

Farm stay in OITA, JAPAN

Farm stay experience guide

KYUSHU OITA



A Journey in Amazing Oita

Oita is a prefecture located in the northeast of Kyushu.

Surrounded by the mountains and the sea, nature-rich Oita Prefecture is best known for hot springs.

It ranks the highest in the country for both the existing number of hot springs and the annual amount of spring water output.

The total number of hot springs currently existing in the prefecture is 4,381.

Among them are some of the country's most famous onsen resorts, such as Beppu facing the Beppu Bay and Yufuin in central Oita.

Along with onsen spas, Oita offers timeless history, nostalgic Japanese cultural experiences, and a wide variety of savory cuisines made with products from this resource-rich, abundant nature.

A trip to Onsen Prefecture, OITA is sure to rejuvenate your body, soul, and mind as it should leave an ever lasting impression on your heart.





View from Beppu City



Japanese-style green tourism began over 20 years ago in Ajimu-machi, Usa City, Oita Prefecture.

"Noson Mimpaku" got its name from letting visitors stay overnight in the homes of ordinary farmers to experience the lifestyle of the farmers, and it has been attracting the attention of people of all ages and nationalities. What makes Oita Prefecture stand out is that it offers visitors the experience of lifestyles that are unique to the locale that is not limited to a farming community, but includes the seaside, a riverside, a valley, a highland, and a remote island.

The wisdom for everyday life rooted in each community, and mealtimes full of smiling faces.

Why not venture out in search of your spiritual home?





Staying at a Local Farm, a Local Experience in the Heart of the Japanese Countryside

After visiting Usuki known for its castle, its samurai streets, and the Stone Buddhas carved into the volcanic rock, I had the chance to visit a rather special accommodation: I will sleep at the home of a couple of farmers, who own vegetable gardens and even rice fields. Ideal for green tourism enthusiasts looking for an experience to connect with nature, the environment, and ecology closer to farmers and the Japanese countryside.



The beautiful countryside before arriving at the farmer's inn



This house is where I am going to stay!!

The farmer's house where stayed was about 45 minutes by car from the Usuki Stone Buddhas carved in the rock, towards Saki city.

The driveway was beautiful and we passed through several valleys before coming upon this small village which has only eight or nine houses.

The house where I stayed is run by a nice couple, Mr. and Mrs. Sato. Both are about 75 years old but look much younger. They are still quite active despite Mr. Sato having a bad leg. I enjoyed talking with them and noticed they have a certain accent. In addition to their personal activity in the fields, they get up every day very early (sometimes 1 am) to distribute the mail to the surrounding villagers.

They used to run a tofu shop, so they have a passion for cooking and will happily share any and all information about the cuisine and local food they cook in their beautiful kitchen.



The wisteria garden must be beautiful in full bloom in May.

They do not speak English but with gestures and the few phrases I knew, we managed to make ourselves understood. They often welcome tourists into their home (Malaysians, Indians, Japanese ...), so they are used to having tourists around them, and communicating through various means. While staying at Mr. and Mrs. Sato's accommodations we slept in a normal Japanese house. The rooms reserved for the tourists are integral parts of the house. They are not separated from the main building but rather they are a part of it, and therefore you really get to experience life in the Japanese countryside. It is really a great experience to do if you come to Japan as it actually allows you to feel how Japanese live their daily lives, and it is not very expensive either! It is best to arrive around 3:30 pm to 4 pm to sit quietly and help them pick up vegetables and cook. The atmosphere is friendly and family oriented, I loved it!



The mountain view in front of the house



Japanese traditional old house

Our Room

Before we started to cook, we went to put our luggage in our room. The woman made us choose between two rooms: a Japanese style room, sleeping on the floor.



Or a western style room, with western stylr raised beds. I preferred to sleep in the Japanese room. It had a small balcony overlooking the small river which is right in front of the house. The bathroom and toilets were located on the ground floor.

It's time to start cooking! The farms are located 100 meters from the house. They have plenty of vegetables: cucumber, pumpkin, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, cabbage, eggplant, sweet pepper, ginger, goya and so much more!



The harvest of the day!



Madame Sato, a wonderfully generous woman

The Dinner at Farmer's Inn

It was still very early but we often eat early in the Japanese countryside, especially because of the lifestyle and work hours of the farmers.

The kitchen was large and was located in the main room where there was a TV, and a coffee table. We began by washing all the vegetables, to prepare some of them for the meal. Meanwhile, the gentleman in the kitchen watched the sumo game on TV. The atmosphere was 100% Japanese!

We ate very well, first eggplant then everything was quickly made: potato salad, pickles, tofu, grilled peppers that had been harvested, shrimp in papillote, soup miso, eel.



Eel donburi as a main dish.

The Breakfast at the Farmer's Inn

The next morning we got up very early because we had to catch a ferry to visit an island where more cats live than locals. Lucky for us, Madame Sato had prepared a great breakfast: tomatoes harvested the day before, salmon, lots of pickles, small cherry tomatoes, miso soup, rice and grapes.

Before leaving her house, she prepared us onigiri for the road and offered us rice from her farm.



Experience Japan's Green Tourism in Kyushu: A farm Stay Near Usuki



The hosts of this farm, near Usuki



The hosts are Mr. and Mrs. Adachi. They plant vegetables and fruits on their farm by themselves and they do not use pesticides.

At this traditional house, it is better to know some Japanese words in order to communicate with your hosts. But in this case, Google Translate will be your best friend, helping you have a conversation no matter the English ability of your host so you can spend a pleasant day and night at the farm stay.

Habits and Customs

Nowadays where modernity takes all the place, it is good to know some of the habits and customs in the house.

In this regard, you will have to take your shoes off in the genkan, the entrances of all Japanese houses. You will also need to arrange them in the direction of your departure, as shown in the photo below.



Since this is a traditional house, you will find sliding doors and tatami mats. You should not walk in with your shoes on, just walk barefoot or with your socks.

The house, the room and meals

Accommodations are available for up to 20 people and will allow you to experience a typical Japanese house. The room is really big and has air conditioning. There is futon, a traditional Japanese bed, that you will sleep on. I have slept on one of them for several months and it's a real pleasure.



Only 30 minutes from Usuki Station, there is a farm-stay accommodation where you can fully experience the Japanese countryside lifestyle. If you like green tourism in Japan, this stay on the farm in Usuki is not to be missed!

Just three years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Adachi opened their doors to welcome tourists into their home and allowed them to stay over night. Living with their son and Mr. Adachi's mother.



The house has many Buddhist ornaments in the purest Japanese style.

On my request, they prepared for a vegetarian meal, but they usually serve meat and fish of course. Everything is cooked by Mrs. Adachi. A real feast, we experienced the true taste of seasonal products. During my conversation with them, I tell them that I really like umeshu, an alcoholic drink made from ume, Japanese plums. Mr. Adachi then had me taste the umeshu which he makes by himself. I had one word to describe its taste: pure delight.

Here are some of the course meals prepared with their own seasonal products.

Be careful though, it is very rare to have a sweet breakfast in Japan.

A cafe in the center of the Japanese countryside

In the early morning, my host offered to show us his garden. Walking ahead, I found a table and benches waiting for us. He invited me to drink coffee with a beautiful view of the Japanese countryside. Such a beautiful start to the day! We talked about many different subjects while sitting in silence sometimes. The beautiful sound of the birds and the wind were there to fill this silence at times.



Before leaving, we had a

walk together in the surrounding countryside. A beautiful landscape! Land as far as eyes can see, there were plantations everywhere. The Japanese countryside is splendid.



Japanese countryside in Usuki

A Farm Stay in Bungotakada, Surrounded by Rice Paddies

Experienced the bustling city life of Tokyo? Ventured to the numerous temples and shrines of Kyoto? Well then, are you ready for something different? If you are ready to get off the beaten path, then look no further than Bungotakada in Oita prefecture Kyushu, Japan's third and southernmost main island.

This small town lost in the mountains and pent in by the rice paddies offers you a unique chance to experience the real countryside life of Japan. Here Mr. and Mrs. Kono have opened their family home and farm to guests who want to experience life in rural Japan. Located in Ofuji, here the Kono's offer you a unique experience of full immersion as they share their house, farming know-how and of course some top quality meals too! I was lucky enough to experience their hospitality over a weekend, and would like to share my experience.



a traditional Japanese house



Tatami and sliding doors

After arriving at Usa station, Mr. Kono came to pick me up in his car. The farm is a good 30-minute drive from the station. In the early afternoon of late September, the rice fields glittered as if sprinkled with gold. We stopped during the trip to take a few pictures before taking the car up a steep path lined with trees,

up the mountain. I was so taken by the breathtaking scenery that we arrived in front of the isolated family farm, surrounded by a full green landscape, before I knew it.

Mr and Mrs Kono live in a beautiful and large traditional Japanese house. Built 120 years ago with a wooden structure, it has been in the family for many generations. Many features of traditional Japanese housing can be found inside, from the genkan (the entrance where one takes off their shoes), to the tatami flooring, many sliding doors, and the butsudan, a small Buddhist altar used to pray to the Buddha and one's family ancestors. You will also notice many futons piled up, waiting to be used for the night.

Along with a very warm welcoming and some iced green tea and cake, we begin to get to know each other. The Konos who are both in their seventies, do not speak a word of English! This was a great opportunity for me to really practice my Japanese and to use expression and imagination to make myself understood. Anyway we laughed a lot and finally managed to exchange words. I think this really added to the experience.

In the afternoon the Konos offered to show me how to pick eggplants. It is the peak season and the garden is full of them. But before we set out, we have to get ready. Despite the mild heat of September long sleeves are strongly recommended, lest our arms all ravaged. To do this and to protect my clothes, Mrs. Kono lent me a nice purple long-sleeved apron. Upon seeing me don this the couple declared in one voice that I looked really "kawaii" - cute in Japanese - and we set out to go to work the fields.

Picking eggplants is actually harder work than I had expected. To spot exactly which eggplants were mature I had to be constantly bent down and had to move forward, twisted under the plantations. Kono-san explained to me where to cut so that the eggplants would be able to grow back strong, and how to select the best ones for harvesting..



After working, it's time to relax. With the delicious aroma of tonight's dinner wafting in from the kitchen, I chilled out and discovered with pleasure the practice of the ofuro. The ofuro is a Japanese bath that is found in most of the houses around here. Proper etiquette says, one must shower before entering the 42-degree heated water.



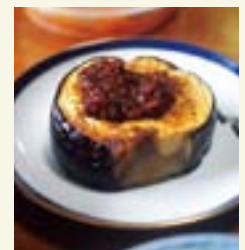
During this wonderful period of relaxation, The Kono's served up a whole feast, made only made with the local farm products. It was all waiting for me, set out on the living-room table. Each dish was truly delicious: from the vegetable tempura, scrambled eggs with tomato, soup, chawanmushi (vegetables and egg flan) even some karaage (fried-chicken). I do think it was the most delicious food I have eaten since arriving in Japan. Whilst my belly was already full, the regions pride product was brought in to close the dinner; the rice. We eat the rice without any seasoning, so that we may truly experience the flavor. The rice that we can find in France has nothing on this. My final word is, wow.

During the dinner, we talked about many things and we even commented on television programs. The Kono's place is not a hotel, but rather their real family home so everyone can feel at home. Before going to sleep I helped to set up my bed. I was given two futons to sleep on, and five blankets to keep warm. Well, as you can image I slept warm and comfortably!

Finally I woke to a pure and traditional Japanese breakfast. On today's menu, we enjoyed a miso soup and some salmon, raw vegetables, all served with rice and yakisoba. Yesterday's freshly picked eggplants also made an appearance, all grilled up and served with miso on top. There is no better way to start the day for a tour of the region!



From Tokyo, take a flight to Oita for 1 hour 45 minutes. Then, from Oita airport, take a bus bound for Beppu station. Once you have arrived at Beppu station, take a train to Usa station. From here, Kono-san will probably come to pick you up at the station.



Stay at Noka Minshuku (Farmer's Stay) Close to Kitsuki



Nakayama is a mountainous region northwest of Kitsuki City (杵築), in the Kunisaki Peninsula, Kyushu Island. It promotes "green tourism" or ecotourism, which allows everyone to experience the countryside in Japan by staying

in noka minshuku (農家 民宿), a bed and breakfast with farmers.

During my trip to the Kunisaki Peninsula, a couple with very warm hospitality shared their daily rhythm of growing shiitake mushrooms, rice and onions with me. They also grow some vegetables and fruits, for their personal consumption, their goal being to be almost self-sufficient.

Oita Prefecture alone accounts for 48% of Japanese shiitake production. The mushrooms are grown on oak stumps. Thanks to the nutrients contained in the strains, they can grow without chemical treatment. Farmers (more specifically, myciculture) erect a kind of wooden barrier made of logs, arranged in chevrons that constitute bands of mushrooms.



The Step of how to "Cultivate the Mushroom" are as follows:

- Seed mushroom (propagation material);
- The preparation of logs, supports of the culture;
- Seeding logs with mycelium;
- Control of the development of mycelium;
- Finally, harvesting and packaging. Shiitake are sold fresh, but can be dried when the production is too abundant, especially in the spring, the best harvest period.

During this stay in Noka Minshuku, I also learned how to cook a kind of custard prepared from locally grown peanuts. We poked the peanuts lightly and then removed the thin skin around the seeds. After soaking in water for a few hours, we mixed them with water and passed the thick liquid obtained through a fine mesh bag. This vegetable milk is then mixed with kudzu, a starch made from fern root, and slowly heated until it thickens.

Last step, pour it into a mould and keep it cool for at least 12 hours. We tasted this tofu, which is not tofu (since it does not contain soy!) at breakfast, accompanied by a bit of miso scented yuzu bark, also homemade. Nothing is lost in this recipe since okara, the solid pulp that remains after making the vegetable milk, can be used to prepare cookies.

I also enjoyed making hoshigaki (干し柿), or dried persimmons. The image of the "curtains" of kakis to make it dry comes to the mind of anyone who went to the countryside in Japan in autumn. The persimmon tree, located right in front of the house, produces extremely astringent fruits; if you try to

taste them as they are.

After we peel the skin, we put them in boiling water for a few seconds and finally dried them for a fortnight in the open. They all exude a unique scent, and their sweetness is comparable to that of fresh soft dates. I patiently peeled the fruits while partially preserving their stem and a piece of branch. We then tied them to a rope to form a kind of garland to hang vertically in a shed protected from moisture at the back of the house.



In addition to myciculture and rural life experiences in Japan, we have covered a variety of topics from daily work, our respective cultures, families, travel; as well as politics, and current environmental issues. Indeed, global warming affects them directly: as evidenced by photographs taken about fifteen years ago, mushroom crops have tended to decline lately.

Sato-san's family only speaks Japanese, but they have hosted English-speaking families in the past and an Indonesian girl has even stayed at their home for a whole year. They receive, very regularly, young Japanese high school students and help them discover the life in the countryside.

Our attentive hosts were eager to share everything they could with us, they took me to the local onsen, and after dinner we admired the illuminated fields of a neighbouring farmer.

Rice, which they grow themselves, is valuable and central to their meals. It is also used to make miso, and the first part of any freshly baked rice is an offering to the ancestors.



I even received a souvenir, home grown shiitake, which we had collected the day before, small kabocha squash and dried persimmons!

For more information, please the Yamaga Green Tourism website (only in Japanese), which offers more information about the stay in Noka Minshuku and allows you to book through the guest's email address.

Take a little excursion to get a taste.



For access to Kitsuki Castle from Kitsuki Station, Oita Kotsu Bus is convenient. Take the bus bound for Kitsuki Bus Terminal and get off at the final stop.



It is a 5-minute walk from Kitsuki Bus Terminal to Kitsuki Castle.



If you stroll through the town wearing a kimono, you can enjoy many benefits such as free admission to public facilities, lunch discounts and small presents at various locations.



Kumano Magaibutsu

Among the largest rock carved Buddha statues in Japan Fudomyoo (left 8 meters, Dainichi nyorai (right) 6.7 meters.

They are said to have been carved nearly 1000 years ago.



Bamboo craft

Bamboo craft is popular in Oita Prefecture so you can take a day trip to give it a try.



Experience & Farm stay Kate House

Kate House is an 80-year-old Japanese-style house, which has been completely renovated and has a lovely atmosphere



- ① The host Matsumoto san
 ② Wood chopping experience
 ③ ④ Steaming rice in an old style kamado oven



MODEL COURSE

Day one

- 10:56 depart** JR Beppu station
 Nippo Main Line
 (bound for Kitsuki)
- 11:20 arrive** JR Kitsuki station
- 11:22 depart** Kitsuki Ekimae Bus stop
 Oita Kotsu Bus
- 11:35 arrive** Kitsuki Bus Terminal
 on foot
- 11:40 arrive** Rental kimono Warakuan
 Stroll through the castle town
 in a kimono (2 hours)
- 16:15 depart** Kitsuki Bus Terminal
 Oita Kotsu Bus bound for Kitsuki station
- 16:31 arrive** Kitsuki Ekimae Bus stop
- 16:39 depart** JR Kitsuki station
 Nippo Main Line
 (bound for Yanagigaura)
- 16:47 arrive** JR Nakayamaga station
 Meet up with host family
 By host's car
- 17:00** Farm stay experience

Day two

- 08:00** Homemade breakfast
 Farm stay experience
- 10:20 depart**
 By host's car
- 10:30 arrive** JR Nakayamaga Station
- 10:34 depart**
 Nippo Main Line
 (bound for Kozaki)
- 11:24 arrive** JR Beppu station

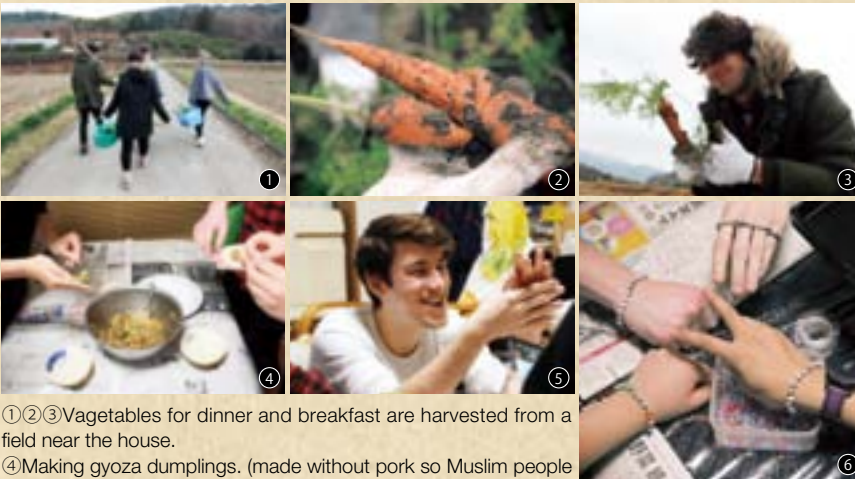
Information

Kitsuki City Official Tourism Site
<http://www.kit-suki.com/>

Experience & Farm stay P Lotus Tashibu



The living room table is a "hori kotatsu" under which you can stretch your legs out and relax.



①②③Vegetables for dinner and breakfast are harvested from a field near the house.
④Making gyoza dumplings. (made without pork so Muslim people can enjoy them)
⑤⑥Making a bracelet using prayer beads



With my host Tashibu san



The great hall of Fukiji Temple is a national treasure. It is the oldest surviving timber structure in Kyushu.



Showa no machi, located in central Bungotakada City, is an area in which the Showa Period of 60 years ago has been tastefully recreated.

Information

Bungotakada City official tourism site
<https://www.showanomachi.com/en/>

MODEL COURSE

Day One

- 11:15 depart Beppu Kitahama Mae
- Airliner Bus
- 12:00 arrive Oita Airport
- On foot
- 12:05 arrive Lunch at Sato no Eki Musashi
- 13:00 depart Meet up with Tourist Taxi
- Taxi
- 13:50 arrive Kumano Magaibutsu (60 minutes)
- 14:50 depart
- Taxi
- 15:00 arrive Maki Oodo (30 minutes)
- 15:30 depart
- Taxi
- 15:40 arrive Fuki Temple (30 minutes)
- 16:10 depart Meet up with hosts
- By host's car
- 16:30 arrive Farmstay Experience
- 18:00 Hot spring

Day Two

- 08:00 Morning stretches and exercise
- 09:00 Homemade breakfast
- 10:00 depart
- by host's car
- 10:30 arrive Bungotakada Showa no Machi (2 hours)
- 13:34 depart Bungotakada bus terminal
- Daiko Hokubu Bus Bound for Usa station
- 13:43 arrive JR Usa Station
- 13:57 depart
- JR Sonic No.23 bound for Oita
- 14:27 arrive JR Beppu station

Experience & Farm stay Yuzan Shochikudo



Learned pottery from Master Yuzan



- ① A souvenir shot with the teacher.
- ② Enjoy your personally prepared pizza baked in the wood-fired oven.
- ③ A photo taken at Shochikudo lodging house.
- ④ Make bamboo craft by following carefully given instructions.
- ⑤ Made a neat piece, thanks to the teacher.

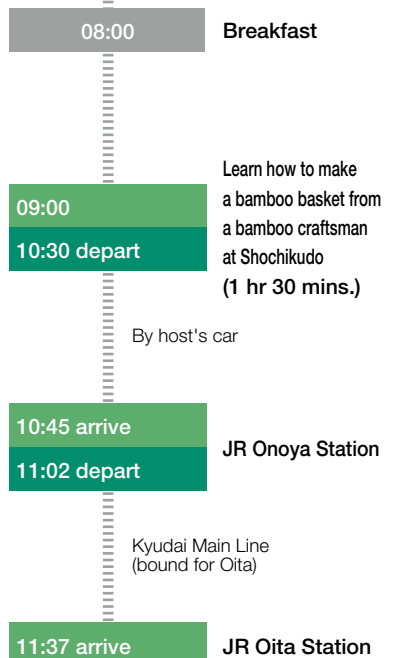
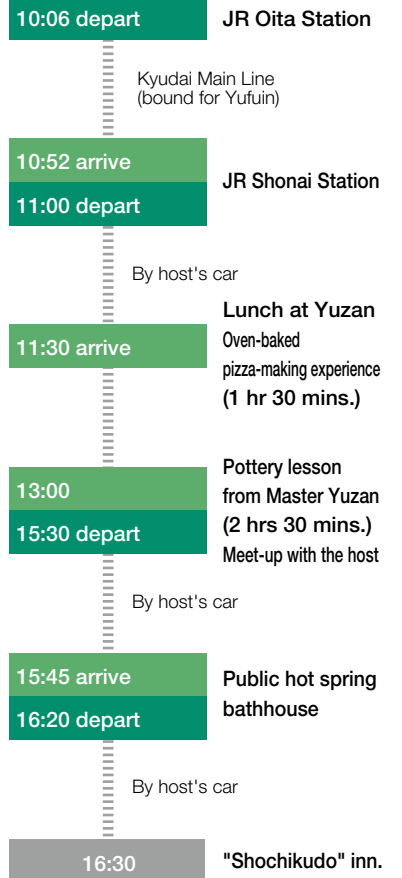


Yufu is one of the famous hot spring resorts in Japan. Its bucolic streets are uniquely Japanese.

Information

Yufu City Green Tourism Study Group
<http://yufuguri.jp/>

MODEL COURSE




Green Tourism location in OITA Prefecture


About Farm Stay

- Experience the daily life of farm families with activities such as vegetable harvesting and craft making.
- Unlike hotels and inns, for legal reasons, you will be asked to help your hosts prepare meals.
(Except for some host families who have obtained food and beverage licenses.)
- If pay on the spot, cash payments are preferable as payment by card is not possible.
- In many cases, you will be taken to a local hot spring facility for bath time.
- Please prepare a towel, a toothbrush and pajamas.
- Basically, there is only one group in one family.


Ajimu Usa City	NPO Corporation Ajimu Town Green Tourism Study Group ----- TEL.0978-44-1158 ✉ japan-ajimu-gt@basil.ocn.ne.jp
	
01	

Amagase Hita City	Amagase Green Tourism Study Group
	
02	

Ohyama Hita City	Ogiri-hata Green Tourism Study Group ----- TEL.0973-52-2644
	
03	

Tsue Hita City	Tsue-no-Sato Heart Tourism Study Group ----- TEL.0973-54-3325 ✉ heart2rism@gmail.com
	
04	



Bungo-Ono City	Green Tourism Bungo-Ono City Noka Minshuku Study Group ----- TEL.0974-34-2921
	
05	

Konoe- machi	Kokonoe Green Tourism Study Group ----- TEL.0973-76-3804
	
06	

Bungo-Takada City Bungo-Takada City Green Tourism Promotion Association

 ✉ staybungotakada@gmail.com

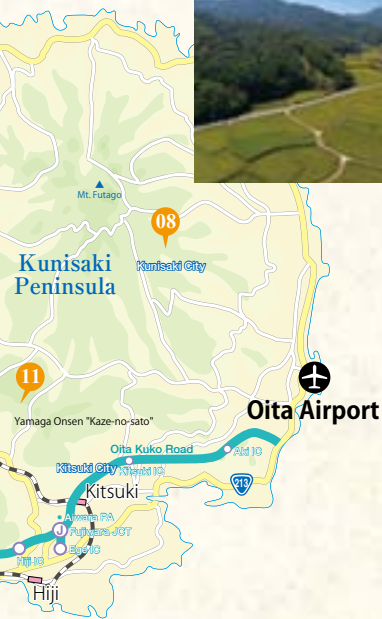


Kunisaki City Kunisaki City Tourism Association Green Tourism Department

 TEL.0978-72-5168
 ✉ kanko@city.kunisaki.lg.jp



Yufu City Yufu City Green Tourism Study Group

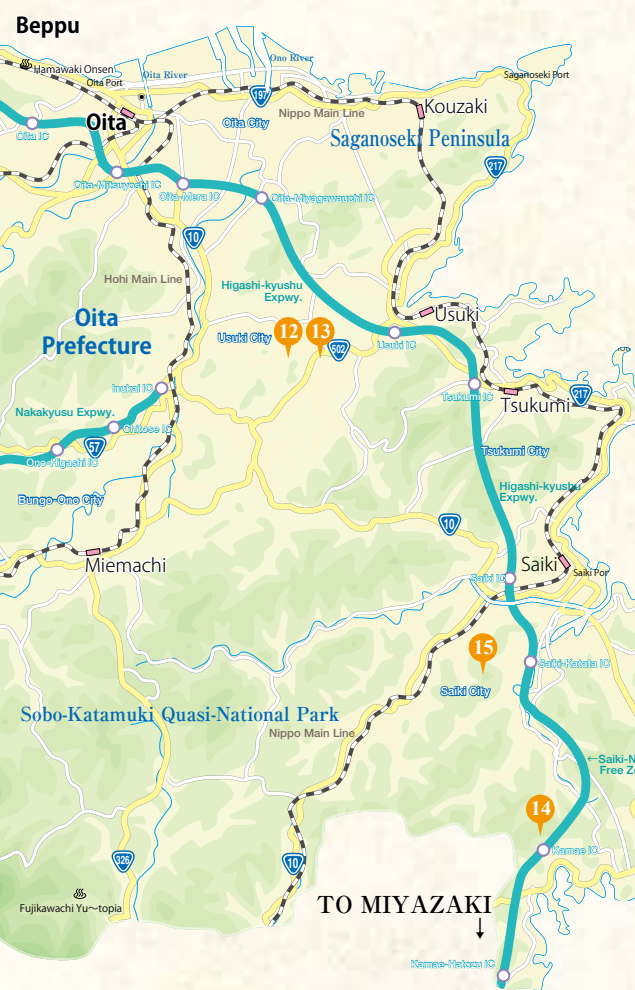
Kusu Town Kusu Town Green Tourism Study Group

 TEL.0973-73-7415



Yamaga-machi Kitsuiki City Yamaga Green Tourism Study Group

 TEL.0977-75-0256
 ✉ fumi-uno@kdt.ne.jp

Notsu Usuki City Kicchomu-san Village Green Tourism Association

 TEL.0974-32-2337
 ✉ hemodori@yahoo.co.jp



Notsu Usuki City Usuki City Green Tourism Study Group

 TEL.090-2507-6847



Taketa City Kichokure Taketa Study Group



Kamae Saiki City NPO Kamae Blue Tourism Study Group

 TEL.0972-42-0115



Saiki City Saiki Green Tourism Study Group

 TEL.0972-58-2464



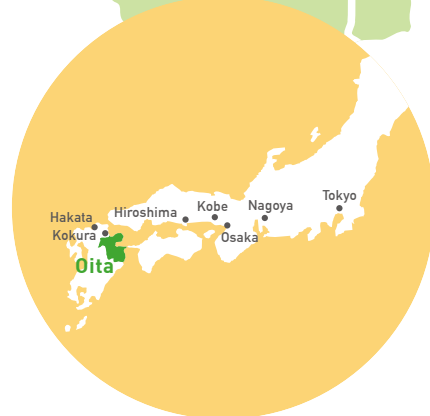
 Some of the Farm Stay in Oita Prefecture can be booked through here.
 URL:https://www.airbnb.com/farmstay_in_oita

Transportation facilities



Air routes

Tokyo (Haneda)	1 hour 30 minutes (14 flights per day)	Oita Airport (ANA - JAL - SNA)
Tokyo (Narita)	1 hour 40 minutes (1 to 3 flights per day)	Oita Airport (Jetstar)
Osaka (Itami)	1 hour (7 flights per day)	Oita Airport (ANA - IBEX - JAL)
Nagoya (Chubu Centrair)	1 hour 5 minutes (2 flights per day)	Oita Airport (IBEX - ANA)
Seoul (Incheon)	1 hour 35 minutes (10 flights per week)	Oita Airport (T'way/KOREAN AIR)



Bus

Oita Airport	Northliner (4 buses per day)	Bungotakada - Usa - Nakatsu
	Yufuin Express Limousine Bus (6 buses per day)	Yufuin
	Airport Express Bus Airliner (40 buses per day)	Beppu - Oita
	South Liner (6 buses per day)	Usuki - Saiki
Fukuoka Airport	Toyonokuni (14 buses per day) 2hours15 minutes	Beppu (Kitahama)



Ferry

Osaka	Ferry Sunflower (1 sailing per day) 11 hours 50 minutes	Beppu
Kobe	Ferry Sunflower (1 sailing per day) 11 hours 20 minutes	Oita
Tokuyama	Suonada Ferry (5 sailings per day) 2 hours	Takedatsu
Yawatahama	Uwajima Ferry (6 sailings per day) 2 hours 45 minutes	Beppu
	Uwajima Ferry (6 sailings per day) 2 hours 20 minutes	Usuki



JR

