

# WALKJAPAN



## 沖縄

## OKINAWA: LIFE & CULTURE ON JAPAN'S SOUTHERN ISLANDS

### Programme Proposal

**5 NIGHTS  
6 DAYS**

Thank you for your interest in Walk Japan's programme OKINAWA: LIFE & CULTURE ON JAPAN'S SOUTHERN ISLANDS. Please find enclosed the programme proposal. If you have any questions or require further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us at [supportservices@walkjapan.com](mailto:supportservices@walkjapan.com)

# OVERVIEW

**Walk Japan's School Programme in Okinawa takes students on a journey through the islands' fascinating history, from the era of rule under the Ryukyuan kings, through to annexation by Japan and the deadly battles of World War II.**

From the hustle and bustle of the prefectural capital of Naha, we explore the islands' most significant spiritual and historical sites, including its poignant Peace Museum, which we tour with a local expert. In the islands' idyllic, subtropical surrounds, students are also exposed to the customs and beliefs here, which remain distinct from those of the Japanese mainland, with opportunities to witness local music performances and pottery-making, and make delicious traditional sweets.

An excursion by high speed ferry to nearby Tokashiki Island offers some of the more enjoyable aspects of island life; its crystal-clear waters, which are perfect for snorkelling and kayaking (weather permitting).

# ITINERARY

---

## DAY 1

### Naha Airport - Naha

**Meals:** Dinner

**Accommodation:**  
Western business hotel

Arrive mid-afternoon in Naha, the prefectural capital of Okinawa, and transfer to our accommodation by monorail. A full tour briefing takes place over dinner in a local restaurant with Okinawan sanshin music performers.

---

## DAY 2

### Naha - Shuri - Naha

**Meals:** Breakfast, lunch and dinner

**Accommodation:**  
Western business hotel

After breakfast at our hotel, we take the monorail to nearby Shuri Castle, once home to a monarchy that ruled from here for some 450 years. Indeed, Okinawa was formerly an independent state, known as the Ryukyu Kingdom. The islands, home to cultures and languages very distinct from those of Japan, were annexed by the Meiji government in 1879. Although Shuri Castle was destroyed

in the devastating Battle of Okinawa during the Second World War, the site has been fully restored to its former glory. We also pay a visit to nearby Tamaudun; an impressive complex housing the tomb of eighteen kings of the Ryukyus and their relatives. After lunch, we walk back toward central Naha for a guided tour of the area, where we also learn about some of the local crafts, including *tsuboya* pottery and *bingata* dyeing. Here we have free time to explore and shop for interesting local souvenirs or perhaps sample one of the delicious delicacies Okinawa is famed for before reconvening for dinner.

---

## DAY 3

### Naha - Itoman - Tamagusuku - Naha

**Meals:** Breakfast, lunch and dinner

**Accommodation:**  
Western business hotel

Following breakfast, we make a 45-minute journey by private coach to the southern tip of the island to learn of its relatively recent and tragic past. We are joined by a local guide at the Okinawa Peace Memorial Museum. Located on the picturesque coastline at Mabuni, the museum provides an informative overview of the events of the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. One third of the Okinawan population were killed in this land battle, making it among the most

horrifying of the Second World War. We then venture down to the beautiful, natural caves where Okinawans sought refuge during the Battle. These caves also functioned as makeshift hospitals and were often staffed by mobilized high school students. Enroute back to Naha, we stop by the islands' foremost spiritual monument of Seifa Utaki; a chance to reflect, and learn about the native beliefs here. This ancient site, a UNESCO heritage, is surrounded by primeval forest that was spared destruction.

**DAY 4****Naha - Tokashiki**

**Meals:** Breakfast, lunch and dinner

**Accommodation:**  
Japanese style inn

After an early breakfast, we leave our main luggage at the hotel and transfer to nearby Tomari port. From here it is a 35-minute journey on high-speed ferry to Tokashiki, the largest of the Kerama Islands. Known for its crystal clear waters and unique biodiversity, it was designated a national park in 2014 and is a popular destination for those seeking to escape the bustle of Naha. Upon checking in, and weather permitting, we experience the wonders of the island through marine activities, including snorkeling and sea kayaking. Dinner takes place back at our inn.

**DAY 5****Tokashiki**

**Meals:** Breakfast, lunch and dinner

**Accommodation:**  
Japanese style inn

Today, we continue our exploration of Tokashiki, first by foot to the summit of Mount Akama, a small hill in the center of the island. The hike rewards us with a magnificent view of the surrounding islands. After a bento box lunch of locally-sourced ingredients, we try our hand at crafting Okinawan *sata andagi* sweets before taking a final plunge at the beach.

Our final dinner on Tokashiki is accompanied by the lively performance of local Ei-Sa dancers.

**DAY 6****Tokashiki - Naha - Airport**

**Meals:** Breakfast and lunch

**Accommodation:**  
N/A

After breakfast and farewells, we board the morning ferry back to Naha. Upon arrival, time for some souvenir shopping before heading to the airport for our flight back home.

**NOTES**

- ➔ This itinerary is subject to change.
- ➔ The group will be met at Nagoya Centrair Airport by the Walk Japan Tour Leader.
- ➔ The Tour Leader is an experienced guide, is fluent in English and Japanese and knowledgeable about many aspects of Japan.
- ➔ All travel in Japan is included on the itinerary.
- ➔ Meals provided are noted in the itinerary above. Japanese cuisine is as varied as it is high in quality.
- ➔ Japanese inns are traditional Japanese-style accommodation and hotels are Western-style.
- ➔ Entrance fees for guided visits to museums and the like are included.
- ➔ There is no porter service in Japan. Please bring only one piece of main luggage and a day pack for walking per person.
- ➔ WiFi and other internet connections are only available in our accommodation on Day 2, Day 4, Day 5, and Day 6.

---

---

# WALKJAPAN

Walk Japan is the pioneer of off-the-beaten-track walking tours in Japan. Authentic and enjoyable tours to discover Japan, its people, society and culture. Beginning in 1992 with our innovative and best-selling Nakasendo Way tour, we were the first to successfully introduce the real Japan, geographically and culturally, that often remains inaccessible for most visitors to the country. Since then, Walk Japan has created more original tours throughout Japan and been widely recognised for its work, including selection by National Geographic as one of the 200 Best Adventure Travel Companies on Earth.

---

**[www.walkjapan.com](http://www.walkjapan.com)**

Please follow us and share your experiences whilst on tour. You can find us on:



@walkjapan #walkjapan