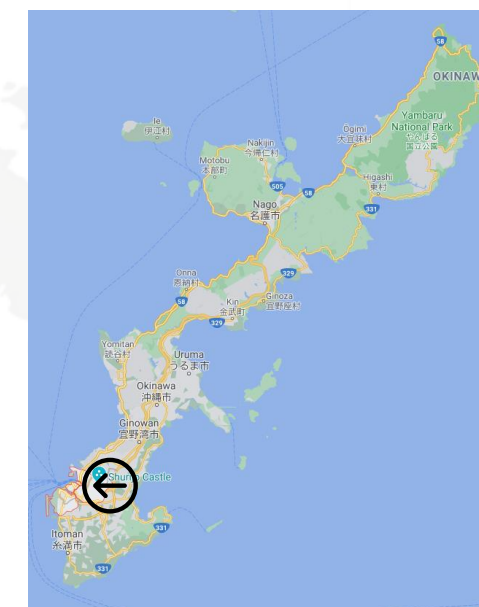
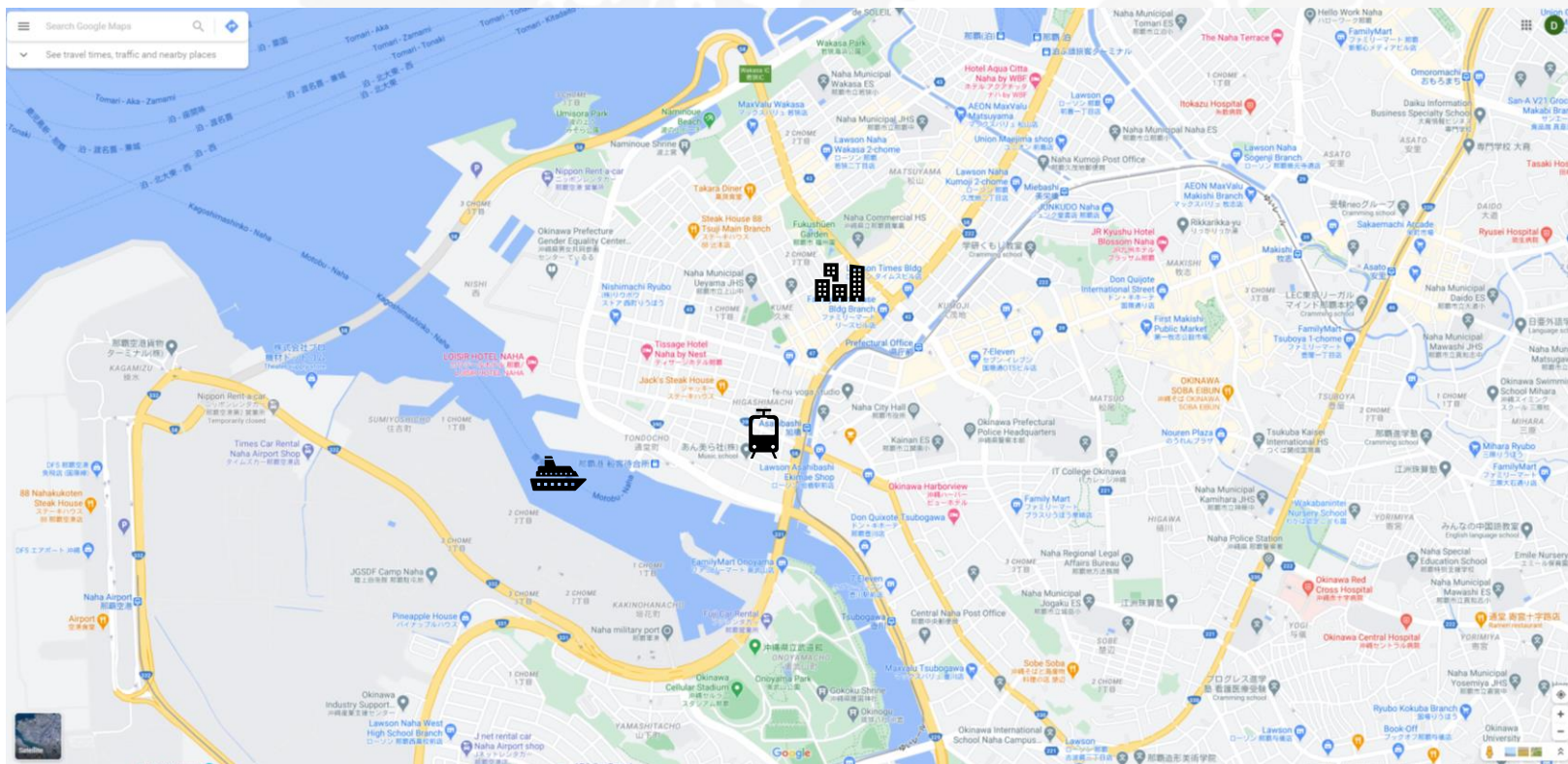


Naha, Japan Friday Feb 25 8am-11pm H-67 L-58F 70% humidity w/ 10 days 4.7" rain/month

We will be docked in [Naha New Port](#), about a 20 minute walk from downtown. Shuttles to downtown in general are available and drop you off very close to the [monorail](#). We currently are only ship in port that day.

As of 1 June 2019, the city has an estimated [population](#) of 317,405
Naha is an economic center of Okinawa dominated by tourism, retail and service industries.



Okinawa is the only subtropical area in Japan, and with its geographical location and background of once being an independent State called the Ryukyu Kingdom between the 14th and the 19th centuries, it has developed a unique culture (influenced mostly by China, Japan and Korea), rich history and natural diversity for all to enjoy. Therefore, Okinawan culture is very different from that of mainland Japan; it has own unique language, music and traditions, including traditional arts and crafts. Its people are well-known for their hospitality.



General Info

Visa not required for stays of less than 90 days for US citizens

ATMs in Japan are becoming more available, and most can be used to withdraw funds from overseas accounts. Post offices also offer ATMs. Plenty of Bank ATMs in town. Recommend getting yen as USD not normally taken, or taken with unfavorable exchange.

Major credit cards are accepted at a majority of stores and restaurants in large urban areas, but if you plan on spending any time in rural areas, be sure to carry sufficient cash. Japan is still very much a cash society and some stores, hotels and restaurants-regardless of location-refuse credit cards.

Shops/department stores in Japan are generally open daily from 10:00 or 10:30am to 7:30 or 8:00pm. Department stores are sometimes closed one day a week on an irregular basis, but since closing days vary for each store, shoppers can always find one open. Plenty of groceries in town.

As a general rule, **bargaining** is not the “done thing” in **Japan**. The currency in Japan is the yen. It comes in denominations of ¥10,000, ¥5,000 and ¥1,000 notes, as well as ¥500, ¥100, ¥50, ¥10, ¥5 and ¥1 coins. 1USD=109Yen

Most Okinawans **speak** Japanese and **do not speak English**. Those who **do** know **English**, are often too shy to use it. Regardless, **Okinawa** is easy to get around without knowing Japanese.

Cafes which offer free WiFi for customers are springing up all over the country. Costs vary, with some coffee shops offering free Wi-Fi services and others charging by the hour for cable-enabled PCs.

NTT Docomo provides high-speed wireless access to the Internet through multiple data networks. It's also the largest and most popular service provider in Japan. Generally, internet is faster than in the US. The high-speed **Internet** market is very competitive in **Japan**.

The best period to see the **blooming of cherry blossoms** in **Okinawa** is from mid-January to mid-February. The color of the **flower** petals of the Kanhizakura are dark pink, quite distinctive and different from the Somei-Yoshino **cherry trees** commonly seen in mainland **Japan**.



What to know about Japan

Safety is high and people are courteous

Cash is king—workers are paid in cash and many places only take yen so check if they take a credit card—plenty of 7 Elevens and ATMs

Tattoos are considered taboo

Japanese love American culture, but beware their interpretation (pizza with mayonnaise)

Keeping your shoes on in certain places is highly offensive (including some restaurants and in dressing rooms)

Don't tip, as it's considered rude!

Many Japanese speak English better than they admit

Department store sushi is pretty good

Many restaurants have small black box with button to summon your waiter, or you may find a screen to place your order

Pointing at people or things is considered rude...eating/drinking in public, taking photos of people without permission are no-no's

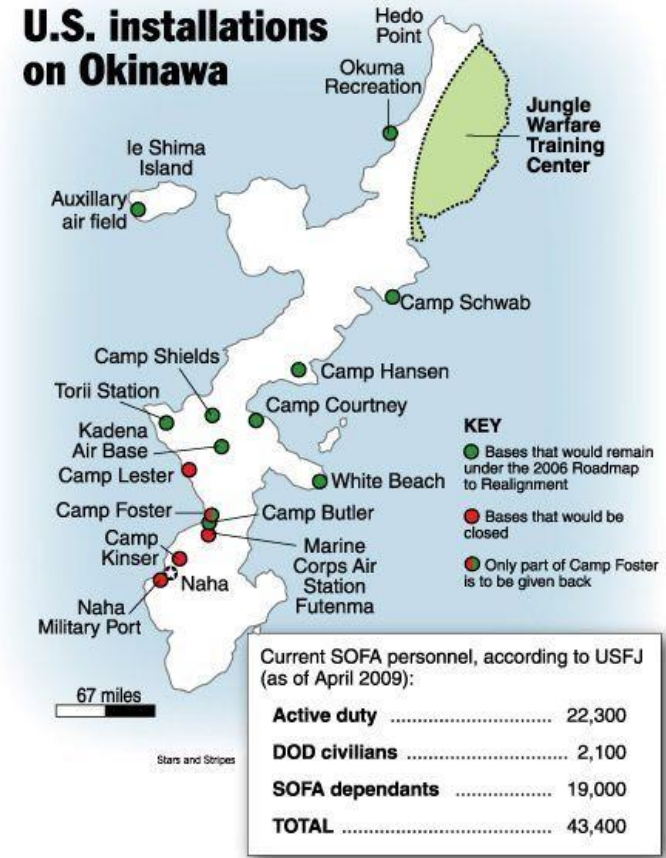
Speak quietly in public



~30,000 U.S. troops are stationed on Okinawa. Next year, the prefecture will mark the 50th anniversary of its reversion to Japan from U.S. administration. In 2016, the U.S. handed back nearly 10,000 acres of Okinawa's Northern Training Area to the prefecture, an area twice the size of Kadena Air Base. That transfer reduced the American footprint on the island by 20%, U.S. officials said at the time.

US Military presence is major issue on Okinawa

- Naha to Marine Corps Air Station Futenma 20 min
- Naha to Camp Foster Exchange 30 min
- Naha to Kadena Air Base 40 min



70.4% of all US military in Japan



The island is 67 miles long and varies from 2-17 miles wide. 463 sq miles

Okinawa is located about 900 miles from Tokyo, Manila, Seoul and Hong Kong, and about 1,200 miles west of Guam.

Transportation

Taxi:

- * When you board a taxi, note that the vehicle's left rear door is opened and closed remotely by the driver. You are not supposed to open or close it by yourself.
- * You are not supposed to tip taxi drivers, as the service is included in the price.
- * If you do not speak Japanese, or your destination is not a well known place, it is recommended to give your driver the precise address of your destination on a piece of paper or, even better, point it out on a map, since the Japanese address system can be confusing even to local taxi drivers.
- * Initial Taxi Fares (As of October 2019) Main Island of Okinawa: 560 yen for regular taxis (Additional fare: 70 yen per 365 meters)
- * Sightseeing taxis will take you to the tourist destinations you want to visit on demand. Your trip would be just as enjoyable being guided by an experienced driver around popular destinations.

•[Okito Kotsu Group](#)

•[Okinawa Hire Taxi Association](#) *Only in Japanese

•[Okinawa Prefecture owner-driver taxi business cooperative society](#) *Only in Japanese

Uber is also available in Naha

Yui Rail connects 19 stations, the monorail is useful for accessing popular tourist spots, such as Kokusai Street, central Naha, and Shurijo Castle Park. The 1-day ticket, which can be bought at all stations, is the best option when using the monorail multiple times in a single day. 800yen (\$7.34)



Transportation

Rental Cars

Out of the airport: Times Car Rental, Okinawa Rent-a-Car

Some downtown: Times Car Rental, Nissan Rent-a-Car

Nearest the Port: Orix Rental

Kayak search: Avis, Hertz ~\$70-80 USD

Notes for Driving

- In Japan, vehicles drive on the left side of the road and are right-hand drive. If this differs from your country, be careful when driving.

[Traffic Rules](#)

- During morning and evening hours, some lanes on national roads are reserved for buses (bus lanes).

- If you drive on the expressway, it is recommended that you choose a car with ETC, which allows for smooth payments at toll booths.

- When driving in Japan, a Passport + An international driving permit based on the Convention on Road Traffic (Geneva Convention) + Driver's license from their respective country

How to Use Coin Parking Lots with Locking Plates:

Many of the coin parking lots in Okinawa feature locking plates installed in the parking spaces. After you park, the locking plate automatically rise and locks the car in place.

When leaving the lot and paying the fee, you use the fare machine installed in the parking lot. Entering your parking number into the fare machine automatically calculates your fee, and once the displayed amount is paid, the locking plate keeping the car in place descends. Return to your car, confirm that the locking plate has descended, and immediately leave the lot.



HAL Excursions

General info bring yen; beware some crafts you buy may need to dry before taking

Red=not recommended for mobility limited (orange lists rough paths but doesn't specifically states not recommended)

Underlined=currenty limited capacity

AFAR: Panoramic Okinawa

Battle of Okinawa

* Peace Memorial Museum & former Japanese Navy HQ

Gyokusendo Cave & Peace Memorial

Several Private Half- and Full-Day Vehicles

Okinawa in Depth

Ryukyumura Village, Cape Manzamo & Kokusai St

Shurijo Castle Park, Garden & Kokusai Street

\$109.95 2 hrs 8:30 (E)

\$ 80.95 5 hrs 8:30 (M)

\$164.95 5 hrs 8:30 (M)

up to \$2199.95/party

\$199.95 8 hrs 8:30 (M)

\$154.95 6 hrs 8:30 (M)

\$124.95 4 hrs 8:30 (M)

Peace Memorial Museum



Gyokusendo Cave

Shikinaen Garden



Cape Manzamo



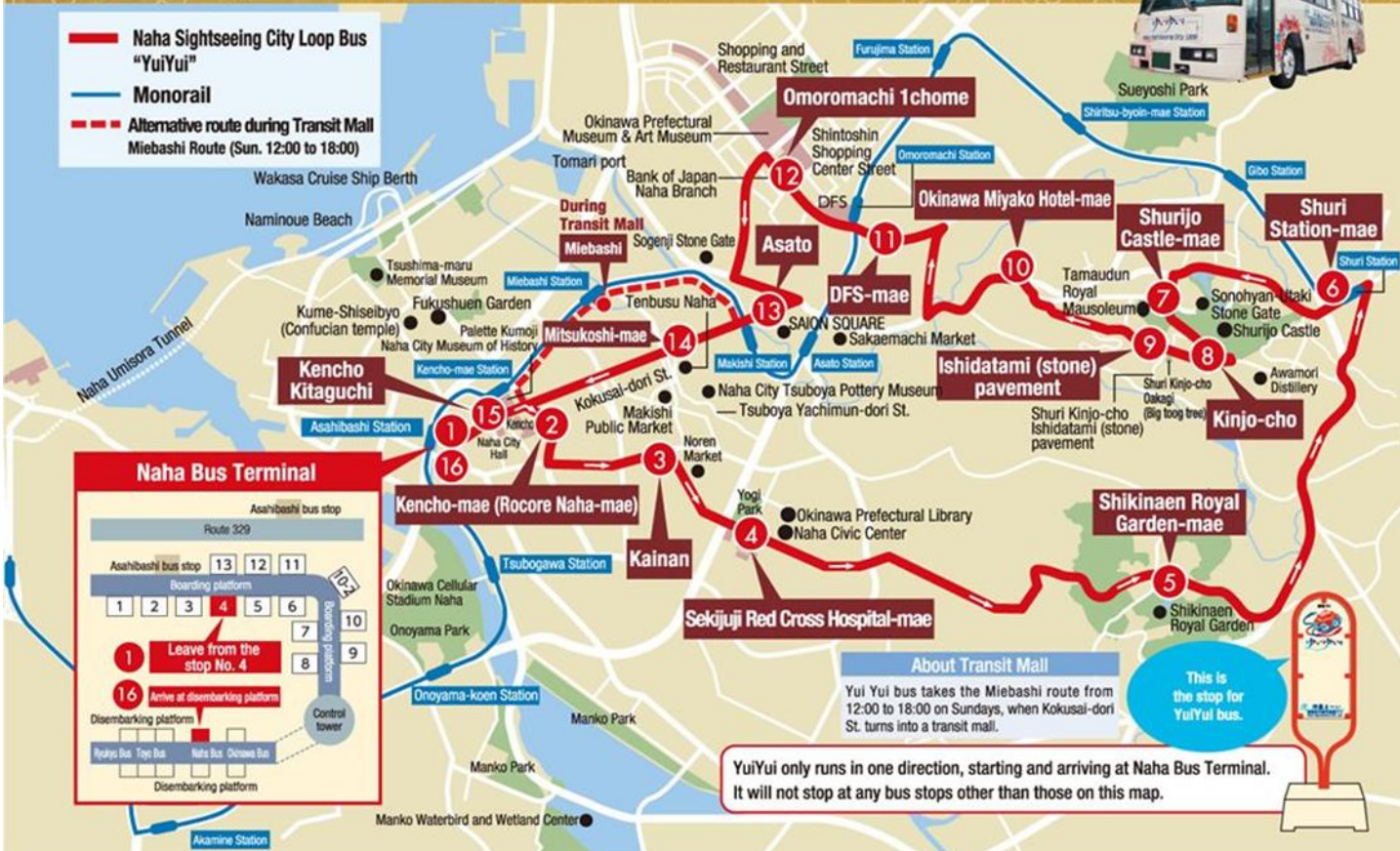
The main buildings of Shuri Castle were destroyed by fire in the night of October 31, 2019. There are plans to rebuild the castle by 2026.

Shurei-mon Gate



Route Map

Visit Naha City's recommended tourist spots on this handy comfy bus!



Viator:

- 2 hr Go cart tour \$86.79
- 4 hr private tour w/guide \$98.50
- 6 hrs \$123.13 8 hrs up to 9 pp \$552.56
- 2 hr night food tour \$123.13

Tripadvisor:

- 3 hr Taste of Okinawa Cooking Experience and Historic Market Tour \$62.53
- 4-7 hr Karate history tour \$132.61

There are more than 40 beaches on the island



Okinawan popular traditional arts and crafts include Ryukyuan glass, Ryukyuan lacquer ware, Shuri-ori textiles, Tsuboya-yaki pottery, and Bingata stencil dyed fabrics.

Ryukyuan glass



Ryukyuan lacquer ware



Bingata stencil dyed fabrics



Tsuboya-yaki pottery



Shuri-ori textiles



What to eat:

Goya, or bitter melon, is a relative of the melon that is indigenous to the region.



The Okinawan take on noodles in soup broth, known as souki soba, is a hearty, meat-heavy dish.

Hirayachi, a simple, savory and relatively light Okonimiyaki -like dish made with eggs, flour, green onions. Often eaten with Worcester Sauce, hirayachi is a great vegetarian option among a cuisine rich in meat and seafood.

Okinawa's deep countryside are advised to keep one eye out for a deadly snake called the habu, but in Naha you're far more likely to encounter one of the venomous reptiles preserved at the bottom of a bottle of habushu. This potent alcoholic tippie is a variant of popular local drink awamori, and is said to pack a double-punch: firstly for its intoxicating effects; secondly (for men) habu-shu is believed to encourage stamina in the bedroom. Habu-shu is not cheap, but then making it involves catching a live snake, starving it for several months, and finally pickling it in alcohol for upwards of six months.



Blue Seal ice cream is everywhere you go in Okinawa: much loved by locals, it's a product that is deeply intertwined with the islands' postwar history. Established after WWII for the enjoyment of US servicemen and their families living on Okinawa's bases, for two decades Blue Seal remained an exotic and elusive treat for locals themselves. In the 1960s however the brand became available on the mass market, and was eagerly adopted as an Okinawan icon. Cafes and stands all over Naha offer over 30 flavors including sweet potato and Shiikuasa, a local citrus fruit.

