

Leisure and Tourism

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Kanto

- Prefectures: Chiba, Gunma, Ibaraki, Kanagawa, Saitama, Tochigi, and Tokyo.
- Chiba, Kanagawa, Ibaraki and Tokyo are the only prefectures on the coast.
- Kanto is home to the two great metropolises, Tokyo and Yokohama.
- Summer = best time to visit because of the festivals and weather.



Kanto Climate



- Tokyo's weather reflects the Kanto region as a whole
- Climate is favorable for most of the year.
- Winter = 10C/50F.
- Summer = 30C/86F.
- Both June (rainy season)
- September (typhoon season)
- Wettest months, more humidity.



Chichibu-Tama-Kai



- National Park
- Mountainous area where many tourists like to hike and walk along the mountain-streams and ranges.
- Although the mountains reach heights of 2000 ft and higher there are no volcanoes which is rare to find in Japan.
- The Tamagawa River and the shores of Lake Okutamako are popular tourist resorts.

Kanto Matsuri Festival

- Pole Lantern Festival August 3-6
- Related to the festival in Akita City.
- In the parade, performers balance long bamboo poles on their foreheads or various other body parts with paper lanterns attached to them.
- The performers switch every few minutes and gradually extend the poles to their full length.
- Main event = night
- Over 250 poles lifted into the air at the same time, after that the audience can talk to the performers and try to lift the poles themselves.



Kansai

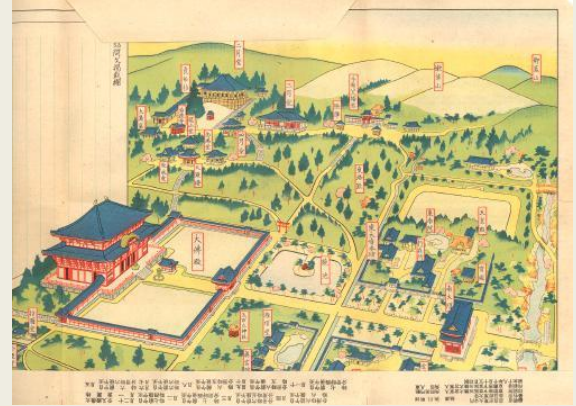
- Includes prefectures of Mie, Nara, Wakayama, Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo, and Shiga.
- The Kansai region is home to many of Japan's most important historical and cultural places.
- Spring is the best time to visit the Kansai region.



Kansai - Nara Park

Nara Park

- ~4km east to west ~2km North to south
- 1200 deer roam freely throughout the park.
- Attracts many tourists in the spring.
- Todai-ji, Kasuga Shrine, many pagodas, and the Nara National Museum.



Todai-ji temple

- The largest wooden building in the world.
- Houses a 50 foot tall statue of Buddha.



Kansai - Kinkaku-ji

- Located in Kyoto, inside a garden that includes many trees, a pond, a tea garden and a small shrine.
- One of the most popular buildings in Japan.
- National Historic Site.
- There is a tea garden where visitors can relax and drink tea.
- Fudo Hall.



Kansai - Dotonbori

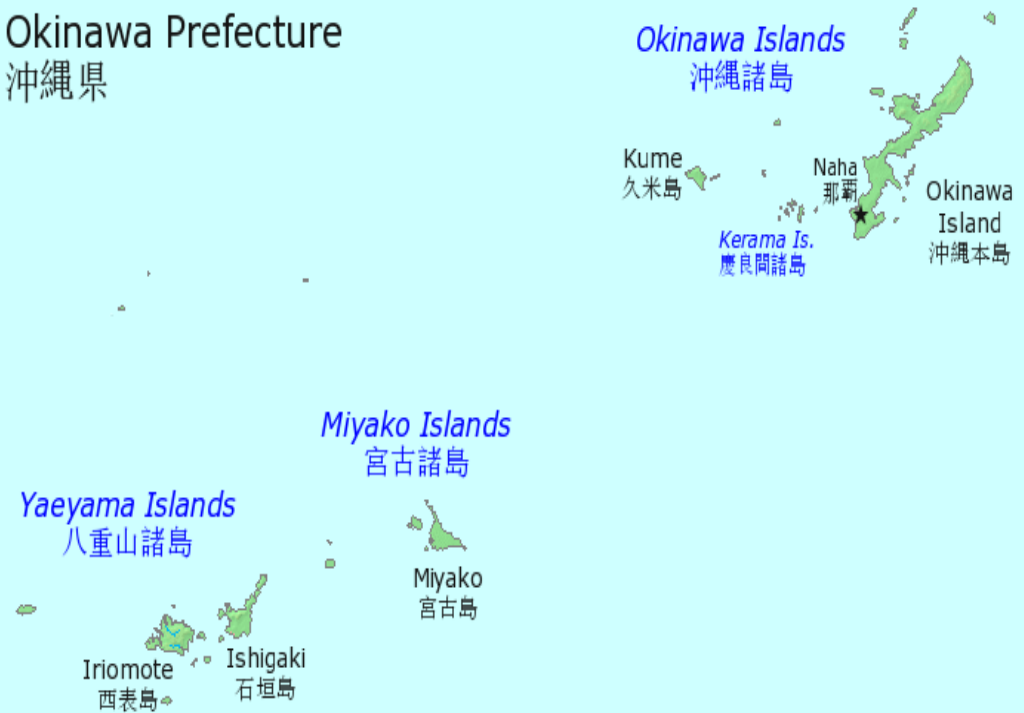
- Popular nightlife and entertainment area of Osaka that has been used in many films.
- Hozenji Temple.
- Hotels, Restaurants, Arcades, clothing stores etc.
- Theaters that perform traditional puppet shows.
- The Gilco man sign is a famous landmark for this area of Osaka.



Okinawa

- Subtropical weather with the oceans and seas being among the most beautiful many coral reefs and marine wildlife.
- The region is divided into 3 major island groups.
 - Okinawa islands
 - Miyako islands
 - Yaeyama Islands
- Snorkeling and scuba diving are among the top attractions in the region.

Okinawa Prefecture 沖縄県



Okinawa - Weather

- Best time to visit is during the spring or autumn season.
- Subtropical climate allows warm weather throughout the year.
- Rainy season lasts from May to June.
- Typhoons can occur in July and August and occasionally into October.



Okinawa - Eisa Festival

- Runs through mid-August to early-September and is held on Okinawa's main island.
- Draws in 200,000 visitors each year.
- Consists of dances and drum performances.

Eisa: Folk dance that originates from Okinawa and is influenced by a song that used to be sung hundreds of years ago.

10,000 Eisa Dance Parade

- Biggest parade on the Island.
- 1,000 dancers assembled from the general public for this event.
- Held on the first Sunday of August.

Miruku-Gami: Milk God

Okinawan Clowns: "Chondara"



Okinawa - Activities

Okinawa Island (Main island of Okinawa Islands)

- Churami Aquarium
 - Considered Japan's best aquarium.
 - Highlight of the aquarium is the massive Kuroshio Tank, one of the largest in the world.
 - Most striking is the whale sharks and manta rays.

Miyako Island (Main island of Miyako Islands)

- Maehama Beach
 - White sand beach and is one of Japan's best beaches.
 - Suited for swimming and other water sports.
- Yoshino Beach
 - Best beach for snorkeling.

Ishigaki Island (Main Island of Yaeyama Islands)

- River kayak tours are offered on the mangrove-lined Miyara River and Fukido River.
- Tours start around 4000 yen per person for a 90 minute guided tour.



Hokkaido

- Second largest island
- Northernmost island
- Known for:
 - extreme winters
 - Snow Festival
 - unspoiled nature



Hokkaido-Weather

- Winter:
 - Extremely harsh with temperatures below zero and snowfall.
 - Ideal for skiers and snowboarders
- Summer:
 - Not as hot or humid as the rest of Japan
 - Cool summer attracts tourist from the rest of Japan
 - June-July = not affected by Japan's rainy season
 - Ideal for hikers, campers and cyclists



Hokkaido-Snow Festival

- Location: Sapporo (Capital and largest City)
- When: One week in February
- Attracts 2 million people from around the world
- There are 3 sites
 - Odori site and Susukino site
 - Displays hundreds of snow and ice sculptures (large/small)
 - Concerts and Food vendors
 - Tsu Dome site
 - more family oriented with snow slides and snow rafts



Hokkaido- Activities

- Niseko:
 - Known for its powdery snow
 - Attracts many foreigners & is open December to April
 - Many ski trails & Guide/Helicopter tours
- Shiretoko
 - Most beautiful and unspoiled nature
 - World Heritage Site
 - Roads only go $\frac{3}{4}$ of the park
 - Mult-day tours or Boat tours to see northern tip
- Daisetsuzan
 - Largest national park & Paradise for campers & hikers
 - Several Onsen Resorts
 - 1st place in Japan to see the Fall colors and Snow



Conclusion

There are many places in Japan to visit with each region having their own attractions for leisure activities and tourism. However, the leisure activities and tourism differ depending on the season and climate of each region. Each region attracts people with different interests and intent. Kansai is perfect for people who are interested in the more traditional side of Japan, Okinawa and Hokkaido allows tourists to interact with Japan's nature, and Kanto is ideal for people for are into the modern aspects of Japan. Thus, Japan is offers many different forms of entertainment that are suitable for any individual.

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