tsutaya* (movie/CD rental, and books), *The Casual* (clothing and homeware), *Mr. Donuts* and more.

Shoppers. Located on the road to Nomura (Route 29). Turn left at the Lawson on Route 56 headed toward Uwajima.

Donburikan. Located along Route 29 between Uwa and Nomura just



past the on ramp to the expressway. Something like a local farmers market with a lot of fresh produce, a few restaurants and gelato.

Cosumosu. Located along route 56 toward Ozu, reasonably cheap health and beauty products, groceries, home goods, and selected clothing items.

100 Yen Shop

Daiso. Located next to the Fuji Grand on Route 56.

Clothing

Wake Sports. Located next to McDonald's.

The Casual. Located along Route 56 toward Ozu.

Shimamura. Located along Route 56 toward Ozu.

Electronics

Yamada Denki. Located along Route 56 toward Ozu.

Books, Video and Music Rental

Tsutaya. Located next to the Fuji Grand on Route 56.

Haruya. Located on Route 56 toward Ozu. Very small location of the chain bookstore. Look for the big "BOOK" sign on 56.

Coffee and Imported Spirits

Summit. Located near Fuji Grand on Route 56.

Home Goods

Daiki. Located on Route 56 next to 7/11 and Lawsons.

Komeri. Located on Route 25 (visible from 56) toward Yawatahama.

Dining Out

Family Restaurant

Joyfull. Restaurant with Japanese and Western-style cuisine. Has a picture menu and is open 24 hours. Located on Route 56.

Yuuboku no Sato (ゆうぼくの里) Good menu, some "western-style" café food with a rustic lodge atmosphere. Lunch prices are reasonable, dinner is pricey. Cakes and coffee are good. Attached to the restaurant is a butcher.

Fast Food

Mr. Donut. Donuts and coffee. Lots of unique seasonal flavors.

Asia-Fusion Cuisine

Oine.

Italian

Daqui. Located on the red shopping street (one block up/parallel to route 56), very close to Joyfull. Incredibly delicious Italian food featuring fresh handmade pasta and bread. Closed on Sundays, open until 10:30 on weekdays, 9:00 on Saturdays.

Japanese

Toyo-ken. Yakiniku restaurant near Unomachi Station.

Kushihiro. Yakiniku restaurant near Unomachi Station.

Kikusui. Okonomiyaki restaurant.

Kanonsui. Soumen-nagashi restaurant (cold noodles). A must try! Only open from April to September.

Maruhide. Kaiten (conveyor-belt) sushi restaurant.

Daisuke Udon. Located on route 29 toward Nomura, cheap assemble your own udon, open until 9pm.

Chinese

Shanghai-ken. Chinese restaurant near Montelibro.

Maiko. Chinese restaurant near Montelibro.

Café and Gifts

There is a café and pottery store (only open on weekends) located right outside of Uwa when coming from Yawatahama. It's peaceful and great for lovely Japanese presents!

Café Vert. Located along Route 56, slightly expensive but has a nice selection of hot drinks and desserts, also offers savory food including bagel sandwiches. Open until 10pm.

Café Repure. Located along Route 56, very close to Unomachi station. Open 10-6. Offers cheap set meals, look for the rabbit on their sign.

Kakemushiro. A cute little café in a moss garden. Offers tea and Japanese sweets. Look for the Coca Cola sign on 56 heading toward Ozu, and follow the signs.

Leisure

Loop. Dart and pool hall located on Route 56 behind au and next to Joyfull.

Dolphin. Dart and pool hall located near Fisherman's Bar.

Uwa Sports Park.

Akemma Kasen Park. Beautiful park in Uwa located off of 56 near the river, great for cherry blossom viewing in early spring.

Suijyou Golf Course. Located off of 56 (plenty of signs, just look for the ones that say 水上ゴルフ) have fun hitting golf balls into a lake.

Various sports and hobby clubs exist around town – Japanese sign language on Thursday nights at the Chuo Community Centre (third floor of the BOE building), trampoline classes twice a month at Tanosuji Elementary School, and much more.

Nightlife

Fisherman's Bar. Popular local hangout located near Unomachi Station. Every six weeks or so there is a DJ event. The bartender, Koji, loves to meet new people and will teach you a lot of casual Japanese!

Very!. Karaoke bar located behind Unomachi Station by the river.

Ikedaya. Located on 4 chome in Unomachi, about a 10-15 minute walk from Unomachi station.

Café/gallery/live space. Their [website](#) offers a schedule of events.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Museum of Ehime History and Culture. Museum with permanent and rotating exhibits. English audio sets are available. There is also a folk art museum in the area.

Kaimei Gakko. A museum of the oldest elementary school on Shikoku.

Nakan-cho (中町). Small street restored to its Edo Period appearance.

Bunkakaikan (文化会館). Performance hall with various events during the year

Renge Matsuri. (April) Mud soccer, food stalls, dancing, and a giant straw mammoth – a major highlight!

Nakan-cho is a major summer festival venue!

Meisekiji Temple. Just along the road from the prefectural museum, 43rd Temple in the historic Shikoku pilgrimage.

Uwa Kome Hakubutsukan (Rice Museum). Located off of route 56, look for signs listing 宇和米博物館 or Uwa Rice Museum. Hosts the Z-1 Grand Prix for the fastest dust cloth cleaning of the 109 meter hallway.

Kasagitouge kofun aka Kasagitouge burial mound. Located off of Route 25 (between Uwa and Yawatahama, closer to Iwaki station than Unomachi station) is a 4th century burial mound in the rare “rice paddle” shape, on the top of the mound is a replica tomb, and once can see Uwa basin, the Misaki peninsula, and, depending on weather, Kyushu!

Blueberry Picking. Open late July through mid-September.
Grape Picking. Open early August through mid-September.

Town of Mikame [三瓶町]

Description

Siting on the coast between Yawatahama to the north and Akehama to the south and with a population of about 9,000, Mikame is a great place to come on a beautiful day. Biking along the coast (Route 376) is amazing but it takes about 2.5 hours.

Location/Access/Transport

Car: You can get there by driving along the coastal roads but the quickest paths are either Route 26 from Yawatahama or Route 30 from Uwa.

Train: No direct train access

Shopping

Supermarkets

Look for **Otani** and **A-coop**!

Shopping Centers

Gintengai and Okaido. Mikame has a covered shopping street similar to its larger counterparts in Matsuyama.

Shiosaikan (Mikame Sea Station). A central tourist stop located on the main road right on the wharf. Here you can buy local produce, souvenirs, really nice tasting soft-serve ice cream and takoyaki, kara-age (fried chicken) and other tasty foods and snacks. You can also stock up on fishing gear and spend the day fishing either just outside the Shiosaikan or at a number of locations along the coast. The Shiosaikan is also home to the Mikame aquarium which hosts the village- famous MANBO fish (sunfish). 100 yen will get you a ticket inside.



Dining Out

A good place to start if you're hungry is the shopping arcade!

Japanese

Noritake. A shabu-shabu restaurant. (Closed Sundays)

Iko. Yakitori (grilled chicken) restaurant.

Izumiya. A restaurant with sushi, other Japanese food, and a really nice chef.

Sakawaki. An izakaya with very tasty, cheap food and kind and friendly staff.

Asanaro. Okonomiyaki restaurant.

Isaka. Okonomiyaki restaurant. (Closed Sundays)

Warabe. Japanese snack bar.

Chinese

Koraku. Located behind the JHS.

Rairaiken across from the A-coop (Closed Wednesdays)

If you drive south, right before the sub-village Shimodomari, you will get to the *Sea Side Uwakai Restaurant* (but you need to make a reservation for this).

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Shrines and Gardens. Drive from the main village north along the coastal road (towards Yawatahama), pass Susaki peninsula (after the sub-village Nagahaya, but before Shuki) and there you are. Another shrine passed Shimodomari, is dedicated to the gods of fish. Follow the signs from Minae.

Autumn Festival. August 14th - 17th

Illumination and Tree Lighting. November 20th

Kumoko Miyanaka Music Festival. Held at the end of November

Oyakushi-sama. April 8th

Gion Festival. July 14th

Accommodation

If you aren't staying at the local JET's place, there are still a few other places where you can catch some z's.

Seaside Uwakai. The same place as the restaurant mentioned above. Check in at 3pm and out at 10am. 6,500 yen/night with two meals included.

TEL: 0894-34-0770

Mikame Honkan. A stone's throw from the Shiosaikan. 5,250 yen/night, no meals. TEL: 0894-33-2001

Shirokawa Town [城川町]

Description

Meaning “Castle River”, Shirokawa is a small mountain town with 4,800 residents bordering eastern Kochi. Despite the name, there is no castle in this town! It’s name is actually the result of a combination of the names of the four villages it encompasses. It’s a beautiful area, and the Ryutaku Temple and Shirokawa Geological Museum are must-see attractions.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: Shirokawa is located along Route 197, between Ozu and Kochi.
To/From Ozu: 30 minute drive
To/From Uwajima: 40 minute drive

Bus: Buses from Uwajima and Nomura are available, but they are pretty infrequent.

Shopping

Supermarket

A-coop. The biggest supermarket in Shirokawa; located in Doi (土居); however, we recommend the [A-coop in Nomura](#) for a better selection

Organic Foods

Michi-no-eki. In the rest stop (*michi-no-eki*) along Route 197, there is a farmer’s market-style specialty grocer who sells a lot of organic meat and vegetables

Convenience Store (Konbini)

Yamazaki. Near Hosenbo in Furuichi.

Dining Out

Japanese

Kuwaterume. A restaurant with ramen, udon, and soba located inside Hosenbo Onsen. Last order at 8:30pm on the weekends. (Closed on Wednesdays.)

Kinahaiya. Restaurant with ramen, udon, and curry. Big servings. Try the sausages! (Closed on Tuesdays.)

Baribari. Yakiniku restaurant in Takanoko just down the street from Hosenbo.

Chabotei (ちゃぼ亭). Mini bar and restaurant that offers local cuisine. Two minutes down Route 197 by car from Hosenbo.

German

Japanese/German fusion frankfurts. Handmade bread using local ingredients.
(Closed Wednesdays)

Nightlife

Marchen. Karaoke bar opposite the restaurants. It’s a foreign-friendly place, and also has a cheap and cheerful restaurant with a picture menu. Can’t find it? Look for the tacky red building!

Leisure

Doi Athletic Grounds. A great place to find some walking trails!

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Gallery Shirokawa. Unique display of *kamaboko* board art. Artists from around the world have donated thousands of decorated boards, making for an interesting display. Located just behind the Shirokawa Town Office.

Hosenbo Onsen. Must see - the pride of Shirokawa!

Ryutakuji Temple is beautiful, particularly in the cherry blossom season. The temple itself is over 600 years old and is surrounded by a really nice park. There are cabins you can stay at during the warmer months, and a great (but slightly painful) roller slide.

Doronko Matsuri (Mud Festival). Come down to Doi in July when mud wrestling traditions – passed down in via an old farmer’s story - attract hundreds of photographers from all over Japan!

O-bon. Hosted at the elementary schools. Music and food stalls.

Don't Miss It!

July: Mud Wrestling in Shirokawa!

Accommodation

Hosenbo Onsen. Very nice, reasonably priced accommodations are available at the onsen complex. Tell them you want the “Economy Plan” and that’ll give you a bed for 3,000 yen. Want breakfast with that? Just throw in another 500 yen when you pay. Best part? 10% off the onsen when you stay at the lodges! (Closed Wednesdays)

Nomura Town [野村町]

Description

Nomura is a friendly dairy town located between Uwa and Shirokawa on Route 441. It’s famous for sumo, dairy cows, the annual Lake Asagiri half marathon and its 400-year old history of Japanese papermaking (*senkashi*).

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: To/From Uwa and Shirokawa: 20-minute drive
To/From Ozu: 45-minute drive along Route 441

Bus: There are buses from Uwa which run from Unomachi Train Station and Uwa Bus Station. Nomura’s bus station is located right in the middle of town.

Shopping

Supermarkets

Fuji Mart. (open 9am to 9pm)
A-Coop. (open 9am-8pm).

Bakeries

Noble. A very popular bakery on the main street between the two supermarkets - check it out! (open from 7am until 8pm, closed Mondays).

Dining Out

Japanese

Torigoya. Yakitori (bbq chicken on a skewer) restaurant on the main street.
Aoi Kei (葵軒). Ramen shop. Nothing fancy, but nothing is over 1000 yen except the “Chinese Lunch Set”. Located around the corner from the JA Nomura. (Opens at 8:30 pm).

Torigoya is a great place to meet locals!

Italian

Peppini. An Italian restaurant in front of the sumo stadium; has pasta and pizza. They also do an all-you-can-eat-and-drink deal.

White Farm. Excellent Japanese-Italian fare including yummy pasta and cakes! They can also cater for large groups. Located just up the hill just past the dam.

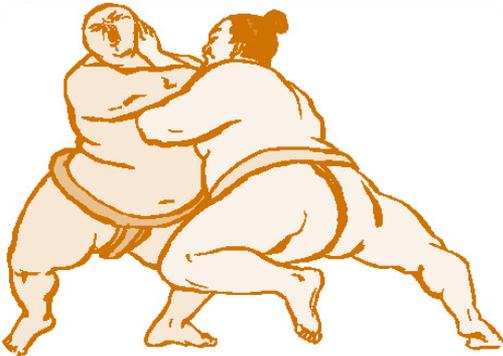
Leisure

Otoi no Satokaroto Onsen. A beautiful hot spring located inside the Otoi Sumo Stadium. (open from 10am until 8:30pm, closed Thursdays). Stop in to relax or get a nice meal!

Hiking/Geology Buffs. Check out the Shikoku Karst way up on the roof of Shikoku in Onogahara. After making the hike and enjoying the beautiful scenery and geological uniqueness of the area, you can relax by watching the herds of grazing dairy cows that populate the area! The karst is part of a park that is also connected to Kochi's Tengu Highlands. There's also a road you can follow that goes through the mountains all the way to Matsuyama that is quite gorgeous in the fall. The easiest way to get there is to follow the signs that start in Shirokawa up in the mountains. You might want to pack a light sweater, as the weather remains cool even through May.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Otoi Sumo Festival. Held annually over two days at the end of November for both child and adult wrestlers. Anyone with an interest in Japan's national sport should check this out. It's the only sumo tournament in Japan where both amateurs and professionals compete. Kids as young as 6 years old take part and every year two famous sumo wrestlers attend. 2014 will be the 163rd tournament. It began way back in 1852 to ward off further fire storms after 100 houses were destroyed in a huge inferno. The sumo stadium, which opened in 2005, was modelled on the one in Tokyo. It also houses a small sumo museum (free entry) and the onsen (see: Leisure).



Nomura Dam. Beautiful in the springtime and early summer. A big summer fireworks festival is held every August. At Christmas time there are illuminations.

Akehama Town [明浜町]

Description

Akehama is a beautiful little coastal town made up of six small communities scattered along the coast. Tawarazu (俵津) is the largest with a population of about 800 people. Sehama is a little out of the way, but well worth the trek on a fine day! The total population of Akehama is approximately 3,800.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: The easiest way to get to Akehama is by car. Turn off Route 56 just after Uwa if you are heading to Uwajima (before the tunnel). The turn off of 56 from Uwa to Akehama is route 45.

Akehama is also accessible on route 378 (the coastal road) from either Mikame or via route 271 in Yoshida off of route 56 if heading toward Uwa from Uwajima. Route 344 from Uwa takes one out to Takayama which is then a short drive to Osozu/Hamayyu, it's all together a faster drive to the beach if you're coming from Uwa.

Train: No direct train service.

Bus: Accessible via buses heading to Unomachi Station.
Buses from Yoshida or Mikame to Akehama are available.
For a nice getaway, take a bus toward *Tawarazu* (俵津) where you transfer to Osozu (大早津). Once there, relax on the 300-meter white-sand beaches, play some beach volleyball, or try their ocean kayaking!

Shopping

Although there isn't much shopping, Akehama has all the basic necessities – post office, grocery store and bakery.

Dining Out

Check out the two restaurants at the Akehama Seaside Park! There are also beautiful log cabins which can be rented out at an affordable price during the winter months. Perfect for nabe parties!

Leisure

Hama Yu (塩風呂). A salt water onsen located on hill directly above Osozu!
Osozu. A man-made beach. Opens “officially” every year between the end of July until the end of August.
Akehama Seaside Park. Located on route 378 (right near Osozu and Hamayu) offers ceramics, sea kayaking, and scuba diving

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Akehama Rekishi Minzoku Shiryō-kan. A folk museum with fishing supplies, pictures, and local tools from the people of Akehama throughout the years.

Wakamiya Shrine. Located off of route 378 in Takayama, has kappa acting as komainu.

Sakura Matsuri. Held at various parks along Nofukutouge (route 45) at the end of March/early April.

Kappa Matsuri. Held on the first Sunday in August every year at Osozu beach featuring food stalls, a beach volley ball tournament, stage performances, and fireworks .

Aki Matsuri. Held in Takayama, features a large bonfire, shogori (purification by sea water) and lifting Ushi Oni from the sea before parading around town and returning to the water again.

Mikan picking. Open in November in Tawarazu.



Yawatahama Area 八幡浜

Yawatahama City [八幡浜市]

Description

Yawatahama is a port city, and the hub of the surrounding coastal communities. It has a lively restaurant scene and is home to a newly built Fuji Grand, which houses many popular stores. The old silk capitol of Honai was recently incorporated into Yawatahama, and is just a 10 minute drive from the heart of Yawatahama.

Population: 37,600

Website: <http://www.city.yawatahama.ehime.jp>

Location/ Access/ Transport

- Car:** Route 197
- Train:** *To/From Ozu.* 10 minutes by express train (1280).
To/From Matsuyama. 40-50 minutes via express train (2390 yen) and 100 minutes by local train (1240 yen).
- Bus:** *To/From Matsuyama.* Bus runs to Matsuyama City Station (Shieki) (1530 yen).
To/From Osaka and Kyoto. Overnight buses available (8000 yen one-way, 13000 round-trip).
There are also buses to local cities such as Mikame (Seiyo) and Misaki (Ikata).
- Ferry:** Ferries to the resort town of Beppu (famous for its onsen, monkey park, and natural geysers) are available for as little as 3000 yen one-way. Routes to Usuki with its famous collection of stone Buddhas are also available.

There is an **excellent** travel agency in the train station. They specialize in domestic travel and can give you all the information you need about trains, planes, buses, ferries, and car rentals within Japan. They even have some English-speaking staff - ask for Emi!

Shopping

Shopping Centers

Shotengai. The main shopping area is in the shotengai (商店街) or covered shopping street. To get to the shotengai from the station, turn left onto the main road as you come out of the station, and then go straight about 400 meters. The entrance to the shotengai is across from the Lawson's. It has lots of small stores for groceries, gifts, electronics, crafts, clothing, and stationary. The shotengai consists of 2 perpendicular streets and is a good way to get to the city office and the sports center. Also, be sure to head to the shotengai every 8th of the month (time it right and the 8th is a weekend!) when they hold the monthly market.



Fuji Grand. There is a brand new, three-storey Fuji Grand located about a 2-minute drive from the ferry port. Inside, you'll find a grocery store with a small section for foreign foods, Lady Drug (cosmetics), a bakery/café, Ed-On (electronics), Space (school supplies/character merchandise), Daiso (100-yen shop), a nice Japanese restaurant, an arcade, and stores for home goods, clothing, books, shoes, and more. You can also have passport photos made here in the booth on the third floor next to the parking lot.

Supermarkets

Shoppers. Basic Japanese supermarket. Near the shopping arcade and one about a 5-minute walk from the train station. Open until 9pm.

Fuji Grand. The largest grocery store in the area; has some hard to find delicacies like mozzarella cheese and taco shells. Located on the first floor of the Fuji Grand behind the bakery.

Books

Book-Off. Located on the second floor of Shoppers; great for used Japanese books, movies, video games, and music.

Haruya. Off the road on the way to Ozu; also sells DVDs, music, and some really cool school supplies.

Fuji Grand. There is a bookstore located on the second floor of the Fuji Grand.

Home Improvement

Daiki. 100 meters behind the train station; also has a large plant selection.

Fuji Grand. There is a section of the second floor of the Fuji Grand that sells pillows, sheets, and other interior home goods.

Drugstores

Look for *Lady Drug*, *Sasaoka Drug*, and *Cosmos* around the city. They sell everything from snacks to cosmetics, grocery, alcohol, office supplies - it's incredible!

Dining Out

Looking for a place to eat? Try checking out the different local restaurants in **Shotengai!**

Coffee Shops

Wimpy. A small coffee-shop style restaurant just a five minute walk from the train station. Great pastas, lunch sets, pizzas, and desserts.

Pino Coda. A classy café on the outskirts of town. It has good coffee, excellent pastries and cakes and a good variety of lunch and dinner foods as well.

Family Restaurants

Joyfull. Every town has at least one of these 'Western-style' diners. In Yawatahama there are two: one in the neighborhood across from the station near Yawatahama High School, the other in Honai heading into Ikata. 8am till 1am.

Japanese

Hanasyohachi. This restaurant is directly across the street from the station (it's the brown building), it is amazingly delicious and rather inexpensive; a good place to try Yawatahama's specialty: chanpon! (vegetable-heavy ramen)

Donto. A nice, modern-looking Japanese restaurant on the second floor of the Fuji Grand.

Minato. By the port. A nice little place run by and a nice older couple. Good friend shrimp and tasty tonkatsu (fried pork cutlet) set menus. It's a small place but an **awesome** view of the port!

Iwachan. A yakiniku restaurant located up the street from the station, heading towards Uwa.

Nagayama. On 378 up the street from Fuji, this one is on the left and has a funny picture of a cow (a map of the delicious parts) outside. There's another place across the street that's good.

Mori Mori. A great ramen shop in Honai, located right behind Himegin Hall and near the Honai town office. Saita is the name of the owner there is nothing he likes more than a good chat with anyone who isn't Japanese. In English, too!

Boshu. Tiny shop. Seats 4 at a counter and 4 at one table. Located in in a small alleyway called Yakusoku Dori off of the shotengai.

Opens at 10 pm.



Boshu is said to have the best ramen in town!

Mexican

Lobos. Across from the Iyo bank in the vicinity of shotengai.

Italian

La Cuisine Uwasakai Tusukasa (宇和海 司) Classy place, pricey. 7th Floor of the Yawatahama Century Hotel. Good chanpon!

Izakaya

Kuimonya (くいもんや). A fabulous izakaya in the shotengai!

Tabemonoichiba (食べもの市場) – the second best (but still very good) izakaya in the shotengai.

Fast Food

Various fast food options like *Sukiya*, *Pizza Royal Hat* (offers delivery), *Hokka Hokka Tei*, *Hotto Motto* (two of these), and of course the convenience stores (Circle K and *Lawson* on the main road past Fuji)

Leisure

Sports Center. Located near the harbor. Swimming pool, gym, tennis/basketball courts, baseball field, aerobics, step, boxercise etc. To get there, go along the shōtengai, turn right when you see Lawsons. Go to the end of the shotengai. Turn left and walk around the city office and you'll see the tennis courts in front of you. They offer various fitness classes like aerobics and yoga. There is a separate facility near Atago Mountain that offers training in various martial arts like kendo and judo.

Culture Center. Offers many classes such as pottery, painting, ikebana (Japanese flower arrangement), and Chinese. They also host cultural events like tea ceremony and English conversation classes. From the train station, go left, past Fuji, until you come to the post office. Turn left, go across the river and you'll see it on the right.

Taisho-yuu. Indoor bath from circa 1920. It's not an onsen, it's a bath...and a *hot* one at that. Exit the shotengai on the Yawata Shrine side, keep going straight, second right, then on your right. Look for 大正湯 in light blue.

GET. An internet café located above the Docomo shop, across the road from Fuji. A nice environment, well-kept cubicles. An excellent place to go if you don't have your computer or internet yet.

Yawatahama Public Library. Near the shotengai (Yawata Shrine side) across the street from the Community Center (市民会館 しみんかいかん)

Nightlife

The majority of the nightlife in Yawatahama takes place in izakaya (Japanese-style pubs) and small snack bars.

Bars

R's Bar. Super spacious. "An authentic bar" as the locals say. Good prices. Opens at 8 pm. Located just down the street about 30 meters and on the left from Hikari Pachinko.

Acoustic The Sting. A small live house where locals go to showcase their musical talent (or just hang out and have a drink) Located on the 2nd floor of Marumoto Building (above *Wimpy*).

Ron's, a jazz bar located just off of the Shotengai.

Smokey Dragon, across the Hikari Pachinko near the Shotengai. Live shows from local musicians once a month.



Karaoke

Turf. Small but popular karaoke bar. It's just off the Shotengai, near the big Iyo Bank and Lobos.

Big Box. A good karaoke bar just above the Docomo shop.

PePe. Located in the shotengai across from *Kuimonya*. Foreigner-friendly!

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Historic Buildings. See buildings from Japan's Modern Period (circa 1910-1940) as well as Shikoku's first bomb shelter (防空壕 ぼうくうごう) built in 1941. Open for free tours. Across the street from Shirohama Elementary school and then up four blocks.

Kawanosu Hashira Shinji. A festival held in Kawanosu on the third Saturday of April at Tenman Jinja and the surrounding area. Men cut down a 22-meter pine tree at dawn, dress the tree, drag the truck around town, throw people in a river and then the ocean during the morning/day. Later they start hustling out the Ushi-oni (Ox Demon)! Not to mention *Kagura* (a sacred Shinto entertainment dance) from 6:30 pm to past midnight with a hair-raising, acrobatic, fiery finale.

Teya Teya Festival. A lively local festival in mid-August. The town parades through the streets to traditional Japanese music. This is part of the celebration of O-bon. Watch as the town's population triples as relatives come flocking home for this once-a-year celebration.

Yawata-jinja. A Shinto shrine at the start of the Shotengai.

Hachiman-jinja. A shrine tucked in the area defined by the elbow of the Shotengai - quite nice.

Honai Town [保内町]

Description

Honai is a pretty little historic town with a population of about 10,000. It was once the textile capital of Shikoku, and it still has many beautiful historic buildings from its heyday.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: *To/From Yawatahama.* About 10 minutes from central Yawatahama. *To/From Matsuyama.* About 60 km along Route 56.

Train: The nearest train station is 10 minutes away by car/20 minutes by bike in Yawatahama. (*see Yawatahama Area Guide for more information*)

Bus: *To/From Yawatahama Station.* A bus runs to the station about once an hour, but service usually stops around 6 pm, so be careful. It's only a 20 minute bike ride to the train station in Yawatahama.

Shopping

Supermarkets

Honai Shopping Center. A grocery store with a Japanese sweet shop and bakery inside. A takoyaki vendor parks himself outside the shop every weekday. Open till 10 pm. Located on Route 197 next to the Daiki.

Kimura Supermarket. The smaller of Honai's two grocery stores. Located on Route 249 near the Board of Education Office. Open till 8:30 pm.

Bakeries

Little Mermaid. Located opposite Kawanoishi High School.

Convenience Stores (Konbini)

Lawson Plus. Look for the orange Lawson's sign near the Daiki.

Circle K. There are two in Honai. One on the same road as Kawanoishi High School, the other is on the same road as the Honai Shopping Center.

100-Yen Shops

Daiso. Down from the main intersection toward Joyfull.

Drug Stores

Sasaoka Drug. This drug store is hard to miss; it's bright yellow. Sasaoka is near the corner of 197 and 249 roughly across from the Police substation.

Cosmos. Located near the Joyfull.

Mac, located on route 197.

Home Improvement

Daiki. Everything you'll need for your house, including tools, kitchen utensils, toiletries, cleaning supplies, and electronics. They also have gardening supplies. Located next to the Lawson's and Honai Shopping Center.

Dining Out

Family Restaurants

Joyfull. On the main road through Honai. Cheap, large-sized meals, free drink refills. Open until 1 am.

Japanese

Somen Nagashi. Somen noodles in running ice water that you catch with your chopsticks, dip in sauce, and enjoy. A beautiful location in the *Heike Valley* (平家谷 *Heike Dani*). Open only in the summer months from June till September. There are several street signs that mark the way but basically just off the road out of Honai as you head north towards Nagahama.

Hokka Hokka Tei. Across from the Kawanoishi High School Circle K. HHT offers cheap takeout bento meals. Roughly across from the Circle K on 249.

Kanade. Yakitori restaurant right next to *Season is Alive*. Delicious do-it-yourself grilled chicken.

Gorilla-kun. Chanpon and ramen shop near Honai Bowl and the Pachinko Parlor, on route 197. Also serve up some good teishoku (set menu items).

Mori Mori. Excellent ramen and handmade udon. Talk to Saita, owner and all-around friendly guy.



Yamaki. Okonomiyaki and udon restaurant in front of the Honai Shopping Centre.

Gyuta (牛太). "The Fat Cow." Popular yakiniku restaurant on the corner of 197 and 249.

Kushiya, a small restaurant that will keep your liquor for you. Close to the yellow drug store on route 197.

Kei, a hip restaurant (great for dates!) on route 197, close to Joyfull.

Izakaya

Season is Alive (Nakai). A really good izakaya with friendly atmosphere and good food. On the main street through Honai (the 197.)

Italian

Glutton. Silly name, but good, mid-priced Italian-style cuisine.

Leisure

ReStation. Local gym with membership for 8000yen/month to use between 8-10pm each night. Good gym, indoor swimming pool, sauna. ReStation is located on 197 just past the Daiso and the Docomo shop, on your left.

Honai Bowl. Includes an arcade and a karaoke joint downstairs. On route 197 across from the orange Lawson.

Kotohira. Park in Honai that's especially nice around cherry blossom season!

Cultural things: Pottery, calligraphy, martial arts, tea ceremony, and taiko drumming. (These are classes that you would have to enroll in and go to regularly, not drop in events.) Let your RA or supervisor know what you are interested in and they can get you started.

Nightlife

Honai Bowl. Bowling and karaoke.

Walk around and look for some izakaya on the main street if you want to stay in the area. The bars and restaurants of Yawatahama are also just a short trip away!

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Mokkin Road. A **must-see** wooden boardwalk between Honai Junior High School and the river. Lined with brick buildings and dotted with personal boats, it's quite nice and a lot of effort has been put into sculptures and lighting (pedestrians only on the wooden road, though - no bikes!)

The Hills of Honai. Many schools in Honai and Ikata organize hikes up the hills in the autumn and spring. They have beautiful views of the sunsets! Driving along past the main post office towards Misaki is lovely – especially in autumn when there are mikans everywhere!

Meiji Era Buildings. Wander past the boardwalk and find the old Meiji-era homes and buildings from when Honai was the silkworm and textile capital of Shikoku.

Fall Festival. Takes place at Mishima Shrine. It usually falls on a Saturday in late October/early November. Includes traditional performances such as *Ushioni* (Ox Demon), *Itsu Shika* (5 deer), and *karashishi* (taiko drumming and lion dance).

Ozu Area 大洲

Ozu City [大洲市]

Description

Known as the Little Kyoto of Iyo, Ozu is home to traditional sights including its castle and historic district, as well as many modern commodities including a movie theater and plenty of shopping. It encompasses the towns of Ozu, Nagahama, Hijikawa and Kawabe with a combined population of about 48,000.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: Highway 56 runs directly through Ozu

Trains: Ozu has 4 train stations on the main **Yosan line that runs through Uchiko Iyo Ozu (伊予大洲駅)** This is the main station with both local and express trains. (35 minutes from JR Matsuyama by express train)
Niiya Station (新谷駅) Local trains only.
Nishi Ozu Station (西大洲駅) Local trains only.
Hirano Station (平野駅) Local trains only.

There are 6 stations in Ozu on the **Yosan Line that runs to/from Nagahama.**
Nagahama Station (長浜駅) This is the main station in Nagahama. Normally Local trains only, however there will be a special sightseeing train Iyo-Nada Monogatari departing on weekends from Nagahama from July 2014.

Iyo Izushi (伊予出石) Local trains only.

Iyo Shirataki (伊予白滝) Local trains only, except for the special sightseeing train on weekends.

Hataki (八多喜) Local trains only.

Haruka (春賀) Local trains only.

Goro (五郎) Local trains only.

Buses:

Ozu is well connected to other cities through its bus routes. It also has buses that run within the city.

To/From Ozu. Iyotetsu bus routes pass through Ozu and have terminals in both Matsuyama and Uwajima

Airport Bus. There is also a bus line connecting Ozu to the Matsuyama airport. Look for a big blue bus with *Konan Kanko* written in white on the side.

Departs from:

1. Iyo Ozu Train Station
2. The main Konan Kanko shuttle bus stop (from Ozu Sunshine Cinema, turn left and at the stop light make a right. Walk down past the hair salon and you will find the bus stop on your right).

One-way tickets are around 1800 yen while a round trip will cost you 3,240 yen. They can be purchased when you board or at the Ozu travel agency on the 5th floor of the Fuji Grand. You can find timetables at the agency as well as at the Iyo Ozu Train Station bus stop just in front of the pay phones next to the main station building.

Osaka and Kobe. Available from the taxi station across the street from *Fresh Value*. A one-way ticket is about 7,500 yen and can also be purchased at the travel agency on the 5th floor in Ozu's Fuji Grand. You can also purchase bus tickets using Lawson's Loppi Machines (Japanese only). Overnight or day buses available.



To/From Hijikawa. Runs four times a day; tickets around 740 yen depending on your starting point in Ozu

Within Ozu City. There is a pink *Konan Kanko* bus that runs around the main part of Ozu City. It costs 100 yen each time you ride it. It is a great and cheap way to get around town when it is too hot or cold to ride your bicycle.

Bicycle Rental

Bicycles are available to rent (400 yen) from Bicycle Shop Ninomiya (on the corner next to Fresh Value on the street in front of Ozu Station), or from Machi no Eki Asamoya. You usually must return them by 4:00pm, but the Ninomiya Shop sometimes makes exceptions if you ask nicely!

Shopping

Clothing

Uniqlo. Stocks some western sizes, but they are usually only slightly bigger than Japanese sizes. Plus sizes unavailable.

Shimamura. Cheap prices, mostly women's clothing and accessories, although there is a men's section. Carries larger shoe sizes and has a plus size section, although the styles are quite limited.

Home Improvement

Daiki. Kitchen appliances, home furnishings, garden, home repair, and other misc. items. Located near the Kimura chain, across the street from Tsutaya in Higashi Ozu.

Nitori. Ikea-esque home goods store (but much smaller!). Slightly pricier than Daiki but with better selections and designs, and still quite cheap for new products. A great place to go for bedding and towels, as well as seasonal decorations and items to make your place feel more like home. Located on Route 56.

Komeri. Similar to Daiki, but located in Nishi-Ozu on 234 heading towards Hirano.

Video and Music Rental

Tsutaya. Across the street from the game shop, near the Daiki.

Department Store

Fuji Grand. Full grocery store, liquor store, bakery, florist, bookstore, travel agency, hair stylist, clothing, household, cosmetics, shoes, toys, etc. There is an arcade with purikura on the top floor.

Ozu Messe. A huge shopping center located along highway 56, carries groceries (*A-coop*), clothes, garden, and floral décor, some furniture.

100 Yen Shops

Daiso. One is located inside *Ozu Messe* and other is located near the *Fuji Grand*, along route 56. Great for buying cheap everyday items.

Seria. Located in the Katayama complex past Hirano on the road to Yawatahama, just before the tunnel.

Electronics

Best/Deo Deo/Denki. Located along route 56 near Ozu Cinema Sunshine. Carry everything from TVs, computers and computer supplies, washing machines, video cameras, bathroom electronics etc.

K's Denki. Another massive electronics shop just past Marunaka on Route 56.

Sports Equipment

Sports Alpen. A large new sports store on 56 just past Marunaka and K's Denki, with a large selection of sports equipment, clothing, and outdoor goods.

Daiya Sports. Located near Ozu station.



Second-hand Shop

Hard Off, Off House, also *Book Off* and *Hobby Off* (for those anime enthusiasts). Everything from used clothing, electronics, guitars, snowboards, lighting, etc. and low prices. They'll even buy stuff (not for much but...if you must get rid of something). Located along Route 56.

Drug Stores

Lady Drug. Next to *Off House* and *Hard Off* on Route 56

Medico 21. Located at the stoplight Route 56/Route 24 junction leading to Nagahama

Cosmos. Across the street from *Medico 21.*

Supermarkets

Central Ozu: *Fuji Grand* • *Fresh Value*

Higashi Ozu: *Marunaka* • *Kimura Chain* • *Lamus* • *Ozu Messe* • *Direx*

Nishi Ozu: *Shoppers* (one across from the BOE; the other is on Route 56, through the tunnel leading to Yawatahama and past the Joyfull)

Dining Out

Italian Restaurants

Locale. Delicious Italian-style quesadillas! Located across the street from *Fuji Grand*, underneath *Madd Happy Ink* and on the same side of the street as *Mr. Donuts*. A more expensive dining choice.

Duet. Located on route 56, across from *Best Denki*

Pizza House. At the entrance to the Hijikawa Bridge near city hall. Located near Ozu Station.

Family Restaurants and Fast Food

Gusto and 2 Joyfulls. Wide variety of inexpensive food and home to the all you can drink bar; open late.

Mister Donuts. Donuts and coffee; located near Iyo Ozu train station

McDonalds. Good when homesick; located along highway 56 near Ozu Messe

Royal Pizza Hat. Pizza place with free delivery; you can also visit their location near Ozu Station

Mos Burger. Located on the right hand side along Highway 56 past Ozu Messe, heading towards Uchiko.

Japanese

Kaiten-sushi. Two in Ozu: Hamazushi is on Route 56 next to Joyful, and the second one is in the same shopping complex as Ozu Messe next to Tomato Soup & Onion.

Weckers. An okonomiyaki restaurant located in Niiya; 2 min walk from Niiya station.

Saoya. Okonomiyaki place in Nishi Ozu, across the street from the Kounan Community Center.

Marugame Udon. Udon restaurant located on the corner by the Fukushi Center on Route 56. Quick, cheap and tasty.

Aburaya. Located across from the red brick building, this restaurant offers food made with locally sourced ingredients. The restaurant itself has a very wonderful atmosphere with its beautiful wooden decor.

Chinese

Hana Hana. Across the street from Locale, near Fuji Grand

Ne Ne. Located on Our Street, very distinguishable by its bright red decorations around the door.

Ramen

Fuku-chan Ramen. Known by locals as the best in Ozu. It is on the corner by Ozu Nogyo High School, on the road leading to Tsutaya. There is also a ramen truck parked around town in the evenings.

Ryoka. Near Cinema Sunshine.

Coffee Shops

Ra Ri Ru Re Ro. Near the BOE and Ozu Castle; located across from the post office. The people that work there are all amazing dancers! Super friendly. Nice cakes.

Roy's. Picturesque nostalgic interior, exquisite coffee and dessert. Great lunch and dinner menu, too. Sometimes has live jazz shows! Located behind Ozu Grand Hotel, just past the movie theater.

Café Neue. Cute café that also sells European antiques and a few imported goods. Features nice bagel sandwiches (you can also buy the bagels to take home), and the staff there are very friendly. Across from Machi no Eki Asamoya, near Ozu Shrine and Ohanahan Street.

Community Café. On the street leading from the Red Brick Building to Asamoya, there is a small café. The owner is very friendly and often gives free sweets or tea afterwards. No full meals here, just tea/coffee/cake/ice cream, but it is a nice stop for a rest.

Sakura. Great sandwiches. Across from the McDonalds on route 56, behind the Docomo and next to the arcade. If you're craving legitimate Western burgers, this is the place to go.

Nyago. Located across from the Daiki Sign on 56. Daily lunch specials including a homemade tartar sauce lunch. The evenings feature a bar and more Italian fare, and the pizzas are quite tasty. There is a small terrace outside with a fireplace.



Café Audrey. Audrey Hepburn themed café. On the road opposite from the entrance to Our Street by the Hijikawa Bridge. It is on the left if coming from the bridge.

Leisure

Cinema Sunshine. Movie theater located along Route 56 across the street from Uniqlo. Those of the lady persuasion get discount prices on Wednesdays, while movie-goers of all genders get discount tickets on the 1st and 15th of each month. Discount tickets are 1100 yen.

Kayak/Canoe rental. Located on the Hijikawa river near the castle

Arcades. One can be found on the 6th floor of Grand Fuji; there is another located next to the Sakura coffee shop behind the Docomo

Onsen. Garyu no Yu is an onsen located near the town station (*Machi-no-eki*); it boasts a beautiful Japanese garden as well; there is another onsen, Oyu Hijikawa Onsen, with an attached hotel in Hijikawa on Route 197

Bowling. Aqua Bowling located on Route 56 next to Ozu Minami Junior High

Gym. A huge building located right next to the *Circle K* and near Kita elementary school

It has a weight room on the ground floor with machines and barbells that you can use for 150 yen per visit.

You can also sign up for several classes at the front desk (volleyball, basketball, table tennis, badminton, kendo, yoga, aerobics, archery, etc.)

Indoor swimming pool. Located on route 197 in Nishi Ozu across the street from Ozu hospital.

Nightlife

Bars

Louis'. One of Ozu's best bars! A blues bar going on 26 years in business where live gigs are held on a monthly basis. A great place to just kick back and eat great food (try the BLT). To get there, go down route 56 heading towards Yawatahama. When you cross the big bridge, turn left at the 3rd street before the Sunkus at the stoplight. You'll find it on your right. (*closed on Tuesdays*)

Madd Happy Ink. Tattoo parlor by day, and bar by night! The owner is very friendly, fun, and happy to talk with ALTs. The prices are very reasonable for Japan (most drinks 500 yen), and they recently introduced an extensive hamburger menu. Sometimes there are DJ events. Located above Locale near Fuji.

39. Located on Route 56, this is a nice chill place to go and has decent sized tables if you want to go with a bigger group. There is also a huge TV which they use to show sports games and such.

Liverpool. Liverpool is a Live House that features live music about once a month. Located on Our Street.

Walk down
"Our Street"
to find tons of
snack and
karaoke bars!

Karaoke

PAL. Located next to Café San Marche on Route 56. Features costumes you can wear while singing.

Maneki Neko. A is a nationwide chain. Located on 56 toward Nitori, across from Mos Burger.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Tourism

Ozu Castle. A beautiful traditional castle originally built in 1331; the original was destroyed but fantastically reconstructed; entrance fee: 500 yen

Ozu Shrine. Tucked into a forested corner overlooking the city and the Hijikawa River

Ohanahan Street. This street was the setting for a drama held in the 1960's, and features several old buildings as well as a nice moat with koi fish. You can get ice cream or rent bicycles at the nearby Machi no Eki Asamoya.

Onsen. Garyu no Yu Onsen is located near Garyu Sanso shrine; from Route 56 turn left at the stoplight before the tunnel that leads to Yawatahama. Follow the road as it curves right around the bend and you will soon see it on your left.

Japanese sweets. Wagashi Shop is a small store that sells a variety of Japanese sweets and souvenirs; located at the bottom of the main steps leading to Ozu shrine

Poko-pen. A market in Nishi Ozu that sells homemade wares and retro Japanese antiques. A great way to spend the day meeting the locals and shop for interesting Meiji-style souvenirs. (Open Sundays in early spring to late fall, 9am to 4pm)

Art Gallery. Check out the Ozu Art Gallery and Coffee Shop located next to Garyu Sanso, 2-story art gallery featuring local and national artists on a monthly basis, complete with a gift shop. (9am to 4pm)

Flower viewing. There is a huge flower field under the bright red bridge on the way into Nagahama that boasts beautiful flowers during different seasons throughout the year.

Festivals

Ozu Candle Light Festival (early March) A light festival featuring lanterns and candles placed in cups decorated by all the children of Ozu. There is live music, food vendors, and a fireworks display. Held on the castle grounds.

Hotaru Festival (early June) A weekend firefly festival in the towns of Yanagisawa and Tadokoro in the mountains by Niiya.

Iris Festival (early June) The Niiya area is famous for its garden featuring over 8000 Iris plants in hundreds of different varieties, some named after local places.

There is an illumination of the flowers in the evening, a fireworks show, and food vendors on the first Saturday in June.

Hiji Festival (mid-July) This festival celebrates the heroine Hiji, who sacrificed herself to the river dragon god to stop the flooding of her town.

Summer Fireworks Festival (early-mid August) A two-day festival with good food and an excellent fireworks show!

Many Lion Dances are also take place around the city from 7am to midnight.

Ozu Yosakoi Festival. Last Sunday of August. Takes place on the banks of the Hijikawa opposite the castle in Ryokuchi Park. Amazing traditional dance teams compete from all over Japan.

Cultural Festival (Saturday closest to November 3rd) Called Bunkasai in Japanese, this festival is located in the park along the river on the opposite to the side of the castle. Filled with traditional dance/music, tea ceremony, great food, and games.



Highlights

Garyu Boat Cruising. Enjoy a relaxing cruise as it meanders along a 200meter course on the Hijikawa river. Boats operate from April to the end of May on weekends and national holidays from 10am – 4pm. 100 yen one way. (approx. 6 min boat ride)

Mt. Tomisu Observatory. Offers a bird's eye view of Ozu.

Mt. Tomisu Azaleas. The park features 63,000 azalea bushes and over 3,000 cherry trees. Best times of viewing are during the months of April and May. Parking is 500 yen during the festival.

Ukai (Cormorant Fishing). Available from June 1st – September 20th. This is an ancient and unique method of river fishing that takes place on the Hiji river running through Ozu. After sunset, Cormorant fishermen dressed in traditional garments handle 5-6 cormorants (a kind of bird). The cormorants dive and catch fish for the fisherman. You can reserve sightseeing packages which

include a meal and drink as you watch this unique style of fishing. Reservations can be made at the surrounding local restaurants with Cormorant Fishing signs posted outside, or at the Ozu tourist center.

Homepage: <http://www.city.ozu.ehime.jp/english/index.html>

Kawabe Village [河辺村]

Description

Kawabe is a small village just south of Ozu with a population of around 1,200. Nestled in the mountains of western Ehime, it's known affectionately as a place where visitors "lose track of time."

Location/ Access/ Transport

Bus: *To Hijikawa.* Three buses daily Monday-Friday. Pick it up in front of the Kawabe Board of Education. There are three buses a day Monday through Friday from the Kawabe Board of Education to Hijikawa, two buses on Saturday and no bus service on Sunday. The cost is approximately 360 yen each way.
To Ozu. Buses to Ozu are also available.

Shopping

Few stores are available in the immediate area. Grab a bus into Ozu and take a look at the Ozu area guide to check out all your options!

Dining Out

Ku-chan. The menu is limited and it serves food mainly at lunchtime. Head over in the evening for karaoke and beer, but watch the time since it often closes around 7 or 8pm.

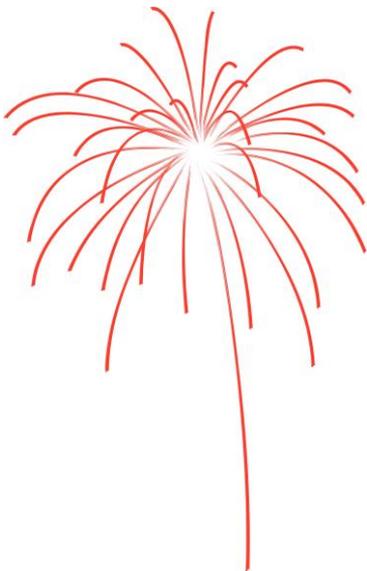
Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

The Eight Covered Bridges. Kawabe is famous for its bridges (浪漫八橋, as they are called), The nicest ones are Miyuki-bashi (built over 80 years ago) and Ryuoubashi located in Kawabe Furusato Park.

Sanhaidani Waterfall. There is a beautiful waterfall called *Sanhaidani* 三杯谷の滝 located up the road toward Ikazaki and Oda. Although it is signposted, it is a little difficult to find so it is best to ask someone for directions.

Summer Festival (second week of August) A small festival with singing, dancing and fireworks - great way to meet the locals!

Saitaniya. A *ryokan* (traditional Japanese inn) located near the park. For 3,200yen per person, you can rent the house for a night and enjoy the *irori*, a traditional open fireplace.



Hijikawa Town [肱川町]

Description

“A kind breeze to welcome you, your hometown: Hijikawa.”

A small town located in the mountains of Ozu, Hijikawa is home to about 2,500 people and the Hiji River.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: 30 minutes drive from Ozu and 25 minutes from Uchiko.

Bus: *To Ozu.* Runs four times a day; the bus ride is about 40 minutes and costs approximately 740 yen.

Shopping

A-Coop. A small grocery store located in the town center;

Michinoeki. A grocery store located on the main highway; it has a great produce stand and a good omiyage shop, as well as some delicious yakitori! It's run by the **Ninomiya family**, who are wonderfully friendly people.

Dining Out

Ajito. Located at Michinoeki; has karaoke and Japanese fast food

Hananomori. Chinese restaurant located at Michinoeki (道の駅 The rest stop)

Fukase. Donburi restaurant located in an old building past the Shell heading towards Ozu. Fabulous *oyako-don* (chicken and egg rice bowl)!

Arirang. Korean barbecue. Located at the Michinoeki

Kanogawaso. Has a restaurant and facilities for enkais. You'll probably head here often for Town Hall/Hijikawa Junior High School teacher's drinking parties!



Leisure

Onsen. There are two well known hot springs in Hijikawa – *Oyabu* and *Kanogawa* (near the main highway). *Kanogawa* is on the 56. *Oyabu* is through the giant red torii (gate) and up the mountain.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Oyabu Gorge. Head through the red torii and up the mountain a bit – it's a picturesque spot for a short hike.

Kanogawa Lake. A beautiful lake created by the dam in Hijikawa. There are walking paths around the lake and an annual dragon boat race the first Sunday in August.

Maruyama Park. A very nice park located above Kanogawa Lake, and one of the best spots for viewing sakura in the spring. Head up in March to see the Shakunage Valley in bloom.

Hijikawa Wind Museum. Located up past Maruyama Park and is the site of the Hijikawa Fureai Festival in November. People come from all over for the performances, a *janken* tournament, and a free drawing for some awesome prizes (crates of produce, sake, washing machines, flat screens). Hijikawa Junior High School students run a flea market, sell festival food and also sell Hiji-chu's famous charcoal (made by the students and the ALT if they are at school on the right day).

The Wind Museum also hosts a cultural performance in March that includes taiko, bunraku and traditional dance.

Brewery. Hijikawa has its own sake brewery named Kaze no Sato. It has existed for approximately 90 years. It is possible to purchase sake at the brewery (near the A-Coop in town) or at the Daily Yamazaki convenience store at Michinoeki (closes at 10:00pm).

Bunraku Monaka. A **DELICIOUS** Japanese sweet that you can buy for only 105 yen at the shop next to the central post office!

Accommodation

Kanogawaso Onsen. The onsen also hosts a relatively large, upscale hotel.

Health

There is a small hospital in town between the post office and city hall. However, from experience the doctor is a bit anti-foreign so it is recommended to do your medical treatments in one of the Ozu hospitals.

Nagahama Town [長浜町]

Description

Nagahama is a small town located on the coast where the Hijikawa River meets the Seto Inland Sea. Most of its 9,000 residents are involved in the concrete, fishing or agricultural industries. Come check out the student-run Nagahama Aquarium with fish from all across Japan!

Location/ Access/ Transport

Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* 1 hour by local train (Yosan Line), 1 hour 20 minutes if you pass through Iyo.

To/From Ozu. 30 minutes.

Car: The coastal road, Route 237, branches off from Route 56 in Iyo and connects Nagahama with Futami, Honai and Yawatahama to the south.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

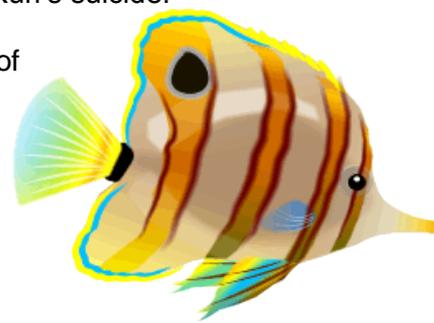
Akabashi. Complete with bullet holes from WWII, Nagahama's red drawbridge Akabashi is the oldest functioning drawbridge in Shikoku. Since commerce is mostly handled by truck now, there are not many opportunities to see the bridge in action, so it is opened every Sunday at 1 PM as a showcase.

Hijikawa Arashi. A very cool sight in winter! In the morning, strong winds blow water vapor rising off the river into large, thick clouds that hang low to the ground and blot out the view of the other side of the river. A major tourist attractions once featured on the national news.

Summer Fireworks Festival. A classic small-town festival located on the bank of the Hijikawa right near the red bridge. The fireworks are great and the food stalls are run by local merchants.

Shirataki. A waterfall with a dramatic history. There is an annual festival called Momiji Matsuri in the autumn celebrating the beautiful maple trees that grow around the waterfall. During Rurihime Matsuri, a special day within the Momiji Matsuri, local children dress up in historical costumes and throw flowers from the top of the waterfall in remembrance of Princess Ruri's suicide.

Illumination. Every Christmas, the Yamato and Toyoshige areas of Nagahama construct elaborate, community-wide light displays featuring characters from Rudolph to Anpanman and messages of



hope for the new year.

Nagahama Aquarium. Nagahama High School has a renowned aquarium run entirely by students, housing fish collected by the students in Okinawa, the Seto Inland Sea area and other places around Japan. It was recently featured on NHK, and is open to the public on the third Saturday of every month.

Town of Ikata 伊方町

Ikata [伊方町]

Description

Ikata is a small town at the base of the Sadamisaki Peninsula with about 10,000 residents. Ikata is the sister city to Red Wing, Minnesota and has a yearly exchange program that the Ikata CIR and ALTs help coordinate.

Website: <http://www.town.ikata.ehime.jp/english>

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: The two main routes into Ikata are:
Highway 56 to Highway 197 (runs from Matsuyama through Ozu and Yawatahama)
Route 378 (runs from Matsuyama along the Inland Sea – incredible views!).
You can also take the Matsuyama Expressway, but it requires tolls and does not save you much time.

Train: The nearest train station is a 20-minute drive away in Yawatahama.

For JETs departing from Ikata: If your destination is in Ehime, it's often cheaper and more convenient to just hop on one of our scenic highways and drive!

Bus: The Iyotetsu Mitsukue line runs from Misaki all the way to Matsuyama (Shi-eki).

The bus times are too infrequent to replace owning a car for Ikata residents, but it's a good way to get to Ikata for a visit, and it helps keep newly arrived JETs moving while they get their car situations sorted out.

Taxi: Places along the peninsula are too spread out for taxis to be cost-effective. Tag along with an Ikata JET if you want to explore! In the event of an emergency, taxis can be called at 089-422-0033.

Leisure

Onsen. Ikata is home to Kamegaike, a beautiful hot spring located about 15 minutes from Ikata proper. The onsen includes



a sauna, a salt sauna (great for the skin!), hot and cold baths, several outdoor baths, massages, an aromatherapy room, a restaurant, and a shop with local produce and crafts.

Website: <http://www.kamegaike.com/>

Laugh in
the face of
winter at
Kamegaike
Onsen!

Gym. There is a gym located behind Ikata Junior High with a weight room, various courts, and a swimming pool that is open to the public. You can check out equipment for volleyball, badminton, basketball, and other sports at the front desk.

Library. The library in Ikata is located right across from the town office. Even if you don't speak Japanese, it has a collection of DVDs including some films in English with Japanese subtitles that you can check out for free!

Eikaiwa. Ikata also has a very active English conversation group that regularly meets for dinner, drinking parties, mountain climbing, and other adventures!

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Kinahaya Ikata Matsuri. Last Sunday of July. A local festival with food vendors, stage shows, free sake sampling, and children's sumo during the day before a big fireworks display at night. It all takes place around the Ikata Town Office or Ikata Middle School, both of which are only about 20 minutes by car (30 to 40 by bike/local bus) from Yawatahama.

Ikata Fall Festival. Held the third Sunday in October in the Minatoura-area. It features *Ushi-oni* (Ox Demon), *Itsutsu Shika* (five deer dancing), *Karashishi* (lion dance) and is held mostly on the Ikata Elementary School grounds (a stone's throw from the town office).

Washi. *Ikata Work* in Kucho sells beautiful *washi* (Japanese paper) postcards, letterheads, and envelopes.

Ikata Nuclear Power Plant. The only nuclear power plant in all of Shikoku. Japanese and English tours are available.



Restaurants and Entertainment

Kuishinbo, a delicious and reasonably priced okonomiyaki restaurant on the right side of the road, about 100 meters from the turn into Ikata.

Yagura, a great yakiniku restaurant run by a local family.

Fureai, a small karaoke bar located on the main road of Ikata proper.

Ochanokosaisai, a nice little restaurant with friendly staff.

All restaurants on this list are located on the main road of Ikata

Shopping

Shopper's is the main grocery store where you can find all of your essentials.

Lawson's, located next to the junior high school.

There are many smaller shops dotting the roads in Ikata, similar to smaller convenience stores.

Seto Town [瀬戸町]

Description

Seto is a fishing town with approximately 2,000 residents located midway between Ikata and Misaki. Practice runs for Pearl Harbor were carried out here due to the similarities in geography.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: 25 minute drive along the Melody Line from Ikata

Bus: There is a bus stop along the Melody Line past Seto, but no bus directly into the town. You will need a car or taxi for the last stretch.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Singing Highway. Why is this stretch of 197 called the Melody Line? Drive over the tuned rumble strips that cover the road in front of the entrance to Seto and find out!



Fishing. Great fishing spots in Shionashi, Ashinaru and Oe.

Local Produce. You can find fresh produce at Seto Agricultural Park along the Melody Line.

Seto Windmill Park. Designated as a prefectural park.

Matsuri. *Chirimen* (“Baby Sardine”) Festival, *Hana Yome* (“Happy Wedding”) Fireworks Festival and *Omatsuri* festivals that date back hundreds of years take place in the Seto area.

Misaki Town [三崎町]

Description

Misaki is a small port town of about 3,300 residents located at the end of the Sadamisaki Peninsula. Jutting out into the Seto Inland Sea, Misaki has fresh seafood, beautiful views, and ferry access to the island of Kyushu.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: About a 45-minute drive from Ikata along the Melody Line.

Bus: The Iyotetsu Mitsukue line runs from Misaki all the way to Matsuyama (Shi-eki).

Ferry: Misaki is connected to the island of Kyushu by several ferry routes. The town of Saganoseki is about 70 minutes away, while the resort town of Beppu with its famous hot springs is a two-hour ride. There is free parking next to the port, or you can pay to bring your car with you on the ferry.

Dining Out

Marina. Seafood restaurant located on the main road through Misaki.

Café. There is a small café located right next to the port. It's a great place to wait for your boat or sit and recharge – try their *yakimeishi* (fried rice)!

French Cuisine. For the prepared, there is an incredible French restaurant in the mountains of Misaki. The owners built a lovely and authentic French home for this restaurant/design company. Lunch or dinner is by reservation only. Call Shimauchi-san at 0894 541939 and try to speak to her in English! Ask Shimauchi-san for directions because it is quite difficult to find but only about a 20-minute walk from Misaki Middle School.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Chorus. A chorus group meets in the Misaki Community Center and holds concerts at various times throughout the year.

Seto Inland Sea National Park. Visit the Misaki Lighthouse located in the center of the park for incredible views - on a clear day, you can see all the way to Kyushu! Campsites are also available from July through October.

Moon Beach and Amida Pond. Lovely places to take in the rural scenery, breathe in fresh air and maybe even help harvest potatoes. Located about a one hour walk from the Misaki Town Office.

Nattori. Famous for its blue stone walls.

The Ako Tree. Designated a National Natural Heritage site in 1921.

The Giant Camphor. Designated a Town Natural Heritage site; the tree has an estimated age of 1000 years.



Uchiko Area 内子町

Uchiko Town [内子町]

Description

Uchiko is a small town surrounded by mountains, with a population of about 20,000. It is the central hub area for several smaller, outlying towns and villages including Ikazaki, Ose and Oda. Uchiko is twinned with the town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber in Germany, and prides itself on the preservation of its historic buildings.

Check out the town websites below!

<http://www.town.uchiko.ehime.jp/>

<http://www.we-love-uchiko.jp/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uchiko%2C_Ehime

Location/Access/Transport

Car: Uchiko is located in the center of Ehime directly along Route 56.

Train: *To/From Matsuyama:* about 22 minutes by express train.

Bus: *To/From Osaka:* Overnight bus available.

Bicycle rental and tickets for the retro bus “Chagamaru” are available at Tabirian Tourist Information next to the train station.

Most sights are within a 15 minute walk from the train station. [MAP](#)

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Machinami. Beautifully preserved historical street from Uchiko's heyday as a wax manufacturer. Handmade Japanese wax candles and umbrellas among other products, are still sold in this area. Head here to check out some historic residences, restaurants, and a ryokan!

Uchiko-za. Oldest Kabuki and Bunraku theatre in Ehime! Built in the final years of the Meiji Era and renovated in the 80's - a must-see!

Sleeping Buddha. Beautiful statue resting in front of the temple at the end of *Machinami* (address: 愛媛県内子町城廻 117).

Karari Farmers' Market. Open every day and offers locally grown produce, fresh local cheese, German-style sausages and ham, homemade ice cream and Uchiko pork burgers.

Ikazaki Paper Factory. Located in Ikazaki's Tenjin district. They sell a large variety of decorative Japanese paper and paper products. Paper making workshops are offered on weekdays for 500 yen per person.

Covered bridge. Picturesque covered wooden bridge in Ishidatami.

Sol-Fa Ski Ground. Offering three runs, Sol-Fa is home to the longest run in Ehime. Rental and a day pass costs about 10,000 yen.

Ikazaki Kite Festival. (Children's Day, 5th May) Teams fly large kites made out of Japanese paper. The kites have blades attached for cutting the strings of other kites!

Oda Lantern Festival. (Last Saturday in July) Lanterns float down the Oda River while the people of Oda take part in a parade. The event culminates in the igniting of a fake boat by shooting fire arrows at it.

Uchiko's Sasa Matsuri. (August 6th and 7th) Bamboo Festival. Beautiful handmade paper decorations line the main street, with decorative light projections on the evening of the 6th. On the evening of the 7th, dancers form a procession down the main street.

Arunze Tourist Information Center can be found on the main street. Behind *Arunze* is *Nanze*, a café and gift shop selling local souvenirs.

Volunteer English Tour Guides can be contacted by phone at 0983-43-1450. Please book at least one week in advance for tours of Uchiko's old street, Ikazaki, Ishidatami or other parts of Uchiko town. Tours can be tailor made but may depend on the availability of guides.

Dining Out

Restaurants and Cafés

Uchiko has a well-maintained restaurant guide with plenty of pictures to help whet your appetite!

<http://www.we-love-uchiko.jp/lunch/>





Incorporating the areas of Iyo, Tobe, Kumakogen, Matsuyama, and Toon



Chuyo

Kumakogen Town [久万高原町]

Description

Kumakogen is a small town known for its forestry industry and abundance of nature. It is the only area of Ehime that consistently sees snow every winter. It has a population of a little over 9,100 spread over the town of Kuma and villages of Mikawa, Omogo, and Yanadani.

Website: <http://www.town.kumakogen.ehime.jp>

Location/Access/Transport

Car: To/From Matsuyama: 1 hour

Bus: To/From Matsuyama: 1.5 hours; buses depart regularly from the JR Station almost every hour (JR Bus (Matsuyama <-> Ohide))

Nature Highlights

Mt. Ishizuchi. Kumakogen and Saijo have a bitter battle over who can claim the tallest mountain in Western Japan as part of their area, but since the entire area of Kumakogen is in the mountains it's obvious it belongs there. There are two different trails that can take you to the top starting in Kumakogen, one short, relatively easy hike from Tsuchigoya and the more challenging route that starts in Omogo Gorge. The third route is from Saijo and involves the famous climbing chains.

Temples 44 and 45 of the Shikoku 88.

Temple 45 岩屋寺 (Iwayaji) or 'Temple of the Rocky Caves' is considered by some the most scenic of the 88 temples. The temple consists of dozens of rooms cut into volcanic rock and a walking path filled with ancient statues and graves.



Shikoku Karst (Shikoku karusuto).

A gorgeous area of the mountains with outcropping stones and roaming cattle the runs right up to the border with Kochi Prefecture. 360-degree panoramic views, easy hiking trails, and delicious ice cream. There are also cabins and a hotel if you want to stay the night. Easily accessible by car, quite a challenge but also doable by bicycle.

Omogo Gorge (Omogo-kei). Escape the heat and enjoy amazing scenery with some hiking along one of the deepest gorges in Japan. Camping spots with some accessible swimming holes if you want to get away for the weekend!

Kuma Ski Land Ehime's easily accessible ski field with 3 short runs and a beginner slope and lift which is free (with park entry fee of 1000 yen). Snow is mainly machine-made over a base of naturally fallen snow. Very popular with young people as there is night skiing every day until midnight. The season officially opens December 1 and runs until around mid to late March. Can be accessed directly on JR bus line about an hour and a half from Matsuyama. Once off the bus give a call to the front desk and they'll shuttle you up to the slopes. This is the closest ski field to Matsuyama. www.kumax.co.jp/04sl/framepage2.htm

Museums/Festivals/Events

Kuma Museum of Art. A small, but impressive museum that houses a rotating/travelling art exhibition that changes every 2-3 months. www.kumakogen.jp/culture/muse

Kuma Obon/Goyoboku Festival. First weekend in August combines an Obon style team dancing competition festival with a fireworks display on Saturday night which sets the tone for the big event the next day; Teams racing down main street while carrying heavy tree trunks to see who can complete the course the fastest.

Mikawa Summer Festival. A small festival in front of the Mikawa branch of the town office that is famous for its fireworks display over the scenic rock outcropping/BBQ and swimming hole spot of Mimido. The number of fireworks doesn't approach those of bigger Ehime festivals, but it is unrivaled for the proximity to which the fireworks are to the spectators which makes them one of the most impressive fireworks displays I've seen in Japan.

Ishizuchi Hill Climb. Not a climb at all, but a cycle up Mount Ishizuchi. It takes place every year at the end of August, and you can sign up via the website [here](#).



Kumakogen Hachiawase Festival. Another of Ehime's shrine battle festivals, this one is small but unique because in Kumakogen they collide the shrines on the narrow side as opposed to the broad side clashes that are the norm in Matsuyama.

Kumakogen Rally. An off-road car rally held over golden week (first week of May) that is part of the Japanese Automobile Federation Japanese Rally Championship.

Kumakogen Hill Climb. Another uphill cycling event in late July that cycles up to the old Mikawa Ski Resort.

Dining Out

Restaurants and Cafés

Tenku no Sato San San (33). A recently built local market/rest stop (*michi no eki*) with a fantastic all you can eat lunch filled with locally grown seasonal dishes and vegetables. There is also a good bakery here which often sells out of their goods quickly. There is also a market/shop to purchase local rice, vegies, and omiyage to take with you.

Kokoro. A famous Kamaage Udon shop that is delicious and an amazing value. Only open for lunch, the shop sells hot udon that the customer dips into a cup of broth before slurping up the delicious result. This lunch will fill you up and not cost you more than 500 yen. Expect a wait and go ahead and sit at a place with any empty chair. Tables are shared among customers of this joint.

Chigusa. A delicious local Izakaya known for its yakiniku and extensive lunch menu.

Kirara Shokudo. A couple runs this almost exclusively lunch restaurant and the food is out of this world. There is a daily lunch special that is always a winner. If you have a group in the area and want to do a dinner party there they can set it up with a reservation.

Maki. A lunch spot renowned for its Chinese Soba (*chuka soba*). The parking lot is small and the place gets full quickly and usually sells out of noodles on the weekend.

Petit Clef. (Puti Kurifu) A tea/coffee shop that makes delicious desserts and also has meals available.

Denko. A restaurant specializing in set dishes (teishoku). Open for both lunch and dinner. I highly recommend the fried chicken set that comes with giant pieces of juicy chicken that will fill you up with a smile.

Gunkan. A restaurant offering an expansive Japanese menu overlooking the majestic rock outcropping/swimming spot of Mimido.

Umaimonya Doi. This restaurant is much farther down route 33 on the way to Yanadani and Shikoku Karst. They have the normal set fare, but their distinguishing feature is their "create your own" brick oven pizzas. Choose your toppings and sauce and enjoy the surrounding scenery as it's cooked to mouth-watering perfection. They also offer bentos for those wanting to grab something on the go or to eat as you're exploring the gorgeous surroundings.

Toon City [東温市]

Description

Toon (sometimes written "Tohon") is just to the east of Matsuyama but still falls under the jurisdiction of Matsuyama City. It was created in 2004 by merging several towns and villages (Shigenobu and Kawauchi being the main two).

Location/Access/Transport

Train: *To/From Matsuyama:* From Shieki, get Line 1 towards Yokogawara. There are several stops in Toon, and it costs between 400yen and 500yen, depending upon the station.

Shopping

Fuji/Cools Mall. Clothes shops, store selling locally produced goods and a supermarket. It's about 6 minutes from Minara Station.

Dining Out

Japanese

Yakitori. There's a really good yakitori place opposite Shigenobu JHS]

Cafés

Wacca Café: A bagel café next to Tanokubo station. Does a great lunch set (12-2pm).

Western-style Restaurants

Polly's Café: an `English` restaurant, complete with Guinness, tartan and paella.

There are also several restaurants in Cools Mall including Chinese and Italian!



Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Ehime University School of Medicine and University Hospital. Get the train to Aidaigakubu Minamiguchi station.

Riraku Onsen. Modern onsen opposite Cools Mall. Several pools and a sauna. You can also get massages, bento and private baths.

AX Snowboarding slope. On a hill side and has a big AX on the roof so you really can't miss it.

Twin Dome. Sports facility.

Shirai no taki Waterfall. Located in Kawauchi. There's a haiku monument to Natsume Soseki, who visited the waterfall in 1895.

Mt. Saragamine. 1271m above sea level; you can camp there in the summer!

Ehime Prefectural Greenery Centre. Has been described as a "tree museum." Includes a semi-tropical Botanical garden and a lot of Sakura trees.

Dotekabocha (Pumpkin) Carnival. Held in September.

Kangetsu-sai (Moon Viewing Festival). The main city festival is held on the last Saturday of August. There is taiko and Bon-dancing near Yokogawara Bridge and a firework display over Shigenobu River.

Iyo District (伊予)

Tobe Town [砥部町]

Description

Tobe is the gate-way to the mountainous regions south-west of Matsuyama. Tobe has a population of about 22,000.

Website: <http://www.town.tobe.ehime.jp>

Location/Access/Transport

Bus: To/From Matsuyama. About 30 minutes. Go to bus stop Number 3 at Matsuyama City Station. Buses numbered 15, 17 and 18 stop in Tobe.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Tobeyaki. A style of pottery unique to the area. There are several shops where visitors not only purchase tobeyaki, but make it too.

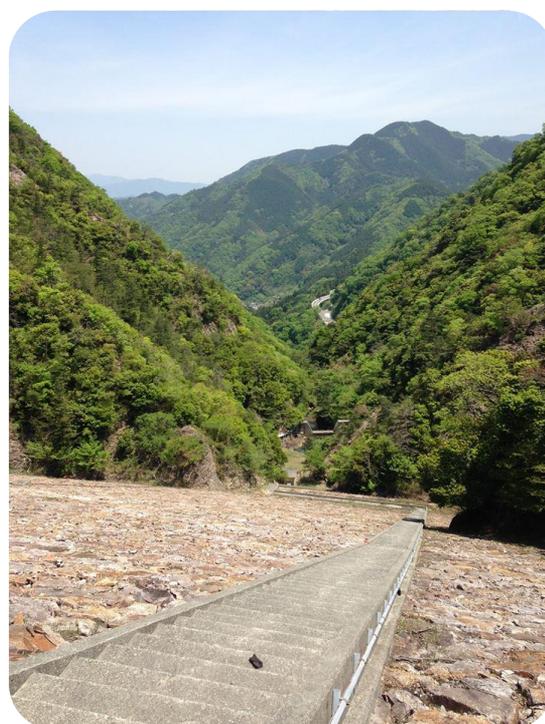
Tobe Pottery Festival. Held every 3rd Saturday and Sunday in April. Attracts over 100,000 people every year.

Tobe Zoo. One of the largest zoos in Japan, it is home to a variety of animals from many different countries!

Plum festival. Held in February at the Nanoore Park, features plum trees in bloom and umeboshi products.

Kodomo no Shiro Koen. The Ehime Children's Playground.

Hirota Firefly Festival. Held in June; festival food and firefly watching in the countryside.



Camping. There is a beautiful campground located near the dam in Tobe!

Iyo City [伊予市]

Description

Iyoshi is a sea-side city that lies just south of Matsuyama. It is home to about 39,500 people and it encompasses the towns of Iyo (on the coastal plains), Nakayama (tucked into the mountains to the south east), and Futami (a seaside village that lies on the other side of the hills along the coast to the south).

Website: <http://www.city.iyo.lg.jp/>

Location/Access/Transport

Iyoshi is just to the south of Matsuyama and a bit north of Uchiko. It is only 20 minutes from Matsuyama airport, and is easily accessed by all other major transportation services.

Bus: *To/From Matsuyama.* The local bus from Matsuyama Shieki station departs intermittently during the day and arrives in Iyoshi in about an hour. The price is upwards of 600 yen.

Many of the long haul highway buses make a short stop in Iyoshi. Check with the bus company for accurate times and locations.

Train: Iyoshi is serviced by both the JR Shikoku Line and the local Iyotetsu Line running from Matsuyama.

JR: The JR station is called "Iyoshi" and is the first express stop south of Matsuyama. 7 minutes by express train from Matsuyama and 17 minutes by regular train. Average ticket cost: 250 yen from Matsuyama or Iyo-Kaminada/Futami.

Iyotetsu: The Iyotetsu Line departs every 15 minutes from Matsuyama's Shieki Station, and every 15 minutes from Gunchuko. From Matsuyama, it's the yellow line labeled "to Gunchuko 郡中". The final four stops all lie within Iyoshi's borders and they are as follows: Shinkawa, Jizomachi, Gunchu, and the final stop - Gunchuko. The price of a ticket from Gunchuko to Matsuyama is 450 yen without an Iyotetsu card. It takes 25 minutes from Matsuyama Shieki to Gunchuko

Car: *To/From Matsuyama.* Take the Iyo exit on the Matsuyama Expressway (**toll road**) or follow Route 56 and look for the sign to exit to Iyo Station or City Centre.

You can also take Route 378 which is a scenic route that runs along the coast from Matsuyama all the way to Nagahama passing through both Iyo and Futami along the way.

Bicycle: Cycling to Iyoshi is possible from most places in Ehime. If you're coming from the north, the safest route is to follow Route 56 which is well lit, has wide side walks, and is relatively flat. It only takes 45 minutes from Matsuyama. If you're coming from the south, the sea road (Route 378) is relatively flat, though there are a few challenging hills, and at some points you will be riding on the road.

Shopping

Local Products

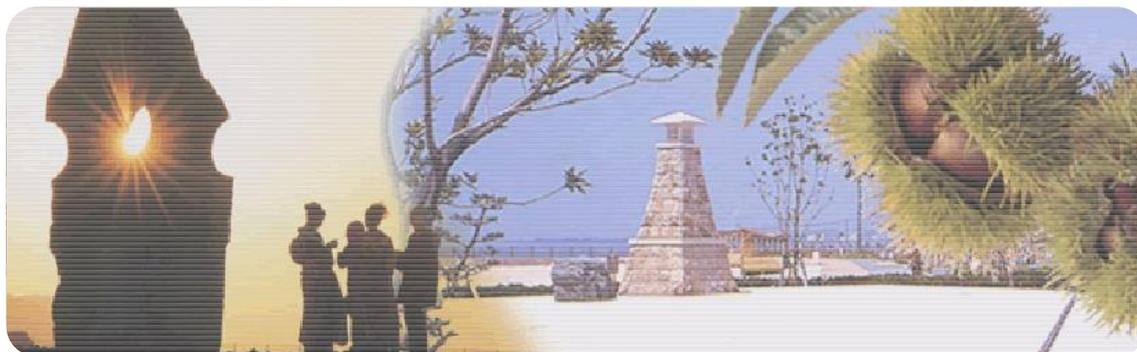
There is a local market just outside of the JR station that sells fresh, local produce and other assorted seasonal items.

Supermarkets

Fuji. Located near the station; has a Daiso (100-Yen Shop) inside

Marunaka. Located near the station

If you want anything else, the massive mall Emiful and the shopping options of Matsuyama are



just a quick ride away on the Iyotetsu Train.

Dining Out

Curry

Agastia. A Japanese / Indian curry house with a strong hippie vibe, this has been a popular spot with ALTs for years. The food is good, and relatively cheap. ¥600 – ¥1500 yen for a set. It's just up the road from the local Fuji. Closed on Tuesdays.

Chinese

Dragon Chinese Restaurant. Located on route 378 just down the road from Shinkawa station, this family run restaurant serves some excellent Chinese food.

Japanese

Iroha. A high end Japanese restaurant that is conveniently located two blocks north of the JR station almost across the street from the post office. It's not too expensive with an intimate atmosphere.

Banks and ATMs

There are two banks in Iyo, the Iyo Ginko, and the Post Office. Both are only 2 blocks from the station.

The local Fuji has five ATMs just inside the door that can take cards from various Japanese banks, and both the Japan Bank and the Post Office ATMs will accept some foreign cards.

Leisure

Welpia (ウエルピア). This is a multi-purpose facility that lies on the border between Iyoshi and Masaki. You need either a car or a bicycle to reach it. It has a massive pool, waterslides, a great restaurant, onsen, golf range, batting cages and much more!

Shiosai Koen. This park is home to several outdoor facilities including outdoor gyms, baseball fields, tennis courts, and running tracks. The indoor facilities include a gym with free weights, treadmills, bikes, and many more.

Goshikihama. This popular beach is open for swimmers during the summer season (from June to the end of August). There is also a small outdoor pool, but it is usually crowded with elementary school students. Beach volleyball and ultimate Frisbee are also quite popular. The beach is about a 15 minute walk west of the city station (just follow the signs).

Onsen. There are several small onsen around the city – two of which are easily located within walking distance of Goshikihama beach.

Tagami-san and Iyo Lookout. This mountain is located directly behind Iyoshi and can only be accessed by car (or a very intrepid cyclist). It is also a very nice hike. But be careful as some points of the road are quite steep. The lookout can be accessed at any time of the year, but it is most beautiful during sakura season. One can see the entire Iyo plain from the observatory – from the edge of Iyo clear to Hojo!

Nightlife

There are a few bars in Iyo, but most of them are small and only frequented by regulars. The one exception is a small bar called “Dragon Bowz” across from the Marunaka supermarket. It is quite foreigner friendly and has **free karaoke!**

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

The Festival of the Five Princesses. Early March. Every spring, five local girls are chosen to represent the five princesses of Goshikihama. Legend has it that these five beautiful princesses once sat at that beach but were suddenly turned into stones according to the colour of their kimono. Now, the city honours their memory each year with a new group of “princesses.”

The Good Catch Festival: May 5th. This festival is meant to ensure a fruitful year for all of the local fishermen. The festival causes the sea to be filled with boats of all types and some fishing contests are held.

Iyo Odori (dance festival) and the Iyoshi Fireworks. July 28th, and 29th (please check the website to confirm dates each year). Teams from all over Iyo gather to dance and parade through the city streets. The next night is the fireworks festival which is one of the largest in Ehime. Some recommended spots for viewing the fireworks are Goshikihama and the observatory of Mt. Tagami.

The biggest party of the year!

Autumn Festival. Every fall the kami from the shrines of Iyo are carried out upon Mikoshi and paraded through the city streets. Great for those seeking a more intimate experience than the Matsuyama or Saijo festivals.

Accommodations

Iyo Prince Hotel. It can be seen from most points in the city and has fairly reasonable rates.

There are also a few nice ryokan along the mountain road heading towards Nakayama.

Futami Town [双海町]

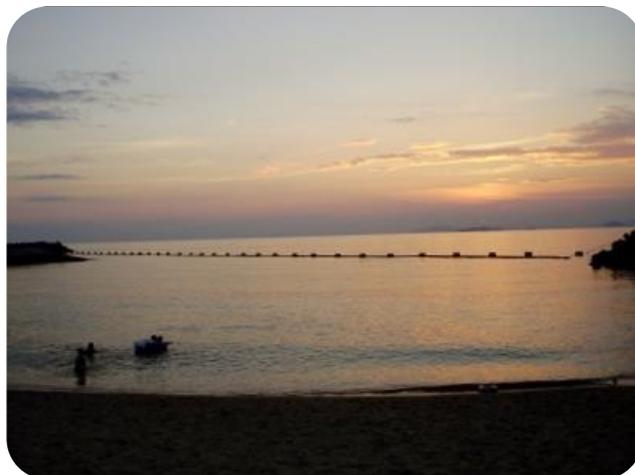
Description

Futami is a small seaside town within Iyo City with a population of about 5,000. Futami Beach is quite famous in the area, and you can enjoy the sun, sand, and waves with some ice cream and beer down at Seaside Park.

Location/Access/Transport

Train: To/From Matsuyama. 45 minutes
To/From Iyo. 15 minutes

Get off at Iyo-Kaminada station and make a right to go to the Seaside Park.



Shopping

Ice Cream and Souvenirs

There is a souvenir shop underneath the restaurant in the Seaside Park which also sells delicious ice cream.

There is a small shop selling Bizenyaki (pottery from Bizen) if you take the road from the station past the Seaside Park.

Convenience Stores (Konbini)

There is one convenience store across from the Seaside Park.

Alcohol

There is a liquor store on the main road, on the far end of town towards Iyo, near the traffic lights.

Petrol

There are two gas stations; one on the main road, on the far end of town towards Iyo and one on the higher road (not the one along the sea leading to Kaminada station).

Dining Out

Japanese

There are various small stores selling food throughout the town (notably by Iyo-Kaminada station, although the selection is very limited and if you want anything fancy like cheese you'll have to go to Iyo).

Seaside Park. Here you can get delicious jakoten (deep fried fish patties), fresh, whole fish and vegetables if you go at the right time. On nice days they also grill squid and prawns and sometimes offer *tai* (sea bream) rice, mountain-vegetable rice, homemade doughnuts and mochi, all of which are excellent. The park also has a restaurant that offers expensive sashimi sets and some basic dishes (curry, udon, spaghetti). However, it is closed sporadically, so check in advance.

Food Stands. During the summer there is also a food stand selling basic snacks like onigiri.

Leisure

At the Seaside Park you can swim in the sea, relax on the beach, and watch the famous sunset. If you are an experienced paraglider, there is a course available in the fall.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Seaside Park. One of the best beaches in Ehime with food and a famous sunset to boot.

Train Platform Concert. There is a fabulous yearly concert at Shimonada station (one stop away from Kaminada), which is the station closest to the sea in all of Japan, with the sunset as a backdrop. (Late summer)

Summer Festival. Not to be missed! If you sign up you can try to catch fish and octopus in the sea with your bare hands. There is also a bon odori (traditional dance) through the streets; dress up in a yukata and join in! At night there are fireworks over the sea.

Firefly Festival. There is a firefly festival in the mountains during firefly season around early June.

Nakayama Town [中山町]

Description

Nakayama is a small town with a population of about 4,000. Meaning “within the mountains”, Nakayama has incredible views of the surrounding landscape. The local train station offers easy access to Matsuyama and Emifull.

Location/Access/Transport

Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* About 40 minutes by the regular JR train. Exit at the Iyo-Nakayama stop.

Car: Route 56 runs directly through Nakayama
To/From Emifull (massive shopping mall). About 30 minutes along Route 56
To/From Matsuyama. A little under an hour away on Route 56

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Summer Festivals. Look for the Nakayama Samba!

Chestnut Festival. Celebration of the Nakayama’s extensive chestnut farms; held in September

Firefly Festival. Firefly watching and matsuri food in late spring/early summer.

Trails. There are several mountain paths leading to some scenic groves, ancient shrines, and sudden graveyards.

Strawberry picking and soba-making. Great in the summer, but only accessible by car.



Matsuyama Area 松山

Hojo [北条]

Description

Hojo is a community located about 20 minutes north of Matsuyama by the JR line and is part of Matsuyama City.

Location/Access/Transport

Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* From the JR station, take the train bound north to Iyo-hojo (7 stops). One-way: 360 yen. If you want to take the express train it is more expensive and be sure to check that it stops in Hojo as not all of them do



Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* From Matsuyama follow the Hojo-Matsuyama bypass (196). You can also follow this road by bicycle and it takes about an hour.

Shopping

Supermarkets

ZY. Simple selection of your regular groceries. Upstairs is homeware, clothes and some stationary. 5 minute bike ride from the JR station. ATMS are available.

Hato Mart. Wider selection of fruit and vegetables. This supermarket is bigger but much more expensive than ZY. There is a very small Daiso, too. A restaurant attached to the side serves delicious takoyaki, and there is a small bakery section as well. It's very close to the JR train station. There are no ATMs here.

Marunaka. Biggest supermarket of the three but it is the furthest away. You can buy clothes, toys, alcohol and some electronics. The food selection here is by far the best. ATMS are available.

Shopping Centers

Hojo Shopping Complex. Not as big as you may imagine. The complex is about 15-20 minutes away from the JR station.

Fuji Palty. Located near Hojo Shopping Complex; has a better selection than the three grocery stores listed above.

Convenience Stores (Konbini)

There is a Lawsons across from Hojo Kita JHS and a Family Mart near Marunaka.

Home Improvement

Daiki. Located across from the Hato Mart, Daiki is the place to go to buy home improvement goods, furniture and other household items. A very convenient drugstore is located next door.

Dining Out

Bakeries

Irohaya. A **DELICIOUS** bakery right in front of the ALT apartment. Great spot to get a last minute breakfast.

Japanese

Ichiya. Best ramen spot in town! Good prices and very delicious! Located by the Family Mart.

Otousan. Japanese restaurant located along the road on your way to ZY coming from the post office.

Tabensai. Delicious and reasonably priced okonomiyaki.

Aki-zakura (秋桜). Okonomiyaki restaurant near Hojo Kita JHS. It's close to the school, so don't be surprised to see students there.

Fast Food

McDonalds. Located next to Marunaka.

Family Restaurants

Joyfull. Located at the Hojo Shopping Complex. A mix of western and Japanese cheap, simple meals.

Banks, ATMs, and Other Services

Post Office. Beside St. Catherine University

Laundromat. One located just in front of Hojo HS.

Cell phones. There is a Docomo near Hojo Kita JHS, and a Softbank next to the Fuji Palty (Natsume) near Hojo Minami Chu

Dentist. There is a good dentist across the street from Hojo Elementary School. His name is Takahashi, and he speaks a little English.

Leisure

Gym. Fairly new. Located in St Catherines University. You must go on a Friday to sign up, and you will need your hanko. You won't be able to work out that day, but on the following Monday or Wednesday you can. It's 200 yen per visit.

Onsen. Right near the Kashima Island Port, called Makoto Seapa.

Deodeo. DVD store with foreign DVDs. Located about 15 minutes away from the train station.

GEO. DVD rental shop near Hojo Senior High School.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Kashima Island. This small island is home to deer! Walk straight out of Iyo-hojo station and follow that road down to the water. You will see a small ferry port there. Buy your ticket from the machine, and take the (very) short ferry ride across. There you can see and feed the many deer the island is famous for. There is also a beautiful view of Hojo from the top of the hill.



Fuwari Beach. Located in the northern part of Hojo and is quite popular in the summer. To get there you can take the JR to Oura Station (大浦駅 *Oura Eki*). From Oura Station it's a short walk to the beach. The beach is located opposite a road station so parking should be available for those who wish to go by car.

Hojo Strawberry Farm. It's a fairly new place that opened in January, 2013. You can pick strawberries there when they're in season (spring). You'll need to give the farm a call to make a reservation before you go. (0120-152-831) There are two places – one is a ten minute walk from Awai Station and another is a kilometer away from Hojo Kita JHS.

Hojo Matsuri. Held every October. The locals have a few drinks and carry around *mikoshi*. *Mikoshi* battles eventually ensue where the shrines are rammed into one another until an inevitable loser falls into the river. There are stalls set up down by the water near the Kashima ferry port and JR station.

Nakajima Town [中島町]

Description

Nakajima "The Island in the Seto Sun" is a very friendly rural community consisting of mikan farmers and fishermen. If you fancy a glimpse of old Japan then look no further. It is home to about 6,000 people. The main attractions are peace and quiet, the beaches and the mountains. Although no ALTs are currently housed on the island, (the ALTs visiting these island schools commute from Matsuyama by ferry) Nakajima is an excellent spot to visit and spend some time away from the hustle and bustle of city life.

Location/Access/Transport

Boat: *To/From Matsuyama.* Nakajima is located off the coast of Matsuyama.

Hop on the Takahama bound train at Shieki. Train runs every 15 minutes starting on the hour from platform 2. It takes about 20 minutes to get to Takahama port (last stop). Tickets cost 410 yen.

Alternatively coming from JR walk north along up the main road, take a right at the Fuji Grand, and in a few minutes you will see Komachi station on your right. From here a ticket to Takahama will cost 360 yen. Once at Takahama walk out of the

station and cross the road, directly in front of you will be a one storey white building. This is the ticket office. Slow ferries cost 890 yen (one-way), fast ferry 1,590yen (one-way), but you get a discount with your IC card. You'll notice traveling times vary depending on how many of the smaller islands you stop at. Note: There is a west route and an east route, and they end up at different ports on the island. The East Route goes to the main port at Oura.

A timetable for the ferry can be found [online](#) and in the table below.

SLOW FERRY

HIGH-SPEED FERRY

Takahama	Oura Nakajima	Oura	Takahama	Takahama	Oura	Oura	Takahama
07.10	08.15	08.35	09.45	07.23	07.48	06.35	07.15
10.25	11.30	11.45	12.25	08.30	09.00	07.55	08.20
13.15	13.55	14.10	15.20	13.50	14.30	12.25	13.04
16.05	17.10	17.30	18.40	17.40	18.20	17.05	17.30
19.25	20.14			19.10	19.41	18.30	18.59

There are buses that leave from the port to various places around the island but they are few and far between. However it's possible to hire bikes from the port for 200 yen a day.

If you would like to bring a bicycle with you, you must board at Mitsuhamma (三津浜). You will have to cycle to the Mitsuhamma Ferry port, as there are no train stations close and it is difficult to board buses with a bicycle. There is also a very good bicycle repair shop in Nagashi, run by a lovely old couple. They can help you if your bike breaks down.



Shopping

Groceries

Tominaga. The biggest and easiest to find of the island's grocery stores. Turn right out of the port and then immediately left and it will be on your left. It closes around 5.30. (6.30 in the summer.)

Alcohol

Off License. Near the Tominaga. You can get all sorts of alcoholic beverages here!

Sunday Shopping

Virtually everything is closed on Sundays except 'Friend Shop' (フレンドショップ) so you can still buy groceries.

Dining Out

There are a few restaurants and hotels around the island. A restaurant called Seto offers delicious udon sets. There is also a family restaurant near a business hotel. Both restaurants are located on the main street in Oura, close to the ferry port. There's a DELICIOUS yakiniku place attached to another small supermarket in Obama, near where the teachers all live. The friendly couple who owns it delivers some of the best yakiniku in the land.



Nightlife

Karaoke

Night. There is an awesome karaoke place called Night situated (rather bizarrely) right behind a graveyard. You won't miss it since it has some serious lighting going on. You can adorn yourself in an array of dodgy accessories and then prance about! To get there turn left out of the port and keep going until you see the fairy lights.

There is also another small karaoke bar directly opposite the port (next to the coffee shop).

Nakajima is a ghost town
come 7pm!

However, one thing that
Nakajima does know how to
do is **karaoke!**

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Himegahama. The most popular of Nakajima's beaches.

Nakajima Triathlon. Himegahama is the starting point of Nakajima's famous triathlon; every August Nakajima plays host to a nationwide triathlon which people from throughout the land flock to in order to compete! The night before there is a bit of a shindig to celebrate, so head over the night before and make the most of it. A few JETs have participated in the triathlon and can help you out if you're planning on testing your might. There are some hotel rooms although the night before the event these are likely to be all booked up. However any other time of the year I'm sure you'd have no problem.

Historic Buildings. Nakajima has a small smattering of points of interest: several shrines and a collection of artifacts from the Edo period.

Nakajima Culture Centre. The Culture Centre is new and features a pretty decent (considering the size of the island) library, art gallery and museum and an amazing auditorium. To find out more information please contact the Culture Centre (tel: 0899971181).

Accommodation

Himegahama Hotel. Offers accommodation starting at 2000 yen a night, for a space in a shared tatami room with futons. The hotel will throw in breakfast as well for around 2,500yen! Bargain! There are other nicer, and thus more expensive rooms, but if you're an adventurer, you can also rent a 6-man tent for 2000 yen and sleep on the beach.

Matsuyama City [松山市]

Description

Matsuyama is the capital city of Ehime and is the biggest city on Shikoku with a population of about 520,000. It's a great weekend get-away for inaka JETs and the place to go to see concerts, art shows, and other attractions.

Website: <http://www.city.matsuyama.ehime.jp/lang/en>

Location/Access/Transport

Train: Located on the Yosai JR line, it is an express train stop.

Bus: Numerous buses can be found, leading to many major cities in Japan (Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka).

Ferry: Ferry services to Hiroshima and Fukuoka run from the main ferry port on the east side of town.

Plane: There is also Matsuyama airport which flies to most major airports in Japan and two international flights are available to Shanghai and Seoul. Recently, both Jetstar and Peach Airlines have begun operating out of Matsuyama Airport, offering cheap flights around Japan.

Young Weekender's Pass: This handy card will get you a great discount if you plan on travelling to other parts of Ehime. Destinations must be more than 61km away, and you must be between the ages of 13 and 29. Pay 1000 yen at the desk to the left of the station entrance, and enjoy discounts of up to 40%. Card is valid for one year.

Transport within the City

On Foot: Walking between the major areas of the city should take no longer than 30 minutes.

Bike Rentals: There are several places that have bike rentals – EPIC has free rentals for foreigners, but you need to pay a deposit (¥1000 and bring your passport or residence card) and book ahead if you can. “Monkeys” in an alleyway opposite the Starbucks by Okaido and near Flankey’s bar has bikes available at a small fee.

Bus: When you hop on at the back, take a ticket from the machine (check out the number that is printed on it) and watch the screen at the front. A price corresponds with each ticket number. Pay when you leave. If you don’t have the correct change, you can use the money changer at the front.

[Matsuyama Tourist Bus Map](#)

Trams: Trams are a set price – 160 yen/adult. You can also purchase a day pass for 500 yen. You can also purchase a re-chargable fare card (**IC Card**) that can be used on all Iyotetsu trains, buses and trams. They can be bought from the Iyotetsu office near the city train station (Shieki). The forms are all in Japanese, so come prepared to do a little translating! The cards will entitle you to a small discount on transport, and can be easily reloaded at train, tram and bus stations around Matsuyama.

Shopping

Shopping Arcades/Areas

Gintengai. Shopping arcade running from Takashimaya Department Store (at the city station) to the Sunkus convenience store and Levi’s store. Some things to check out – A-One foreign foods and GET (big ¥100 store on the 3rd floor, crazy clothes shop on the 2nd and groceries in the basement). There’s also a Zara here, which is good if you have a hard time fitting into Japanese sized clothes. Things are a bit pricier, but the quality is worth it! Great for formal wear, suits, etc.

Okaido. Shopping arcade running from the Sunkus convenience store and Levi’s store to Starbucks. There is a cinema, numerous restaurants, a games arcade and some cool shops. There’s a Muji at the very top of the arcade. It’s a great place to find conservative clothes for work (ie: knee length skirts and loose fitting tops for women). The stairs leading to the store are next to the Flying Scotsman (a café) beside a burgundy and white sign.

Kinuyama. This area has many stores. You can basically get anything you need. There’s a home supplies store called Nitori (like a Japanese Ikea) across the large street from the main shopping area (lamps, couches, beds, bedding, dishes etc). Anything you can’t find there, you can probably find in the Daiki (home improvement store) just around the corner from it. There’s a Media Cafe (pool tables, darts, computer access, manga rentals), a really large Daiso (100yen store), men’s business clothing (Yofuku no Aoyama), Hard Off/Book Off and a movie theatre. Check out Village Vanguard (books and quirky things) under the cinema too. The area can be reached via train from Matsuyama City Station.

Dogo Shotengai. This is a fantastic place to go when shopping for souvenirs to send home. It is focused at tourists because of the famous bathhouse at the end of the shopping arcade. You can buy food, pottery, clothes and Japanese souvenirs.

Emifull. A giant American-style mall with imported foods store, sports store, Loft, UNIQLO, movie theater and lots more. A 15 minute Iyotetsu train ride from Matsuyama Shieki to Koizumi Station (古泉). If you spend over 3000 yen in Emifull and show the receipts to the information centre they will provide you with a train ticket back to Matsuyama for free.

Department Stores

Takashimaya. Department store attached to Matsuyama city station. There is some grocery shopping in the basement, with sections carrying foreign foods (like peanut butter and spices). Be careful to pay in the correct area – it is not all one store! There are restaurants and plenty of other shops upstairs.

Mitsukoshi. Similar to Takashimaya and located in Okaido near Starbucks. Food is in the basement with two pastry stores, a meat store and another small section of foreign foods and cheeses. They also sell amazing mochi (rice balls) that are filled with different flavoured creams.

Shopping Centers

Fuji Grand. Large shopping centre 5 minutes' walk north of JR station; has groceries, fast-food outlets (**McDonalds, KFC, Mr Donut, Baskin Robbins, Subway**), clothing, fitness center, foreign foods and homewares. Also nearby are an Edeon electronics store and a Book Off/Hard Off (second hand books and electronics).

Jusco. 25 minute walk south of Gintengai's eastern entrance. It has groceries, clothing and home-ware. The second floor is also home to a restaurant that holds Matsuyama's largest parfait.

Daiki (various locations): home-wares and DIY equipment.

Miscellaneous

Donkihote. Doidamachi, about a 35 minute walk from shieki. Donki is packed from floor to roof with random goods. Clothes, underwear, makeup, snacks, alcohol, electronics, phone accessories, toys and homeware. The store also has seasonal goods like Halloween costumes and Christmas decorations.

Restation. Various locations throughout the city. This is a great second hand store where you can get many appliances and other things that you will need for daily life. There's one very close to the Donki Hote.

Grocery Shopping

Supermarkets

Fresh Value. Basement level of GET in Gintengai. Good prices. There are other Fresh Value locations around town that you have to cycle to. There's a big one on Kukou Dori (Airport Road) near Nishi JHS. On the 5th of each month, they have discount prices and pretty good deals.

Fuji Vesta and Palty Fuji: Grocery stores owned by the Fuji group. Lots of produce and some western items. They're everywhere including Dogo, Tachibana and Fujiwara. Get a point card to get discount coupons. The card also entitles you to a discount when buying cinema tickets.

Seven Star: always has cheap cheese and good lunch foods. Almost the same as Fuji as far as prepared foods and a good selection.

Marunaka. A little more of a gourmet store so it's a little more expensive. They have many more pre-made foods and sometimes carry foods you won't find elsewhere.

Jusco. There is a large grocery store on the ground floor of Jusco. Open until 11pm.

Sunny Mart. Grocery store open till midnight! Located in Kinuyama across the street from the movie theater and in various locations around the city.

Lamu. 24-hour grocery store located near Kinuyama beside Hamazushi. Probably the cheapest place in town to get groceries though their selection isn't as wide as other supermarkets.

Matsuyama Seikyo. Littered around the city. Another chain of supermarkets.

ZY. Discount grocery store owned by Fuji. There's one near Yougo station.

Gyomu Super. Wholesale supermarket that sells cheaper meat. There's one right next to Jow-pla, and another 15 minutes north of Kinuyama by bicycle. They also have a great selection of frozen foods, including fruits, vegetables and meats, all at low prices.

Local Produce

South Gintengai. There are two locally owned produce shops near the south end of Gintengai. Their fruits and veggies are much cheaper compared to those you get in grocery stores!

Kayamatchi Shotengai. Street near Fuji Grand, that is famous for their cheap, locally grown produce shops.

You're more likely to find local stores further from the city centre!

Foreign Foods

A-One. In Gintengai. Go here for things like popcorn, Mexican food fixings or candy. A good place for gifts!

A-Price. Off the airport road (kukodori). This is the best place to go for getting lots of stuff at a good price. Tortillas, spices, pasta, canned beans and fruits etc. It is a restaurant supply store, but you can shop there. They also have alcohol and frozen foods. A little hard to find at first, but if you are in front of the JR station, head south until the road hits the city train line. Turn right at that street (but don't cross over to the train side). The sign is read and written in katakana (エープライス).

Kaldi. Locations in Emifull and Fuji Grand. Imported foods from all over the world, many different kinds of coffee and a great selection of cheese wine.

Dining Out

This is just to get you started. There are many great local places that the people who live in Matsuyama will be able to tell you about.

Cafés

Starbucks. Okaido's entrance and Minatomachi (near Saibi Highschool). The only non-smoking café in town. Great for meeting with teachers or for finding other foreigners on the weekends.

Chococro (St. Marcs). There one in Okaido, and one in Gintengai. Great chocolate filled croissants!

Doutor. Café with a few bagel sandwiches, really cheap (in Gintengai, on a corner and next to Shieki)

Santo Santo. Variety of foods and desserts, two locations downtown. One is in the Takashimaya Building on the third floor with a nice view of the station area and in the alley behind Mitsukoshi.

K's Café. A cafe in Okaido. Associated with the Circle K convenience store. Tasty set meals and shakes.

Amanda's Coffee. A 3 story café located in Okaido. It has both smoking and non-smoking floors. You can get coffee, tea, iced beverages, alcohol, muffins, donuts, santo santo cakes and set meals – basically everything! It's a good place to hang out and people watch, or to study if you don't need an extremely quiet environment.

Tully's Coffee. Another coffee chain in Gintengai, they have great pancakes!

Japanese

Gazen. Behind Mitsukoshi Department store off Okaido. Great food and midrange prices.

Wataminchi. One of the best izakayas in town, Wataminchi is located at the entrance to Okaido near Starbucks.

300 Yen Bars. There are quite a few around Matsuyama, advertised by the huge “300 円” signs out front. Some of the more popular ones are located just off Gintengai and Okaido. One is directly next to the entrance of Gintengai, on the left, when coming from Shieki. Another is located one street over from Okaido. When you get to Amanda Coffee's (coming from Starbucks) turn right, then take the next left, next to ABC Shoe Mart. Go straight for 2 minutes, the bar is on your right!

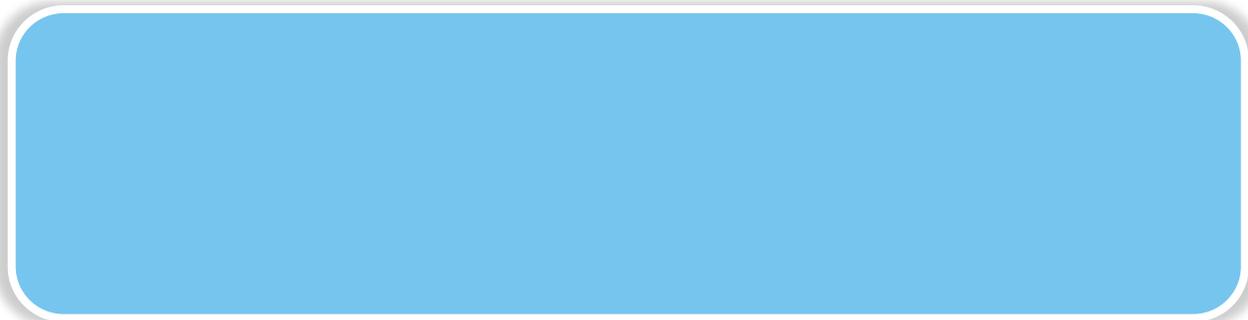
All food and drink is 300 yen (plus tax), including beer, highballs, edamame, fried chicken, sashimi, etc.

Za Watami. Chain izakaya, located just off Okaido on nibancho, to the left. Has great ceasar salad.
Ippudo. Excellent ramen place near Okaido. Lunch sets are particularly good value, as gyoza are included for free. Turn right at Amada Coffe's, then left at ABC Shoe Mart. Its just down the street on your left, with a ラーメン sign out front.

Sushi Ro. A chain of kaiten sushi restaurants that is great quality starting at 105 yen a plate. The most convenient one for most people is located near Jusco department store. A new one also opened in Kinuyama.

Dogo Brewery. A place to get the famous beer made in Dogo. Some really nice food is available too, as well as other beverages. Located directly next to Dogo Onsen!

Hanamaru. Very delicious cheap udon. Many locations, but most convenient in Gintengai. They also have tempura (veggies, shrimp) but it's often cold. Marugame Seimen serves really good udon.



Can

get crowded during lunch and dinner time. There's one in Asodamachi and Kinuyama.

Pizza

Delivery pizza places include [Pizza Hut](#), [Royal Hat](#) and [Chicago Town Pizza](#)

The best pizza is found at either "Da Bocciano" or "Paradiso", both on Nibancho (calzones and pasta as well). Also Indie's Kashi Mashu (Kuwabara-chou) has good pizza. You can also order pizza online **IN ENGLISH** from Dominos Pizza at dominos.jp/en. It's a lifesaver if Japanese is not your forte!

Pasta

La Sera. Located about two blocks west of the Sunkust convenience store at the crossroads between Gintengai and Okaido, has the best lasagna in town, along with very good chicken dishes. Duet across the street from Shieki is a small but nice pasta place with huge portions.

Amare Amare. Located on Nibancho near Matsuyama New Grand hotel, has excellent pastas and salads.

Burgers

McDonalds. Sprinkled throughout Matsuyama.

Freshness Burger. Good hamburgers, located off Gintengai (from Shieki, go down Gintengai, and turn left at the first alley).

Flat Burger. A locally owned burger place located at the point where Okaido and Gintengai meet. They make delicious avocado burgers, and their fries are tasty. The most "Western" tasting burgers in town.

Mos Burger. Famous for their rice burgers! Another chain you might be familiar with. There are some in Amayama, Mitsuhama, Kuwabara and Emifull.

Indian

Ladki. Has a great lunch set. One is near Shieki and one's near Starbucks at the end of the Okaido shopping arcade.

Everest. (Kinuyama, Okaido, Shigenobu) has great Indian/Nepalese food.

Namaste. Two locations, one on Nibancho near Matsuyama Grand hotel and another a 2 min walk from Shieki, also offers excellent Indian food with free naan or rice refills.

French

Amitie. Delicious but slightly pricey and is downtown Matsuyama near Shiroyama (Castle Mountain) park (the place with the moat). Try lunch, just as good and half the cost.

Cabaret. Next to the Yamaha piano store near Shieki on the 3rd floor.

Buffet (“Viking”)

Okudogo Buffet. For a weekend feast, this “Viking” (aka buffet) is a great deal for 1500yen (bring a hot pepper coupon book and it’s only 1200yen). It comes with a ticket to the “Jungle Onsen” which has about 10 different hot springs in a jungle-like atmosphere. Highly recommended. Located at the Okudogo Hotel. Access by the #52 bus toward Okudogo. Near the hotel you can see cherry blossoms in spring.

Charlie’s Vegetable. Has a nice vegetarian buffet. Much cheaper at lunch. If you’re heading up Ropeway from Starbucks turn down the street on your right that has a guitar shop on it.

Korean

Ansan. A small Korean restaurant north of Gintengai. Cross the Tachibana bridge and keep walking until you see it (on the left side of the road). Cheap and delicious. Omoni is a popular Korean restaurant near the Okada train station (one stop away from Emifull). Delicious and reasonably priced.

By Location	
Okaido	McDonalds, shabu-shabu, yakitori, soba, Italian, beefbowl, udon, izakaya.
Gintengai	Japanese curry, Freshness Burger, Doutour, Okonomiyaki
Matsuchika (underground near Shieki)	Ramen station, tonkatsu (fried pork)
Fuji Grand	KFC, McDonalds, Nagasaki Champon, Baskin Robbins, Subway, Donto.

Leisure

Kinuyama Cinema Sunshine. Movie theater in the Kinuyama area. Check the listings [here](#).

Okaido Cinema Sunshine. Theater in one of the main shopping areas. Listings [here](#).

Kisuke Box. Located across from the JR Station; has bowling, an arcade, billiards and an onsen.

Soratomori. Onsen located near Kume station. One of the nicest in Ehime! Besides standard onsen pools there are multiple steamrooms, hot and ice rooms to experience. Massages and Korean body scrubs are also available. The food is amazing too. Check it out [here](#).

More bowling at the north end of Okaido in Fastbowl or near Kinuyama. Jungle Onsen at Okudogo Hotel.

Sports and Exercise

Comi-Cen. The easiest place to get started is at the Comi-Cen (Community Centre). There is a great lap swimming pool, a free weight gym, a nautilus-type machine as well as a cardio gym and squash/badminton/ping pong courts available to be rented.

How to use the Comi-Cen

For the **pool**, you must walk downstairs and use the machine to buy a ticket for 200yen. This has a time mark on it. Each hour is 200yen. As you enter, you will need to remove your shoes and put them into a plastic bag. Walk into the locker room area. Lockers require a 50yen coin to lock and be able to carry the key with you. Locking is recommended, as there is sometimes theft at the pools. Rinse in the shower, walk through the foot cleaning pool and there you are! You must use a swim cap. If you don't have one, they have yellow ones available poolside. Remember, if you go over an hour, you must pay more money! As you leave, show that time-marked ticket to the woman and either pay more or be on your way.

For the **gyms**, upstairs as you enter the exercise building, there is a counter with cards. Please fill in the card (English is fine) and hand it to the attendant. You will need to pay 200yen and they will give you a wrist band. Go to it! Then return the wrist band as you leave.

For the squash/badminton/table tennis **COURTS**, bookings can be made on the day or over the Internet if you sign up for a card.

Tennis Courts. There are places to play tennis all over town. Many parks have tennis areas (along Ishite Koen). Botchan Stadium has nice ones, but they are often in use by university clubs.

Botchan Stadium. Very nice sports arena and area of Matsuyama City. There is a baseball stadium, soccer fields, tennis courts, a swimming pool, and a martial arts area.

Private gyms. There are lots of private gyms where you can pay if you want an alternative to comi-cen.

Martial Arts. There are a large number of martial arts groups in Matsuyama especially Kyokushin Karate. Ashihara is a very popular off shoot of kyokushin and Matsuyama is home to the Hombo Dojo. To get started ask at your local communities halls and centers for more information.

Nightlife

Most of Matsuyama's nightlife is centered on the **streets east of Okaido**. Here are just a few spots:

Bibros. Club located to the east of Okaido, between Nibancho and Sanbancho on the 7th floor of a building (usually with a 1500yen+ cover)

Flankee's Bar. Located one block east of the McDonald's in Okaido. Cheapest beer in town at 300yen. Standing room only.

14 – 1. In the building opposite Flankee's on the third floor. Pool table, darts board, karaoke, Wii games, a wide selection of cocktails and a generous nomihodai.

Sala Sol. One of the few places to go dancing in Matsuyama. Located to the east of Okaido, between Sanbancho and the Levi Jeans store.

Choco Bar. Matsuyama's other cheap standing bar. Located two blocks south and an additional block east of Flankey's.

Salon Kitty. A small local live venue where many bands come and play. Located just beside the bridge near the intersection of Tachibana and Gintengai. You can't miss the giant stripper painted on the front wall.

Jett. A small bar located about a five minute walk from Flankees. A rock venue which converts to a dance bar when DJs come.

Linda Linda. A great bar for organizing events just down the street from Jett. Very friendly staff, darts, karaoke and you can bring your own music.

Hungry's. one of the only truly "pub style" bars in Matsuyama with plenty of Irish and British paraphernalia on the walls. They have great food and drinks at mid range prices. They also have a dart board and a few TV's. It's located three blocks East of Okaido, between Nibancho and Sanbancho on the left side of the street.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Matsuyama Castle. Located to the north of the prefectural building, accessible by foot or chairlift. To get to the chairlift, go up the ropeway and head into the large castle center at about 3/4 of the way up on your left. Inside you can buy tickets and pick up pamphlets in various languages about the history and highpoints of the castle. The castle has a beautiful view of the city, as well as a place to dress up like a samurai inside. A great (but sometimes crowded) place to do hanami (cherry blossom viewing) in the spring. Get there early to claim a spot!

Dogo Onsen. A hot spring famous for being the oldest in Japan is located in the northeast section of town, surrounded by shopping and several high-class hotels. It was the inspiration for the onsen in Miyazaki's 'Spirited Away'.

Dogo Park. A beautiful park located just across the street from Dogo Onsen Station. You can walk to an observatory at the top for great views of Matsuyama City (especially good views at night time). This is also the location of the ruins of Yuzuki Castle. Most of information is entirely in Japanese, but you can take a short wander around if you're in the park. There is also a small open field for sports and a small playground. Dogo Park is an excellent location for cherry blossom viewing in the spring time. You can rent mats, barbeques and there are food stalls set up throughout the hanami season.

Pick up a
What's Going On
brochure at COMS,
EPIC, train stations or
any bookstore to find
more sightseeing
highlights!

Matsuyama Community Centre. Home to a library, swimming pool and gym.

Shiroyama Koen. Park, located in the center of the castle moat, and contains the prefectural museum and traditional gardens.

Ishiteji. A famous temple located south of the Dogo area of town. Several festivals are held there at various times of the year. It is number 51 of the 88 temple pilgrimage round Shikoku. There are plenty of trails up behind the temple as well, and you can hike up to a large statue of Kobo Daishi in the hills.

Sogo Koen. European-style park with a mini castle west of JR station. It's a long hike up to a grassy area where you can picnic and see a nice view of Matsuyama.

Tsubaki Shrine. Arguably the shrine to visit while in Matsuyama. There's a huge festival held there every year around February.

Accommodation

Abis Hotel. Two locations: opposite prefectural building, and corner of Ichibancho and Katsuyama-doori. 5,000 yen/night

Toyoko Inn. Ichibancho, east of Okaido. 5,300yen/night

Guest House Matsuyama. On the Ropeway, just north of Starbucks

Dogo Youth Hostel. Located in Dogo up a hill. Nice and cheap.
Sen Guesthouse Matsuyama. Newly opened hostel in Matsuyama. Friendly staff and private onsen-style baths for a small fee!

Hospitals

Ehime Prefectural Hospital, Shimin Hospital

Ehime-kenritsu Chuo Byoin

Iio Clinic, *English speaking General Practitioner near City Hall*

Ehime University Hospital

Minami Matsuyama Hospital, *located in South Matsuyama is open on weekends*

What's Going On prints the emergency hospitals for each month (available at EPIC, MIC/COMs)

Women's Health

See the **Women's Health** section on page ___ for more information.

There is a female gynecologist at **Shimin Hospital** near JR station, Dr Yuuko Kawamoto.

There is also an English-speaking doctor at the **Mariko Ladies Clinic**, near Chifunemachi Doori.

NTT Hospital in the moat area

Yano Maternity Clinic, near EPIC – good gynecologists!

Opticians

Takeoka Contact. Up the Ropeway Street from Ichibancho Street so that Starbucks is on your right and LaForet is behind you. It's about two minutes on foot; keep to the right hand side
Tanaka Glasses. Located about half way down Gintengai.

Other Essentials

EPIC (Ehime Prefecture International Centre) is a very handy place! Catch a tram bound for Dogo from Matsuyama City Station or from Okaido and get off at Minamimachi. There is a woman on staff, Omori-san, who speaks English and will help you find a doctor, understand a bill or do anything else she can to assist you. You can park your car (please ask first). Intensive Japanese classes are held twice a year for two weeks each for summer and spring. Internet and good lending library too! You can also rent bicycles from EPIC.

MIC/COMs is downtown, near Shieki. This is a good place to study and use the internet. They do book loans and have travel guides too.

Looking for English books?

EPIC: free lending library. Just fill out your name in the back card and leave at EPIC.

Comi-Cen: quite an extensive collection of English books. Fill out the application card in English – bring proof of your address or foreigner card. Borrow for up to two weeks.

Junkudo: has a great selection of English books for sale on the fifth floor.

Looking for the Internet?

EPIC: free computer use (but slow).

MIC/COMs: Set up a membership to use the computers for 100yen/hour. These connections are much better than the free ones at EPIC and worth the money.

City Station: air conditioned room next to the train ticket machine; internet use is free, with a limit of 15 minutes if people are waiting

Coffee Shops: Some coffee shops, such as Tully's (the one in Gintengai) provide wireless access.



Incorporating the areas of Imabari, Kamijima, Namikata, Onishi, Kikuma, Tamagawa, Asakura, Oshima, Hakatajima, and Omishima



Imabari Area 今治

Description

Imabari is a port city that lies on the coast of Ehime Prefecture, facing the Seto Inland Sea. Not only does Imabari have a varied landscape with green mountainous areas and a world-class archipelagic Shimanami-Tobishima area, but it is also widely known for its towel and ship building industries. A few years ago, the old city merged with a number of other districts to form the second largest city in Ehime, with a population of about 172,000 people; however the old districts' distinct identities still remain. Ehime was only connected to *Honshu*, the main island of Japan, about 10 years ago.

Please see <http://www.city.imabari.ehime.jp/> and http://iciea.jp/e_index.html for more information.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Spring Festivals: or “Haru Matsuri,” is a string of festivals that take place each year in the beginning of May, typically during Golden Week (a string of national holidays that fall within a one-week period; one of the most popular vacation times in Japan). Most of these festivals take place at local shrines throughout the Imabari area, and typically feature a type of dance called Tsugijishi. Most of these festivals also feature taiko (Japanese traditional drumming), and mikoshi (portable shrines carried on the shoulders of groups of men).

Noma Jinja: the most famous of the spring festivals takes place at Noma Jinja (shrine). This festival features five groups of Tsugijishi dancers (a type of lion dance).

Onmaku: is Imabari City's biggest annual festival, usually held during the first weekend in August. It is a two-day festival that features a variety of traditional Japanese dancing, Japanese Taiko drumming, game and food booths, and an incredible hour-long fireworks show over the Seto Inland Sea.

Imabari Jazz Festival: Imabari is famous for Jazz music, and hosts a two-day Jazz festival in September of each year, attracting Jazz artists from all around Japan who come to perform at different venues throughout the city.

Otomo-uma: is held on the third Sunday of October each year, at Kamo Jinja (shrine) in Kikuma-cho. It is an autumn festival meant to ensure the health of the people and a plentiful harvest. The festival features Tsugijishi (lion dancing), and mikoshi fights... but the main feature is a horseracing event called “Uma-no-



Famous For...

Towel Production: Imabari towel companies make up about 60% of Japan's towel production industry.

Ship building: largest ship building yard in Japan, and 4th largest in the world.

The Shimanami Kaido: a scenic 70km long highway that links the islands of the Seto Inland Sea with nine individual bridges. Tourists enjoy cycling along this scenic Shimanami Kaido area as a cyclist mecca.

Sakurai Shikki: beautiful Japanese lacquer ware that comes from the town of Sakurai. It is well known throughout Japan as one of the finest, most reasonably priced lacquer ware.

Kikuma Gawara: Japanese roofing tile produced in the Kikuma region. Their production dates back 700 years.

Seafood: Imabari is famous for its seafood because of its prime location on the Seto Inland Sea.

Yaki-tori: delicious grilled chicken skewers

Barisan! Imabari's city mascot, Barisan was 2nd in an all-Japan city mascot competition in 2011 and won first place in 2012. Everything about the mascot's design is symbolic of the city. Barisan is a chicken wrapped in a towel (haramaki), clutching a ship-shaped wallet and wearing a tiara of the Shimanami bridges.

hashirikomi.” Brave boys race horses clad in colorful adornments up a 300-meter approach to the shrine.

Imabari Castle (Imabari-Jo)

Built in 1604 by Takaora Todo, it is a rare coast-side open castle, and boasts one of the only sea water-supplied moats in the world.

There is a fabulous view from the observation deck on the 6th floor of the tower. You can see a panoramic view of the entire city, the Ishizuchi Mountain Range (the highest mountain in Western Japan), the Seto Inland Sea, and the first Shimanami-kaido Bridge that leads to Oshima.

In the spring, the castle grounds are a popular location for ohanami (cherry blossom viewing parties).

The castle grounds are open to the public 24 hours a day, but the castle itself is only open from 9am to 5pm (last entrance at 4:30pm), and the entrance fee is 400yen for adults, and 100yen for children.

Shimanami-kaido (Shimanami Sea Road)

The Shimanami-kaido is a highway that connects Imabari City to Onomichi City in Hiroshima Prefecture, by six bridges, crossing over six islands.

You can cross the bridge via car, motorbike, scooter, bicycle, or foot. Bicycle and foot-crossing events are held throughout the year.

Spring and autumn are popular seasons for cycling and walking this beautiful route when the weather is milder.

It is about a 70km journey from the foot of the bridge in Imabari to Onomichi but if you're not keen on riding both ways, you can choose to ditch your bike on the other side and catch a bus or ferry back to Shikoku.

There are also bike terminals on each of the islands, along the way so you can drop your bike off at one of these terminals (for a fee), then head back on a bus or ferry. The views along the way are breathtaking. The water is a gorgeous blue-green color, and the lush mountainous islands are lined with beaches.



Rental terminals in Imabari City

Imabar-shi Cycle Station

Hours: 8:30am-5:00pm

Address: 252-2 Ko Noagasawa, tel: 0898-47-0990

Imabari-shi Cycling Terminal “Sunrise Itoyama”

Hours: Apr-Sept: 8am-8pm; Oct-Mar 8am-5pm

Address: 2-8-1 Sunaba-cho (located at the foot of the first bridge), tel: 0898-41-3196

Pricier rentals for fancier bikes are available at the Giant underneath Imabari station, but these must be brought back to the store.

Other Biking Paths

Hugging the ocean along the northern tip of Ehime, taking the sea road out towards Matsuyama, going through Tamagawa, trekking to Saijo, etc. Just explore and you'll find some great areas.

Onsen “Hot Springs”

Yu-no-ura Onsen. Located on a hill at the most eastern part of Imabari, in the Machinami Area, Yu-no-ura has gorgeous views of the city, Sakurai and the Seto Sea. It is said to be one of the finest hot springs in Shikoku because of the naturally occurring chemical properties of the water.

Nibukawa Onsen. The most famous onsen in Imabari lies in the Nibukawa gorge, upstream from Soja River. It is a nice place to enjoy cherry blossoms and autumn leaves. This hot spring has been known for its fine water quality since the Heian Period. There is a bus that runs there from Imabari Ferry Port, and Imabari station.

Kiyomasa-no-yu. Features a variety of indoor baths, as well as a beautiful outdoor bath. There is also a big swimming pool, a small climbing wall, and a bare minimum gym.

Chikutei. Located just up the hill from Kiyomasa-no-yu. Chikutei is smaller, but far more peaceful. It features indoor and outdoor baths. The outdoor baths are guarded by a thick bamboo forest, which gives it a beautiful and calming atmosphere. No children allowed.

88 Temple Pilgrimage

Shikoku is home to Japan's most famous pilgrimage route. Many Japanese people follow this path on a quest for spiritual peace. The journey is said to be the spiritual legacy of the famous priest, Kobo Daishi (774-835), who founded the Shingon sect of Buddhism. "Hachijuhakkasho-meguri," as it is called in Japanese, consists of 88 temples over a 1,200km stretch that loops around Shikoku. Although bike and bus tours are commonplace, most pilgrims who walk cover an average of about 25km per day, and finish the course in about five to seven weeks.

Imabari is home to six of these temples.

Imabari Towel Museum

Address: 2930 Asakura-kami, Imabari-shi; tel: 0898-56-1515

Hours: 9:30am-6:00pm (5:30 Nov-Mar); Closed second Tuesday of each month

Ohanami (cherry blossom viewing party)

Throughout spring, cherry blossoms bloom in different parts of Japan, depending upon the weather. Ohanami season is short, but glorious! It is a favorite spring pastime for people all over Japan. People have BBQs or bento picnics under the trees. Night viewing parties are also popular.

Popular places for ohanami in Imabari include the [Imabari Castle](#), [Tamagawa Dam](#), [Shimin-no-mori Park](#), [Tondagawa River Bank](#), and [Hirakiyama Park](#).

Summer BBQ by the river

There is a really lovely spot on the river in Nibukawa, where the water is almost turquoise in the summer, and tall trees shade the banks. It is great for summer BBQs and swims!

Beach

In the summer, hit one of the many beaches that line the coasts of Imabari, and its islands, where you can swim, kayak, play beach sports, etc... [Kamioke beach](#) in Onishi is one of the best beaches in Imabari

Leisure

Gyms and Fitness

Imabari City Gym. Admission Fee: The cheapest gym admission in Imabari, prices TBA

Closed for renovations until February 2015 Address: 6-2-2 Bekku-cho, tel: 0898-24-2351

Weights, treadmills, basketball courts that are also used for volleyball, badminton, and indoor soccer. They also have an area for karate, judo and aikido as well as tennis courts and a baseball field nearby.

Classes offered: [yoga](#), [volleyball](#), [badminton](#), [table tennis](#), [aerobics](#), [futsal](#), [fitness weight training](#), etc.

Cross temples

#54 – *Enmei-ji*

#55 – *Nanko-bo*

#56 – *Taisan-ji*

#57 – *Eifuku-ji*

#58 – *Senyu-ji*

#59 – *Kokubun-ji*

**off your list in
Imabari!**

Axtos. Gym with weight machines, pool, and studio (yoga class, hula, hip hop, aerobics...)
3-1-6 Kinuboshi-cho Imabari-shi [tel: 0898-34-1331] 34.049041,133.015482 (google map)

Z-up. Gym.
610-2 Kamitoku-kou Imabari-shi [tel: 0898-48-7400] 34.041992,133.014911
Makoto Swimming Club Futaba. 4320yen~/month

There are a few places to learn **scuba diving** near the port! Ask around or look for a van with advertisements on the side if you're interested.

Chikamiyama (近見山). A small mountain in Chikami, many older people walk to the top of it. Good exercise, a great view of Imabari, and a few hidden paths along the trail.

Movie Theatres

iCinema. 2-2-20 Kyoei-cho, Imabari [tel: 0898-34-7155]
1000yen tickets on the first day of each month
1000yen tickets for ladies every Wednesday,
1000yen tickets for late shows (start time at, or after, 8pm)

Fuji Grand. 6 screen movie theatre. Various 1000 yen specials on selected days. Monday is Men's night, Wednesdays is ladies' night. AU customers get specials on weekdays.

Education

Language

The ICIEA can help you find either a conversation partners (free) or language tutors (~1000yen/hour).

Culture classes

Kinro Seisyonen Home (Working Youth Center)

1-1-16 Kitahorai-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-32-2698
34.063806,132.995178

Handicraft, Calligraphy, Kimono School (to learn how to put on a kimono properly), Tea Ceremony, Painting, Cooking, Flower Arrangement (Japanese & Western style), Koto (Japanese zither), Yoga, Baking, Ping-Pong

Nightlife

Party!

Although Imabari does not have a huge, bustling nightlife, there are still a few places to go have a good time with friends. Matsumoto-cho is a bar district in the downtown area of Imabari (running perpendicular to the Ginza) that features a large variety of bars, but beware of snack bars (hostess bars). The bars in Matsumoto-cho tend to have table fees, or pricy drinks. A popular one is...

Tin Goose. Jazz Bar; owner plays the guitar and knows many foreign songs that you can sing along to (there is a table charge). Atmosphere depends on the crowd, and can be pretty hit or miss. Hours: 8pm-3am

Address: 1-4-30 Matsumoto-cho
Telephone: 0898-35-1020

Rokusan 禄さん. A cool little bar, the owner is friendly, has a huge collection of records and sometimes takes requests. Great atmosphere, good drinks. There is a bar section and a lounge in the back.

Address: 1-5-2 Kogane-cho
Telephone:0898-23-1020

Karaoke!!

Wao. Entertainment center with karaoke, billiards, purikura, and video games

Hours: 11am-2am (roughly); they stay open until about 3am on Fridays; and about 4am on Saturdays

Address: 3-12-30 Koizumi, Imabari-shi,

Telephone: 0898-23-1511

Maneki-neko. Smaller, and not as nice as Wao, but cheaper; popular among high school students; upstairs from a billiards bar

Open 24 hours

Address: 8-2-7 Tokiwa-cho

Telephone: 0898-34-3211

Dining Out

[Ehime JET Google Restaurant Map](#) (from 2011)

Korean

[Korea Town](#) コリアタウン

3-1-29 Gion-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-23-5078

34.054993,133.003302

Hours: 11:00-22:00 (It fills up, so you should probably reserve in advance.)

Italian

[Albero](#) アルベロ

2F; 3-2-1 Minamihorai-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-31-5292

34.058837,133.002057

Hours: 17:00-23:00, lunch only by reservation

Closed: not fixed



Cucina Italiana Umakoshi. This restaurant operates on a reservation only basis. They have dinner and lunch set courses. Lunch is a good price and dinner is a bit more expensive, but worth the money. They also have wood oven pizzas! Address: 71-3 Tokushige, Imabari-shi, 794-0863
Telephone: 0898-32-6044

Osteria Miyagawa (on route to Nitori)

Tsuchibashi-cho, 1-9-43, tel: 0898-34-5919

34.049906,133.004595

Hours: 18:00-23:00 (LO)

Closed: Sunday and Monday

Farina Fresca (near Sai Sai on the 196). Fantastic Italian food and a fairly decent wine selection too. It has a really summery feel as well!

Nakadera 254-4, 794-0840, tel: 0898-35-2009

Hours: 11:30-14:00/18:00-22:00

Closed: Sundays

Tou. Great Italian restaurant close to Daiki on Sangyo Road (the one the Castle entrance is on). Lunch sets are great and reasonably priced.

Higashi-toriu-cho, 4-1-46, tel: 0898-33-2789

34.050012,133.018982

Hours: 11:30-14:00/17:00-22:00

Closed: Sundays

Spanish

[ESPANA MIRO](#).

3-20 Haishi Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-48-1536

34.042179,133.025347

Hours: 11:30-14:00 17:30-21:00- need a reservation

Closed: Tuesdays

Vegan

Magnolia. Probably the only vegan restaurant in Ehime! See the [Tamagawa Section for more information](#).

<http://cafe-magnolia.jugem.jp/>

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

<http://tabelog.com/ehime/A3802/A380201/38005689/dtlrvwlst/>

Address: 玉川町長谷甲 1060-1 Telephone: 0898-55-4350

Hours: 9AM-5:30PM

Closed: Wednesdays

Chinese

Chouan 長安

1-9-18 Nakahiyoshi-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-32-5178

34.062815, 132.993563

Hours: Weekdays 11:00-15:00 and 17:00-22:00; Sat, Sun & holidays 11:00-22:00

Closed: Tuesdays

Buisan

4-1-23 Koizumi, Imabari-shi (located next to the police station), Telephone: 0898-32-0775

Hours: 11:00-22:00

Indian

Spice Kingdom スパイス王国

5-13-1 Higashimon-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-34-6688

34.061512,133.014843 (located at Fuji Grand)

Hours: 11:00-22:00

Japanese

Gyukaku 牛角 (Yaki-niku)

3-2-7 Asahi-machi Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-34-7001

34.060886,133.001749

Hours: 17:00-24:00-last order 23.30. Sometimes you need a reservation to do the big set meals.

Uichi has
amazing
yakitori! Give
it a try!

Goen (Yaki-niku) Kinubushi-cho, 2-chome, 1648-1, tel: 0898-24-6780

Hours: 17:00-24:00 Monday-Saturday, 11:30-24:00 Sunday and Holidays

Uichi ういち (Yaki-tori)

8-1-35 Tokiwa-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-23-8851

Hours: 17:30~23:00

Closed: Sunday & holidays

Gomidori 五味鳥 (Yaki-tori). Very famous, very good, very smoky inside.

1-5-20 Asahimachi, Imabari, Telephone: 0898-32-3753

Hours: 5:30PM-11:30PM

Tatsugawa たつ川. Imabari-style yakitori!

6-7-33 Tokiwa-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-25-7788

34.05905,132.991031

Hours: 18:00-23:00 Monday-Saturday

Closed: Sundays

Tarome-tei たろめ亭. Okonomiyaki restaurant near DeoDeo.

3-3-65 Umagoe-cho Imabari-shi, 0898-33-3690

34.058477,132.981074
Hours: 11:00~15:00(LO14:30); 17:00~23:00(LO22:30)
Closed: Tuesday

Begin. Okonomiyaki restaurant near AEON.
4-5-36 Umagoe-cho Imabari-shi, : 0898-32-6541
34.055293,132.981992
Hours: 11:00~22:00 (LO21:30)
Closed: Tuesday (open on a national holiday and is closed on the next day)

Menya Takeyoshi 麵屋武吉. A ramen joint.
Hours: 11:00-14:00; 17:00-20:00
Closed: Wednesdays

Mitsuya 光屋. A ramen joint.
5-1-18 Tokiwa-cho Imabari-shi 0898-32-3227
34.061626,132.995478
Hours: 11:00-14:00 18:00-21:00
Closed: Tuesdays

Sushi-suigun. Conveyor belt sushi.
5-2-20 Tenpozan-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-22-8788
34.062686,133.016195
Hours: Mon-Fri 11:00~14:00 and 17:00~22:00; Sat, Sun & holidays 11:00~22:00 (Last Order 21:30)



Sushi-ro. Conveyor belt sushi – just 105 yen per plate!
Nakadera 598-1, Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-33-8024
Hours: 11:00-23:00 (22:30 LO)

Hamazushi (conveyor belt sushi)
4-5-18 Bekkucho Imabari-shi, TEL: 0898-33-7170
Hours: 11 AM – 11 PM

Tosendou. Kakigori (Japanese shaved ice) is very popular in summer, beware of queues.

Matsumoto-cho 3-2-28, tel: 0898-22-5735
34.062562,133.00282
Hours: 9:00-19:00. Shaved ice served until 18:00
Closed: Sundays

Izakaya

Rokusuke (izakaya)
Koizumi 4-6-38, Imabari, tel: 0898-33-1090
Hours: 18:00-2:00am
Closed: Tuesday

Wataminchi わたみんな家. An izakaya.
3-6-19 Tokiwa-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-34-3071
34.065805,132.999265
Hours: 17:00-3:00am

Cafés

Gaka 雅歌. Cute café w/ coffee, tea, sweets, and yummy lunch sets.
1-1-7 Ebisu-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-22-8788

34.067612,133.004686

Hours: 9:00-22:00

Closed: Sundays

VERDURE. Cute café near Imabari Castle entrance.

1-1-5 Misuka-cho Imabari-shi, tel: 0898-24-1566

34.064797,133.008444

Hours: 9:00-23:00 (LO 22:30)

Closed: Thursdays

Ichimishin オリエント珈琲 一味真. Really nice atmosphere!

2-229-1 Kanebacho Imabari-shi, TEL: 0898-25-3939

Hours: 8:30-22:30 (L.O. 22:00)

Barrel Coffee and Roasters. Café and brewery!

1-4-44 Kitatacashita-cho TEL: 0898-33-1017

Hours: 11AM-11PM

Closed: Mondays, and if Monday is a holiday the following Tuesday as well.

“Recently moved to Imabari from Matsuyama. There are some bars with decent beer selections in Ehime, but this place takes the cake with an assortment of top U.S. microbrew labels like Stone and Anchor, along with many other rarities.”

– Harrison

Shopping

Supermarkets

Fuji Grand. Indoor shopping mall with stores, restaurants, bowling, video games, 100yen shop, internet café, and six screen movie theatre

Aeon. Large supermarket (kind of like Wal-Mart); bottom floor is the grocery store with a large cosmetics section, a bicycle shop and a McDonald's; 2nd floor has mainly men's, women's, and children's apparel; 3rd floor has a hundred yen shop (daiso) and almost anything else you could possibly need (i.e. kitchen ware, bedding, furniture, books, toys, bikes, electronic appliances, school supplies, etc... and even seasonal goods, such as Valentine's Day chocolates – a big deal in Japan)

A-Coop. Grocery store; prices for many items are more expensive than in other supermarkets, but MEAT is really cheap!!! There's also a nice bakery inside that posts the time fresh bread will be available. Some of these around town have quiona (for you **vegetarians** out there).

Fuji Market (Koizumi). 1st floor grocery store; 2nd floor department store with a small 100 yen shop

Malls and Shopping Arcades

World Plaza. The largest mall in Imabari; Large do-it-yourself hardware store, 100yen shop, restaurants

Ginza. Covered shopping arcade; the original shopping district in Imabari. The busiest time is during the Onmaku festival, otherwise it's relatively quiet.



Home Improvement

Daiki. Large do-it-yourself hardware store; daily goods; gardening tools

Nitori. Large furniture and home interiors shop. Has the funkiest selection of home ware. Best place to go for house essentials like bedding and curtains. Also reasonably priced furniture including beds and **kotatsu (Japanese heated tables).**

1-9-41 Higashimuraminami, Imabari-shi, 799-1507.

Electronics

DeoDeo. A huge electronics store

Yamada Denki. Merely a big electronics store

Books

Tsutaya. CD, DVD, and Video rental shop; also sells CDs, and typically features a small English music section

Outdoor Goods

Elk. Outdoor adventure store; climbing, camping equipment, etc.

Clothing

Uniqlo. Clothing store for men, women, children, and babies... big chain, kind of like The Gap. It's reasonably priced, and if you are any bigger than the average sized Japanese person, this may be one of the only safe bets for finding clothes that will fit you. Uniqlo is great because you can find clothes for work and play.

Location/Access/Transport Within Toyo A

Bus: *To/From Yo-no-ura*. Take the Komatsu Line (31 minutes; 520yen)
To/From World Plaza. Take the Komatsu Line, Niihama Station Line, or Mine Topia Line (15 minutes; 250yen)
To/From Nibukawa Hot Spring. Take Kamikomori Line (28 minutes, 570yen)

To/From Matsuyama. **Setouchi Express Bus Line** connects Matsuyama == Imabari == Oshima == Hakatajima == Omishima, runs throughout the day

There are many different local bus routes, but be aware that most run fairly infrequently.

Schedules: available at the following places (Japanese only):

<http://www.setouchibus.co.jp/>

Imabari Eki-Mae (= in front of the station) 今治駅前 Bus Terminal ticket window (the bus terminal in front of Imabari JR Station)

On the buses (near one of the front seats)

Kaisuken – packets of discounted tickets that can be used in any combination to make up a bus fare. (i.e. a booklet of tickets purchased for 2000yen buys you 15 tickets worth 100yen, 10 tickets worth 50 yen, and 20 tickets worth 10yen... a value of 2200yen in total)

Kaisuken can be purchased from the driver, or from the Eki-mae Bus Terminal ticket window.

Train:

Imabari is on the JR (Japan Railways) Line
Local trains (**kakuekiteisha** 各駅停車) connect the smaller towns in the area. The local stations in the Toyo A region are: Iyo-Kameoka 伊予亀岡, Onishi 大西, Namikata 波方, Hashihama 波止浜, Imabari 今治, Iyo-Tomita 伊予富田, Iyo-Sakurai 伊予桜井.

Smartphone users: Yahoo! Japan has a great, free app for trains.

Timetables are available inside the train station or online at [Hyperdia](#) or [Jorudan](#) (both in English).

Bike:

For sightseeing within the Imabari area, it may be easiest to rent a bike. Bikes can be rented from the 'Giant' store in Imabari Station or see above in the Shimanami Kaido section for other rental shops.

Taxi:

For sightseeing; there are two types: small and medium
Small taxis start their meters at 550yen for the first 1,500m
Medium taxis start their meters at 560yen for the first 1,500m
After 1500m, the fare climbs quickly; it will still increase while waiting in traffic; etc.

From 10:00pm to 5:00am, the fare increases 20%
 There is a taxi rank outside the back entrance of the station.
 One good company is: **Tokiwa Taxi: 0898-22-0011**

Ferry: Several local ferry lines run from Imabari Sanbashi (Port) 今治棧橋 connecting the various islands of Toyo A. (There is also one ferry that runs out of Namikata.) Sanbashi port is about 20 minutes' walk or a short bus ride from the JR Train Station. [Route maps and links to timetables](#) (Japanese only)

Ferries listed in this section go from **Imabari Sanbashi**. For more information on other ferries from the islands, please see the relevant island pages below.

From Sanbashi	
Innoshima 因島 (Habu Port, Chuo Sanbashi 土生)	This high-speed boat is the best way to access the Kamijima Town 上島町 islands from Imabari. Stops at Oshima 大島 (Tomoura Port 友浦), Hakatajima 伯方島 (Kinoura Port 木浦), Iwagi 岩城, Sashima 佐島, Yuge 弓削 and Ikina 生名.
Oshima 大島 (Shitadami Port 下田水港) Kyowa Kisen Line	High speed ferry 15mins
Omishima 大三島 (Miyaura Port 宮浦) Omishima Blue Line	Regular ferry 90 min Fast ferry 1 hour Regular ferry stops at Omishima 大三島 (Munakata Port 宗方港) and Osakikamijima 大崎上島 (Kinoo Port 木江港)
Okamurajima 岡村島 (Okamura Port 岡村港)	Regular ferry 80 mins Fast ferry 35 min Regular ferry stops at Kooogejima 小大下島 (Kooogejima Port 小大下港) and Oshitajima 大下島 (Oshita Port 大下港) Okamura is the start of a chain of island bridges that go directly to Kure in Hiroshima Prefecture! Great for cycling, roughly the same distance as the Shimanami. Avoid the mountain road, although there are very nice Mikan farmers all along it!

Location/Access/Transport Outside Toyo A

Bus: *To Fukushima Station 福山*. [Shimanami Liner] (Great way to get to the shinkansen); about 1 hour 30 minutes; one-way 2500 yen; round-trip 4500 yen; book of 4 tickets costs 8,200yen
 **Cannot be used as a local bus (i.e. you must cross the prefectural border)

To/From Hiroshima Bus Center 広島. [Shimanami Liner] About 2 hours 30 minutes; one-way 3700yen; round-trip 6650 yen; book of 4 tickets cost 12,300 yen; departs three times each weekday, and six times on Saturday and Sunday.
 **Cannot be used as a local bus (i.e. you must cross the prefectural border)

To/From Kobe Sannomiya 神戸 and Osaka Eki-mae 大阪. [Ishizuchi Liner]
 One-way to Kobe 4750 yen (round-trip discount not available) 4hrs 40min.
 Overnight 6hrs
 One-way to Osaka 5150 yen (round-trip discount not available) 5hrs 50min 6hrs.
 Overnight &hrs 10min

Tel: 0898-22-8800; departs 8 times daily (one is overnight); toilet on bus, non-smoking; **reservations necessary**

To/From Tokyo. One-way 11,500yen (round-trip discount not available)

To Tokyo:

Depart: Imabari Kokusai Hotel at 18:35; Imabari Port at 18:50

Arrive: Hamamatsu-cho at 6:20; arrive: Shinagawa at 6:40

To Imabari:

Depart: Shinagawa at 19:50; Hamamatsu-cho at 20:10

Arrive: Imabari Port at 7:40; Imabari Kokusai Hotel at 7:45

Toilet on bus; non-smoking

Tel: 0898-22-8800 **reservations necessary**

Website for all bus routes

For some routes, including those not shown above, there are a number of sites where you can purchase bus tickets at a (sometimes steep) discount.

Car: *To/From Matsuyama.* Look for Route 196 or Route 317, then Route 11 in the direction of Niihama.

To/From Honshu. Toyo A is very well connected by the national expressway routes to both Honshu and the rest of Shikoku. Be warned that the **Shimanami Kaido is a toll road** and can be expensive to cross. Kei cars (yellow plate) get a 20% discount.

Train: Unfortunately Shikoku has no shinkansen (bullet train), but we do have a Japan Rail (JR) Line that loops the whole island, and connects us to Honshu via Tokushima-ken/Okayama-ken.

Notes on Trains

From Imabari JR Station, you can catch both local (kakuekiteisha 各駅停車) and limited express (tokkyuu 特急) trains. Limited express trains don't stop at most of the smaller stations.

Limited express trains leave almost hourly, going in either the direction of Matsuyama 松山 and southern Ehime, or in the direction of Takamatsu and Okayama. On the electronic departure boards the **express trains will be in red**.

Timetables are available inside the train station. The little business card-sized ones are a very handy thing to keep in your wallet. Look up train times in English on-line, according to specific departure or arrival times at [Hyperdia](#) or [Jorudan](#). The hyperdia website also has links to timetables. Plus it makes searching for different routes, according to the type of train, price, convenience, etc. much easier.

Beware!
The schedules usually change seasonally!

Young Weekender Card: if you qualify (people of 13-29 years of age), you definitely want to get one of these! When you are travelling by limited express train on a Friday after 17:00, Saturday, Sunday, (can also be used on National Holidays, December 31, January 2nd, and 3rd), a Young Weekender Card gives you a 40% discount on a round-trip ticket. However, this is only applicable on a return ticket on a limited express train journey of more than 61km each way.

You can apply at the ticket window in the Imabari JR Station. It only takes a couple of minutes to fill in a very simple form (name, address, DOB. The form is in Japanese but it's ok to fill it in using English) and you will be issued with your card on the spot.

Sign-up fee: 1000 yen; Renewal fee: 400 yen. Worth it because it should pay for itself pretty quickly... maybe even in your first trip!

Round-trip tickets to Matsuyama: Matsuyama is not far enough away to use the Young Weekender Card, but purchasing a round-trip ticket can give you a slight discount from purchasing them as two separate one-way tickets. If you have a reason to travel to Matsuyama often, you can purchase packages of round-trip tickets, and the discount rate goes up with the amount of tickets you purchase. (Available for both local and limited express tickets.)

Birthday Ticket: For three consecutive days during your birthday month, you can get on and off any JR train or Tosa Kuroshio train in Shikoku. You can also use the first-class carriage. 10,000 yen for your ticket; and the same price applies for each person who accompanies you (max 3 additional people).

Popular JR Routes from Imabari			
Imabari == Matsuyama	松山	36 min	1480 yen
Imabari == Iyo-Saijo	伊予西条	26 min	1270 yen
Imabari == Niihama	新浜	34 min	1400 yen
Imabari == Takamatsu	高松	116 min	4440 yen
Imabari == Okayama	岡山	133 min	5280 yen

**times and prices for limited express, unreserved seats*

Ferry: From Yawatahama to Beppu. Head out for the onsen resort town of Kyuushuu! [Check here](#) for more information. (Japanese only)

Orange Ferry: From Toyo Ferry Port 東予 to Nanko Ferry Terminal in Osaka 大阪
Reservations 0898-64-4121

5500 yen oneway, or 9350 yen if you buy a round trip ticket (30% discount on the return trip). This is for the cheapest ticket and gets you a futon in a large shared tatami room. 6500 yen gets you one way in an 8-person bedroom. Private rooms and car transport are also available for a cost.

Afternoon Departure: 14:00 Arrive: 21:40

Overnight ferry Departure: 22:30 Arrive: 06:00

If you want to spend the weekend in **Kansai area** (Osaka, Kyoto, Nara, Kobe, etc.), or you want to catch a flight out of Kansai the next day, this is probably the most time and cost-effective way of getting to Osaka.

If you are continuing on to **Kansai International Airport**, you can purchase a ticket at a discounted price when you buy your ferry ticket. However, the return trip ticket can only be purchased at the airport.

A **free connection bus** bound for Toyo Port leaves from Imabari Eki Mae bus terminal at 21:07, and arrives at 21:50. When you return, there is a free bus from Toyo Port, back to Imabari Station, that departs at 6:20, and arrives around 7:03.

Make sure to ask for a bus ticket when you check-in for your return journey. It's free, but you still need the ticket.

Plane: Air travel is often one of the fastest and cheapest ways to get around Japan as well as to see other countries in the area.

Matsuyama Airport is the closest airport from Imabari City.

Getting There

Airport Limousine (Izumi Kanko Bus)

Tel: 0898-48-7707
 Reservation required. You can do this online
 (Japanese only)
 9 services a day; 2300 yen each way
 Takes about 85 minutes
[Timetable](#) (Japanese only)

JR to Matsuyama Station

1430 yen on the express train
 Catch the blue Airport Limousine (no
 reservation needed) from the bus terminal in
 front of the station. This bus takes between 15-
 30 minutes to get to the airport, costs 310 yen,
 and departs about every 15 minutes.
[Timetable](#)

Domestic Flights: schedules can be found online, or you can pick up pocket schedules from any Japanese travel agent – i.e. JTB, HIS, etc.

To	Airlines	Average Time
Tokyo (Haneda)	ANA, JAL	80 min
Osaka (Itami)	Japan Air Commuter	50 min
Fukuoka	Japan Air Commuter	45 min
Nagoya	ANA, JAL	60 min
Kagoshima	Japan Air Commuter	60 min
Okinawa	ANA	110 min

International Flights

To	Airlines	Average Time
Seoul	Asiana Airlines	100 min
Shanghai	China Eastern Airlines	100 min

Hiroshima Airport is also fairly close and convenient – more so than Matsuyama from some of the islands.

Getting There

Hiroshima Airport is half way between Hiroshima and Fukuyama cities. There are airport buses from Fukuyama, Hiroshima, Mihara, and Takehara Port.

Starting July 2013, there is also bus from Kure city in Hiroshima; (1.5 hours, 2200 yen RT) Kure is accessible from Imabari by a combination of ferry and bike if you plan correctly!

From Imabari or islands on the Shimanami expressway, take the highway bus to Fukuyama Station (1hr 30) then the airport limousine from the station to the airport (about an hour).

[Timetables](#) and [information](#) (in English).

Domestic Flights

To	Airlines	Average Time
Tokyo	ANA, JAL, IBEX	1h 28 min
Sendai	ANA, IBEX	1h 35 min
Okinawa	ANA	1h 40 min
Sapporo	JAL	2h

International Flights

To	Airlines	Average Time
Guam		4h 5 min
Seoul	Asiana	1h 30 min
Taipei	China Airlines	2h 20 min
Shanghai	China Eastern	1h 40 min
Dalian, China	Air China, China Southern	1h 55 min

Daily flights to **Beijing** and **Chengdu** as well.

There are also a number of chartered flights, which you may be able to board by contacting the contracting organization/company.

General Travel Information

Driving

Toyo A is very well connected by the national expressway routes to both Honshu and the rest of Shikoku. Be warned that the Shimanami Kaido is a toll road and can be very expensive to cross. Kei cars (yellow plates) receive a 20% discount.

If you plan to drive on toll roads regularly, consider getting an ETC card. This charges automatically to your bank account, and reduces the toll by almost half on bridges and highways. In order to get an ETC card you need a Japanese credit card. You can apply for both at the same time at Iyo Bank. You will also need to get a card reader for your car. This is expensive, but second hand readers are sometimes available. Ask at your local second hand car dealership. Highways: route 196 or route 317 to Matsuyama. 196 then 11 in the Niihama direction.

For information on getting a Japanese driving license, see the [Ikata Wiki](#).

Other Useful Information

[Ehime JET Google Important Necessities Map](#)

Imabari City Library: spacious, quiet atmosphere to read, study, etc.; free internet access; English book shelf; Audio-visual booths; CD rental (some English music CDs available); <http://www.library.imabari.ehime.jp>

Hours: 9:30am-7:00pm (Tue-Sat); 9:30am-4:00pm (Sun)

Closed Mondays, National Holidays, and the 3rd Friday of each month

Address: 5-203-2 Tokiwa-cho (2 minute walk from the Imabari train station), tel: 0898-32-0695

Imabari City International Exchange Association (ICIEA): an international organization whose goal is to promote international understanding within the community. They do this by organizing international oriented events, and providing assistance to foreign residents. ICIEA offers help by supplying vital information for living in Imabari, as well as Japanese language and culture classes.

A plethora of information about Imabari is available in English at ICIEA, including English maps. They also coordinate exchange programs with Imabari's international sister cities.

Hours: 8:30am to 5:15pm

Closed: Weekends, National Holidays, New Year's

Address: 1-1-16 Kitahorai-cho 1F

Tel/Fax: 0898-34-5763

E-mail: info@iciea.jp

Web: <http://iciea.jp> and <http://iciea.jp/siryu/guidebook.html>

i-News is a bilingual newsletter, published by ICIEA. It provides readers with a variety of information, as well as a range of perspectives. i-News welcomes written contributions from foreigners living in the area, so feel free to participate! You can find i-News at the information desk of Imabari City Office, Imabari Station, and the City Library.

Tamagawa Town [玉川町]

Description

Tamagawa is a beautiful town/village that lies in a quiet valley among the green mountain ranges of southern Imabari, with picturesque Sojagawa River lazily winding its way through rice fields that decorate the town with changing scenery, each season.

Location/Access/Transport

Car/Bike: Coming from downtown Imabari, take the 317 mountain highway, headed towards Matsuyama.

Bus: Accessible by bus and car from Imabari Port and Imabari Station. For bus schedules and fares, see <http://setouchibus.co.jp/>

Shopping

Supermarkets

A Co-op. Common grocery store chain around Japan.

Convenience Store (Konbini)

Circle K. Common convenience chain around Japan.

Dining Out

Japanese

Aan. Amazing hand-made, fresh soba noodles; delicious, reasonably priced sets with fried chicken and donburi (rice bowls with different toppings)

Yamabiko. Delicious udon!

Hassho-tei. Famous for its yaki-niku (meat cooked on a grill at the table), fried chicken, and salad bar

Kawashi. Tiny but awesome restaurant directly across the road from Tamagawa Junior High School; limited menu, but they offer delicious and sizable lunch sets for very cheap; lunch set of the day usually 600-650yen.

There is also a variety of other small family run shops around town that serve great lunch sets which are delicious and a great value. Some even occasionally serve wild boar.

Vegan

Magnolia. Quite possibly the only vegan restaurant in Ehime. Organic food café with a small market; the lunch set is delicious!! (even if you aren't vegetarian). Run by a few vegan women who spent a combined

For you vegetarian and vegans out there: **quinoa** can be found at some of the A-Coop's around town!

few decades in California. Yoga sessions and interesting lectures held on the second floor. Information on various alternative lifestyle-related events (i.e. vegan cooking, sexual revolution lecture, environmental awareness festival, poetry reading) going on in Ehime is placed near the door.

Leisure

Greenpia. Huge, gorgeous community center with a large, well-lit open ground with two baseball diamonds, two tennis courts, a big playground for kids with an enormous winding slide, a multi-purpose gymnasium with a stage and fold-out stadium seating, meeting rooms, a large tatami room, and dance studios where a variety of activities are held (i.e. hula, judo, etc.). At various times throughout the year, different types of events are hosted here, such as town festivals and sports tournaments.

Tamagawa Dam. There is a beautiful temple that sits on a small peninsula that juts out into the reservoir. In the spring, check out Tamagawa Dam for a BBQ and gorgeous cherry blossoms. In the summer, try canoeing or camping.

River BBQ and fishing. In Nibukawa, you can do both. There is a crystal clear turquoise river you can take a dip in when the weather is warm; The river is lined with trees that provide a shady river bank for escaping the summer heat. It also makes a great place for camping. There is even a fish farm right by the river where fishing has never been easier. Even if you have never fished before, you are sure to get a bite here! Not only will they provide a fishing pole with a baited line, but they'll even clean and BBQ it for you if you want.

Hiking and Biking. Take a gorgeous bike ride along the river, or on a path through the wealth of rice fields. Or hike one of the many mountains in search of a shrine, temple or gorgeous view of the city.

Onsen. Relax at one of the many hot springs in the scenic Nibukawa Valley of Tamagawa, many of which feature secluded outdoor baths overlooking the river, including the Nibukawa Onsen (see onsen section above for details).

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Explore Shrines and Temples! There are many shrines and temples that line the mountain ranges of Tamagawa including #57 and #58 of the 88 Temple Pilgrimage!

#57 – Eifuku-ji: Nice view of Imabari City

#58 – Senyu-ji: Beautiful temple with a gorgeous view of Imabari, the Seto Inland Sea, and neighboring islands. The family that runs the temple is very kind, and the son-in-law speaks pretty good English. If you make a reservation in advance, you can have a traditional temple lunch, which is delicious, healthy, and made with herbs and flora picked fresh from the mountainside.

Imabari-shi Tamagawa Kindai Biutsu-kann (Tamagawa Modern Art Museum). Typically features works by Japanese artists on the first floor, and foreign artists on the second floor (including Dali, Warhol, Rembrandt, even a small Picasso).

Address: 86-4 Ko Ono Tamagawa-cho; tel: 0898-55-2738

Hours: 9am-5pm; Closed Mondays and December 27-January 1

Bon Festa. Obon Festival with traditional Japanese music and dancing, festival games, and a great fireworks display; held at Greenpia, usually on the second weekend in August

Sakurai Town [玉川町]

Description

This sleepy little seaside community is a suburb of Imabari. It is located on the east border of Imabari just before Saijo city limits.

Location/Access/Transport

Car: To/From Central Imabari. 20 minute drive.

Train: JR local trains stop at Iyosakurai Station.
For express trains you must go to the JR Imabari Station.



Shopping

There isn't much shopping to speak of in Sakurai - **drive or cycle to Central Imabari** for more shopping prospects!

Supermarkets

Sun Life. Small grocery where you can find most day-to-day basics. For a bigger selection head to Marunaka.

Pharmacies

There is a small pharmacy next to Sun Life.

Convenience Stores (Konbini)

There's a Family Mart close to Iyo-Sakurai station as well as a Circle-K.

Dining Out

Cafés

Café Astro. Funky little café that serves lunch. The menu is small-they have risotto, gratin, and some Japanese foods.

Japanese

Uozen. Ocean front restaurant that serves seafood and traditional Japanese food.

Sakura Fubuki. Only ramen and gyoza available here, but it's really good! You can even try Imabari ramen!

Unagi-ya. The place to go if you want some fresh grilled eel.

Hotto Motto. When you don't want to cook it's a step up from convenience store food. Everything is take-away and ready in about 5 minutes.

Osen Izakaya. Only Izakaya in Sakurai. They do the usual kinds of yakitori. Not an extensive menu but tastes good.

Takomasa Takoyaki. Serves decent takoyaki only.

Western-style Restaurants

Canadian Café. Strange Japanese take on a western style restaurant. Mostly hamburger steaks and omu-rice.

Piton. Open for lunch and dinner, this place has a cozy log cabin vibe. Wide variety of Japanese classics and western favorites like pizza, pasta, and steak.

Italian

Olive House. Serves Italian food. The daily lunch sets are cheap!

Taiwanese

Many
restaurants in
Sakurai are
closed on
Wednesdays.

Rising Dragon. Semi-fast food style menu. Has a large and tasty menu, big sets too!

Head to Imabari
or Saijo if you're
looking for
some nightlife!

Leisure

Neighboring Yunoura Heights Hotel. Has a lovely onsen with an incredible view of the sea!

The Core House. A community gym. There is a city bus that goes directly to the Core House.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Tsuna Shiki Tenmangu (Shishimagahara). Beautiful sprawling shrine complex. Especially popular in March when the dozens of ume (plum) trees are in bloom. Bring a bento and enjoy a picnic under the blossoms!

Siekodou. Famous mochi shop where you can try mochi with a whole mikan or strawberry inside. Made fresh by the family who owns the shop. Opposite Marunaka Supermarket.

Sakurai Shikki Kaikan (Lacquer Ware Workshop). Sakurai is known for its lacquer ware. At this shop you can buy shikki made on site by their trained artisans. You can also watch them at work and learn about the whole process step by step.

Practical Stuff

Banks

There are two banks: Hime Gin and Iyo Bank.

JP Post Office: also has a bank and international remittances can be done here.

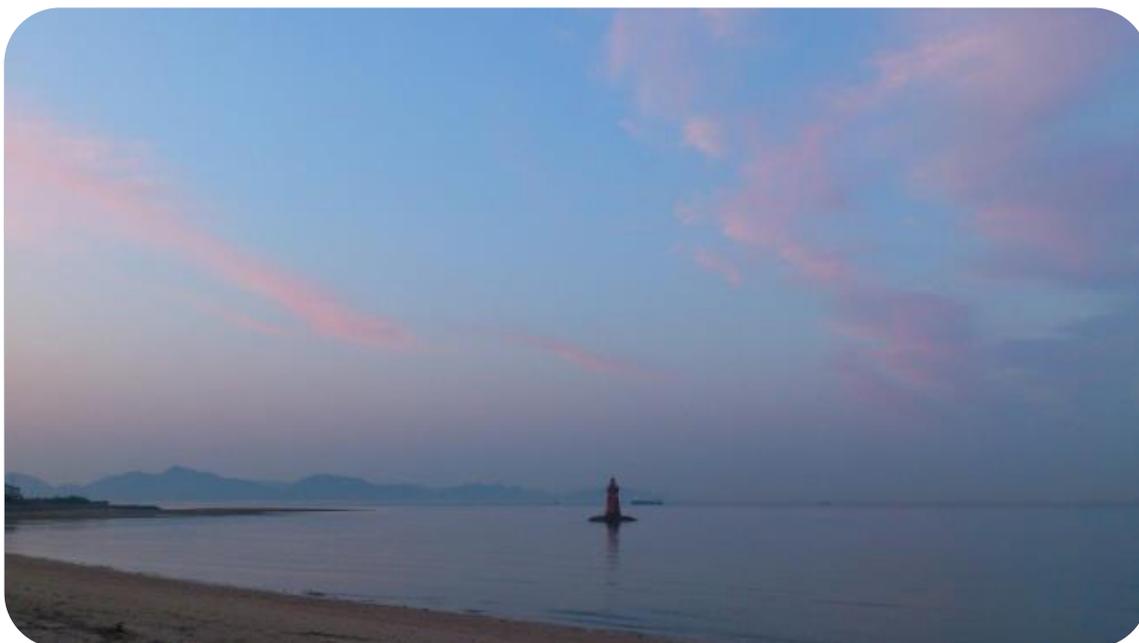
Dry Cleaning

Mickey Dry Cleaner is run by a friendly lady and the prices seem reasonable.

Bikes and Scooters

Motorbike Shop: Taihou is a good place to look for used scooters.

There is also a bicycle shop just down the road from Iyo Bank and the back entrance to Sun Life Grocery Store where you can buy new bicycles or have most repairs done.



Namikata Town [波方町]

Description

Namikata is a small town just outside of Imabari with roughly 9,700 residents. It is also home to the offices of numerous shipping companies.

Website:

<http://www.islands.ne.jp/imabari/index.html>

Location/Access/Transport

Train: Local trains run to Imabari from Namikata 波方 and Hashihama 波止浜 stations.

Bus: Buses are available within Namikata and to Imabari.

Ferry: Ferries from Hashihama 波止浜 to the small islands of Koshima 小島 and Umashima 馬島 are available.

Bike: Cycling to central Imabari is about 30 minutes, walking is over an hour and the train can get you there within 10 minutes.

The pedestrian/bike path onto the first of the Shimanami Kaido しまなみ海道 bridges starts in the Hashihama/Namikata area. You can walk/bike the bridge to Oshima for a small fee (200yen).



Shopping

Supermarkets

There are a few grocery stores in town but no places to really shop other than in Imabari City. *Dio*. Discount grocery store located on Route 317 going to Imabari; next to the *Komeri*.

Near Kitago Junior High there is a butcher and a small supermarket. This supermarket closes at 8 p.m. but is good for fruit and veggies and is easily accessible.

Home Improvement

Komeri. Located in the Hashihama area right next to Namikata; off Route 317 going toward Imabari City.

Electronics

There is also a small electronics store and a newly opened drugstore in the area.

Strip Malls

Happy Plaza. Located on your left as you go to Imabari (before *Dio*); it has a good liquor store with a decent range of foreign wines, a softbank store, a Chinese restaurant, a supermarket and a fried bento shop.

Dining Out

There are a few restaurants in town all mainly on the main streets around town.

Korean

Liohen. A popular yakiniku (Korean BBQ) place. It serves up the best yakiniku in the area, although a little pricey. You can see the restaurant on the way to Namikata port if you are coming from the Matsuyama direction.

There is also a hard-to-explain abundance of barbers and hairdressers.

Japanese

There is also a yakitori izakaya (chicken kebab place) in the area that is popular with locals (can be a little intimidating but the owners are really very nice if a little curious)
Oriento, an izakaya that has more of a German beer hall feel to it.

Pizza

Austro. The best pizza in Imabari. Tel: 0890-35-2777

Leisure

There are various activities offered in the town hall and the town gym during the week, e.g. soccer, volleyball, kendo, judo. Ask at the town hall for the schedule.

There are small cafes in town, some with karaoke, but most of them close relatively early during the week. **Oriento serves drinks until 12.** Many locals though prefer to find a quiet spot often near the dry docks in the port and drink amongst themselves.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Ozumi no Hana. A nice beach camping area at the tip of “mainland” Ehime overlooking the sea. It is also where the Marine festival is held, the Sunday right before Marine Day. There are various food vendors, a stage for performances with local acts, a Power Ranger-ish dude that comes to put on a show for the kids, kayaks for rent, and a mini boat cruise around the small nearby islands. Namikata is also very close to the Shimanami bridges that connect to the Seto Inland Sea islands and Onomichi in Hiroshima. You can rent bicycles at Sunrise Itoyama to cycle across the bridge, which is relatively inexpensive compared to driving across the bridges and paying the high toll fees.

Cultural activities. Held at Namikata BOE during the week (taiko, tea ceremony, flower arrangement)

Parks and Museums. There is a great kid’s park that’s fun for all ages! (roller slides and a flying fox). Near the sports park and Dojo. Above the park there is a nice path that will take you to a traditional house. Next to the house is a small museum that displays old agricultural tools and local historical oddities including human bones.

Umiyama jo (Namikata Castle). A tiny castle at the top of the same mountain, but the walk up is nice and the view is great (you can look at the sea and the first set of the bridges over to the islands).

Ozumi Beach Seaside Park. Why not BBQ or camp overnight? There is a beach festival held here every year – on the Sunday before Marine Day festival (kayaks, stage shows, catch fish, take a boat tour around the coast!)

Onishi Town [大西町]

Description

Don’t let the translation “Big West” fool you! Onishi is a small suburb town of Imabari city with a population of roughly 10,000. It is located by the sea and home to one of the largest ship building companies in Japan, Shinkurushima Dockyard, which employs workers from all across Asia – China, Vietnam, Korea – giving Onishi a multi-cultural demographic. Don’t let the dockyard’s bulky cranes put you off this town though! Onishi may be small but has many lovely little treats to discover.

Location/Access/Transport

- Train:** Local trains run both ways between Imabari and Matsuyama fairly frequently.
To/From Imabari. 15 minutes.
To/From Matsuyama. 1 hour.
- Car:** 15 minutes from Central Imabari
- Bike:** 30 minutes to Central Imabari

Shopping

Supermarkets

Shoppers.

Co-op.

Ashista. Has a decent 100-yen shop inside. Also hosts a daily farmer's market that closes at 4 pm. Go on the weekend to get the best of the local produce!

Convenience Stores

Onishi also has a Circle K and Sunkus convenience store for all your 24-hour needs.

Dining Out

Fairly limited on the dining scene. Restaurants owned by locals often open and close at irregular times. For cheap fast food dining there is a **Joyfull** restaurant and for a warming bowl of noodles there is an **udon eatery**. However, it is recommended to go to Imabari or Matsuyama to get the most out of a dining experience.

The most noteworthy offering is a beautiful little coffee shop called **So To Su**. Owned by a local family, so again be aware that opening times are irregular. If you see the lights on in this place, go in for a delicious fresh-baked cake and tea/coffee set. They also sell hand-made crafts and arts.

Leisure

Community Sports Centre. Has a very minimal gym but a spacious hall for games and practices. Martial arts and other sports classes are held here, usually for school students.

Onishi Town Hall. The center for a number of community activities such as cooking and dancing, and it also has a small but very well kept library.



For
after-hours fun
Imabari and
Matsuyama are
a train ride
away!

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Fujiyama Park. The crowning feature of Onishi town. This big green hilly open space with a central water lake feature is the hub of community life and in springtime when the cherry blossoms are in full bloom, this is a popular spot for “hanami” (blossom viewing) parties. For one week in this season, lanterns illuminate the park at night. In autumn, the trees display gorgeous shades of fiery reds, burnt oranges and golden yellows. A great spot for relaxing!

Fujiyama park is also the site of **an ancient tumulus burial tomb** that was excavated by Ehime University and is therefore of historic archaeological importance. Local festivals are often held in Fujiyama Park and the town hall to celebrate national holidays, particularly in Golden Week

Kamoike Beach. Although you can see big ships and cranes ticking away in the distance, this is nonetheless a gorgeous little beach surrounded by mountains. Follow the signs to the “Observatory” and you are rewarded with a 360-degree view of the sea, mountains and ShimanamiKaido bridges.

Cycling Around Town. Onishi is filled with beautiful flowers, gardens and shrines. Keep your eyes peeled when you are cycling around the town to be rewarded with some great man made and natural beauty.

Kikuma [菊間町]

Description

Kikuma is a small seaside town on the very outskirts of Imabari City. Famous for its *kawara* (roof tiles) and its spectacular autumn festival, this quaint town is pretty quiet most days and only fills up during community events or *matsuri*. That being said, there is plenty to discover in Kikuma if you have a bicycle, a little Japanese, and some やる気!

Location/Access/Transport

Car: 25 minutes from Central Imabari

Train: JR local trains stop at Kikuma Station.
For express trains you must go to the JR Imabari station.

Shopping

Convenience Stores (Konbini)

Circle K. Located next to Henjoin Temple on Route 196.

Lawson. Located near Kikuma River on Route 196.



Dining Out

Japanese

Sangorou. A wonderful sushi restaurant located on the main street just a five-minute walk from Kikuma Station. It's a good place for a high quality sushi experience served up by a chef who has been crafting his art for over 40 years. With a bright bar and some alcove tables, you can enjoy a solo meal chatting with chef and owner Watanabe Yoshihiro and his wife Fumiko, or bring some friends and enjoy an *otsukaresama* smorgasbord of sushi and sashimi after the long work week. Make sure to say hello to the Watanabes! They are very warmhearted people and are always trying to practice a little English. They'll be delighted to meet you!

Other options include various takoyaki stalls, a small okonomiyaki place, and some ramen shops right off Route 196!

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

By far the must-see event in Kikuma is the yearly Otomouma Autumn Festival, where elementary and junior high school boys in traditional garb race brightly bedecked horses up the hill to Kamo Shrine. Cameramen and reporters come from all over to get some breathtaking photos of this unrivalled event. It's sure to be one of the most unique festivals you see in Japan.

For this year's date, **contact the Toyo A RA!**



Oshima [大島]

Description

Oshima is the first of the islands on the ShimanamiKaido bridge way (しまなみ海道) that connects Shikoku to Hiroshima Prefecture. The island has a population of about 7000, and is divided into two towns, Yoshiumi 吉海 and Miyakubo 宮窪.

Location/Access/Transport

Car/Bike: Oshima is accessible from Imabari by bicycle or car via the Shimanami Kurushima Kaikyo Bridge (the first bridge of the Shimanami Kaido Expressway).

You can continue along the expressway all the way to Onomichi City 尾道 in Hiroshima Prefecture.

Bus: There are several local bus routes around the island, as well as a bus that stops in both Miyakubo and Yoshiumi on its way from Omishima to Imabari *To/From Matsuyama*. 4 buses a day into the city
[Schedule here](#)

Ferry: There is a ferry from the Imabari Sanbashi 今治棧橋 ferry port to Oshima's Shitadami Port 下田水港 next to the bicycle rental station and Oshima's most famous restaurant, Ikiiki Kan.

Other ferries run from Oshima to Hakatajima, Kamijima Town and Innoshima. Check [here](#) for routes and timetables.

Shopping

Supermarkets

The biggest supermarket is The Life Shop, on the main road running through town (Route 317). Next door is a drug store with medicine and beauty products.

Convenience Stores (Konbini)

Lawson's and Circle K are just up the road from The Life Shop.

Dining Out

Oshima has many fantastic and cheap family-run restaurants. There is a small cafe at the Rose Park (Bara Koen), which serves set lunches. There are also two or three restaurants along the 317, serving various Japanese fare.

Oshima's most famous restaurant is **Ikiiki Kan** (near Shitadami Port). You handpick your own live seafood, and then grill it yourself on a traditional style portable grill at your table outside.

Leisure

Most leisure activities are located in Imabari, but be sure to check out:

Yoshiumi. Lookout point with fantastic views.

Bara Koen (Rose Park). Quite beautiful when in full bloom and a big tourist stopping point.

Health

There is a small hospital/doctor's office near the elementary school that is only open in the mornings. There are multiple other specialised clinics and dentists on the island.



Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Despite its small size, Oshima has many attractions and events throughout the year. Well-known festivals hosted on Oshima are the **Rose Festival in May**, **The Pirate Festival in August**, and during spring, many travelers come to Oshima for "Shima-Shikoku." *Shima Shikoku*. In imitation of the 88 Temple Pilgrimage around Shikoku, Oshima has 88 small temples around its coastline. Accomplishable in maybe two or three days, "Shima-Shikoku" is a good alternative for anyone without the time to travel around all of Shikoku.

Suigun Race (Dragon Boat Race). Held in July on Noshima Island – the location of what was once a medieval Japanese naval base. All the rowboats used in the race are built in accordance with the medieval design. People come from all over Japan to participate.

Yoshiumi Rose Park. The most famous destinations are the Yoshiumi Rose Park, well known in Imabari for its beautiful roses and rose flavored ice cream, and the Kirozan observatory, which boasts the best view of the first Shimanami Bridge.

Murakami Suigun Naval Museum. Dedicated to the Murakami Suigun Navy who controlled the sea above Shikoku in the Feudal Era. Visitors to the museum should also take the "Experience the Currents Boat Ride" located behind the restaurant in opposite the Museum. Here you can experience the fastest sea currents in Japan, which reach up to 2m in height. Museum 300 yen, boat ride 1000 yen)

Address: 1285 Miyakubo-cho, Oshima;

Tel: 0897-74-1065

Hours: 9am-5pm; Closed Mondays (and the following day if it's a holiday) and December 29- January 3



Stone Museum. There is also a stone museum in Miyakubo to celebrate Oshima's granite production.

Information on Oshima's tourist attractions in English [over here](#).

Hakata Island [伯方島]

Description

Hakatajima is a small island in the middle of the Seto Inland Sea, along the Shimanami Kaido bridges. It's about 20 square kilometers in area, with a population of around 7000 people. The main industries are shipbuilding and shipping. It's also famous for salt!

Island life is quiet and rural, but there is easy access to Imabari and Honshu along the Shimanami Kaido bridges (しまなみ海道).

Location/Access/Transport

Car: Hakatajima is connected to both Shikoku and Honshu by the Shimanami Kaido bridges. You can cross the bridges by car, scooter, bicycle or foot. By car, it's about 30 minutes' drive from Hakata Interchange to central Imabari. Remember that the bridges are toll roads.

Ferry: 9 high-speed ferries a day from Imabari Sanbashi 今治棧橋, stopping at Hakata's Kinoura Port 木浦港 (35 minutes; 1030 yen). The ferry continues on to Habu Port 土生 on Innoshima 因島, stopping at several of the Kamijima islands along the way. [Schedule here](#).

There are also ferries from Oura Port 尾浦港 to Miyakubo Port 宮窪港 on Oshima

Bus:

The main bus stop is right next to Hakata Interchange (the entrance/exit to the Shimanami Kaido).

To/From Imabari. Buses between the Imabari JR Station (Imabari eki mae 今治駅前) and Hakata jima Bus Stop (伯方島 B S) run approximately every hour, and take about 35 minutes (864 yen).

To/From Matsuyama. There are four buses a day that will take you all the way to Matsuyama 松山. [Schedule here.](#)

To/From Hiroshima and Fukuyama. The highway buses from Imabari to Hiroshima 広島 and Fukuyama 福山 also stop on Hakatajima. These can't be used as local buses, though (i.e. you can't use them just to get from Hakata to Imabari).

Hiroshima: 2 hours, 3200yen

Fukuyama: 1 hour, 1950 yen

[Schedule here.](#)



Shopping

Supermarkets

Hakata Shopping Center. The island's biggest supermarket located directly across from Hakata High School in the Kinoura district. Closes at 8pm.

Marine Oasis gift shop. located by Hakata Beach; has a small farmers' market inside. Closes at 5.

Alcohol and fish shop. Located next to the high school.

Convenience Store (Konbini)

Lawson. 24-hour convenience store near the Interchange.

Home Improvement

Conan Home Stock. Opposite Hakata Beach. DIY, household products and toiletries.

A few small shops for basic electronics/household goods in the Kinoura district (near the port).

Just pass the Lawson away from the Interchange, there is large drug store called [Zag Zag](#) which sells everything a convenience store does but with greater variety and stock.

Dining Out

Japanese

Sanwa. A famous ramen shop near the police station (Kinoura district) that serves Hakata Salt Ramen.

Fuu. Onokomiyaki restaurant located on the frontage road across from the bus terminal, near the main beach.

Sakura. Okonomiyaki restaurant located on the main road towards the northwest side of the island.

Tampopo. Okonomiyaki restaurant located in Arrouz near the Murakami Clinic.

Midori. A great izakaya with friendly owners opposite the community center (*kominkan*). The sushi and sashimi are some of the best around. Seating at the counter downstairs, and a few large rooms upstairs which are often used for parties.

Note that most restaurants shut around 8:30 or 9:00, and are closed on Sunday nights.

Also look for:

There is a **nice yakinuku restaurant** located in Kinoura near the Iyo bank. It's next to the butcher! A small bar that serves Japanese type bar food and has a lunch set. A friendly owner.

Cafés

Tamaya. A cute café on the main road halfway between the Interchange and the supermarket. Coffee, cakes and lunchtime meal sets. Gorgeous sea views and a small outside terrace.

Leisure

Biking. Biking makes a great day trip. There's a bike rental point next to the Marine Oasis at Hakata Beach.

Camping. There are a good number of campsites on Hakata and Omishima. Information and reservations are available at the bike rental point.

Beaches. Lovely beaches (the main Hakata Beach opposite the bus terminal, Okiura, several tiny and hidden beaches all around the coast).

Clubs. A few local sports/hobby groups meet in the evenings. Ask at the community center for details.

Library. There is a small library located inside the community center (**No English books**).

Nightlife

Karaoke

There is karaoke in Kinoura before the Sanwa Ramen shop.

Bars

There are a few bars in Kinoura near the port.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Hanami. Hakata is famous for the cherry blossoms on Mt. Hiraki/Hirakiyama 開き山 during the appropriate season. The views from the top of the mountain are worth a visit at any time of year. Hakata Summer Festival (mid-August) features a rather impressive fireworks display on the beach.

Festivals. There are various local festivals at the many small shrines and temples around the island, especially in the autumn.

Museum. There is a small museum in mock-castle style up a mountain in the Kinoura district (turn left up the mountain just after the port/shipyards). Panoramic views from the top. Free entrance.

Hakata no Shio. Hakatajima is 'famous' for salt. The Hakata no shio (伯方の塩) brand name is sold all over Japan. (Truth is, it's not even from the island anymore! They just ship it from either

Mexico or Australia and package it here. Shh...). Cyclists doing the Shimanami Kaido usually stop for a **salt ice cream at Hakata Beach**, **salt ramen at the small café inside the Marine Oasis** or at Sanwa, and **salty souvenirs at the Marine Oasis gift shop**.

Accommodation

Ryokan

There are a few ryokans around. They are pretty expensive though.

Camping

Small campsites with great views at the Funaori Seto viewpoint in the south of the island.

There is also a campsite on a small, uninhabited island half way between Hakata and Oshima. It's accessible only by foot or bike from the Hakata-Oshima bridge. About 20 minutes' walk from Hakata Interchange.

Health

There are clinics and dentists on the island, but for anything more than the sniffles or a checkup, you'll be shipped to a hospital somewhere else, most likely in Imabari.

Murakami Clinic. Located in Arrouz near Tampopo and Tamaya Café.

There is also a clinic across from Lawson and next to the apartment building for school staff (Hakata Kyoushokuin-Juutaku).

Omishima [大三島]

Description

Omishima is the third stop along the Shimanami Kaido bridges from Imabari, and the northernmost Shimanami island in Ehime prefecture. Omishima's total population is close to 8,000. It has two subdivisions: Omishima 大三島 and Kamiura 上浦 towns.

Omishima is a sleepy, agricultural island but there is a surprising amount to see and do. We recommend a daytrip to visit the ancient Oyamazumi Shrine, the attached treasury museum (home to Japan's largest collection of samurai armour) and the 4 stunning, modern and unexpected art museums on the southern coast.

Location/Access/Transport

Bus: Shimanami Liner buses leave for Omishima from in front of Imabari Station 今治駅前 around once every hour. They take around an hour, depending where on the island you are going to. They stop next to the interchange in Kamiura (just across from the Roadside Station which has a gift shop, café and bike rental point) and continue across the island to the end of the line in Omishima town.
To/From Matsuyama. 4 buses a day from Matsuyama.
[Schedule here](#).

Car: Accessible from Imabari and Honshu via the Shimanami Kaido bridges (しまなみ海道). Remember that you will have to pay tolls on the bridges.

Ferry: Ferries from Imabari Sanbashi 今治棧橋 to Munakata Port 宗方港 (1 hr – 1hr 30 mins). [Schedule here](#).
Ferries from 盛 Port to Hiroshima prefecture. [Schedule here](#).

Shopping

Supermarkets

Omishima town has two small supermarkets and a large DIY shop.

Kamiura town has some small grocery shops and a Circle K convenience store close to the interchange.

Good farmers' market at the Roadside Station near the Interchange. Lots of locally-grown fruit and veg, as well as homemade jams, pickles and handicrafts.

Local Goods

There are several shops and places to buy little gifts and locally made items that you will not find in the bigger, more popular cities. Take advantage of these cultural treats when you're out sightseeing and shopping for your friends and family back home.

Dining Out

The island has several small restaurants offering **ramen, curry, tempura and the like**. You'll find a few on the main road near Oyamazumi Shrine.

There's also a nice **café in the Roadside Station** near the Interchange, which serves great sushi, ramen and other dishes using local produce. It's a popular lunch stop for Shimanami Kaido bikers!

Leisure

Mare Gracia Spa マーレ・グラッシア. Located in the Itena district, Omishima town. The spa has views over the Inland Sea and has inside and outside salt-water onsens, with a sauna inside too. They also have a little pub to keep you well fed while you relax and enjoy the calm atmosphere. Open from 8:30am - 9pm during the week and 10 am - 8pm on the weekends.

Library. Small library in Miyaura community center/local government office with some films.

Kamiura Dome. Sports centre and onsen located in Kamiura town, not far along the waterfront from the interchange. Facilities include a swimming pool, weight room, basketball, volleyball and tennis courts, and soccer field. Weekly sports classes and occasional community events are held there as well.

Cycling! There is a rental place in the Roadside Station near the interchange. Follow the Shimanami Kaido bike route or go exploring on your own.



There are a few small karaoke rooms around town as well!

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

OyamazumiJinja (Shrine) 大山祇神社. One of the oldest shrines in western Japan. Dedicated to the god of the mountains and the sea. Within the shrine grounds you will find the Oyamazumi Shrine Treasury Museum. This comprises three museums including the National Treasure Museum, Shiyoden Museum, and Omishima Marine Museum. The National Treasure Museum houses Japan's largest collection of samurai armor and swords (80% of all Japan's samurai National Treasures)!

Open 8:30-17:00. Last entry to Treasury Museum at 16:30. Museum entry is 1000 yen. Entrance to the shrine grounds is free.

The **Shimanami Liner buses** stop outside the shrine at 大山祇神社前

There are also local buses from the main island bus stop by the interchange.

Walkable from Miyaura Port 宮浦港

Omishima Art Museum 大三島美術館. A collection of paintings by mostly contemporary Japanese artists. Opposite Oyamazumi Shrine.

9:00-17:00, closed Mondays

500 yen

Tokoro Museum ところミュージアム大三島. Tiny but gorgeous contemporary sculpture gallery with an open air front and stunning sea views.

9:00-17:00, closed Mondays
300 yen

Toyo Ito Museum of Architecture 伊東豊雄建築ミュージアム. Small museum in a surreal, futuristic building dedicated to the work of an eminent Japanese architect.

9:00-17:00 closed Mondays
800 yen



Tokoro Museum



Mother and Child Museum

Ken Iwata Mother and Child Museum 岩田健母と子のミュージアム. Open-air sculpture gallery featuring mostly, you guessed it, mothers and children.

9:00-17:00, closed Mondays
300 yen

A combined entrance ticket for these last three museums is available for 1000 yen.
Best accessed by car as they are well off the beaten track. Local buses go from the interchange or Oyamazumi Jinja Mae stops, but times are sporadic so check before you go.

Tatara Shimanami Park. The Roadside Station near the interchange that offers a fantastic view of the Tatara Great Bridge. Souvenir shop, restaurant, mikan ice cream, small beach. A large dam in the mountains behind Oyamazumi Shrine. A small waterfall nearby with an atmospheric fertility shrine. Follow the signs from Oyamazumi Shrine.

Take a tour of the salt factory near the high school!

Otaue-sai/Nukiho-sai. Rice planting ceremony at Oyamazumi Shrine. Dates change according to the lunar calendar, but it's usually mid-June. It originated as a Shinto ritual to pray for a bountiful harvest, and dates back at least as far as 1346. The ritual involves a sumo wrestler performing a fight against an imaginary rice spirit, and 16 young girls in white kimono with red sashes.

Autumn Festival. Omishima also has a huge Autumn Festival that includes the whole island! It begins at the Oyamazumi Shrine. The festival includes many villages toting their local Danjiri all throughout the island with singing, dancing and plenty of food.

Kamijima Town [上島町]

Description

Town homepage: <http://www.town.kamijima.lg.jp/>

The name 'Kamijima' literally means 'upper islands'. True to its name, Kamijima Town is a cluster of islands at the northernmost tip of Ehime. They're near the islands on the Shinanami Kaido Expressway (famous for its cycling route), but aren't connected to the mainland.

The four major islands of Kamijima are Yuge 弓削島, Iwagi 岩城島, Ikina 生名島, and Uoshima 魚島. In addition, there are several other small islands, such as Sashima 佐島 (connected by bridge to Yuge and Ikina) and Takaikamijima 高井神島 (which can be accessed by ferry).



Location/Access/Transport

Ferry: Although Kamijima is part of Ehime Prefecture 愛媛県, it is in fact closer to Hiroshima Prefecture 広島県 (only 3 minutes away by ferry).

Kamijima is connected to Innoshima island 因島 (on Hiroshima Prefecture) and Imabari City 今治市 (on Ehime Prefecture) by many ferry routes. Hence, it is very accessible from both Honshu and Shikoku. For details on the ferry routes, please click on the links on the summary page.

Bus: Innoshima, the neighboring island on Hiroshima prefecture, is also connected by bus to Hiroshima city 広島市, Onomichi city 尾道市 and Fukuyama city 福山市. The nearest bus stop will be Habu Port 土生港. Here are some links where you can check out the timetables and fares for the various bus routes.

Between Onomichi 尾道 and Innoshima Habu Port 因島土生港:

[Mondays to Saturdays](#)

[Sundays and Public Holidays](#)

It costs 930 yen from Habu Port to Onomichi.

No reservation is required.

Between Hiroshima 広島 and Innoshima Habu Port 因島土生港: Flower Liner

[Bus Operator Homepage](#)

[Mondays to Fridays](#)

[Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays](#)

It costs about 2,350 yen from Habu Port to Hiroshima Bus Center.

No reservation is required.

Between Fukuyama 福山 and Innoshima Habu Port 因島土生港: Citrus Liner

[Bus Operator Homepage](#)

It costs about 1,350 yen from Habu Port to Fukuyama city.

No reservation is required.

Plane: The nearest airport is **Hiroshima Airport**. Although there are direct flights from Hiroshima, most international flights transit at Haneda or Narita International Airport in Tokyo. From Hiroshima Airport, take the **Airport Limousine** to Mihara Port. It costs 820 yen.

From Mihara Port, take the **Mihara Ferry** to Habu Port. It also stops at Tateishi Port (Ikina). It costs about 1,250 yen.

Car: *To/From Shikoku.* Take the Shimanami Expressway north from Imabari. It connects a whole series of islands in the Seto Inland Sea between Shikoku and Honshu. Some boats allow cars to board while others do not. Please check the next page to see which routes allow cars to board. They are indicated with an asterisk sign.

Please note that there is only **ONE BOAT PER MONTH** that allows cars to board to go to Uoshima.

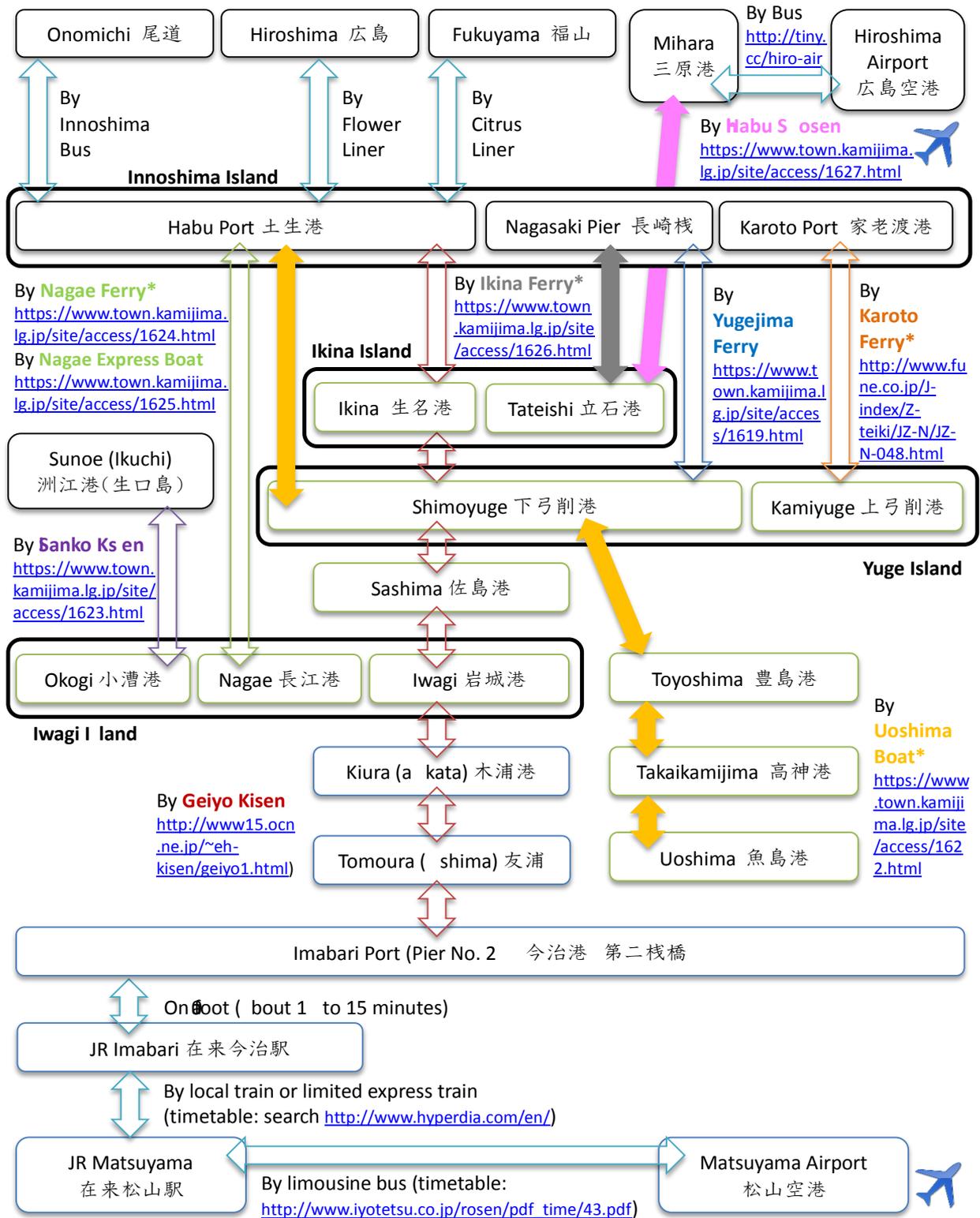
Train: By local train or limited express train [\[Timetable\]](#)

Limousine Bus: [\[Timetable\]](#)



A detailed transit map follows on the next page.

Summary of Access Routes to Kamijima



Yuge Island [弓削島]

Description

One of the four Kamijima islands. The population of Yuge Island is about 3,380 (correct as of June 2014); the population of Kamijima is about 7,460 across all islands (correct as of June 2014).



Location/Access/Transport

Please refer to the main [Kamijima Town section](#) for information on ferry routes to and from Yuge. On the island, most places can be accessed [on foot or by bike](#), although a public bus goes between the islands of Yuge, Sashima, and Ikina.

Information on Yuge Bus Feeder Services

Flat cost of 100 yen regardless of where you board and alight

Information on Yuge-Sashima-Ikina Bus Trunk Line

Flat cost of 100 yen for services between Sashima and Yuge, and 150 yen for services between Ikina and Sashima or Ikina and Yuge

Shopping

Supermarkets

The Seaside Mall. Houses a small supermarket, a stationery shop, a shop of locally-made food and crafts, and a photo printing shop.

There is also a co-op supermarket, an agricultural store, a convenience store (no ATM service), a small game arcade and a small hardware store in the vicinity.

Near the co-op there is a fish market, a clinic, a small pharmacy, an apparel shop, a post office, a gas station and Ehime bank. We also have several hairdressers.

Dining Out

Japanese

Okonomiyaki is popular in Yuge. There are at least four okonomiyaki joints: Puku (near Yuge High School), Ramento (near the town office), Jumbo (in Seaside Mall), and another near Kamiyugo Port.

Yakiniku. Look for a yakiniku restaurant in Kamiyuge.

Takoyaki. Look for it in the Seaside Mall.

Izakaya

Daikokumaru. Located in the Seaside Mall

Tottoya. Located in the town office

Cafés and Restaurants

ShimadeCafe. Located near the town office. It sells the local specialty of lemon pork rice.

There is also a restaurant in the FESPA Inland Sea Resort.

Leisure

Community Activities. Lots of community sports, music, craft groups, free books and movie rental from the public library, a saltwater rehabilitation spa, and nice beaches.

Cultural Classes. There is also a koto teacher and calligraphy classes. Pottery classes are held once a year in the months of July, August and September.

Karaoke. Two karaoke rooms are available for booking in FESPA Inland Sea Resort.

Closing Time

Various hobby groups meet in the afternoons and evenings. Shops close around 7 p.m. The supermarkets close at 7.30pm. The convenience store is open until 10:00.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Fall Festivals. The fall festivals in October are not to be missed (especially sumo at the Shimoyuge fall festival).

There is one festival for each region: Habu, Shimoyuge (features the Yakko parade where the students will be part of), Hikino & Myojin, Kamiyuge (features the danjiri fight), Sawazu, Kushiura and Sashima (features the purification in the sea and carrying of the danjiri up a steep staircase).

Outdoor Activities. Good beaches, good hiking, and great bicycle rides around and between the islands.

Mts. Ishi and Kushi. You can also visit Mt. Ishi, which used to be a stone quarry. Good views from Mt. Ishi. You can also see a bird's eye view of many islands near Yuge on top of Mt. Kushi.

Hanami. There are many cherry blossom and maple trees all over Yuge. You can enjoy beautiful views in spring and fall. There is a cherry blossom park in Otani.

Temple Pilgrimage. The 88 Shikoku Pilgrimage trail also takes place in Yuge in April. You can walk around Yuge, pray to the stone statues, and in return collect snacks and useable items. A household in Otani offers delicious bamboo shoot rice and soup to visitors on the 88 Shikoku Pilgrimage trail every year.

Accommodation

There's a resort, called FESPA Inland Sea Resort, located on a hill overlooking Matsubara beach. It has a spa, a restaurant and two karaoke rooms inside. There's also a small guesthouse behind the community center. There are other guesthouses on the island as well.

Health

There's a health clinic in Shimoyuge called Hata Byoin. There are two dentists on Yuge, but the ones on Innoshima are better. There is a hospital on Innoshima Island.

Other Essentials

Library. The public library has a VERY limited amount of English-language books (just some children's fairy tale books).

Food from home. For foreign food, your best bet is to go to the neighboring island of Innoshima part of Hiroshima prefecture, but it may be necessary to go to Fukuyama or Hiroshima. There is a foreign food store called Jupiter in Hiroshima City. Yuge is a great place to go to get away from it all, as there's next to nothing but beaches, mountains, and good people here 😊

Caution: there are many wild boars on Yuge that live in the mountains and come down mostly at night. It's not advisable to be out walking after 10pm.

Ikina Island [生名島]

Description

Ikina is a one of the four Kamijima islands in the Seto Inland Sea with a population of about 1,713 (correct as of June 2014). Ikina is by far the most convenient of all the 4 Kamijima islands - Hiroshima Prefecture is just a three-minute ferry ride away!

Website:

<https://www.town.kamijima.lg.jp/>



Location/Access/Transport

Please refer to the main **Kamijima Town Section** for information on ferry routes to/from Yuge.

On the island, most places can be accessed on foot or by bike, although a public bus goes between the islands of Yuge, Sashima, and Ikina. Ikina is connected by bridge to two other Kamijima islands, Sashima and Yuge. The bridge connecting Ikina and Iwagi will be ready in a couple of years.

Bus:

[Information on Ikina Bus Feeder Services](#)

(cost 100 yen regardless of where you board and alight)

[Information on Yuge-Sashima-Ikina Bus Trunk Line](#)

(cost 100 yen for services between Sashima and Yuge, and 150 yen for services between Ikina and Sashima or Ikina and Yuge)

Ikina is close to Fukuyama city 福山市 (one hour ten mins), Imabari 今治市 (one hour fifteen mins), Onomichi city 尾道市 (45 minutes), Hiroshima city 広島市 (two hours) and Matsuyama city 松山市 (two hours).

Ferry: The Ikina Ferry run every 20 minutes starting at about 6am until 11pm, and can transport cars, motorcycles, bicycles, and people on foot. (Refer to the main Kamijima Town Section for the website link)

It is only a three-minute ferry ride to **Habu** 土生 on Innoshima 因島 in Hiroshima Prefecture 広島県.

From Habu you can also catch buses around other parts of Innoshima, or up to **Fukuyama City**, Onomichi city, or Hiroshima city. (Refer to the main Kamijima Town Section for the website link)

Habu itself gives access to a larger supermarket, a sweets shop, a drugstore, several 100 yen stores, small clothes and miscellaneous household goods store, several restaurants (Chinese, Italian, etc.), several bookstores, several doctors' clinics, a dentist, a small hospital, and the possibility to take Japanese classes.

Fukuyama is a major Shinkansen station, and also has day and night buses that go to farther parts of Japan such as Kobe, Osaka, Kyoto, Yokohama, and Tokyo.

Shopping

Supermarkets

There are two small grocery shops: one near the town branch office and one near Tateishi Port
There is also a mini supermarket near the nursery school

Miscellaneous

Bicycle shop. Located near Tateishi Port

Hairdressers. Two both located near Tateishi Port.

Post Office. Open from 9:00 to 5:00; also has ATMs from 9:00-4:30pm

Dining Out

There is only one restaurant, which is located on Level 2 of Tateishi Port! Check it out!

Leisure

Ikina Sports & Recreation Center. A new sports complex with a swimming pool, baseball ground, and badminton hall. It is also equipped with table tennis tables. Rackets, balls and accessories can be rented there.

Camping. Camping grounds and a number of reasonable beaches can be found on the island.

Motorbike Track. Ikina motorbike circuit track

Cultural Classes. Calligraphy lessons are available too. Kendo and Judo are taught in the police station of the neighboring island, Innoshima 因島.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Fishing. Fresh fish right from the Inland Sea!

Mt. Tateishi. The summit offers beautiful views. On New Year's Day, there is a race in the early morning (about 6.30am) to the top of Mt. Tateishi to catch the first sunrise of the year.

Fall Festival. Takes place in October and most students take part in it.

Inoko Festival. Festival held in December.

Ikina Marathon. Takes place in March and offers courses of 3km, 10km and a half marathon course.

Island Hopping. From here, you can easily go island hopping around the hundreds of islands of the Inland Sea of Japan

Central Spot. Easy access to Imabari and Shikoku, Hiroshima prefecture, Hiroshima city, Fukuyama city etc.

Uoshima [魚島]

Description

Uoshima is a small island in Kamijima. Its population is about 200 people, and the major industry is fishing. It has a combined elementary and junior high school, and there are currently 3 junior high students and 6 elementary students. There are also 2 younger boys who attend pre-school.

Website: <https://www.town.kamijima.lg.jp/>

Location/Access/Transport

Please refer to the main [Kamijima Town Section](#) for information on transit.

Shops and Ammenities

Dining Out

There is a small restaurant that is part of the tourist center (open for lunch on weekdays and on the weekend if you tell them in advance).

Groceries

For grocery stores and other shopping go to Yuge and Innoshima. The only store on the island has been recently closed, but may be re-opened.

Many residents also order groceries through the [Hiroshima Seikyo](#), a food-ordering service. Orders can be sent by fax or made online, and are delivered weekly.

Postage and ATMs

You can find both at the Uoshiima Post Office.

Leisure

Clubs. There are a few clubs, including a karaoke club that meets on Saturday evenings, a Japanese dance group, and (as of 2011) a small group of dedicated ping-pong players who practice in the Uoshima school gym.

Uoshimax. A band comprised of mainly school teachers that plays at local concerts in Kamijima as well as on Uoshima.

Fishing. A main focal point on Uoshima. Swimming is also pleasant during the summer.

Hiking and Jogging. The mountainous terrain good for hiking and jogging. There's an observation tower on top of Mount Shiro with a good view of the inland sea on non-foggy days.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Fishing and diving for clams.

Kameihachiman-jinja (shrine) on Uoshima.

Observation point on the top of **"Castle Mountain" with nice cherry blossoms** in the spring.



Iwagi Island [岩城島]

Description

Iwagijima is located at the northeast tip of Ehime, with a population of about 2,000. It is home to many ship building companies, and as a result, there are various foreign workers living on the island (Chinese, Thai, Filipino).

Website: <https://www.town.kamijima.lg.jp/>

Location/Access/Transport

Please refer to the main **Kamijima Town Section** for information on transit.

Ferry: For those without a car, the main form of transportation is the Geiyo Kisen 芸予汽船 also known as the Rapid Ferry (快速船). It connects up to Habu 土生, on Innoshima 因島, and down to Imabari, as well as to other nearby islands.

There are also larger ferries that transport cars. One goes from Nagae Port (長江港) to Habu Port, on Innoshima.

People without cars can ride these ferries as well, but they are less convenient to get to from the main Iwagi town area if you don't have a car or scooter.

Bus: From Habu there are bus connections to Hiroshima, Fukuyama and Onomichi on Honshu, and from Imabari you can access other parts of Shikoku.

Dining Out

Japanese

Yoshimasa. Sea food, not far from the port; sometimes enkais are held here

Lemon Heart. Restaurant in the port building; limited hours

Kamei Restaurant/Ryokan. Near the port next to the town office. Many enkais are held here.

Chinese/Japanese

Komogakushi Onsen. Chinese food run by actual Chinese, plus standard Japanese fare and a small yakiniku restaurant section as well.

Shopping

Supermarkets

A Co-op (エイコープ). Grocery store open 10 am to 6:30pm; closed Sundays. Immediately next to the port building.

Kanno Shoten (加納商店). Small mom and pop grocery store between the main Iwagi port and Nagae port.

Home Improvement/Misc.

General goods store. Located near the A Co-op selling household and gardening goods not found at the co-op

Occasionally small shop displays are set up outside the A Co-op, such as to buy glasses or hearing aids, clothes, or 100 yen store items.

Convenience Stores (Konbini)

Small convenience store near Nagae port (長江港)

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Hanami. Mt. Sekizen has approximately 3,000 sakura (cherry blossom) trees, more than any of the other Kamijima islands.

Sakura Matsuri (Cherry Blossom Festival). Held the first or second weekend in April. Various events, performances, stalls selling local food, and the opportunity to walk up the mountain (Mt. Sekizen) and view the cherry blossom trees in full bloom!

Komogakushi Onsen. Only has one large bath, but is the only onsen on the island. Also has a hotel across the street from it and a restaurant attached to it selling Chinese food, standard Japanese food and yakiniku.



Incorporating the areas of Saijo, Niihama and Shikokuchuo



Toyo B

Saijo City 西条市

Saijo consists of four municipalities were combined in 2004: Old Saijo, Toyo, Komatsu, and Tanbara. The total population of Saijo is roughly 114,000. Saijo sits in the eastern part of Ehime, between Imabari and Niihama.

Description

Saijo City prides itself on its delicious spring water, sacred mountains and exuberant festival. The current city of Saijo was consolidated from four municipalities: Saijo, Komatsu, Tanbara, and Toyo and has a population of about 113,000.

Websites: <http://www.saijo.city.ehime.jp> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saijo,_Ehime

Old Saijo [伊予西条]

Location/ Access/ Transport

Train: The Yosan Line (予讚線) features both local and express trains stopping at Iyo-Saijo Station (伊予西条駅)

Bus: *To/From Matsuyama.* the Setouchi Bus Company and Iyotetsu Bus Company operate hourly buses between Niihama and Matsuyama that pick up in front of Saijo Station and the public library. Fare from Saijo to Matsuyama Station is 1440 yen (as of April 2015).

There is another Saijo located in Hiroshima Prefecture. This is why the Saijo Station in Ehime is formally known as Iyo-Saijo (*Iyo* was the feudal era name for Ehime).

Shopping

Supermarkets

The major supermarkets in Saijo are **Max Valu**, **Fuji Grand** (a medium-size department store with a large grocery selection), **Lamu** (often the cheapest prices in town) and **Maruyoshi** (one location)

Suitoichi Farmers Market. Famous permanent farmers market next to Saijo High School operated by Japan Agriculture. A wide range of cheap local fruits and vegetables, seafood and other specialty products. Get there early! The bakery next door uses special *mochi*-based dough.

Address: 487-4 Kanbaiko (西条市 神拝甲 487-4)

Phone: 0897-53-6771

Books, DVDs, Media

Tsutaya and Chameleon. DVD/CD/manga rental and used game stores located next to Saijo High School and near Saijo's 7-11.

Address: 331 Akeyashiki (西条市 明屋敷 331)

Phone: 0897-55-8181 (Tsutaya)

Phone: 0897-56-9444 (Chameleon)

Geo. Cheaper DVD rentals than Tsutaya, but more expensive used games than Chameleon.

Address: 352-1 Furukawa-ko (西条市 古川甲 352-1)

Phone: 0897-58-2251

Bookoff/Offhouse. Large selection of used books, CDs, manga, DVDs, games, and figurines, as well as a second-hand store next door at Offhouse. Tends to be a bit pricier than other used places. Near Maruyoshi Supermarket and Kanbai Elementary.

Address: 418-1 Kitagawa (西条市 喜多川 418-1)

Phone: 0897-58-5001

Haruya/Miyawaki Books. Large bookstores located on Route 13 (also called the *Sangyo-doro*). Neither has much in the way of English-language books, but both stock JLPT study books.

Address: 155 Shinden (Miyawaki) (西条市 新田 155)

141-1 Kanbaiotsu (Haruya) (西条市 神拝乙 141-1)

Phone: 0897-52-1335 (Miyawaki)

Phone: 0897-52-1822 (Haruya)

Miscellaneous

Daiki (hardware), Daiso (100-yen shop) and K's Denki (electronics) are all located on the Route 13. There is a Don Quixote (everything store), Mister Donut, McDonalds and more on the other side of the eastern bridge (toward Niihama, past the police station and Saiseikai Hospital).

Dining Out

Indian

Maharaja Spice. Indian curry restaurant just off the main shopping street (*shotengai*). 1030 yen for curry and all-you-can-eat naan/salad. One of the most popular new restaurants with JETs and young locals.

Address: 272-1 Sakaemachi (西条市 栄町 272-1)

Phone: 070-5357-5763

Beer halls

Asahi Brewery and Beer Hall. The Asahi Beer Brewery that serves all of Shikoku. The dining hall offers several all-you-can-eat-and-drink options and has plenty of space for groups. Not cheap, but great for parties. You can also arrange to take an English tour of the brewery. They operate a free shuttle from Saijo Station.

Address: 2-6 Hiuchi (西条市 ひうち 2-6)

Phone: 897-53-7770

Restaurants

Kerun Steakhouse. Excellent steaks from a restaurant that has been serving Saijo for over 25 years. Can be quite expensive, but the chef cooks your meal on a large grill right in front of you for an awesome experience. They also offer a good weekday lunch set for around 800 yen.

Address: 1641-4 Omachi (西条市 大町 1641-4)

Phone: 0897-56-2253

Doudeshou. An izakaya popular with JETs and eikaiwa teachers. The owners are friendly and speak limited English. Wednesdays are half-price beer nights.

Address: 196-1 Shindenmachi-koi (西条市 新田町甲 196-1)

Phone: 0897-47-8799

Route 13 restaurants. Route 13 (also known as the *Sangyo-doro*) is where the majority of chain restaurants in Saijo are located, including Mos Burger, Sushi-ro/Kurazushi (*kaiten* or "conveyor belt" sushi), Coco Ichibanya (Japanese-style curry), and Yoshinoya/Sukiya (*gyudon* beef bowls).

Cafés

Love Crepe. Everyone's favorite crepe cafe. Located near city hall and Saijo High School. Delicious crepes and lattes prepared by the friendly owner, who can speak some English.

Address: 1761 Omachi (西条市 大町 1761)

Phone: 0897-47-3115

Nana Coffee Roaster. Cute café located near the library that serves curry, doria and other light meals with coffee/tea. They are famous for decadent waffles covered with ice cream and fruit. Lunch sets run around 800 yen.

Address: 276-1 Kanbaiko (西条市 神拝甲 276-1)
Phone: 0897-47-7751

Nightlife

Karaoke

Suito. Booth style karaoke located near the Iyo Bank-Circle K intersection at the center of town. Also features a pool hall.

Address: 680-7 Omachi (西条市 大町 680-7)
Phone: 0897-53-7433

18-ban (juuhachiban). The cheaper, seedier, inevitably more popular alternative to Suito. Located at the heart of the drinking street near the station.

Address: 697-3 Omachi, Benzaiten Building 2F (西条市 大町 697-3)
Phone: 0897-55-3851

Bars

The *Nomiyagai*, or drinking street, near the station hosts numerous shot, snack, and hostess bars. Popular destinations include World's End Café and De Niro Shot Bar. The owner of World's End speaks English and is the Saijo's most active music promoter, sometimes holding live shows in his café and other small venues.

Leisure

Saijo Sports Park. Located on the harbor near the Imabari Shipbuilding Cranes, this public sports complex features baseball and track stadiums, martial arts and gym facilities, as well as a small weight room. The weight room gets packed in the evening, and some ALTs like to go right after work or on the weekends to beat the crowds. 100 yen to use the weight room, which is free on Wednesdays. Closed on Mondays.

Address: 1-2 Hiuchi (西条市 ひうち 1-2)
Phone: 0897-53-3200

Saijo Public Library. Absolutely gorgeous two-story library completed in 2010. Has a few shelves of **English-language books**. Events are sometimes held on the lawn of the rear entrance.

Address: 1590 Omachi (西条市 大町 1590)
Phone: 0897-56-2668

Parks. The parks running alongside the Kamo River are a great place to get together – the most popular is called Bujo Park (武丈公園). Popular activities include cherry blossom-viewing parties in spring, barbecues in the summer, and potato stew parties known as *imotaki* in autumn.

Mt. Hachido. Near Bujo Park is Hachido-yama (八堂山), a public park located on the slopes of a small mountain featuring plum and cherry blossom groves. Along with a road, there's a trail that leads to the top marked by a red *torii* gate visible from the Kamo River. The large, lonely building on the hillside that can be seen from all over town is Saijo's Archaeological History Museum.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Saijo Spring Water. Saijo's spring water is known as *uchinuki* and is a major source of local pride. Uchinuki can be seen everywhere in the central part of the city, and the 'Aqua Route' running through the town area is a popular walking course that allows you to admire the relics of the Saijo Clan domain and the surrounding freshwater fish and flowers.

Mt. Ishizuchi. Mt. Ishizuchi is the highest mountain in western Japan and is one of Japan's seven sacred peaks. With part of the range designated as a quasi-national park, its seasonal beauty and alpine plans make it a welcoming sanctuary for nature-loving visitors. Buses run from Saijo Station to the Ishizuchi ropeway, but the



Mt. Ishizuchi
is the highest
mountain in
western Japan!

most convenient way to access either the Ropeway Route or Tsuchigoya Route to the peak is by car.

Saijo Festival. (October 14th-17th) The biggest event in the city. Come prepared to party! Over 80 danjiris (portable shrines which weigh about 100 kg) take part in a 3-day procession, making their way from local shrines down to the Kamo River for the festival's grand finale. Many of the foreigners living in Saijo and nearby cities are able to find teams to participate with.

88 Temple Pilgrimage. Two of the temples: Maegami-ji and Kichijo-ji.

Komatsu [小松]

Description

Komatsu is a town in the foothills of the Ishizuchi Mountains with a population of about 10,000.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Train: Komatsu's station is Iyo-Komatsu Station (伊予小松駅), which is only served by local trains on the Yosan Line. If you are coming by express, you will need to change to a local train at either Iyo-Saijo Station (coming from Takamatsu) or Nyugawa Station (coming from Matsuyama).

Bus: The Setouchi and Iyotetsu Buses between Niihama and Matsuyama stop in front of the Komatsu branch of Saijo City Hall (*Komatsu-shisho-mae*)

Shopping

Yama-san. The biggest supermarket in town. Start your shopping here!

Dining Out

Several great ramen shops are scattered around town. Look for them!

Italian

Marubun. An excellent Italian place located directly in front of the station. One of the most popular restaurants in the Saijo area. Known for its pasta, whereas its sister restaurant in Niihama is known for pizza (see below).

Address: 407-1 Shinyashiki-ko Komatsu-cho (西条市 小松町新屋敷甲 407-1)

Phone: 0898-72-2004

Izakaya

Azumaya. Modern izakaya with great food and atmosphere located near Marubun and the station.

Address: 351-7 Shinyashiki-ko Komatsu-cho (西条市 小松町新屋敷甲 351-7)

Phone: 0898-72-2020

Leisure

Ishizuchi Highway Oasis. Large complex alongside the Matsuyama Expressway featuring a restaurant, gallery space, camping facilities and a 400 yen hot spring overlooking the city (Tsubaki Onsen).

Address: 22-29 Shinyashiki-otsu, Komatsu-cho (西条市 小松町新屋敷乙 22-29)

Phone: 0898-76-3133

Komatsu Onpo Library. A cozy library located next to the Komatsu Community Center (walk straight for a few blocks after exiting Iyo-Komatsu Station). The community center hosts numerous international-themed events every year.

Address: Komatsu-cho, 3007-1 Shinyashiki-ko

Phone: 0898-72-5634

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Yoshino Mochi. One of the Saijo region's best-known omiyage (souvenirs), these Japanese-style treats can be purchased directly from the maker, Meshiya Kaho (めしや菓舗), located near the library and community center.

Three of the 88 Temples of the Shikoku Pilgrimage:

#60 Yokomine-ji (横峰寺) – The only pilgrimage temple in the Saijo area not located near Route 11, Yokomine-ji is notoriously one of the hardest of the 88 to reach on foot. Located deep in the mountains at an elevation of over 700 meters, this temple can be accessed by an expensive toll road, by bus, or by one of two strenuous trails leaving from the Komatsu area. Famous for rhododendron flowers (*shakunage*) that bloom in the middle of May. The nearby Hoshigamori (星ヶ森) offers a famous view of Mt. Ishizuchi.

#61 Koon-ji (香園寺) – Massive and surprisingly modern temple that's about a 10-minute walk from Iyo-Komatsu Station.

#62 Hoju-ji (宝寿寺) – Located next to Komatsu Station.

Tanbara Town [丹原町]

Description

Tanbara Town merged with Saijo City proper in 2004, but a census taken in 2000 marked the population at 13,644. As a mostly agricultural area, Tanbara features a significant number of fields and rice paddies. Its most notable agricultural products are roses and persimmons.

Tanbara is located in Saijo City along the eastern coastline of Ehime. It's one of the more difficult areas of Saijo to get to via public transportation.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Train: Take a train to Nyuugawa Station in Toyo. From there you can take a bus into town until around 6 p.m., or a taxi (approx. ¥1100 to the closet area of Tanbara)

Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* There's an express bus from Matsuyama that stops at Yuyaguchi in Tanbara, from there you can take a bus that takes you through Tanbara, and all the way to Nyuugawa Station (as long as it's before 6 p.m.)

Shopping

For most things you may be better off going into Toyo or even ordering online, but Tanbara does three grocery stores, a Mini Stop, a Lawson, bakery, farmer's market and cake shop!

Supermarkets

Kimura Chain.

Yamasan.

Toshoku. Small corner store across from the bakery.

Shu-chan Hiroba. The largest permanent farmers market in Saijo. Features fresh local produce, fish, and many other products. Get there early!

Address: 290 Ikeda, Tanbara-cho (西条市 丹原町池田 290)

Phone: 0898-76-2022

Miscellaneous

Shaved Ice. During the summer a shaved ice shop opens up a few doors down from Toshoku.

Bike Shop. There is a bike shop along Tanbara's main road – almost catty-corner to the post office – where you can fill up your bike tires for free. If you smile nicely at the owner, he may also give you a bag of persimmons when they come into season, whether you want them or not.

Dining Out

Easily Accessible

Fantasy. For any ALTs living in Tanbara this is the go-to restaurant when you don't feel like cooking. It's close, reasonably priced and the proprietor loves to meet new ALTs. He's also open to adjusting food orders (i.e. cheese-less pizza) without much fuss, and occasionally handing out bags of fruit. Located near Tanbara H.S. and Kamakura Mansion. Hours: 10:30 -10pm, closed Wednesday.

Address: 196-1 Ganrenji, Tanbara-cho (西条市 丹原町願連寺 196-1)

Phone: 0898-68-7842

Ushiro no shoumen. Easily accessible if you're at Tanbara Nishi J.H., otherwise it's a bit out of the way. Lined with cherry trees. Has a salad bar, and lots of deserts. Lunch costs ¥780 and up. Hours: 9 -10 p.m., closed Thursdays.

Address: 777-1 Kurumi, Tanbara-cho (西条市 丹原町来見 777-1)

Phone: 0898-73-2207

Dandanchakan. Just a little further down the road than Fantasy. Huge selection of teas and mostly Korean and Thai food. The Bibimbap dish is recommended, and the Thai Green Curry is also very good. Owner speaks a bit of English. Closed Sundays.

Address: 1626-3 Ikeda, Tanbara-cho (西条市 丹原町池田 1626-3)

Phone: 0898-68-0686

Souen. Good place to grab lunch when there's no school lunch at Tanbara Higashi JH. It's nice and close, has a set lunch for ¥680 as well as other menu items. Closed Sundays.

Restaurants that Take a Bit More Effort to Locate/Get to

Café Gojinya. Small café located in a traditional Japanese building that apparently used to be a hospital. There are only a few tables available, and the lunch is a set menu, but it has some of the best-tasting food in Tanbara, possibly even Saijo, as well as a selection of delicious freshly-baked cakes. Located: Down the road from Tokuda E.S., has red banners in front. Hours: 11am-5pm, Thurs-Sun.

Address: 876-4 Kota, Tanbara-cho (西条市 丹原町古田 876-4)

Phone: 0898-68-7255

Café Lamp. The fashionable café of Tanbara located in a refurbished warehouse. A lot of Italian food and the best espresso in Tanbara. Dinner is from 6pm, and a reservation may be needed. Located in Kurumi, down the road from Ushiro no Shoumen Hours: 11:30 -9 p.m.

Address: 684 Kurumi, Tanbara-cho (西条市 丹原町来見 684)

Phone: 0898-75-5008

La Blanche. A French restaurant in Tanbara, they use seasonal ingredients and the menu changes every day. You need to make a reservation at least a day in advance, you can also tell them any food allergies or dislikes you have and they'll work around them. It is however, not cheap, their full course meal can run ¥5,000 - ¥15,000 and lunch is about ¥3,000 - ¥3,500. Located in Kurumi, near Tanbara Nishi J.H. Hours: 11:30-2 (lunch), 6-10pm (dinner)

Address: 388-17 Sekiya, Tanbara-cho (西条市 丹原町関屋 388-17)

Phone: 0898-73-2410

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Nishiyama Koryuji Temple. Has a festival dedicated to momiji (Japanese maple leaves) on the third Sunday of November. It's one of the best places for viewing momiji in the area, and it is also one of the extra 20 temples of Shikoku's 88 Temple Pilgrimage, as well as designated one of the 20 most Sacred Sites in Shikoku. Also, if livestock is your thing, there's a famous rock that looks like a cow.

Kumyoji Temple. Known as a good place for hanami (cherry blossom viewing).

Tanbara Sogo Park. A really nice park which was built on the ruins of Mimigane Castle. There are beautiful panoramic views from the playground area which you can reach by climbing a rope ladder or walking up the path. Facilities include the aforementioned playground, with slides, a zip line, and climbing frames, tennis courts, hiking trails, and a multi-purpose area that can be used for baseball, soccer, etc. Close to Kumyoji Temple.

Tanabata Matsuri (Star Festival). Occurs on August 5-7th. Good way to get out and see the local community, eat some festival food, and see a parade (with dancing!).

Tanbara Autumn Festival. Coincides with the bigger Saijo Festival, you can see (and hear) the local shrines' danjiri (portable shrines) paraded around town.

Toyo and Nyugawa Station [東予市、壬生川駅]

Description

Toyo has a population of about 32,000 and sits on the opposite side of the Dozen Plain from Saijo, closer to Imabari and Matsuyama. The area is flat and features farmland and an industrialized coastline.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Train: There are regular trains (local and express) and buses from Matsuyama to Toyo. The station name for Toyo is Nyugawa (壬生川).

Ferry: Toyo Port is a major gateway for the region and overnight ferries for Osaka depart from here.

Shopping

Numerous **grocery stores, pharmacies, electronics stores, bookstores** and **DVD rental places** are located around Nyugawa Station and the Saijo City Hall Toyo Branch.

Dining Out

Japanese

Yakiniku Go-en. It's hard to beat the combination of yakiniku and 200 yen beer!

Address: 624-1 Shu (西条市 周布 624-1)

Phone: 0898-76-8270

Torikko. Awesome izakaya restaurant with a fluent English speaking chef! A 10-minute walk down the road directly opposite Nyuugawa station on the right hand side. You can't miss the huge photo of the owner holding a chicken decorating the front of the restaurant.

Address: 31-14 Mitsuyahigashi (西条市 三津屋東 31-14)

Phone: 0898-76-1005

88 Udon. On the main street of Toyo, about 5 minutes walk (west) from the Toyo branch of Saijo City Hall. They serve the cheapest, most delicious udon in town. Be warned, just one visit will most likely result in compulsory bi-weekly visits just so you can get your delicious udon fix.

Address: 694-3 Shu (西条市 周布 694-3)

Phone: 0898-64-0033

Issei Yakitori. The oldest and possibly most famous restaurant in town. This restaurant is owned and operated by an incredibly kind-hearted family that has been looking after Toyo JETs for the last 25 years. The food is absolutely amazing but the service is even better. After exiting the Nyugawa station, take a left and continue to the next set of traffic lights. Take another left and its about 200 meters up the road on the right.

Address: 55-2 Mitsuya (西条市 三津屋 55-2)

Phone: 0898-64-1909

Toyo shares a McDonald's with Tanbara that's open 24 hours a day. Just follow the signs! There's also a Mos Burger if you're feeling fancy.

Nightlife

Karaoke

Toyo has karaoke and arcades, as well as a 24-hour Funky Time internet café with billiards, darts, karaoke, and games

Bars

Ing. A shot bar that looks a lot like a garage both outside and inside. Also not far from Nyugawa Station. Features darts and a pool table. The owner is into extreme sports.

Address: 4-46 Mitsuya-minami (西条市 三津屋南 4-46)

Phone: 0898-64-3237

Leisure

Toyo Sports Park. Toyo's public sports park has many of the same facilities as the sports park in Saijo, but is much newer. Also features an indoor field and skate park. The baseball stadium here hosts the Ehime Mandarin Pirates minor league team several times during the summer and fall months.

Address: Kawarazu shinden (西条市 河原津新田)

Phone: 0898-66-0361

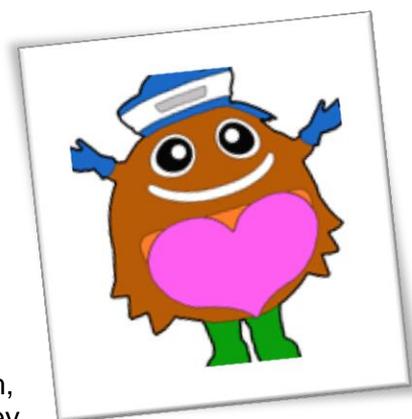
Toyo Public Library. Popular old library with a local history museum, art exhibition space and horseshoe crab exhibit attached. They occasionally offer crafts activities such as traditional paper-making. Located next to Saijo's largest community center and down the street from the Toyo branch of Saijo City Hall.

Address: Shuu 427 (西条市 周布 427)

Phone: 0898-65-4797

Toyo Onsen and Spa. Expansive hot spring featuring numerous baths and doubling as a hotel, with private rooms for couples and families. The basic hot spring fee is 550 yen for adults.

Address: 687-1 Shuu (西条市 周布 687-1)



Kabuchan, Saijo's *kimo-kawaii* horseshoe crab mascot.

Phone: 0898-64-0080

Hyotan Pond. Renowned as one of the best cherry blossom-viewing spots in all of Saijo.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Okagen Matsuri. Toyo's firework festival in July. Held near the port, with plenty of excellent food and drinks available from street-side vendors.

Tateboshi-ami. Join intrepid fishers from all over Toyo as they rush into the ocean to catch as many of the 16000 fish (tai, hamachi, etc.) and 1.6 tons of clams that the city releases into shallow netted-off coastline as they can. Held annually in late May on the Kwarazu Coastline (Google Maps: 西条市 河原津海岸).

Cost: 1500 yen (net and gloves included)

Ehime Coastline. The coastline is easily accessible by car and is about a 30-minute walk from Iyo-Miyoshi Station.

Niihama 新居浜市

Description

Niihama is the third largest city in Ehime with a population of about 125,000. Niihama has been called "The Town of Red Gold" (*Akagane no machi*) for the Besshi Copper Mine.

Websites: <http://www.city.niihama.lg.jp/english/>
and
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niihama%2C_Ehime



Location/ Access/ Transport

Train: There are regular trains (local and express) and buses (Setouchi and Iyotetsu Bus Companies) running through Niihama.

Shopping

Shopping Centers

AEON Mall. Large indoor mall with a variety of stores as well as several restaurants, a Starbucks, and a movie theater. AEON also has the region's Kaldi Coffee, which stocks a wide variety of foreign food and drink.

Address: 8-8 Maeda-cho (新居浜市 前田町 8-8)

[Toho Cinemas Niihama Website](#)

Supermarkets

Fuji Grand. Located near the JHS ALTs' current apartment complex, this large supermarket also features a Tsutaya, McDonald's and Mr. Donut.

Address: 2-10-7 Shinsuka-cho (新居浜市 新須賀町 2丁目 10-7)

Phone: 0897-34-6511

Dining Out

Indian

Hari/Spice Kingdom. Indian restaurants in the central Niihama area.

Hari's Address: 2 Takagi-cho (新居浜 高木町 2)

Phone: 0897-34-9777

Spice Kingdom's Address: 1-1-3 Nakasuka-cho (新居浜市 中須賀町 1 丁目 1-3)

Phone: 0897-32-0522

Pizza

Marubun. While the Komatsu Marubun (see above) is known for pasta, the Niihama Marubun makes great gourmet pizza in a real oven. Conveniently located near the station. They do take-out!

Address: 2-2-44 Sakai-cho (新居浜市 坂井町 2 丁目 2-44)

Phone: 0897-37-8383

Cafés

Cook's Café. A 15-minute walk from the station for some bagels and coffee. From 11am-2pm, they have a brunch special for 1050 yen (bagel sandwich, salad French fries, soup of the day, and a drink of your choice).

Address: 4-1-7 Shonai-cho (新居浜市 庄内町 4-1-7)

Phone: 0897-32-2456

Minna no Coffee. A lovely beach shack café overlooking Oshima Island on the very, very eastern edge of the city. It's an adventure to get there if you aren't driving. The friendly couple running it are bicycle fanatics and will also lend out their 2 kayaks for free on calm days. Their coffee is good but their food menu is limited to a few desserts.

Address: 838 Ninai-cho (新居浜市 荷内町 838)

Phone: 0897-46-5255

Japanese

Koya. Also known as "little old house," the restaurant serves great yakitori but it is a bit on the expensive side.

Address: 4-2-14 Shonai-cho (新居浜市 庄内町 4 丁目 2-14)

Phone: 0897-37-2627

J. Great Hiroshima-style okonomiyaki with a very friendly owner!

Address: 1-1-8 Wakamizuchō (新居浜市 若水町 1 丁目 1-8)

Torikko. Awesome izakaya restaurant that specializes in chicken dishes. Often used by the Niihama ALTs to grab dinner and hang out.

Address: 6-17 Tokutsunecho, Niihama, Ehime Prefecture 792-0022

Phone: 0897-32-1005

Mos Burger, **Coco Ichibanya** (curry), **Sushiro/Hamazushi** (conveyor belt sushi), **Sukiya/Yoshinoya** (beef bowls), **Watamin-chi/Za Watami** (izakaya) and many other Japanese chain restaurants can be found across the city

Leisure

Parks: Hirose Park (広瀬公園), Takinomiya Park (滝の宮公園), Yamane Park (山根公園) and Ikedaike Park (池田池公園) are some of Niihama's many large parks.

Marine Park Niihama. A man-made beach with a volleyball court, campgrounds, and picnic areas. AJET has hosted late-summer beach parties here in recent years.

Address: 324 Habu sanchomeotsu (新居浜市 垣生 3 丁目 乙 324)

Phone: 0897-46-4100



Besshi Copper Mine Memorial Library. Niihama's somewhat confusingly named central library is located on the western end of the city near AEON Mall. The main building has an interesting circular design that features a lot of reading/study space looking out on the surrounding park.

Address: 10-1 Kita-shinmachi (新居浜市 北新町 10-1)

Phone: 0897-32-1911

Japanese Lessons

The city holds free Japanese lessons every Tuesday and Thursday from 7:30-9 p.m. at the Fureai Plaza (aka the Municipal Public Welfare Center). Private lessons for 500 yen an hour are also available and are not restricted to the Fureai Plaza.

Address: 2-60 Takagi-cho (新居浜市 高木町 2-60)

Phone: 0897-65-1218

Nightlife

Bars

Niihama's bar street Shikishima-dori (敷島通り) is the largest in the Toyo B area and features popular spots such as Bar Leon, Lau Lau, Chelsea's and many more!

Live Music

Jeandore. Niihama's live music venue.

Tourism/Festivals/Highlights

Niihama Taiko Festival. A massive, must-see taiko-dai (large drum float) festival held from October 16-18. Niihama's festival coincides with those in Doi of Shikokuchuo and Saijo, and has a reputation for being the rowdiest of the three.

Zuijōji Temple. A Soto Zen Buddhist temple located in the Yamane area in the foothills of the Besshi mountains. The temple has a zazen meditation service early every Sunday morning. Excellent autumn scenery.

Address: 8-1 Yamane-cho (新居浜市 山

根町 8-1)

Phone: 0897-41-6563



Minetopia Besshi. Located in the mountains, Minetopia is dedicated to the Besshi Copper Mine that allowed Niihama to prosper. A steam engine carries passengers from the landing point (which features a large Niihama souvenir shop and other attractions) to historical sites higher in the mountains. You can also visit the peaceful Tatsukawa Shrine (龍河神社), which sits at the top of an endless stone staircase under heavy forest, on the way up.

Address: 707-3 Tatsukawa-cho (新居浜市 立川町 707-3)

Phone: 0897-43-1801

Ehime Prefecture Science History Museum. A massive science museum with good exhibitions on the geological, biological, and industrial history of Ehime Prefecture (limited English). There is an excellent 45-minute planetarium show as well. 510 yen for admission and a separate 510 yen for the planetarium. Out of the way, but there are buses from Niihama and Saijo Stations.

Address: 2133-2 Ojo-in (新居浜市 大生院 2133-2)

Phone: 0897-40-4100

The Niihama Guide Club is a group dedicated helping connect foreigners living in Niihama with the city. They often give tours and put on cultural events, such as tea ceremony demonstrations and the Niihama Global Party in February.

Shikokuchuo City 四国中央市

Description

Like Saijo, Shikokuchuo consists of different municipalities that combined to become one city: Kawanoë, Mishima, Doi, and Shingu (川之江、三島、土居、新宮). The total population of Shikokuchuo is around 92,000. Shikokuchuo sits on the eastern end of Ehime and is centrally located in relation to the rest of Shikoku, providing easy access to the other prefectures via car or train.

Website: <http://www.city.shikokuchuo.ehime.jp/>
[Shikokuchuo International Friendship Association](#)

Kawanoë

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: By car from Matsuyama or Takamatsu, take the Kawanoë-Mishima exit of the Matsuyama Expressway.

Bus: Both JR and Iyotetsu have bus service to the Kawanoë-Mishima Interchange for around 2300 yen (1.5 hours).

Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* There are regular trains (local and express) from Matsuyama to Iyo-Mishima and Kawanoë stations. The express from Matsuyama is about 1.5 hours, and twice that for local.

Shopping

Supermarkets

The major supermarkets in Kawanoë are **Halows** (open 24 hours), **Fuji Grand**, **Marunaka**, **Aeon** (cheaper), and **Gyoumu Supermarket** (has a small selection of imported foods, and is generally cheap).

Books, DVDs, Music, etc.

Tsutaya. Japan's largest DVD/CD/manga rental chain. There is a second location inside the Kawanoë Fuji Grand.

Address: 1058-1 Kinsei-cho Shimobun (四国中央市 金生町下分 1058-1)

Phone: 0896-58-2211

Geo. Cheaper DVD rentals than Tsutaya. Located west of Kawanoë Station, on the road to Kaonji.

Address: 4066-1 Kawanoë-cho (四国中央市 川之江町 4066-1)

Phone: 0896-59-1160

Book Market. A smaller used book store than the sprawling Book-off in Mishima, but with similar prices. Located next to Fuji Grand.

Address: 1113-1 Mendori-cho (四国中央市 妻鳥町 1113-1)

Phone: 0896-59-2225

Haruya Books. Bookstore located next to Uniqlo on the road east from Time (north of Aeon).

Address: 1662-1 Mendori-cho (四国中央市 妻鳥町 1662-1)

Phone: 0896-58-8787

Miscellaneous

Aeon and Fuji Grand both contain a variety of shops including clothing stores, sports shops, and stationery stores. Aeon has a **Nitori** furniture shop. There are also **Daisos** near Aeon and in Fuji

Grand, and a **Seria** next to Halows (all 100 yen shops). Kawanoé has a large used clothing/furniture/everything store located just north of Aeon. **K's Denki** and **Edion** are both electronics stores, both located at the crossing of the Time and Aeon roads. **Time** in Mishima is probably the closest hardware store.

Dining Out

There is a good range of restaurants, especially around the station!

Italian

Amalfi. Italian food including good pizza. Does take out.

Address: 2608-3 Mendori-cho (四国中央市 妻鳥町 2608-3)

Phone: 0896-72-6702

Formaggio. Another good pizza place.

Address: 2029-1 Kinsei-cho shimobun (四国中央市 金生町下分 2029-1)

Phone: 0896-22-3929

Mexican

Tranquilo Café. Mexican restaurant. Open for lunch and dinner. It's quite small (and popular!), so reservations for dinner are best. Parking is down the street. They do take out--and burritos!

Address: 754 Kawanoé-cho (四国中央市 川之江町 754)

Phone: 0896-22-3534

Bunbukuchagama. Beef stew, reasonable prices, highly recommended!

Address: 793-4 Mendori-cho (四国中央市 妻鳥町 793-4)

Phone: 0896-57-2677

Japanese

Shimazu. A relatively upscale sushi restaurant, near Hito Hospital.

Address: 818-10 Kamibuncho (四国中央市 上分町 818-10)

Phone: 0896-58-1153

Yuushokubouya. A delicious izakaya with a good atmosphere near Aoyama Suit Shop and K's Denki.

Address: 1601 Mendori-cho (四国中央市 妻鳥町 1601)

Phone: 0896-58-6177

Gorohachi. Izakaya with a great, intimate atmosphere and delicious food. At the crossroads of the road north from Grand Fuji and east from Time.

Address: 910-2-101 Mendori-cho (四国中央市 妻鳥町 910-2-101)

Phone: 0896-58-9568

Cafés

Nico Café. A family-run affair near the station with a friendly atmosphere (the owner and her daughter are studying English) and absolutely delicious waffle desserts.

Address: 1888-1 Kawanoé-cho (四国中央市 川之江町 1888-1)

Phone: 0896-77-4260

Kinari. A nice café near Mendori Elementary School.

Address: 1568-1 Mendori-cho (四国中央市 妻鳥町 1568-1)

Phone: 0896-58-6367

Café Lamp. Café with a pleasant atmosphere near the Kagawa border. Specialties include kinoko and kuromitsu ice creams.

Address: 26 Kawanoé-cho Nagasu (四国中央市 川之江町長洲 26)

Phone: 0896-58-3938

Being the closest to Kagawa Prefecture which is known for its Sanuki udon, Kawanoé has some of the best udon in Ehime!

Leisure

Shikokuchuo Bowl. Bowling alley just south of the station and arcade.

Kawanoe Library and Community Center.

Address: 2242-1 Kawanoe-cho (四国中央市 川之江町 2241-1)

Phone: 0896-28-6256

Fitta. A gym and fitness center located near Fuji Grand.

Address: 1121-7 Mendori-cho (四国中央市 妻鳥町 1121-7)

Phone: 0896-57-2133

Mori To Kohan
Park (森と湖畔
の公園) and the Kinsei
River (金生川) are
both great areas for
walks or runs!

Mori To Kohan Park. Includes a lake and forested hills, along with a barbecue area and an car camping site. A great place to explore or unwind, located near the Takamatsu-Matsuyama Expressway.

Kawanoe Castle. An interesting historical attraction with a small park attached.

Night Life

Karaoke

Big Echo. Booth-style karaoke located near Fuji Grand. There are various cheaper (in both senses) karaoke rooms scattered around the city.

Bars

Minami. A bar that serves burgers and other foodstuffs late. They also have darts and karaoke!

Address: 1851-1 Kawanoe-cho (四国中央市 川之江町 1851-1)

Phone: 0896-22-3188

Bar Luke. Located between Fuji Grand and Hito Hospital, is a spacious bar with darts and a nice atmosphere. No cover charge.

Address: 328-5 Kamibun-cho (四国中央市 上分町 328-5)

Phone: 0896-57-1122

Tourism/ Festivals/ Highlights

Kawanoe Paper. Kawanoe is known for its paper mills and the tourist attractions include the Paper Museum where you can make paper and postcards and the Paper Technology Center where you can make traditional mizuhiki crafts. They're both a lot of fun and great for 1- or 2-hour activities.

Paper Festival. In late July come celebrate the Paper Festival! There are loads of paper-related festival activities and a large dance in the evening with plenty of revelry.

Kawanoe also has its own unique Fall Festival complete with parades of giant and elaborately decorated taiko-dai. Don't miss it!

Fuyu Youichi. In winter enjoy the Fuyu Youichi, an intimate festival and illumination in front of Aeon Mall.

Umenishiki. A large sake factory. You can tour and try lots of sake samples! They also manufacture three types of beer.

Shingu Tea Houses. Check out the tea houses in Shingu. Clustered around a traditional Japanese village, there are many shops performing both traditional and more modern tea ceremonies.

Mishima

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: By car from Matsuyama or Takamatsu, take the Kawanoe-Mishima exit of the Matsuyama Expressway.

Bus: Both JR and Iyotetsu have bus service to the Kawano-Mishima Interchange for around 2300 yen (1.5 hours).

Train: *To/From Matsuyama.* There are regular trains (local and express) from Matsuyama to Iyo-Mishima and Kawano stations. The express from Matsuyama is about 1.5 hours, and twice that for local.

Shopping

Supermarkets

Mishima has a **Fuji** supermarket near the station, two **Fresh Values**, a **Marunaka** on Route 11 near EcoTown, and a **Halows** (24 hrs). Hit up the **Cosmos** or **Mac** drugstores for slightly cheaper snacks and drinks (and a few surprises!).

Books, DVDs, Music, etc.

Book-off/Off-House/Hard-Off (EcoTown). Sprawling used goods store, with everything you can think of: Books, manga, CDs, DVDs, computer hardware, digital devices, sound systems, clothing, accessories, furniture, and sports equipment.

Address: 500-3 Gujo-cho (四国中央市 具定町 500-3)

Phone: 0896-28-1426

Tsutaya. DVDs, CDs, and manga rentals. Near the City Hall.

Address: 428-1 Nakasone-cho (四国中央市 中曾根町 428-1)

Phone: 0896-24-5003

Miscellaneous

The Fuji supermarket has a 100-yen store (**Daiso**) and a limited selection of cheap clothing. For hardware needs, go to **Time** (next to Route 11 Bypass) or **Daiki** (Route 11 in Sangawa, past EcoTown). Time has more staff. There are a number of liquor shops in Mishima. **Time's** has the most variety and probably the best value for imported liqueurs, as well as a few craft beers like Kona Ale. **Takemoto Liquor** near Mishima High School has a surprising (for the inaka) selection of lower-end imported beers, including Samuel Adams.

Dining Out

Mishima has an excellent dining selection. In addition to those listed below, there are a number of small shops and izakayas around the station and Mishima Shrine.

Plazas

Oishii Hiroba. There are a number of restaurants concentrated near the Fuji supermarket, including a spacious izakaya, an Okinawan place, and a ramen shop.

Fusion

Evo Evo. Located just east of the City Hall, has delicious food, good atmosphere, and a great selection of imported beer. French/Italian/Japanese fusion, slightly expensive, but **so** worth it. Closed Mondays.

Address: 4-9-57 Miyagawa, Mishima (四国中央市 三島宮川 4-9-57)

Phone: 0896-24-1018

Essen. Almost next to Evo Evo, east of the City Hall. Euro-Japanese palette. The owner spent time in Switzerland, thus the name. A very nice, low-light atmosphere, and tastefully appointed. Great for small group gatherings!

Address: 4-8-57 Miyagawa, Mishima (四国中央市 三島宮川 4-9-57)

Phone: 0896-29-5390

Japanese

Darumaya. Located just west of City Hall. A nice, intimate shop with friendly staff and a smaller-scale izakaya atmosphere, including a counter. Good for gatherings, but Japanese-style tatami seating only.

Address: 4-4-23 Miyagawa, Mishima (四国中央市 三島宮川 4-4-23)

Phone: 0896-23-2210

Rococo. Just west of the City Hall and Darumaya. Another small-scale izakaya with a pleasant atmosphere. Includes counter and room seating.

Address: 4-1-24 Miyagawa, Mishima (四国中央市 三島宮川 4-1-24)

Phone: 0896-23-1545

Hego. Located just east of Iyo-Mishima station. An excellent izakaya with a great atmosphere, including an opulent backroom and a bar/counter on the first floor. Very good for large or intimate gatherings, but make a reservation on weekend nights. Mostly tatami-seating, but the first floor is western-style. Cute staff.

Address: 3-1708-1 Mishimachuo (四国中央市 三島中央 3-1708-1)

Phone: 0896-24-4655

Yamaguchi Sato no Mise. A wonderful little shop on Route 11, just across from Daiki. Very pleasant, light atmosphere with a view of a petite garden. The food is Japanese-style, delicious, and healthy! They serve a variety of rice bowls as well as courses and many individual dishes. Sweetened Ghibli soundtracks play endlessly in the background, which will make you simultaneously nostalgic and excited to identify which movie each is from. Japanese-style seating only.

Address: 309-1 Sangawa-cho (四国中央市 寒川町 309-1)

Phone: 0896-24-4701

Taiwanese

Ajigen. A cheap Taiwanese restaurant located directly south of the city hall on Route 11 Bypass. Might be the cheapest restaurant in the city. The atmosphere isn't much and the food sacrifices a little to keep the price low, but it's still pretty good, and they have a great selection.

Address: 5020 Nakasone-cho (四国中央市 中曾根町 5020)

Phone: 0896-29-5580

Chinese

Tsuge. A higher-class Chinese place just up the street (toward the mountains) from Ajigen. There's a smaller menu, and the food caters a little more to the Japanese palette, but it's pretty delicious, and the atmosphere is a little more refined than Ajigen.

Address: 5049-4 Nakasone-cho (四国中央市 中曾根町 5049-4)

Phone: 0896-23-8575

Italian

Sitia. A nice little family-run Italian restaurant near Mishima Elementary and the station. Very small, but with decent pasta.

Address: 2-5-2 Mishimachuo (四国中央市 三島中央 2-5-2)

Phone: 0896-23-7711

Kureyon. Italian restaurant near Mishima Station with AWESOME pizzas. Very small and a little faded, but don't let the appearance fool you. Open only for lunch.

Address: 3-6-4 Mishimachuo (四国中央市 三島中央 3-6-4)

Phone: 0896-24-6968

Cafés

Kura. Located just next to Halows, Kura has an intimate atmosphere and excellent coffee. They serve a variety of dishes, as well, including a fantastic bacon pizza and sandwiches. The official name is Kohi-gura (The Coffee Storehouse), but everyone just calls it Kura.

There are a number of small, cheap udon shops in the vicinity of the City Hall.

Address: 391-2 Nakazone-cho (四国中央市 中曾根町 391-2)

Phone: 0896-24-0313

Leisure

Mishima Library. Located near the City Hall.

Address: 4-8-57 Mishima Miyakawa (四国中央市 三島宮川 4-8-57)

Phone: 0896-28-6053

Iyo-Mishima Undo Koen (Fitness Park). Has a gymnasium for indoor sports as well as a baseball field, soccer pitch, track, and tennis courts. Located on Route 11.

Address: 1655-1 Nakanosho-cho (四国中央市 中之荘町 1655-1)

Phone: 0896-28-6071

Mishima Park (三島公園). A lovely little multi-tiered park in the foothills south of the City Hall. There are open fields for sports as well as a playground, short hikes, and a great view of the city.

Hiking. There are several rarely-used maintenance roads going into the mountains at various points north of the expressway that are great for hikes. Have fun exploring them!

Gujo Observatory. Located on the way to Tomisato Dam; an excellent place to view the entire city, especially at night!

Nightlife

Karaoke

Manekineko. Booth-style karaoke located in Oishii Hiroba, near the Fuji supermarket. Manekineko has an especially large room on the second floor for big groups.

Address: 1-16-5 Mishima Chuo (四国中央市 三島中央 1-16-5)

Phone: 0896-28-8030

Chanson. A popular and cheaper (in both senses) alternative to Manekineko and Big Echo, located on Route 11 east of Gusto.

Bars

Odin. A small bar located at the western end of the Mishima arcade. Similar in style to Luke's and many Matsuyama bars. 300 yen cover (for snacks), with average-priced drinks. Occasionally they have events or live music.

Address: 3-14-32 Mishimachuo (四国中央市 三島中央 3-14-32)

Phone: 0896-24-6364

Manhattan. Another bar just off Mishima shopping arcade. A bit of a higher-class atmosphere, if a little faded. The prices here can be a little higher, including a cover charge for a bit of food. There's a reason though—the owner is actually a world-class mixologist (seriously), and several of his personal concoctions are on the menu.

Address: 3-12-4 Mishimachuo (四国中央市 三島中央 3-14-32)

Phone: 0896-23-3807

Tourism/ Festivals/ Highlights

Dance Festival. The Kamimba Dance Festival is held at Mishima Elementary School on July 23rd. Come cheer the dancers or join in the festival yourself! Don't forget to try all the matsuri stall food, as well!

Fireworks Festival. The Mishima Fireworks Festival is held every year on August 25th. Stalls are set up all around Mishima Shrine and the marina. Fireworks are shot over the bay. Be sure to wear your yukata!

Mishima Fall Festival. Mishima has its own special version of the Fall Festival. As in other towns, giant, intricately damasked floats with taiko drums are paraded around town. Mishima's taiko-dai, elaborate all by themselves, are also fitted with a variety of electric lights for a decidedly modern (some people say garish) festival feel. However you feel about the Mishima-style tradition, it's not to be missed!

Calligraphy Festival. The Calligraphy Festival is held yearly at the beginning of August and was featured in the recent film *Shodo Girls*. It is a live calligraphy competition that combines traditional calligraphy with an almost dance-like standing calligraphy form to see which team can produce the best work of art in the allotted time. The competitors perform barefoot in kimono. It is really cool!

Doi Town

Description

Doi is a small town in Shikokuchuo. It's a great little town, if somewhat rural! Japanese is a definite asset when visiting Doi. It has a population of 17,000.

Location/ Access/ Transport

Car: The easiest way to get to and around Doi!

Train: There is one local train that stops at Iyo-Doi Station (伊予土居駅)

Dining Out

Doi has a few good restaurants and a great pub: Syuki!

Pub Fare

Syuki. Doi's pub. The owners will do their best to accommodate you. It's on Route 11, just west of the Co-op grocery store on the same side.

Address: 672-2 Doicho Irino (四国中央市 土居町入野 672-2)

Phone: 0896-74-3022

Japanese

Hiraku. A wonderful, extremely local yakiniku restaurant run by two adorable old ladies. Near the train tracks.

Address: 1173 Doi, Doicho (四国中央市 土居町土居 1173)

Phone: 0896-74-3297

Tori-shin. Specializes in a variety of chicken dishes. Highly recommended.

Address: 116-4 Doicho Irino (四国中央市 土居町入野 116-4)

Phone: 0896-74-6636

Organic

Rina. Organic restaurant near the ocean.

Address: 3995 Tsune, Doicho (四国中央市 土居町津根 3995)

Phone: 0896-74-0880

Cafés

Café Sogno. A café with great panninis! Located west of Doi High School.

Address: 1764-1 Doi, Doicho (四国中央市 土居町土居 1764-1)

Phone: 0896-77-4183

Leisure

Doi Library and Cultural Center.

Address: 939 Irino, Doi-cho (四国中央市 土居町入野 939)

Phone: 0896-28-6354

Arena Doi. A large gym and fitness center with great facilities located alongside the Sekigawa River. There's a swimming pool, onsen and machine gym inside, among other things. Arena also hosts many sporting events.

Address: 1781 Doi-cho (四国中央市 土居町 1781)

Phone: 0896-74-1111

Orange Golf. A driving range located in the eastern section of Doi.

Address: 3740-1 Tsune, Doi-cho (四国中央市 土居町津根 3740-1)
Phone: 0896-74-6186

Tourism/ Festivals/ Highlights

Hiking. If you have a car, take any road south as far as you can and follow the giant blue arrows that are on Route 11 to find great hiking spots!

Bonsai Farm. Another blue arrow following adventure will take you up the Sekigawa River to a bonsai tree farm and further beyond that are some excellent swimming opportunities.

Fireworks Festival. The Doi Fireworks Festival is held on August 15th every year. Enjoy the show from afar or up close in the heart of the festival in front of Arena Doi and the Sekigawa River. A great time, but be careful if going by car. You'll have to wait a while, park far away, or go very early. Iyo-Doi Station is relatively close.

Taiko Festival. The Fall Taiko Festival is a lot of fun. Giant, elaborate Taiko-dai (hand-carried floats) make the rounds all over the city. The atmosphere is infectious and invigorating!

Biking. The roads along the coast and through the fields from the western mountains to Mishima make for a pleasant bike ride.

Kiri no Mori. A fantastic day trip into Shingu! Nestled in the mountains alongside a river, Kiri no Mori is renowned for its special daifuku sweets and tea. The facilities are quite extensive and include a "chafé" where you can try various tea-infused drinks and delicacies (all delicious), a restaurant, and an onsen. You can also swim in the river in the summertime.

Tomisato Dam. A nature area located in the mountains behind Shikokuchuo. Go up for a pleasant drive and picnic lunch. Just next to the tunnel leading from Mishima, there is a great little waterfall.

Senryuuji. A temple located on Route 319 between the Kawano and Mishima tunnels to Shingu and the Tomisato area (closer to the Kawano side). There are a number of temple buildings and many, many steps on various paths leading up into the mountains. Where do they go? Where do they end? Nobody seems to know...



thank you

Congratulations! You have read through the entire Ehime JET Guidebook. Hopefully you now have an idea of what to prepare for and expect.

If you still have any additional questions or suggestions for the guidebook, please feel free to contact your RA or email the PAs at ehimepa@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you soon!

