



Late Autumn, When Nostalgia Whispers in the Wind

During its long history, Japanese culture has evolved in ways not seen elsewhere. The heritage sites where this distinctiveness can be encountered exert an endless fascination over people from all around the world.



Kurashiki | OKAYAMA 岡山

Miyajima | HIROSHIMA 広島



Traditional beauty lingers over a placid sea

Hiroshima Prefecture, which faces the Seto Inland Sea, has approximately 140 islands and islets. Miyajima (formally, Itsukushima), is a sacred island that is home to the Itsukushima Shinto Shrine, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, having a history of over 1,400 years. The large vermilion *torii* (sacred gate) that stands on the tidal flats is a symbol of Hiroshima, along with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site). The *torii* is about 16 meters high, the main pillars of which have a circumference of about 10 meters, and there are about seven tons of rock inside, allowing it to stand on its own weight. Long counted as one of the three most scenic spots of Japan, its sublime aura becomes even more enchanting as evening draws near during the late autumn.

<http://visit-miyajima-japan.com/en/>

Neighborhoods with stories to tell

Okayama Prefecture is a thriving fruit-growing region, renown for its grapes and peaches. Benefiting from the topography and warm climate of the Seto Inland Sea, a distinctive cultural zone has developed over the centuries in Okayama Prefecture, where traditional neighborhoods have been preserved in many communities. The Bikan Historical Quarter in Kurashiki City is particularly famous, with over three million visitors yearly. Old Kurashiki, developed over several centuries under the direct governance of the Edo shogunate, can be seen in the sumptuous residences and warehouses on the old road that runs along the Kurashiki River, with their *namako*-patterned tile-and-plaster walls. Kurashiki also has modern Western-style buildings, such as the Ohara Museum of Art, the first art museum in Japan with a collection of Western art. Sightseeing boats, which are even available for weddings, offer another way of experiencing the eclectic local history with its intricate blend of Japanese and Western culture.

<https://www.kurashiki-tabi.jp/for/en/>

