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off the Beaten Path: A Different Side of Japan

2026 CHERRY BLOSSOMS GRAND OKINAWA & FUKUOKA SHOPPING

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Very Unique Tour Itinerary! Let's explore two diverse climates and cultures in one exciting trip!

The arrival of cherry blossoms is the highlight of the Japanese year. Young and old celebrate the fleeting beauty of these delicate flowers. Okinawa has a subtropical climate, which means it is the first place in Japan to enjoy the festivities. From mid-January to mid-February, dark pink blossoms bring joy to Okinawa's islands.

10 Nights / 12 Days • 18 Meals (10 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches, 5 Dinners)
Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide
January 28 – February 08, 2026 • Tour Manager: Lee Ann LaFortune

OVERVIEW: Okinawa is home to a unique culture that differs considerably from that of mainland Japan. Until the islands were invaded by the Satsuma domain (present day Kagoshima Prefecture) in 1609, Okinawa existed as an entirely separate country from Japan, known as the Ryukyu Kingdom. After the invasion, the Ryukyu Kingdom served as a tributary state to Japan, but continued to be governed by the royal family from Shuri Castle (Shurijo). It was not until 1879, a few years after the Meiji Restoration, that the kingdom was abolished and incorporated into Japan as Okinawa Prefecture. The castles of Okinawa, known as "gusuku" in the Okinawan language, are among the most vivid monuments that testify to the unique cultural and historical heritage of the Ryukyu Kingdom. In the year 2000, five castles and four related sites were designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites under the collective title of "Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu."

VISIT: Haneda • Naha • Onna • Kitanakagusuku • Nago • Manza
Motobu • Nakijin • Nanjo • Fukuoka • Dazaifu • Nagasaki • Saga

OKINAWA HIGHLIGHTS (5 NIGHTS): Shuri Castle (Shurijo) • Ryusou Ryukyu Kimono Dress-Up Experience
Ryukyu Mura • AEON MALL Okinawa Rycom • Awamori (Rice Liquor) Factory Tour
Motobu Yaedake Sakura Festival • Churaumi Aquarium • Nakijin Castle Site • Michi-no-Eki KYODA
Okinawa World • Habu (Snake) Museum • Gyokusendo Cave • Glass Factory • Shisa Painting Experience

HOTEL COLLECTIVE (OKINAWA): Luxurious accommodations right on Kokusai-Dori shopping street.

FUKUOKA HIGHLIGHTS (4 NIGHTS): LaLaport Fukuoka • Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine
Huis Ten Bosch Amusement Park • Okawachiyama Village Area • Arita Porcelain Park Sakagura
Strawberry Picking Experience • Hakata Ori Making Experience

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES: Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu

COMPLETE PACKAGE!

Includes Roundtrip Airfare from Honolulu,
10 Nights Hotel, 18 Meals, Tips for Local Tour
Guides and Bus Drivers, All Taxes & Fees

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HOTEL VILLA FONTAINE GRAND HANEDA AIRPORT (Haneda Airport — 1 Night): The hotel is conveniently located just a one minute walk from Terminal 3. Japan is one of the world's leading onsen hot spring countries, and have long been loved by the Japanese for their ability to prevent disease, promote health, bestow beauty and anti-aging benefits, and soothe the body and mind. Shake the weariness of the 9½ hour flight as you relax in the onsen (for the nominal fee of 2,000 yen). Or get an introduction to Japanese convenience stores at Lawson (open 24 hours) on the 2nd floor.

Non-Stop Travel Exclusive!

DON'T MISS A THING!!

WHISPER — Wireless Tour Guide System!
English narration directly to your ear!

Day 1: Wed, Jan 28 — HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #73 at 11:30 am.

Day 2: Thur, Jan 29 — HANEDA. Arrive at the Haneda International Airport at 3:55 pm. After entry formalities, walk to your hotel connected to the airport terminal. Enjoy a buffet dinner at the hotel. HOTEL VILLA FONTAINE GRAND HANEDA AIRPORT (1 Night) (D)

Day 3: Fri, Jan 30 — HANEDA — NAHA. After a breakfast buffet at your hotel, transfer back to the Haneda airport terminal. Enjoy a bento box at the domestic departure gate. Depart Haneda Domestic Airport via Japan Airlines flt #987 at 11:30 am and arrive at the Naha International Airport at 2:25 pm. Being your exploration of Okinawa with a visit to **Shuri Castle (Shurijo)**, the most important castle of the Ryukyu Kingdom, serving both as the central government office and royal residence. Although the main buildings of Shuri Castle were destroyed in a fire in October 2019, reconstruction to bring back the castle to its former glory is expected to be completed in 2026. Shurijo is the only castle in Okinawa that has been reconstructed. Only ruins remain of all the other castles. **Dress up in Ryusou Ryukyu kimonos** for a group photo! Transfer to the hotel. Walk to a nearby restaurant for dinner. HOTEL COLLECTIVE (1 Night) (B, L, D)

*Baggage will be held at the hotel in Naha. Prepare an overnight bag for a one night stay in Manza.

Day 4: Sat, Jan 31 — NAHA — ONNA — KITANAKAGUSUKU — NAGO — MANZA. After breakfast, we head north to Onna and spend the morning at **Ryukyu Mura**. It's basically a traditional Okinawan village with exhibits showcasing various festivals, crafts, and foods. Enjoy some performances and events held at the village, including multiple daily eisa taiko drumming performances. Then stop at **AEON MALL Okinawa Rycom** for shopping and lunch (on own). Next we visit an **awamori (rice liquor) factory**. Awamori is the signature alcoholic beverage of Okinawa and most of the Ryukyu Islands. Learn the unique process involved in making awamori. Enjoy dinner at the hotel tonight. ANA INTERCONTINENTAL MANZA BEACH RESORT (1 Night) (B, D)

Day 5: Sun, Feb 01 — MANZA — MOTOBU — NAKIJIN — NAGO — NAHA. After an incredible breakfast buffet, depart Manza for Motobu. Attend the **MOTOBU YAEDAKE SAKURA FESTIVAL*** and walk under a canopy of pink cherry blossoms. With the cherry blossom season in Okinawa typically lasting between mid-January and early February — you'll be one of the first to see cherry blossoms in Japan! Then visit to the **Churaumi Aquarium**, widely considered Japan's best aquarium. It is the main attraction of the Ocean Expo Park on the former grounds of the 1975 International Ocean Expo. The aquarium was completely redesigned and reopened in 2002. The highlight of a visit to the Churaumi Aquarium is the massive Kuroshio Tank, one of the largest in the world. The tank takes its name from the warm Kuroshio current which plays a large part in the variety of Okinawa's of marine life. Next, visit the ruins of **Nakijin Castle**. Learn about the history of Okinawa. The castle — a former residence of the Ryukyu Kingdom governor during the 14th century — is a designated UNESCO World Heritage site. On the way back to Naha City, stop at the roadside **Michi-no-Eki KYODA** for a chance to stretch the legs and get a little shopping done as well. Not only do they provide a clean and convenient rest stop, but you will find an array of farmer-direct merchandise along with other omiyage items. The remainder of the evening is at your leisure. HOTEL COLLECTIVE (3 Nights) (B)

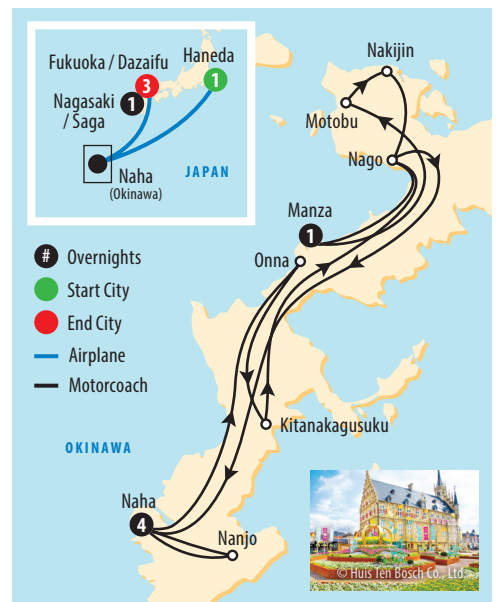
Day 6: Mon, Feb 02 — NAHA. Full day at leisure. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. Perfect day to relax and/or visit with family and friends in Okinawa. Don't miss the out on the numerous shopping opportunities on Kokusai-Dori — including the Heiwa-Dori covered shopping arcade or the Don Quijote that is open until 3:00 am everyday! (B)

Day 7: Tue, Feb 03 — NAHA — NANJO — NAHA. Another full day of exploring is ahead! Start the day with a visit to **Okinawa World** a theme park about Okinawan culture. The park's main attractions are a massive natural cave, a craft village and a **habu (snake) museum**. With a total length of five kilometers, **Gyokusendo Cave** is the longest of the many caves in the south of Okinawa Island and the second longest cave in the entire country. 850 meters of the cave are open to the public and feature spectacular stalactites and stalagmites. The **Kingdom Village** is a nice replica of a traditional Ryukyu village with workshops introducing the various traditional Okinawan crafts, such as weaving, dyeing, paper making, pottery, sugar cane processing, the making of music instruments, and the more recently introduced glass blowing. Colorful **Ryukyu glass** is one of those **must have souvenirs** when visiting Okinawa. Taking a tour of the work shop allows visitors to see how the craftsmen create their art. Hands-on experiences are offered at many of the workshops. Enjoy a buffet lunch while there. You'll then have your chance to **paint your own shisa** — a traditional Ryukyuan cultural artifact derived from Chinese guardian lions, often seen in similar pairs, resembling a cross between a lion and a dog, from Okinawan mythology. Shisas are believed to protect from some evils — with the left shisa traditionally having a closed mouth keeping good spirits in, while the open mouth shisa on the right traditionally wards off evil spirits. This evening enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. (B, L, D)

Day 8: Wed, Feb 04 — NAHA — FUKUOKA. Depart Naha Airport via Japan Transocean Air flt #52 at 10:30 am. Arrive in the Fukuoka Airport at 12:10 pm. Enroute to the hotel, a stop will be made at **LaLaport Fukuoka**. You'll have ample time to explore the 220 stores in this shopping mall. Then transfer to the hotel in Fukuoka. Enjoy a little time to rest before walking to a nearby restaurant for dinner. THE ROYAL PARK HOTEL FUKUOKA (1 Night) (B, D)

Day 9: Thur, Feb 05 — FUKUOKA — DAZAIFU — NAGASAKI. This morning visit Dazaifu, established in the late 7th century and served as the administrator center of the entire island of Kyushu for over 500 years. Nowadays, Dazaifu is a small, quiet city on the outskirts of the large city of Fukuoka. Where there a number of temples and shrines, the most famous of which is the **Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine**. Next, travel to Nagasaki and visit **Huis Ten Bosch** (Hausu Ten Bosu), a theme park that recreates a Dutch town. This spacious resort is suffused with a European atmosphere with its picturesque canals, iconic windmills, beautiful gardens, and architecture. Enjoy lunch (on your own) here. Check into the hotel. The remainder of the day is at your leisure. You may return to Huis Ten Bosch and continue exploring the park (on your own). HOTEL NIKKO HUIS TEN BOSCH (1 Night) (B)

Day 10: Fri, Feb 06 — NAGASAKI — SAGA — FUKUOKA. After breakfast, travel to the **Okawachiyama Village area**, a small, isolated village in the mountains just outside central Imari. Alongside Arita (in the neighboring valley), it was the first place in Japan to produce porcelain after kaolin — the mineral essential to making porcelain — had been found in the area and craftsmen with the necessary skills had been brought from Korea into the country. Today, Okawachiyama Village consists mostly of pottery workshops and their store fronts. Enjoy some time to stroll the area and shop for the beautiful Imari Yaki porcelain ware. After lunch, explore the **Arita Porcelain Park Sakagura**, a porcelain-related theme park. The park recreates a German town with its European style architecture. Its highlight is the Zwinger Palace, a recreation of the actual Zwinger Palace in Germany. The palace in Arita displays various kinds of both European and Arita porcelain. Arita Porcelain Park also has stores selling both kinds of porcelain after sightseeing on the park grounds. Next, **pick some fresh strawberries** at the peak of ripeness. How sweet! Enjoy eating



the "fruits of your labor" before returning to Fukuoka. The Local Guide will have suggestions for dinner and your evening of leisure. HOTEL JAL CITY FUKUOKA TENJIN (2 Nights) (B, L)

Day 11: Sat, Feb 07 — FUKUOKA. A free day at leisure. Explore Fukuoka on your own. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. Perfect day to relax and/or visit with family and friends in Fukuoka. Or perhaps do more shopping! (B)

Day 12: Sun, Feb 08 — FUKUOKA — HONOLULU. After a leisurely breakfast, depart from the hotel. **Hakata ori** is a traditional Japanese textile that has been produced in the Fukuoka prefecture for more than 770 years. There are two varieties of Hakata ori: kenjo hakata-ori and mon ori hakata-ori. Kenjo hakata-ori is woven in a traditional pattern related to Buddhist beliefs, and was influenced by fabrics produced in the Sui Dynasty in China (581–618). Mon ori hakata-ori is the name used for hakata-ori containing multi-colored designs. Hakata-ori is most commonly found as the material for men's obi (belt used in traditional Japanese clothing), though both men and women wear hakata-ori obi. Hakata-ori is also used to produce a number of different products not related to kimono or kimono accessories, such as handbags, neck ties and scarves. This morning, you'll **learn how to make a Hakata ori**. Then transfer to the Fukuoka Airport for the flight home. Depart Fukuoka via Japan Airlines flt #322 at 5:00 pm. Arrive at the Haneda Domestic Airport at 6:35 pm. Depart the Haneda International Airport via Japan Airlines flt #74 at 9:00 pm and arrive Honolulu at 8:45 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B)

UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu (2000).

* Fares are per person, USD based on double occupancy and include all airline taxes and fees. Airline fuel supplements, taxes and fees are subject to change and tour member is responsible for any increases. Some airline-imposed personal charges, including but not limited to baggage, priority boarding and special seating, may apply. For details visit www.tripadvisor.com/AirlineFees. After initial deposit, a \$75 per person Non-Stop Travel (NST) cancellation fee will apply. Group departures may be cancelled, if there are less than 24 tour members. Final payment to NST for "non-cruise/line" air and land package must be made by money order or personal check. NST does not guarantee that all tour members will fly together with Tour Manager. Tour Manager assignments, number of meals offered on tour, tour price, discount, and the "final" cruise or tour itinerary are subject to change with/without notice. **NST reserves the right to correct errors or omissions including but not limited to, fares, fees, and surcharges at any time.** Deposit: \$500 per person. Final payment due: 09/19/25. NST at its discretion, may use group and individual photos on its website, print, television, and various social media. Premium Economy class seating is for flights between Honolulu and Japan only. Domestic Japan flights do not offer Premium Economy class seating. Early booking discount is per person. Purchase of NST's complete Air and Land Package is required. Cherry Blossom viewing is subject to weather conditions and is NOT guaranteed. Earn rewards every time you refer a friend. For each "new-to-NST" customer you refer, both you and your referral can receive a \$25 discount off your next NST escorted group. **Special assistance:** You must notify NST, at time of reservation, of any disability requiring special attention. NST reserves the right to cancel your booking or terminate your vacation if your special needs or disabilities are not suitable for the vacation or if you are not traveling with a companion who will provide all the assistance you require. **Wheelchair and electric scooter access outside of the USA is severely restricted.**

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