

# GOLF

## in HYOGO,

# JAPAN

A wide-angle photograph of a lush green golf course. In the foreground, a small pond with a fountain in the center reflects the sky. The background shows rolling green hills and a line of trees under a clear blue sky.

### Japan's Leading Golf Destination

In addition to golfing this brochure will present various attractive sightseeing activities. We hope that it may serve as a reference source when planning golf tours in Hyogo prefecture.



Himeji Castle

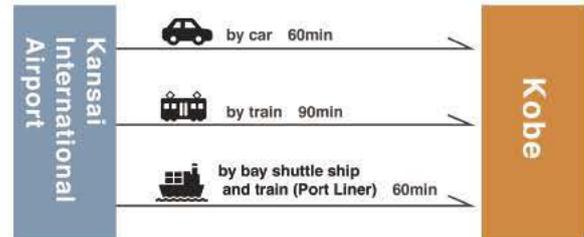
# HYOGO : The Heart of Japan



When measured from the southernmost part of the island prefecture of Okinawa to the northernmost part of Hokkaido you will find that Hyogo prefecture falls directly in the center of Japan (35°N 135°E) thus making it the perfect location from which one may travel to any part of the country

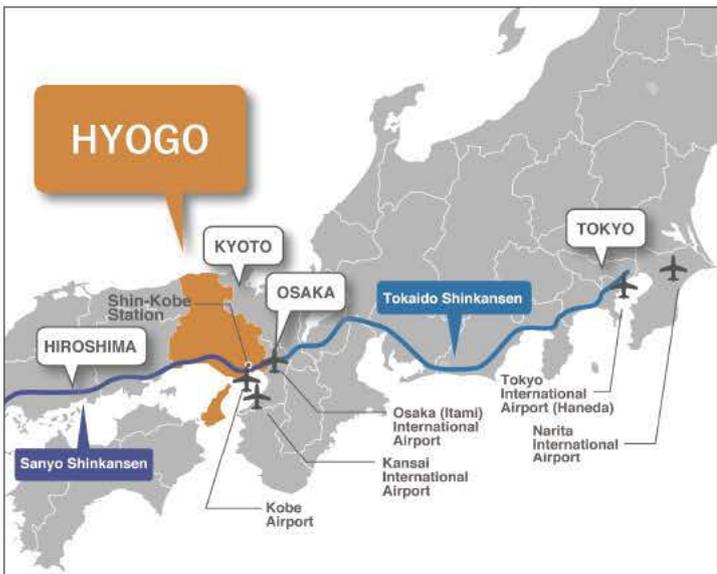
Kansai International Airport is one of the two largest major airports in Japan and is said to be the “western gate” of the country. The city of Kobe, considered the heart of Hyogo prefecture, is located just one hour from the airport.

### From Kansai International Airport to Kobe



Osaka (Itami) International Airport and Kobe Airport are also both located in the Kobe area, as is the Shin-Kobe Shinkansen (bullet train) station, providing for easy access to all corners of Japan.

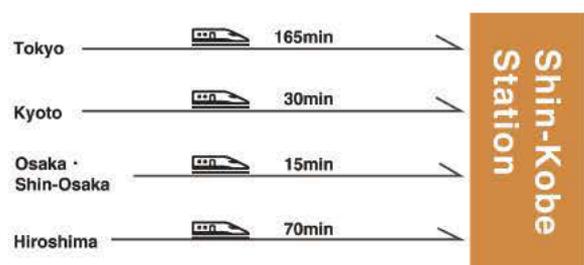
## How to Get to Hyogo



### Airplane from major airports



### Shinkansen (Bullet Train) from major cities



## A Welcome Message from Professional Golfer, Ayaka Furue

Hyogo prefecture, where I was born and raised, is surrounded by the sea and mountains, and is a place with abundant nature. There are many wonderful tourist destinations such as historically famous port towns, hot springs, and castles. And I am very proud to have been born in Kobe, the birthplace of Japanese golf. I am also grateful for this blessed environment that I have known since I was a child, as it is part of what helped make my dream of becoming a professional golfer come true. I love my wonderful hometown, Hyogo prefecture. Please come to Hyogo and enjoy golf and sightseeing.

Ayaka Furue

### Profile Ayaka Furue

Ayaka Furue is a Japanese female professional golfer born in 2000 in Kobe where she is still currently based. She turned pro in October of 2019 and already has three wins under her belt. She is currently ranked 16th in the world the women's golf (as of January 4th 2021).



Photo by Daily Sports

# Regions of Hyogo Prefecture



## A Region of Proud Traditions and Nature

Harima is the home of Himeji Castle a World Heritage Site. Also craftsmen in Harima produced Japan's first iron golf club by applying the same production technology as that of the samurai's katana sword. Activities which allow guests to try their hand at some of the traditional local occupations of the area are popular attractions for visitors. The rich natural environment enables the production of the finest sake, rice, vegetables, and livestock. The rolling hills of Harima are also ideal for golf courses.



## Magnificent Wilderness, the Finest Hot Springs, and the Fruits of Both the Land and Sea in Surf-and-Turf Cuisine

Blessed with beautiful natural surroundings, various outdoor activities from skiing to beachgoing can be enjoyed throughout the year in Tajima/Tamba. Cattle known for being the breeding cattle for many brands such as Kobe Beef is a prized product of this region. There is an abundance of tourist attractions such as Kinokuni Onsen, a natural hot spring town with a history of 1300 years, and Takeda Castle Ruins, which is also known as "the castle in the sky."

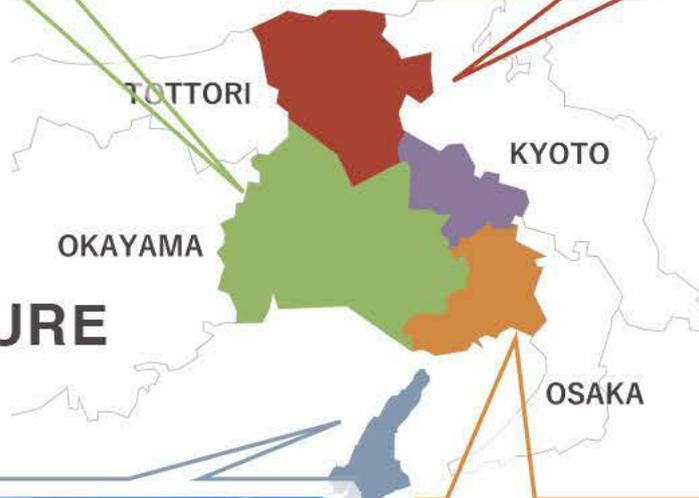
In the historical region of Tamba, visitors can enjoy the streets of old Japan around castles and post towns. The area is also the production center of well-known brand foods such as matsutake mushrooms, chestnuts, and black beans.

HARIMA

TAJIMA • TAMBA

# HYOGO PREFECTURE

AWAJI



## An Island of Flowers and Romance Where Myths and Traditional Culture Still Survive

Floating in the Seto Inland Sea, Awaji Island is a treasure trove of gastronomic delights, as the warm climate promotes thriving agriculture, fishery, dairy, and farm industries. The world's largest whirlpool, generated by the tidal range, is an impressive display of the power of nature and a must-see spot located just off the coast of Awaji Island. From the Kita-Harima region of the main island, travel time to Awaji is a mere 40 minutes by highway to the northern region. The southern region is easily accessible from Tokushima Prefecture on the nearby island of Shikoku. Tokushima Prefecture is the official golf location for the World Masters Games 2022. Kansai Accommodation on the island boasts a high standard of quality that will easily meet and/or surpass the expectations of most golfers.



## An International Port Town Where East and West Meet

Known as international port city, Kobe has been a leader in the modernization of Japan with the introduction of western culture through cinema, café culture, and golf. Being a port city with a global population, a Chinatown, sake breweries, an array of temples representing cultures from around the world, and traditional Japanese hot springs, Kobe is a true melting pot of a city.

Between the big cities of Osaka and Kobe, the Hanshin area has been home to both business and culture since ancient times. It has nurtured rich traditions such as Noh theater and flower arranging, and is home to the Takarazuka Revue, arguably the country's most well-known and recognized performance company.

## Why Golf in Japan?

### Ideal Golf Environment

#### More Golf Courses than Anywhere in Asia

A lesser known fact about Japan is that it has the second largest number of golf courses in the world after only the U.S. It has by far the most in Asia. This small island nation is a golf superpower home to many a prestigious and tournament level course.

#### World Golf Course Ranking (by number of courses)

1	America	≈ 14 000
2 / 3	Japan/Canada	≈ 2 200
4	England	≈ 1 900

(with Scotland and Wales ≈ 2 800)

#### Reasonable Green Fees

Green fees in Japan were relatively high up through the 1980s. But today many courses can be enjoyed for less than 20 000 yen even during peak season at members only courses. Prices at standard courses on weekdays during the off season can start from as little as 6 000 yen including lunch and cart fee. A golf course can be found to suit most any budget.



#### Well Maintained Clubhouses and Facilities

Remote controlled carts with GPS systems along with other ultra modern capabilities are rare in most countries; but here they are available in addition to other amenities such as personal lockers for every guest. Some club houses are also home to hot springs and saunas which are a great way to relax after a round during winter months. A clubhouse with a Japanese garden visible from the facility is also an option in some cases. Sanitary conditions are strictly maintained so visitors may rest assured that they are spending time in a clean and safe environment. Attentive and thorough care is also taken of each of the golf courses.



### Rich Nature and Culture

#### Beautiful, Natural Surroundings and the Changing of the Seasons

Spring summer autumn and winter. With much of Japan falling in a temperate zone the seasons are very distinct thus the scenery and playing environment can vary greatly depending on the time of year; another enjoyable perk of playing here. Cherry blossoms and green grass in the spring autumn leaves and maiden silver grass in the autumn and snow topped mountains in the winter. The many expressions of mother nature and the numerous activities that can be enjoyed both before and after your round are all part of the attractiveness and charm of golf in Japan.



#### A Short Trip from the Bustling City to the Natural Surroundings of the course

Just an hour's drive can take you from Kobe a metropolis with more than a million people to a spacious golf course surrounded by nature. It is easy for guests to enjoy the best of both worlds from the big city to a quiet golf course.

#### Unique Culture

Japan is considered by many to be the most westernized country in Asia. And it may appear at a glance that Japan with its skyscrapers bullet trains computer games and automobiles has been completely consumed by the west. But upon taking a slightly deeper dive one can see beyond the façade and realize that traditional Japanese culture such as hot springs traditional architecture and customary social manners are alive and well. Today Japanese culture is a perfect enjoyable fusion between the east and west.



#### Japanese Food "WASHOKU"

Registered as a World Intangible Cultural Heritage "WASHOKU" is stated simply traditional Japanese food. The cuisine of Japan consists of so many different ingredients that it cannot be easily compared with other food cultures. And one of the underlying ideals in Japan is that what we receive from nature should never be wasted or thrown away. Here you can enjoy authentic Japanese food vibrant and rich in color and nutrition yet low in calories.



Why golf in Hyogo? 1

## The Most Top-class Golf Courses in Japan

Among the more than 160 golf courses in Hyogo, more than 100 are located within a one-hour radius of Kobe, Hanshin or Harima. Of these, approximately 40 are open to all visitors.

### Major Golf Courses in Hyogo

#### Kobe/Hanshin Area

Arima Country Club  
Kitarokko Country Club East Course / West Course  
Kobe Pine Woods Golf Club  
Taiheiyo Club Takarazuka Course  
Takarazuka Kogen Golf Club  
Cherry Golf nagawa Course  
Hyogo Country Club  
Mukonodai Golf Club

#### Harima Area

Awaga Golf Club  
Aono Exercise Public Garden Aono Golf Course  
Ako Kokusai Country Club  
chikawa Golf NC  
West One's Country Club  
ABC Golf Club

Ono Grand Country Club  
Oriental Golf Club  
The Olympic Golf Club  
Sun Royal Golf Club  
Zen Country Club  
Takamuroike Golf Club  
Taiheiyo Club Rokko Course  
Tokyu Grand Oak Golf Club  
Tojoko Country Club  
Tojo Pine Valley Golf Club  
Hanayashiki Golf Club Yokawa Course  
Funasaka Golf Club  
Miki Seven Hundred Club  
Minagi Golf Club  
Myoken Fuji Country Club  
Yashiro Country Club  
Yokawa nter Golf Club MECHA  
Yokawa Royal Golf Club

#### Tajima/Tamba Area

Ooka Golf Club  
Kannabe Country Club  
Santo Country Club  
Bell Green Country Club

#### Awaji Area

Awaji Country Club  
Sumoto Golf Club

### Major Hotels in Hyogo

#### Kobe/Hanshin Area

ANA Crown Plaza Hotel Kobe  
Address 1 Kitano cho Chuo ku Kobe 650 0002  
Official website <https://www.anacrownplaza-kobe.jp/en/>

Oriental Hotel  
Address 25 Kyomachi Chuo ku Kobe 650 0034  
Official website <https://www.orientalhotel.jp/>

Kobe Bay Sheraton Hotel & Towers  
Address 2 13 Koyochi naka Higashinada ku Kobe 658 0032  
Official website <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/osakb-kobe-bay-sheraton-hotel-and-towers>

Kobe Portopia Hotel  
Address 10 1 6 Chome Minatojima Nakamachi Chuo ku Kobe 650 0046  
Official website <https://www.portopia.co.jp/en/>

Meriken Park Oriental Hotel  
Address 5 6 Hatoba cho Chuo ku Kobe 650 0042  
Official website <https://www.kobe-orientalhotel.co.jp/english/>

Hotel Okura Kobe  
Address 2 5 Hatoba cho Chuo ku Kobe 650 8560  
Official website <https://www.kobe.hotelokura.co.jp/en/>

#### Harima Area

Nesta Resort Kobe  
Address 894 60 Taruho Hosokawa cho Miki 673 0703  
Official website <https://nesta.co.jp/>

#### Tajima/Tamba Area

Kinosaki Onsen Nishimuraya Hotel Shogetstet  
Address 1016 2 Yushima Kinosaki cho Toyooka 669 6101  
Official website <http://www.nishimuraya-ne.jp/shogetsu/english>

### Sample Plan 1 - Enjoy the Nightlife of Kobe

Enjoy the charm and nightlife of Kobe one of Asia's leading international port cities. With just a 45 minute drive visitors may find themselves in the center of Japan's largest concentration of high-end golf courses the Kita-harima area. This is what is said to be the "royal road" of Hyogo golf.



## Why golf in Hyogo? 2

# Prestigious Courses that boast a High Standard and History

The first ever Japanese golf course was Kobe Golf Club established in 1903 in addition to its spot in history as the birthplace of Japanese golf the conditions of Kita harima including the fact that it is situated just outside of Osaka and Kobe proved to be favorable for golf leading to the creation of many golf courses that reach a high standard due in part to the region's abundance of rolling hills and other geographical features Hirono Golf Club which is said to be the number one golf course in Japan is of course located in Hyogo Also located in Hyogo are Naruo Golf Club and many other 5 star courses that are open to all visitors



## Prestigious Golf Courses

### ABC Golf Club

This club has been the stage for many major tournaments With an elevation difference of up to 17 meters between some of the flats a wide fairway numerous bunkers and ponds of various sizes this course was laid out with calculated precision in particular three specific holes on the back nine have been the location of many a dramatic event in competitions

Name of golf club	ABC Golf Club
Address	933 20 Eifuku Kato 673 1313
Official website	<a href="https://abc.golf.co.jp/english.html">https://abc.golf.co.jp/english.html</a>

### Tokyu Grand Oak Golf Club

This is a beautiful course that spreads out over the gentle hills in the south eastern part of Lake Tojo The coniferous pine and cypress trees that surround the entire course create a calm and relaxing environment within the Japanese landscape The fairway has an average width of 40 yards meaning that golfers have a much greater chance of staying out of the rough for a much more enjoyable round of golf

Name of golf club	Tokyu Grand Oak Golf Club
Address	1843 Nagasada Kato 673 1304
Official website	<a href="http://www.grandoak.jp/">http://www.grandoak.jp/</a>

### Hanayashiki Golf Club

This is a 36 hole hill golf course consisting of two separate courses the majestic Hirono course and the Yokawa course which boasts a very distinctive fairway The Yokawa course has played host to official tournaments on the LPGA Tour With its smooth curves and transitions Yokawa is a strategic course that is popular with long hitters

Name of golf club	Hanayashiki Golf Club Yokawa Course
Address	534 1 Konishiya Fukui Yokawa cho Miki 673 1113
Official website	<a href="http://www.hanayashikigc.co.jp/hgy/top/top.html">http://www.hanayashikigc.co.jp/hgy/top/top.html</a>



## Sample Plan 2 – Enjoy the Prestigious Golf Courses in Hyogo

Being in the region of Japan's highest concentration of golf courses guests can find themselves at a tournament level course in under 60 minutes from leaving the hotel Some of the world's top 100 courses as well as some of the toughest courses in Japan are all just a stone's throw away With easy access to Japan's best courses even the most finicky golfer is sure to find thorough enjoyment



## Why golf in Hyogo? 3

# A Collaborative Effort between the Government and the People

One of the greatest features of golf tourism in Hyogo prefecture is that the system itself is a joint effort between the public and private sectors. Hyogo prefecture places great importance on golf due to the traits of the region. Those in the local golf industry shared our vision, which led to the creation of our “Friendly Competition Tour.” In addition, our efforts extend beyond golf into the realms of experience-oriented tourism and regional revitalization.



## What is “Friendly Competition”?

“Friendly Competition” is a competition where international golf lovers come together to do what they love. Players, both Japanese and from overseas, play and mingle in a friendly, international exchange.



## Sample Plan 3 – Enjoy “Friendly Competition”



## Recommended Local Sightseeing for This Sample Plan

### Akashiura Fish Market: Special Tour of Fish Auction

Live fish auctions are a unique kind of experience. Some 100 different varieties of marine life called “Akashi no Maemon” from the rich fishing area of the Akashi Strait find their way from this market to other markets, stores, and shops all around the country. “Hiru ami” which literally translates to “midday net” is a fish auction that takes place in the middle of the day. Visitors can “catch” this auction as well as observe some of the surrounding fishing facilities.

Experience content	Live Fish Auction Tour at Akashiura Fish Market
Address	33-1 Misaki-cho Akashi 673-0895
Official website	<a href="http://www.akashiura.or.jp/">http://www.akashiura.or.jp/</a>



Photo by Akashi Tourism Association

### Autumn Festival in Harima

One of the things for which the Harima area is famous is its festivals, which take place in October and are held to give thanks for the year's rich harvest. Booths and stands pop up at shrines, and the sounds of traditional drums fill the air in these lively festivals that should not be missed if given the opportunity.

Himeji Nada Kenka Matsuri Festival  
Official website: <https://www.nadamatsuri.jp/>

Miki Omiya Hachimangu Shrine  
Official website: <http://www.miki-oomiya.net/>

Takasago Sone Tenmangu Shrine  
Official website: <http://www.tenmangu.net/>



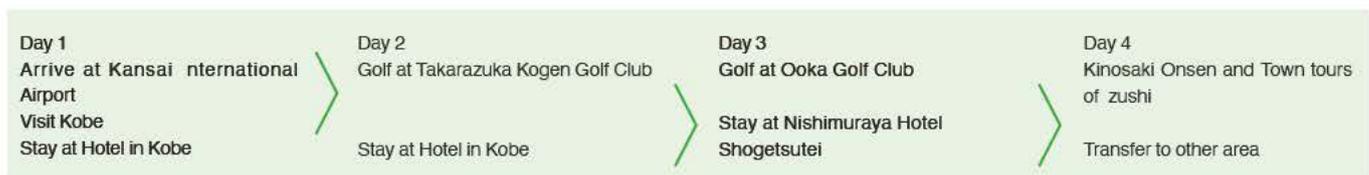
## Hyogo is a "Microcosm of Japan"

Hyogo is the only prefecture in Japan that faces two different seas; one to the north and one to the south. This contributes to its diverse climate and natural features. In addition, Awaji island which lies in the inland sea serves as the southern tip of the prefecture. With the sea, mountains, cities, suburbs and rural areas, players can choose an environment that suits their own personal style and preference. A year-round mild climate allows winter golfing, which means that after a round of golf, visitors can head up the slopes of nearby mountains such as Mt. Rokko and Mineyama Kogen Highland for skiing and snowboarding.



## Sample Plan 4 – Enjoy the Metropolis and the Countryside

The tour begins in the big city with sightseeing and a golf in Kobe. It is followed by a visit to Tajima where guests can slow down and get a taste of traditional Japan.



## Recommended Local Activities for This Sample Plan

### A Walk around Kinokasa Onsen Town in a Yukata (traditional, Japanese, casual attire)

Kinokasa Onsen boasts a history of 1,300 years. A river flowing in from the Sea of Japan travels through the center of the town as willow trees decorate the riverbanks in a picturesque scene that takes one back to old-time Japan. It is here that guests may experience true Japanese hot spring culture. Seven hot spring baths called "sotouyu" meaning "outer hot spring" are located outdoors in public areas. Guests staying at inns are issued a pass allowing them to bathe at these sotouyu free of charge. When walking through town heading to or from the sotouyu, yukata robes and traditional geta clogs are considered standard attire. Both yukata and geta are available at inns. Meals here are gorgeous and often include crab, sashimi, and Tajima beef.

#### Seven Sotouyu (Outer Hot Spring)

Kono-yu, Mandara-yu, Goshono-yu, Chino-yu, Yanagi-yu, Jizo-yu, Satono-yu  
 Contact: Visit Kinokasa  
 Official Website: <https://visitkinokasa.com/>



### Rokko Arima Ropeway in Kobe

Rokko Arima Ropeway connects the summit of Mt. Rokko to Arima Onsen Hot Spring town; a distance that can be covered in approximately 12 minutes. The view changes along with the altitude as yellow beech trees can be viewed near the summit station, while red maple leaves become more abundant as you approach Arima Onsen.

### Kougenji Temple in Tamba

Tamba, a region known for having significant temperature variations, is famous for its autumn colors. Among them, Kougenji temple abounds with around 500 maple trees, including "tenmoku" maple trees brought back from Mt. Tenmoku in Hangzhou, China, by Zen master and founder of the temple, Enkei Soyu during the Kamakura period (12th to 14th century). The flowing tunnel of overlapping autumn leaves above the mossy approach is a beautiful and breathtaking sight.



Photo by KOBE TOURISM BUREAU

### Golf and Skiing at One Location

Hyogo prefecture has as many ski resorts and golf courses; with the number of ski resorts being the most in western Japan. In addition, there are many famous sightseeing spots and gourmet dishes that may be enjoyed near each ski resort, such as Kinokasa Onsen, Yumura Onsen, Takeda Castle Ruins (known as "the castle in the sky"), Tajima Beef and seasonal Tajima Matsuba crab. All pair wonderfully with golf.

#### Easily Accessible Ski Resorts When Golfing

Rokkosan Snow Resort: <http://www.rokkosan.com/ski/en/>  
 Mineyama Kogen Resort: <http://mineyama.kogen-resort.com/>  
 Kannabe Kogen Manba Ski & Snowboard: <http://www.manba.ski.jp/>



## Why golf in Hyogo? 5

### Highly Developed and Convenient Transportation

Kobe is the closest golf destination when travelling from Kansai International Airport at just about an hour by airport shuttle bus or ferry. In addition, domestic travel is also convenient via the airports, the Shinkansen bullet train, or a network of highways. Popular tourist destinations such as Kyoto and Osaka are also only 50 and 20 minutes away respectively by local train. For those wanting to visit multiple locations in their golf tourism experience, this is a great advantage.



### Route 1 - Golden Route of Major Japanese Golf Destinations

13 nights 14 days / 7 golf plays

Arrival at Kansai International Airport > Hyogo > 3 nights / 2 rounds of golf > Kyoto Shiga (2 nights / 1 round of golf) > Mie (3 nights / 2 rounds of golf) > Shizuoka (3 nights / 2 rounds of golf) > Tokyo (2 nights) > Departure from Narita Airport



### Route 2 - Kansai Route

9 nights 10 days / 5 golf plays

Arrival at Kansai International Airport > Hyogo (4 nights / 3 rounds of golf) > Kyoto Shiga (2 nights / 1 round of golf) > Gifu (2 nights / 1 round of golf) > Osaka (1 night) > Departure from Kansai International Airport



### Route 3 - West Japan Route

10 nights 11 days / 6 golf plays

Arrival at Kansai International Airport > Hyogo (4 nights / 3 rounds of golf) > Tokushima (2 nights / 1 round of golf) > Hiroshima Okayama (3 nights / 2 rounds of golf) > Kyoto Osaka (1 night) > Departure from Kansai International Airport



# Hyogo Sightseeing

## Himeji Castle

Himeji Castle located in Himeji city Hyogo prefecture is a national treasure of Japan. The castle is registered as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site and was named one of Japan's Top 100 Castles. The castle's main structure, its tower, was built in 1609. Himeji Castle has managed to retain its beautiful appearance over the years and is popular not only for its historical value but also for its beautiful scenery and surroundings. It continues to attract visitors from around the world.



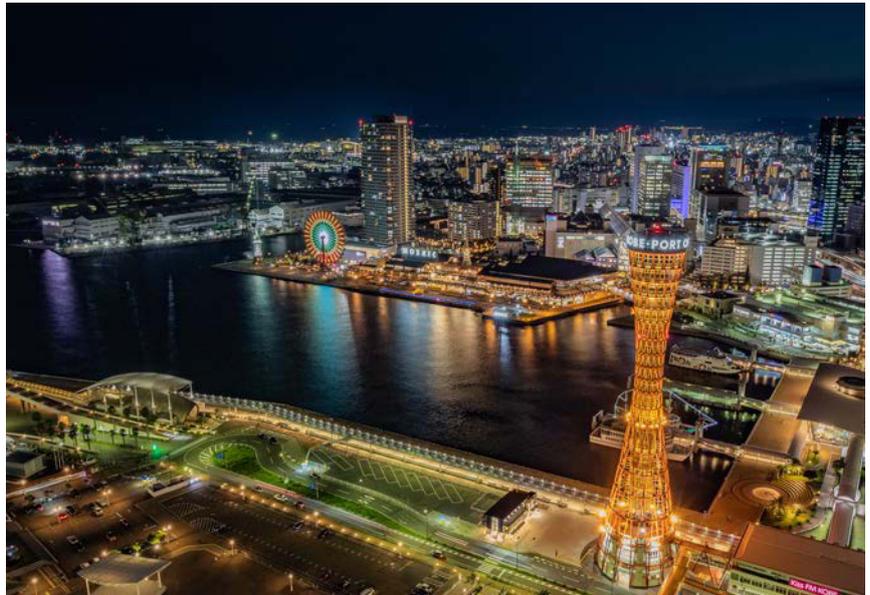
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Experience content	Himeji Castle Visit
Address	68 Honmachi Himeji 670 0012
Official website	<a href="https://www.himejicastle.jp/">https://www.himejicastle.jp/</a>

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## Kobe Night View

Kobe is famous for many things, among them its numerous locations with romantic night views. One such location is the view from Kikuseidai Observatory. The night sky viewed from there is famous around the country and considered to be one of Japan's three greatest night views. From there, visitors may enjoy a beautiful star-filled night sky in a panoramic view of Kobe's bay area, with its symbolic Port Tower, Mosaic shopping center, and retro-modern, exotic city illumination. The view makes a magnificent addition to any book of Kobe memories.



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Experience content	Kobe Night View
Address	Mayasan cho Nadaku Kobe 657 0105
Official website	<a href="https://www.feel-kobe.jp/kobe-yakei/area/mountain/03/">https://www.feel-kobe.jp/kobe-yakei/area/mountain/03/</a>

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## Uzushio (Whirlpool) Cruise

The whirlpools of the Naruto Strait can be up to 30 meters in diameter and are among the three major tidal currents in the world. On a whirlpool cruise, guests will get so close that they can truly see and feel the power of nature, far greater than they ever imagined. This is an activity that will stimulate all five senses.



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Experience content	Uzushio Cruise (Kanchō pleasure boat)
Address	Uzushio Dome Nanairo kan Fukura port Awaji 656 0501
Official website	<a href="https://www.uzusio.com/en/">https://www.uzusio.com/en/</a>

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## Activities and Cuisine

### Knife Forging Experience

This is an opportunity to get an up close look at the world of the traditional Japanese metalsmith. Miki city in Hyogo prefecture is famous around the country as one of Japan's leading metalware producing regions. Many historic blacksmith shops are open to tourists, allowing visitors the opportunity to experience hands on the craft of metal forging. Once a month blacksmiths open their doors to demonstrate to viewers how forging was once done using traditional tools and techniques. The knife forging experience can be adjusted to suit the level of the guests, thus making this an activity that all can enjoy.

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Experience content Knife Forging Experience  
Address M K HAMONO MFG CO LTD  
5 6 Shiba cho Miki 673 0414  
Officialwebsite <http://www.miki-hamono.co.jp/>

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### Kimono/Yukata Wearing Experience

In this experience guests will wear yukata (summer kimono) made from Banshu Ori textiles. This particular type of fabric uses top dyeing (dyeing of the fibers prior to textile production) and is one of Japan's most famous and world renowned textile brands. Guests will visit the historic Kishi family home in Nishiwaki city. The building was erected in 1918 using materials and techniques that were of the highest quality known at the time and would be extremely difficult to reproduce today. It is in this building that visitors will wrap themselves in a yukata and a kimono, then take a leisurely stroll around the premises. Tea ceremony and armor wearing experiences are also an option here.

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Experience content Yukata/Kimono Wearing Experience  
Address Old Kishi Family House  
394 1 Nishiwaki Nishiwaki 677 0015  
Officialwebsite <http://www.umekichi.tmo.jp/index.html>

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### Soba Noodle Making

For this noodle making experience guests will be using specially selected buckwheat flour from Izushi Castle Town. A soba noodle chef will give you a step-by-step lesson in traditional soba noodle making. Then, after your experience lunch will be those very same noodles, made by your own hand.

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Experience content Soba Noodle Making  
Address M KURA  
129 19 zushicho Kobito Toyooka  
668 0256

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# Recommended Local Specialties in Hyogo

## Kobe Branded Beef

Kobe Beef is Wagyu beef from the Tajima strain of Japanese black cattle raised in Hyogo prefecture according to rules set by the Kobe Beef Marketing and Distribution Promotion Association. The meat is a delicacy valued for its flavor, tenderness, and fatty, well-marbled texture. It is generally considered one of the top three brands of beef in Japan, alongside Matsusaka Beef and Omi Beef. Kobe Beef is primarily cooked as steak, stewed as sukiyaki, boiled as shabu shabu, eaten raw as beef sashimi, or grilled on a teppanyaki griddle.

Venue: Kobe Beef Gallery  
Address: Kotonohako Kobe 3rd Floor  
1 Kinano cho Chuo ku Kobe 650 0002  
Official website: <https://kobebeefgallery/>



## Japanese Sake

The natural environment of Hyogo prefecture, with its clean and clear water and rice fields, coupled with age-old techniques and traditions, makes it extremely conducive to the production of sake. In fact, 30% of Japan's sake is produced in Hyogo, making it a powerhouse in the world of the rice-based fermented beverage. Hyogo is also especially well-known as a leading producer of Yamadanishiki rice, a rice with a long history as the base element for sake. Yamadanishiki is considered the "king of sake rice" as it is the parent of more than 100 kinds of sake.

Venue: Yamadanishiki no sato  
Address: 222 Yokawacho Kichiyasu Miki 673 1114  
Official website: <https://www.762401.com/>



## Local Seafood

### Matsuba Crab

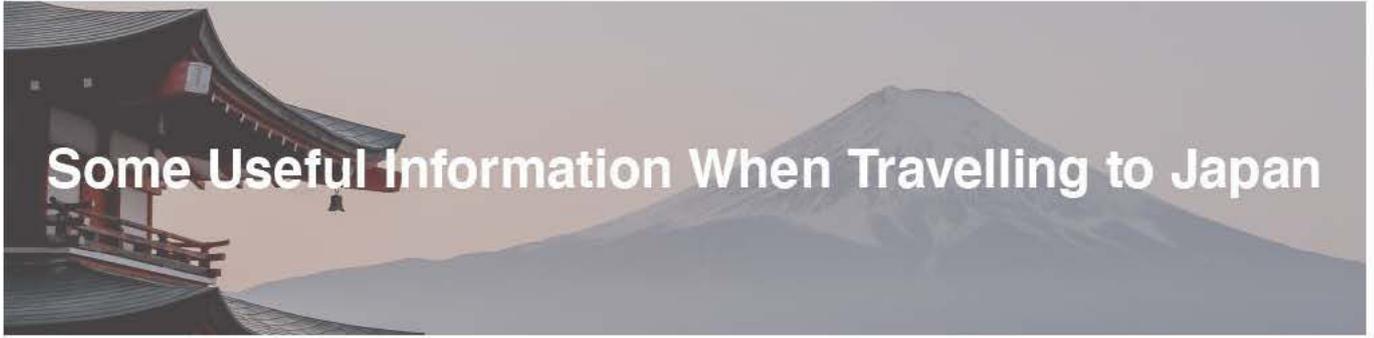
Hyogo is the biggest supplier of Matsuba crab in Japan. This crab is called "zuwaigani" or "snow crab" throughout most of Japan, but in parts of San'in Area, it gets the name "matsuba" crab, as the shape of its legs resembles matsuba pine needles. Matsuba crab is known for being sweet and flavorful and is in season from November to March. Sometimes called "a precious gift from the winter ocean," matsuba crab is usually stewed in a pot or eaten raw as sashimi.

### Akashi Snapper

Snapper from the Akashi area is known for being of the highest grade in Japan. The coastline that runs along Akashi provides perfect conditions for snapper to grow. With the spring season comes a coastal tide that strengthens the muscle of the migrating fish. Then, as the weather cools and transitions to autumn, and the snappers feed, their bodies become rich with fat. Akashi snapper is known for its rich, sweet flavor and is often enjoyed grilled, as well as with chazuke (hot tea on rice) as sashimi and more.



Photo by Akashi Tourism Association



# Some Useful Information When Travelling to Japan

## Time Difference

Japan is 9 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. There is no summer time.

## Language

The official language of Japan is Japanese. English is used less frequently than in other Asian countries. However, simple English is generally understood. English signage and translations may be found in many public places.

## Currency

Yen is the only official currency in Japan. There are very few places that accept any other currency such as US dollars. It is recommended that visitors exchange their money for yen prior to visiting Japan. Payment by credit card and electronic/digital money has become more widespread over recent years. With the exception of some local or family-run shops, credit cards are generally accepted.



## Tax

Sales tax in Japan is 10%, excluding groceries, non-alcoholic drinks, and newspaper subscriptions, which are taxed at 8% (as of March 2021). Tax-free shops may be found around the country. Just look for the "Tax Free" signage. In some cities, there is an accommodation tax at hotels. A "bath tax" may also be applied at ryokan inns in certain hot spring areas.

## Tipping

Tipping is not customary in Japan. However, at some luxury hotels and other establishments, an additional service charge, generally between 5% and 10%, may be applied.

## Bargaining

Haggling is not customary in Japan and is completely unacceptable in most shops. However, guests may rest assured that "tourist prices" do not exist in Japan, so they need not worry that they may be paying more than the locals for certain products or services.

## Drinking Water

Tap water is safe and drinkable in Japan. Water and/or tea is typically provided for free in restaurants. However, bottled water and other drinks from the menu will be charged.

## Wi-Fi

Compared to many other industrialized nations, Japan is not known for having an abundance of free Wi-Fi spots. But recently, free Wi-Fi has become increasingly available in such places as major railway stations, Shinkansen bullet trains, coffee and fast food chains, and more. Various cities are also making city-sponsored free Wi-Fi more available.

## Luggage Forwarding

Luggage space on public transportation in Japan is limited. Large, heavy luggage may prove to be an inconvenience while in Japan. If luggage transport presents a difficulty while in Japan, a truck transfer service is a viable option and solution. Truck services can generally provide next-day delivery service of your luggage. These services will deliver your belongings to your hotel, where the luggage will then be handled by the hotel staff. Services such as this may also be used to deliver golf bags directly to a golf club. Hotel staff can help you with any necessary forms. Prices usually depend on luggage size and the distance to the destination, but typically range from 1,500 yen to 2,500 yen.

## Taking off Shoes

Generally speaking, shoes may be left on in most modern restaurants, hotels, shops, and museums. However, some traditional Japanese establishments such as temples, shrines, restaurants, and ryokan inns may require that you remove your shoes to enter. Visitors should generally be prepared to remove their shoes if necessary. It is recommended that shoes be easily removable and that socks be clean, free of holes, and presentable.

## Dietary Restrictions

Restaurants in Japan, regardless of genre, typically use a large variety of ingredients to create depth and harmony of flavor. As each element has a specific purpose, the elimination of any of these ingredients will mean that the true flavor and essence of the dish or meal will not be able to be appreciated. For this reason, many restaurants are unable to accommodate dietary restrictions. Recently, the number of restaurants that can provide vegan meals is on the rise, but guests should understand that these restaurants are still few and far between.

## Electrical Current and Plug Type

Voltage in Japan is 100V, compared to North America which is 120V and central Europe which is 230V. Japanese electrical plugs and outlets resemble those from North America and have two flat prongs. A universal adaptor is recommended, just in case.



# Useful Information For Playing Golf In Japan

Golf play in Japan differs from that in other countries in a number of ways. Some of these may be surprising, but as long as players are aware of them in advance, they will be able to enjoy your golf as usual. So please do take time to read and explain the points below to your guests in detail, so that they are fully aware of the differences in golf style here in Japan, and can enjoy their golf in Japan.

## PRE-PLAY

### Dress Code

Outside the summer months of July, August, pre and post play (i.e. in the Club House) at most Japanese courses, it's obligatory or at least recommended to wear a jacket. So it's very important to check Dress Code rules with any golf course on which foreign visitors plan to play in Japan. Stricter courses may refuse to allow those not adhering to their Dress Code to play.

On Arrival, A Blazer or Jacket must be worn while in July & August. A Jacket need not be worn, but can be carried. Anyone wearing a t-shirt, jeans, shorts, sneakers or sandals will not be allowed to enter the Club. During Play, all players must wear a shirt with a collar. Turtle neck or polo neck wear is not allowed. Shorts may only be worn in combination with long socks, which must completely cover the ankle area.

### From Arrival to Tee-Off

Standard procedure at a Japanese golf course is as follows:

1. Players arriving by vehicle are greeted as they arrive by Club Staff, to whom they immediately hand their golf-bag. The Staff arranges for the bag to be placed on the appropriate cart, while the Player enters the Club House to change. For this reason, it's important that golf-bags and go f-covers have clearly visible name-tags.
2. On entering the Club House, players proceed to Reception, where they write their name and address on a registration card, and in return receive their locker-key and scorecard-holder. All purchases at the course are then charged to the player's bill by simply giving their signature and locker number, and the bill is settled at Reception before leaving the course.
3. Players then proceed to their locker, change into golf-wear and shoes (soft-spiked shoes only), put their personal belongings in the locker, lock it and proceed to the course.
4. Players wishing to practice at the Driving Range should buy a token for the range-ball-vending-machine at the Caddy Master's Desk (usually adjacent to the exit from the Club House to the course – the player's locker number is needed for this), select a few clubs, and walk to the practice range (carts aren't used to access the practice range in Japan). The putting practice green is usually close to the Club House, and there the player uses their own balls. Etiquette in Japan is for all players to be at the first tee 10 minutes before their official start time.
5. Very few Japanese courses have adopted the American-style of players paying green-fees at the Pro-Shop, not using a locker, putting their own golf clubs directly onto their cart, and, when their official start time comes, driving their cart to the 1st tee.

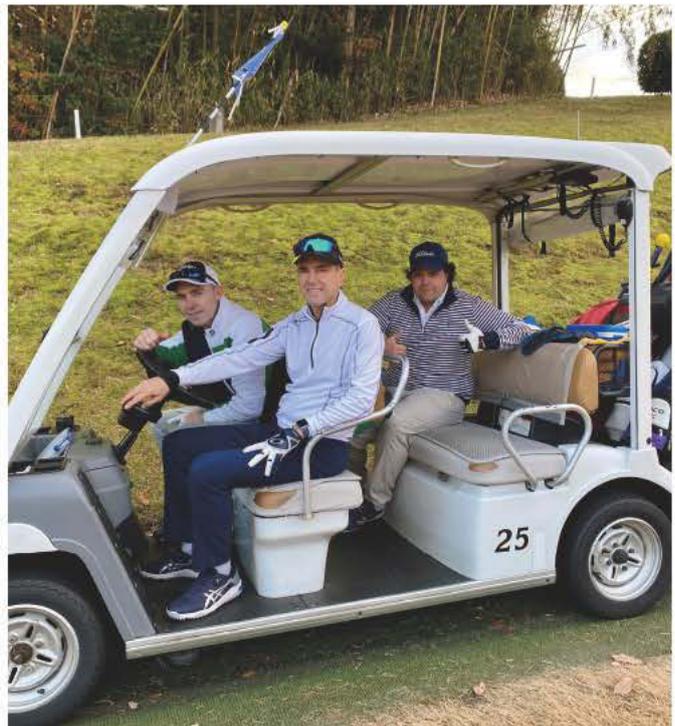
So, it is particularly important to fully explain Japanese-style golf course etiquette to guests before they travel to Japan. And in the case of FIT-golf travelers, it is vital to communicate complete relevant data to those guests for each of the courses they will play in advance of their trip.

### Auto-Driving Remote-Controlled Carts & Caddies

Japanese golf carts are generally auto-driving remote-controlled vehicles seating either 4-players, or 5 people, including a caddy. And, on most courses are Cart Path Only.

Some courses slightly restrict the speed at which these carts move to add an extra dimension of safety, but visiting golfers should also be made fully aware that they are likely to be issued with warnings in case of slow play, or slow cart-progress.

In Japan, one caddy usually serves 4 players. These caddies (mostly ladies) move quickly and precisely across the course to support their players. Please pro-actively try to communicate with your caddy to get the best of their knowledge and support!



## WHILE PLAYING

### Lunch Breaks

Almost no Japanese courses offer the global standard of playing 18 holes consecutively. In Japan, lunch breaks lasting 30-45 minutes are required between playing the front 9 and back 9 holes. And Club House restaurants offer a variety of dishes including some featuring local produce unique to the course and others highlighting local specialty dishes. These are dishes which most Japanese enjoy for their day to day lunches but are almost all items which can't be found in Japanese restaurants outside Japan. Now that Japanese food culture is considered one of the World's finest, please do try golf course Japanese cuisine.

### Simultaneous Tee-Off Times on Out- & In-Courses

Thanks to the Japanese custom of a lunch break during a round of golf, 2 separate parties of golfers can start simultaneously on the 1st hole (front 9) and 10th hole (back 9). For foreign visitors, in case of a small group or individual players, to avoid confusion, it's recommended to request tee off times on the Front (Out) 9 holes. In the case of larger groups, while there will inevitably be a time lag between the first groups and last groups finish, using the option of simultaneous tee offs on the front and back 9 makes it possible to significantly reduce that time lag.

### Forward 4 or Front 4

'Forward 4' or 'Front 4' is a term for a uniquely Japanese local rule. Under this rule, if a player's tee shot goes out of bounds, rather than taking stroke and distance relief (a one shot penalty combined with hitting a second ball from the same point as the original shot), the player proceeds to a drop point, usually signified by yellow tee markers, approximately 200-250 yards down the course (in case of a Par 4 or 5 hole), and plays their 4th shot from there. The reason for this rule is to avoid the danger of slow play resulting from playing multiple tee shots, and this local rule has become part of golf etiquette here in Japan.

Particularly when the following group are already waiting behind players at a tee, re-hitting tee shots which have gone out of bounds is likely to result in complaints from that group, and subsequently a warning from a Course Marshal.

### Two Greens and Yardage-Markers

Many Japanese golf courses have what is termed 2 greens for the same hole, making it necessary to check before starting a round which green is in use on that day on such holes. Also, depending on the course, yardage markers indicating the distance remaining on each hole may be measured from the hole, the center of the green, or the front of the green, so players need to check a course's particular way of measurement before starting their round. And please note that distances at Japanese courses are indicated in yards, rather than meters.



## POST-PLAY

### Baths, Showers & Tattoos

In Locker Rooms of Japanese golf courses, there is a communal bathroom which consists of an area for changing and a bathroom containing a shower area and a large bath for communal bathing. The Locker Room area is where a player changes into golf wear before playing their round. When a player showers after their round, they should put on the slippers provided in the locker, take a change of clothing, lock their belongings in their locker, walk to the changing area (usually at the back of the Locker Room), undress, and proceed to the bathroom to shower and then, if they choose, bathe (towels are provided in the changing area).

People with tattoos are barred from entering Japanese golf courses. In traditional Japanese society, tattoos signify 'yakuza' members of outlawed gangs, often referred to as the 'Japanese mafia', and such people are barred from golf courses. In recent years, awareness of tattoos as a fashion statement has grown, so these traditions are now starting to change, but unfortunately, golf courses still strictly apply this bar on entry.

Anyone with tattoos wishing to play golf should consult with their travel agency, tour manager, or directly with the course in question to confirm that it is acceptable for their tattoos to be fully concealed by long-sleeved clothing or covered by plasters. In case a member at a famous course in Japan were to register a complaint about another golfer's tattoos, not only that golfer but the whole of his party or group can and may be asked to leave the course immediately. This is a particularly important point for groups to be aware of, as their numbers inevitably make them stand out and bring particularly close attention.

### One Ball Booking not accepted

Japanese golf courses don't accept reservations for 1 person. The minimum number of players needed to reserve a tee off time is 2. And in case of parties of 2 or 3 players, rather than adding an unrelated 4th player to make up a foursome, it is standard practice for golfers to pay what is known as a supplementary '2 back fee' or '3 back fee' and play in twosomes or threesomes. Supplementary costs for playing in twosomes or threesomes can be obtained at the time of reservation.

### Golf-Bag Forwarding

For golfers playing as part of a tour (e.g. day 02 golf / day 03 sightseeing / day 04 golf), it is possible to arrange transportation of one's golf bag (including shoes) to the 'next' course via luggage delivery services.

### Golf Course Utilization Tax

The Japanese Government applies a tax to golf play, which usually amounts to between JPY 300-1,200 per person per day, depending on the size and play fee of golf clubs. And some courses may charge for items such as 'Sundry Costs', 'Locker Fees', or 'Facility Charges', not familiar outside Japan, so please request full details of all costs when making reservations.





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