

Explore Kyushu

As Japan's third largest island, Kyushu is home to active volcanoes, relaxing beaches, tasty cuisine, rich traditions, and simmering hot-springs.



Yufuin Onsen, Gita

Just a short two hour flight from Tokyo, Kyushu is home to seven distinct prefectures just waiting to be explored. Here are three reasons to visit this remarkable region of Japan:

Onsens

There's a reason why Kyushu is affectionately known as Japan's Onsen island. As an island formed by volcanoes and geothermic forces, Kyushu's fertile soils and pristine waters have healed and soothed emperors, samurai, and locals for centuries. With hundreds of Onsen resorts ranging from luxury retreats to rustic ryokan, there's a hot spring location for everyone. From Beppu's seven colourful boiling outdoor hot springs called the Hells (jigoku), to Kagoshima Prefecture's famous Ibusuki Onsen sand baths, a visit to Kyushu is not complete without trying at least a few of the dozens of hot spring types across the island.

Great Outdoors

Even from the centre of Kagoshima City, there's no missing the imposing Sakurajima active volcano that overlooks the city from across Kinko Bay. Sakurajima is just one of Kyushu's active volcanoes, which in turn, are just one of the many breathtaking natural wonders that can be explored across the region. There are a multitude of hiking trails traversing mountains, valleys, plains, and temples to explore either on foot or by bike including the stunning Takachiho Gorge in Miyazaki Prefecture – one of Japan's most photographed natural wonders. Or the tropical islands and beaches of Amami Oshima, which were just designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Heritage and History

Not only is Kyushu rich in natural wonders, but it is also home to some of Japan's oldest and revered traditions and history. From food stalls, or Yatai, serving the best local produce to locals and tourists alike in Fukuoka, to the centuries of samurai and craft history still practised and admired in Saga Prefecture and surrounding regions, the people of Kyushu remain proud to showcase these traditions with visitors.

But Kyushu locals aren't afraid to also show some of the darker sides of the region's history. Nagasaki, for example, is a thriving metropolis that still commemorates its tragic WW2 past. And just off the shores of Nagasaki, visitors brave enough can explore the mysterious remains of Gunkanjima, or battleship island. A location made famous after it was designated a World Heritage site in 2015 and as the backdrop for a key sequence in Skyfall.