



Off the Beaten Path: A Different Side of Japan

2026 FALL GRAND OKINAWA PLUS KYOTO & OSAKA

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10 Nights / 12 Days • 22 Meals (10 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 7 Dinners)
Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide
November 16 – 27, 2026 • Tour Manager: Scott Tamasaka

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. 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, Itoman, Nanjo, Onna, Kitanakagusuku, Manza, Motobu, Nakijin, Kyoto, Uji, Kameoka, Arashiyama & Osaka

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: Walking Tour Around the Hotel, Himeyuri Peace Museum, Mabuni Hill, Okinawa Peace Memorial Park, Okinawa World, Gyokusendo Cave, Habu (Snake) Museum, Ryukyu Mura, AEON MALL Okinawa Rycom, Awamori Factory, Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium, Nakijin Castle Site, Sweets House, Shuri Castle, Nijo Castle, Byodoin Temple, Byodoin Omotesando, Sagano Torokko Ressha (Sagano Romantic Train) Ride, Arashiyama Bamboo Forest, Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion), TeamLab Biovortex Kyoto, Kuromon Ichiba Market, Dotonbori Shopping, Shinsaibashi Shopping Arcade & AEON MALL Rinku Sennan

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES: Shisa Painting, Ryusou Ryukyu Kimono Dress-Up, Ryuzen Zome (Coral Dyeing) & Yuzen Dyeing

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES: Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu, Nijo Castle & Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)

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Day 1: Mon, Nov 16 – HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #73 at 12:05 pm.

Day 2: Tue, Nov 17 – HANEDA. Arrive at the Haneda International Airport at 4:05 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: Wed, Nov 18 – 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 2:20 pm. Transfer to the hotel. Take a **walking tour** to familiarize yourself with the **area around the hotel**. Walk to a nearby restaurant for dinner. HOTEL COLLECTIVE (2 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 4: Thur, Nov 19 – NAHA – ITOMAN – NANJO – NAHA. After breakfast, we will visit two WWII memorial sites. Begin by exploring the **Himeyuri Peace Museum**, which details what the Okinawan people experienced. The museum also commemorates the fate of the female high school students that had worked in the army field hospitals under horrendous conditions, many of which did not survive the war. Testimonials of the few survivors of the Battle of Okinawa are exhibited here, offering detailed recollections of their painful experiences. Next is the **Okinawa Peace Memorial Park**, situated on **Mabuni Hill**, the site where the Battle of Okinawa ended, was created to mourn the loss of close to a quarter of a million people. One of the key features of the park is the Cornerstone of Peace inscribed with the names of some 200,000 individuals, including civilians and Japanese and foreign soldiers, who lost their lives in the Battle of Okinawa. The concept of the stone monuments is to remember those who died and to pray for them, to share lessons learned from war and to provide a place for meditation and learning. Spend the afternoon exploring **Okinawa World**, a theme park about Okinawan culture. The park's main attractions are a **massive natural cave**, **craft village**, and a **habu (snake) museum**. With a total length of 5km, **Gyokusendo Cave** is the longest of the many caves in southern Okinawa, and the second longest cave in the entire country. 850m of the cave are open to the public and feature spectacular stalactites and stalagmites. The Kingdom Village is a replica of a traditional Ryukyuan village with workshops introducing the various traditional Okinawan crafts. Colorful Ryukyuan 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 lunch here. This evening, enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. (B, L, D)

*Baggage will be held at the hotel in Naha. Prepare an overnight bag for two nights.

Day 5: Fri, Nov 20 – NAHA – ONNA – KITANAKAGUSUKU – MANZA. After breakfast, we head north to Onna and spend the morning at **Ryukyuan Mura**, a small theme park about Okinawan culture in the form of a recreated village from the times of the Ryukyuan Kingdom. The highlight of the village is the eisa show. Eisa, a form of folk dance originating in the Okinawa, is performed during the obon festival to honor the spirits of one's ancestors. In the finale of the eisa show, visitors can join in on the dance known as kachashi. The word "kachashi" in the Okinawan dialect means "to mix" – it implies the idea of sharing happiness, which fosters a sense of unity that transcends borders and language barriers. Then, stop at **AEON MALL Okinawa Rycom** for shopping and lunch (on your own). Next, we visit an **awamori (rice liquor) factory**. Awamori is the signature alcoholic beverage of Okinawa. Learn the unique process involved in making awamori. Enjoy dinner at the hotel tonight. ANA INTERCONTINENTAL MANZA BEACH RESORT (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 6: Sat, Nov 21 – MANZA – MOTOBU – NAKIJIN – MANZA. After an incredible breakfast buffet, enjoy a visit to the **Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium**, one of the largest and most renowned aquariums in the world. Located within the Ocean Expo Park, a large, multi-attraction recreational complex, it is widely considered Japan's best aquarium. A highlight of the aquarium is the massive Kuroshio Sea Tank, one of the largest in the world. Enjoy lunch (on your own) here. Next, visit the ruins of **Nakijin Castle** and learn about the history of Okinawa. The castle is a former residence of the Ryukyuan Kingdom governor during the 14th century and is a designated UNESCO World Heritage site. Let your creative side loose when you **paint a Shisa**, a traditional Ryukyuan cultural artifact and decoration. Often seen in pairs and resemble

a cross between a lion and a dog, shisa are from Okinawan mythology, and are believed to protect from some evils. People place pairs of shisa on their rooftops or flanking gates to their houses, with the left shisa traditionally has a closed mouth, the right one an open mouth. The open mouth shisa traditionally wards off evil spirits, while the closed mouth shisa keeps good spirits in. Transfer back to the hotel for dinner. (B, D)

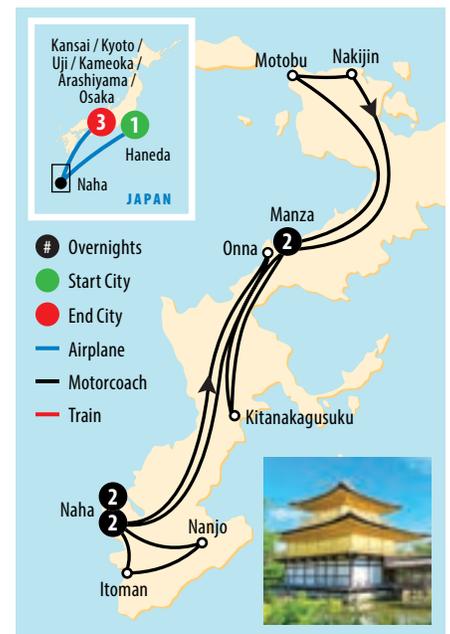
Day 7: Sun, Nov 22 – MANZA – NAHA. Say goodbye to the beautiful coral reefs, cobalt blue ocean views, and pristine white beaches of Manza Beach as you depart the hotel. Before leaving Manza, make a stop at **Sweets House**. After lunch, visit **Shuri Castle** (Shurijo), the most important castle of the Ryukyuan 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 Ryukyuan kimonos** for a group photo! Coral is a fundamental part of the history and culture of the Okinawan Islands. Many areas of Okinawa's main island are made of Ryukyuan limestone formed by ancient coral reefs several hundred thousand years ago. Today, coral fossils are often used to create various art pieces in Okinawa. Try your hand at bringing your own art to life when you learn how to decorate a tote bag using **ryuzen zome**, a **coral dyeing** technique done only in Okinawa. After arriving at the hotel, walk to a nearby restaurant for an Okinawan dinner. HOTEL COLLECTIVE (2 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 8: Mon, Nov 23 – NAHA. Full day at leisure. The 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, the main shopping street in Naha, including the Heiwa-dori shopping arcade or the Don Quijote that is open until 3:00 am every day! Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. (B)

Day 9: Tue, Nov 24 – NAHA – KANSAI – KYOTO. This morning we depart Naha and fly to Kansai. Depart the Naha Airport via Japan Transocean Air flt #4 at 11:20 am. Arrive at the Kansai Domestic Airport at 1:10 pm. Transfer to by coach to the hotel in Kyoto. The remainder of your day is at your leisure. Your hotel is surrounded by department stores, specialty stores, and restaurants. A perfect opportunity to fulfill your shopping list. The Local Guide will have suggestions for dinner. MIYAKO HOTEL KYOTO HACHUO (3 Nights) (B)

Day 10: Wed, Nov 25 – KYOTO – UJI – KYOTO. Depart the hotel for a full day of touring. When the Tokugawa Shogunate fell in 1867, **Nijo Castle** was used as an imperial palace for a while before being donated to the city and opened up to the public as a historic site. Its palace buildings are arguably the best surviving examples of castle palace architecture of Japan's feudal era. Today's hands-on experience is **ryuzen dyeing** (surikomiyuzen), which is one of Kyoto's traditional craft dyeing techniques. Since the patterns are dyed by placing a paper stencil over a piece of fabric, such as a tote bag, you can make an authentic piece, even if this is your first time. A great souvenir of this tour! After lunch, explore **Byodo-in Temple**. Together with its garden, the temple represents the "Pure Land Paradise" and was influential on later temple construction. Byodo-in was initially built in 998 as a countryside retreat villa for the powerful politician Fujiwara no Michinaga, not as a temple. At **Byodo-in Omotesando**, the road leading up to the main gate of Byodo-in Temple, are many long-established tea shops. The air is filled with the fragrance of tea. In 2001, the Ministry of the Environment recognized it as one of the "Top 100 Fragrant Landscapes to Pass on and Preserve." There are plenty of stores selling unique local products, as well as numerous restaurants and cafés where you can leisurely enjoy a menu full of tea-based dishes. One of the major attractions is the ability to enjoy authentic matcha soft serve ice cream while walking around. Return to the hotel for a buffet dinner. (B, L, D)

Day 11: Thur, Nov 26 – KYOTO – KAMEOKA – ARASHIYAMA – KYOTO. After breakfast, travel to Kameoka and board the **Sagano Torokko Ressha (Sagano Romantic Train)** to Arashiyama. In Arashiyama, you'll have the choice of several activities. Explore the famous **Arashiyama Bamboo Forests**. Or shop for world-famous Arashiyama bamboo products. Enjoy a very special **yudofu (boiled tofu)** set menu lunch, a local Arashiyama



specialty. After lunch, visit **Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)**, a Zen Temple whose top two floors are completely covered in gold leaf. Next, explore the wonders of **teamLab Biovortex Kyoto**, a new concept by the team behind the international art collective teamLab. This venue focuses on a high-dimensional thinking athletics space based on the concept of perceiving the world with your body and thinking about it high-dimensionally. In a complex and challenging space, you will be immersed in a physically challenging four-dimensional world where time changes with the presence of your body. Return to Kyoto for another evening of leisure. (B, L)

Day 12: Fri, Nov 27 – KYOTO – OSAKA – KANSAI – HONOLULU. After hotel checkout, start the day with a visit to **Kuromon Ichiba Market**, a lively covered market famous for its fresh seafood, fruits and vegetables, meats, dried fish, pickles, and confectionery. Many stalls will prepare, cook and serve their food to you right on the spot! Next, visit Dotonbori and Shinsaibashi Shopping Arcade, a couple of Osaka's most popular tourist destinations. **Dotonbori** is a popular shopping and entertainment district, and is also known as a food destination. **Shinsaibashi Shopping Arcade** and the surrounding area is Osaka's premier shopping center, where you can find chain retail stores, trendy boutiques, department stores, and top designer fashion labels in one place. Enjoy lunch here (on your own). A final shopping stop will be made at **AEON MALL Rinku Sennan** before transferring to the Kansai International Airport for our return flight home. Depart Kansai via Japan Airlines flt #790 at 10:10 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 10:25 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B)

UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu (2000), Nijo Castle (1994), Byodo-in Temple (1994), Kinkakuji Temple (1994)

* 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 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: 07/09/26. NST at its discretion, may use group and individual photos on its website, print, television, and various social media. † Early booking discount is per person. Purchase of NST's complete Air and Land Package is required. †† 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.** J16636 013026

