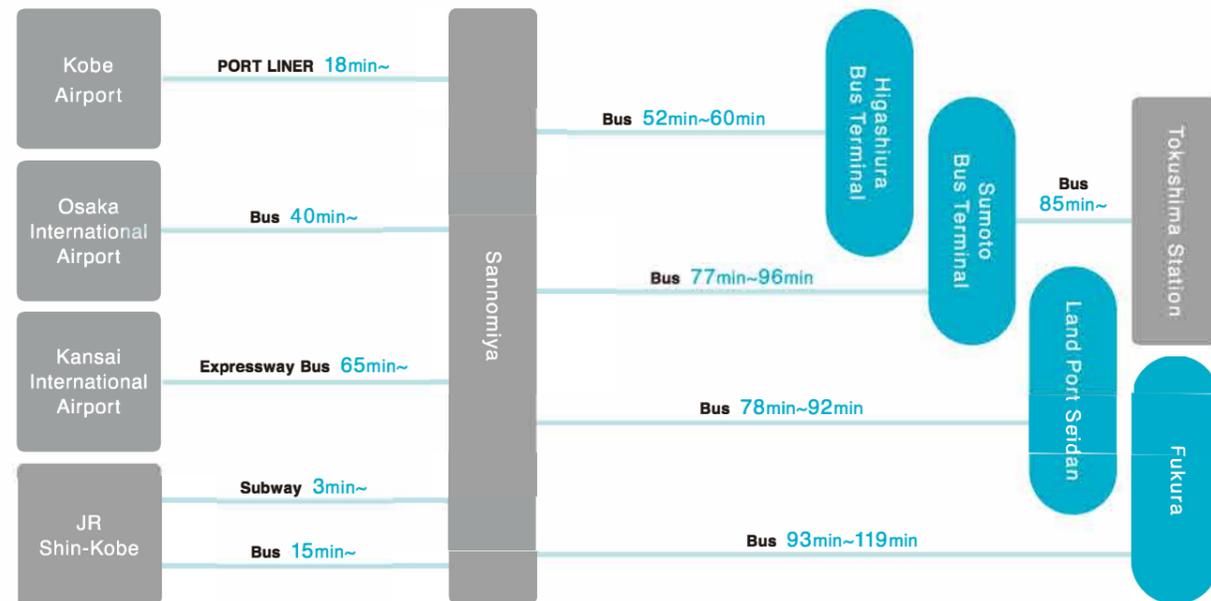
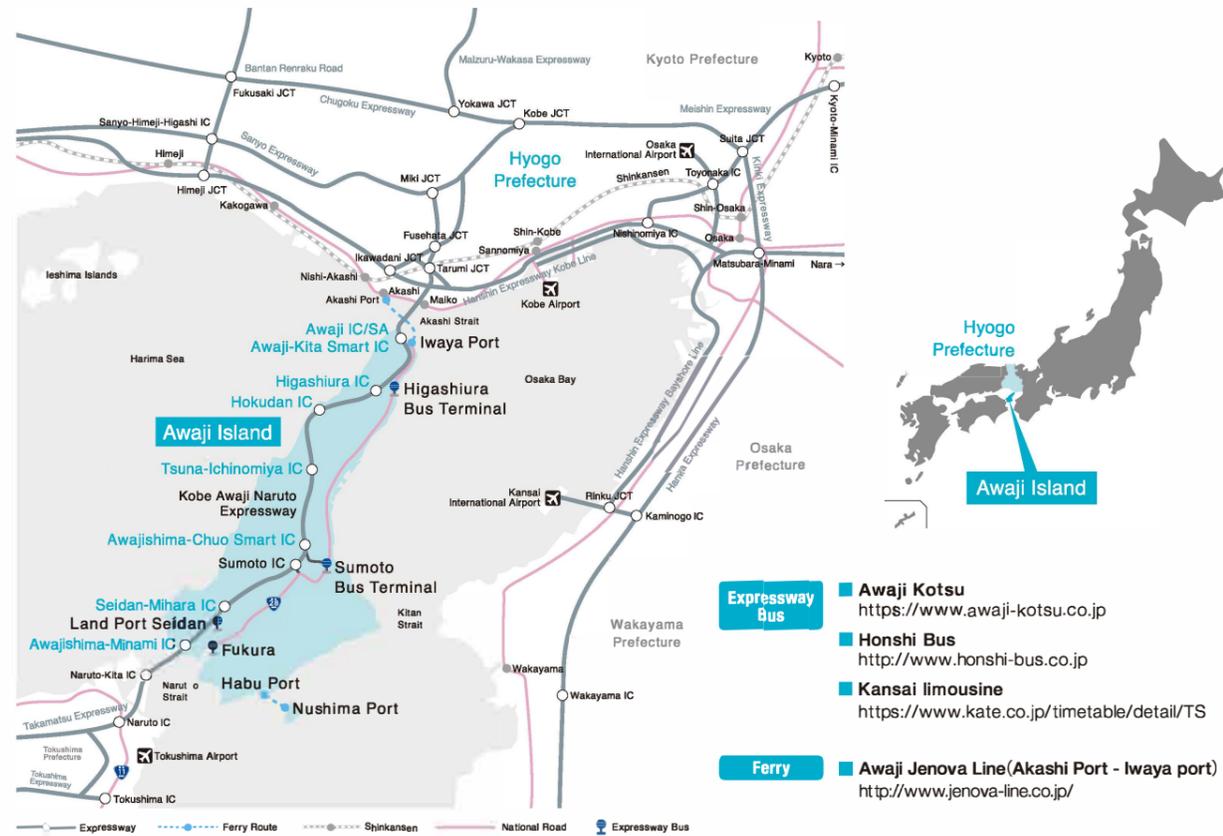


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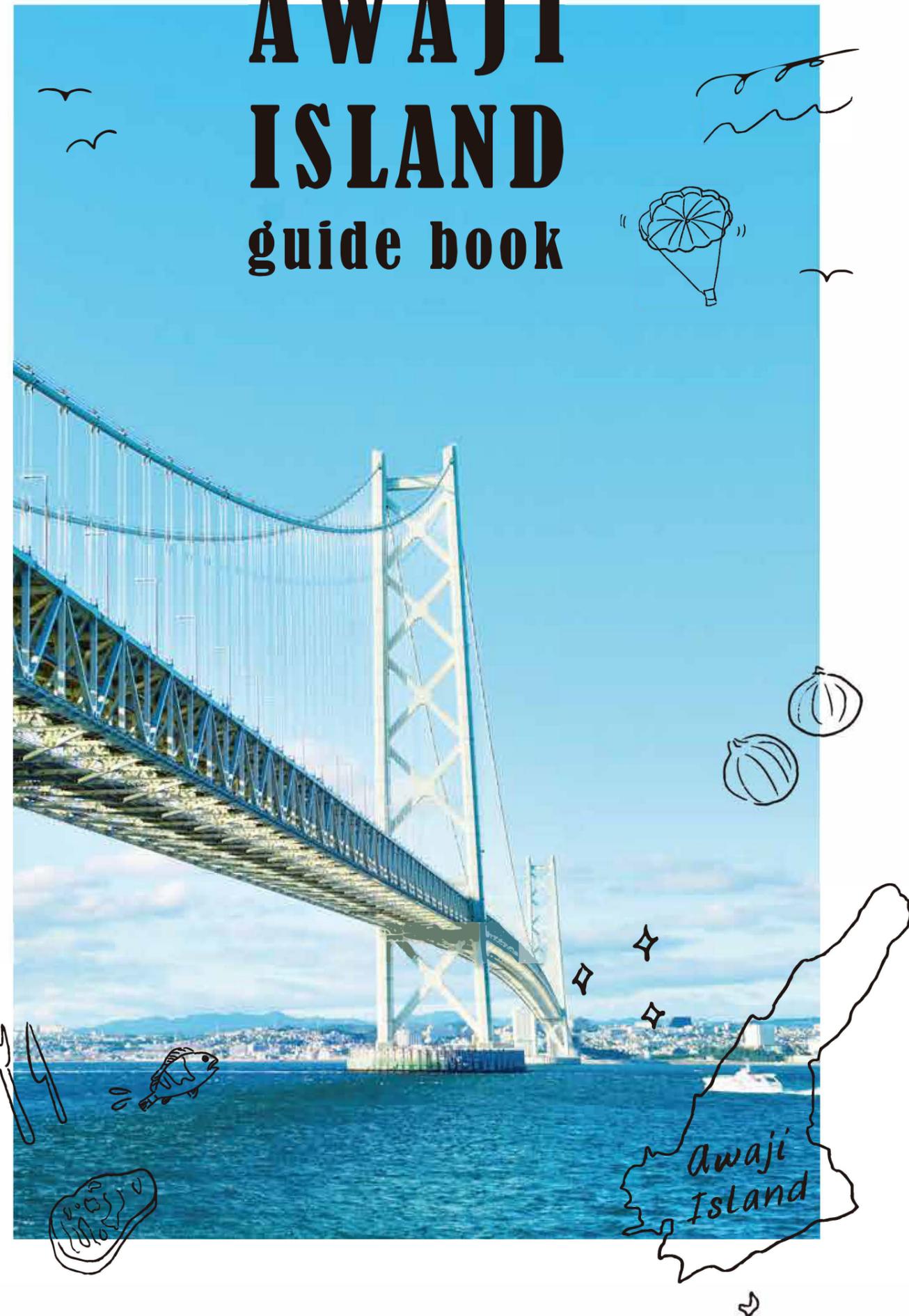
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# AWAJI ISLAND guide book

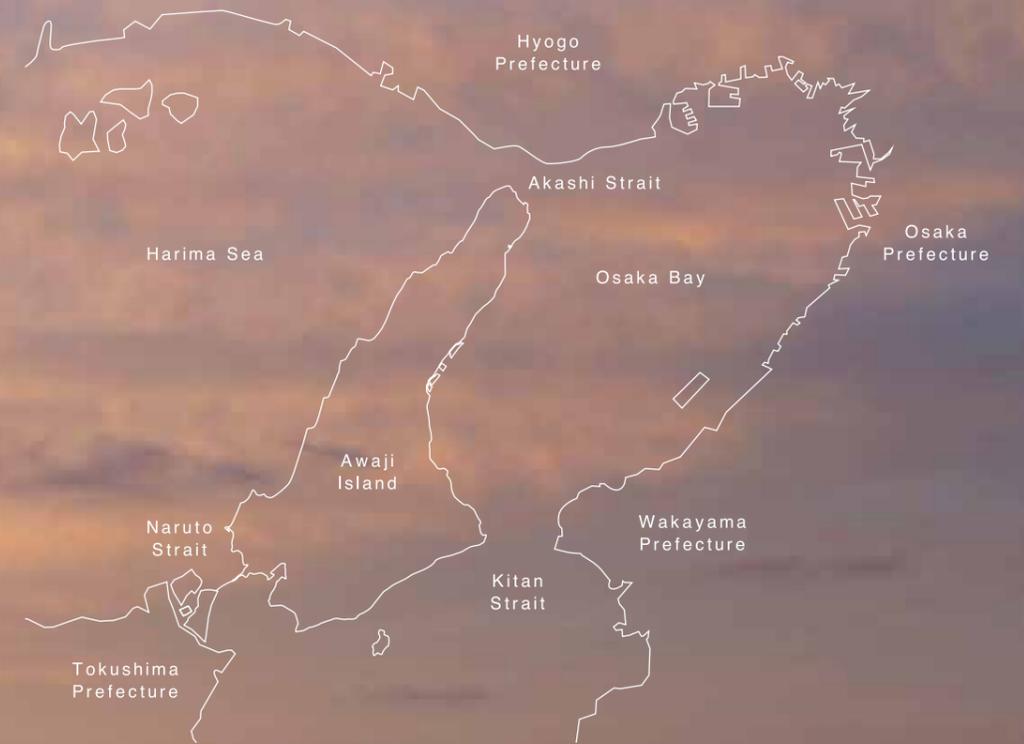


# The First Island

Awaji Island is the 11th biggest island in Japan, situated in the Seto Inland Sea at 135°east longitude. Measuring about 55 km from north to south, about 28 km from east to west, and with the circumference of about 216 km, the island is about 596 km<sup>2</sup> in area, as large as Guam. The world's longest suspension bridge, the "Akashi Kaikyo-Ohashi Bridge", is located at the northern edge of the island, which connects to Kobe City. Also, the world's largest Uzushio (whirlpools) can be seen at the Naruto strait that lies between the southwest edge of the island and Shikoku.

The climate is relatively mild with a lot of sunny days, and the total amount of rainfall is less than the national average. Agriculture, fisheries and livestock farming are the island's main industry as the island is blessed with food from the sea and the mountains. "Awaji Island Onions", "Awaji Island 3-year Japanese Pufferfish", and "Awaji Beef" are especially famous.

According to the Kuniomi Story (Japan's Creation Myth) depicted in the "Kojiki," the oldest historical record of Japan, Awaji Island is the first of the Japanese islands that were created by the two deities Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto. There still remain traditional performing arts such as Awaji Ningyo Joruri (puppet narrative) with about 500 years of history, as well as other many unique customs.



# 1 Myth & Japan Heritage



## Japan Heritage - "Awaji, the island of the Kuniumi story (myth of Japan's creation)" that adorns the opening of "Kojiki"

The "Kojiki" is the oldest historical record of Japan and it includes the "Myth of Kuniumi (Japan's Creation)," a spectacular tale that describes how the two Shinto deities called Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto created the nation of Japan. The myth mentions that the first of the Japanese islands to be created was Awaji.

Behind this myth, there were the people of the sea called "Ama", who brought metalworking technology that opened up a new chapter of Japanese history, and also later supported the Imperial court and the lives of those living in the capital through salt production and fine seamanship. In 2016, the story about Awaji Island, which exhibits ancient history in the present day, was recognized as a Japan Heritage Site, as "Awaji, the island of the Kuniumi story (the Myth of Japan's Creation)" origin of the "Kojiki - ama who supported ancient Japan".

■ <http://kuniumi-awaji.jp/>



### Onokorojima Jinja Shrine

In the age of Shinto deities, Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto stirred the ocean with a holy spear called the Ame no Nuboko, creating the nation of Japan. When they pulled the spear out of the water, drops from it hardened to form Onokorojima Island. The two deities that descended here first created Awaji Island, then more islands one after another. The Onokorojima Shrine is one of the places where Onokorojima Island reportedly existed. Its 21.7 meter-high vermilion torii gate earns lots of attention.



### Izanagi-jingu Shrine

Located in Taga, Awaji City, this is Japan's oldest Shinto-shrine whose name appears in the "Nihonshoki" (Chronicles of Japan). It enshrines the deities Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto, and is the only Shinto-shrine in Hyogo Prefecture that has received an imperial proclamation as a Jingugo. It is said that this is where Izanagi no Mikoto built a hidden palace where he spent the rest of his life after he completed his holy work, starting from the creation of Japan.



### Nushima Island

Nushima is an island shaped like a Magatama (a comma-shaped bead) with a circumference of about 10 km and sits to the south of Awaji Island. It is one of the places where Onokorojima Island reportedly existed. It is believed that the two deities Izanagi no Mikoto and Izanami no Mikoto got married by going around a 30-meter-tall rock called Kamitategamiwa, also known as the "Ame no Mihashira (the heavenly pillar)."



### Eshima Island

An island at the northern tip of the area, this is one of the places where "Onokorojima Island," which appears in the Kuniumi Story (Japan's Creation Myth), reportedly existed. Originally connected by land, erosion caused by waves has shaped it into the island it is now. It has been famous as a great place to gaze upon the moon since ancient times.



### Gossakaito Archeological Site

A national historical site where iron is said to have been manufactured during the late Yayoi period (c. 300 bce-c. 250 ce). There are only a few sites in which this many blacksmithing facilities have been discovered, as iron was extremely precious at that time, and the site is treasured as providing insights to the society of this era.



### Matsuho Dotaku

In 2015, seven bronze bells were discovered in dirt collected from the Matsuho district. Along with one lozenge crown-type bell, which was made at the earliest stages, the other six bells are also said to have been made in the Yayoi period, in the B.C. eras.

### Takataya Kahei and Kitamaebune

"Takataya Kahei was born in 1769 in what is currently known as Tsushi, Goshiki Town, Sumoto City, as the eldest son of a poor farmer, and grew up to be a boatman of a cargo ship called the Kitamaebune. He started a business based in Hakodate, and played an active role as a pioneer in northern Japan, contributing to the development of Hakodate and opening safe routes and new fishing grounds.

In 2017, the ocean route from Osaka to Seto Inland Sea to Hokkaido called "Ports of call for Kitamaebune/Ship Owner's Village" was recognized as a Japan Heritage Site. Although Sumoto City is not a port of call for Kitamaebune, it was additionally recognized as a Japan Heritage Site in 2018 for being the birthplace of Takataya Kahei, the man who succeeded with Kitamaebune."





# History / Culture / Tradition



## Awaji Ningyo Joruri

"Awaji Ningyo Joruri(the puppet narrative)is believed to have originated from the puppetry taught by a puppeteer called Hyakudayu from Settsu-nishinomiya who came to the Sanjo Village(currently Sanjo,Minami-awaji City)about 500 years ago.

There used to be puppetry groups of varying sizes from the early Edo period to the early Showa period.They travelled not only in the island but around the country presenting Ningyo Joruri to fascinate audiences.Uemura Bunrakuken,the founder of Bunraku in Osaka,from Awaji Island.

Awaji ningyou Joruri was well liked,but experienced a rapid decline from around 1950.

Today,it is played at Awaji Ningyoza in Fukura,Minami-Awaji City,vividly depicting the joys and sorrows of human relationships."



## Sumoto Castle

The ruins of Sumoto Castle can be found on the 133m Mt. Mikumayama, south of the city center. It was the base for the Awaji administration during the Age of Civil Wars to Edo period, and one can still see its stone walls reminiscent of the past. The castle structure is a well-preserved example of architectural styles of the Age of Civil Wars, and is designated as a National Historic Site and a cultural asset of Hyogo Prefecture.



## Awaji Island Shichifukujin Pilgrimage

Shichifukujin, or the Seven Deities of Good Fortune, are seven gods: Daikokuten, Ju rojin, Bishamonten, Ebisushin, Hoteison, Fukurokuju, and Benzaiten. Awaji Island is likened to the treasure ship which Shichifukujin are on, and we will make a pilgrimage tour to visit seven temples in the island that are dedicated to them. Visitors can receive a prayer service and listen to a sermon at these temples. It is believed that visiting all the temples will bring us good luck.

Give 200 yen offering at each of the seven temples and collect their stamps on the Happy tic ket to receive Fukuzasa.



## Danjiri

Danjiri (decorative portable Shrines) go on a parade at festivals held in spring and autumn. There is a wide variety of Danjiri: including richly ornamented Funa-danjiri, boat-shaped Funa-danjiri, and Nage-danjiri and tsukai danjiri that are vigorous and valiant.



## Mt.Senzan/Senkoji Temple

Mt.Senzan, which is 448 meters above sea level, is said to be the first mountain created at the birth of Japan. Its summit is home to an ancient big boar. The temple bell in the precinct is a nationally designated important cultural property.



## Tosanji Temple

This is an ancient temple believed to have been established by Kobo Daishi in the year 820. It is one of the few scenic spots on the island known for autumn leaves. The standing statue of Yakushi Nyorai and the standing statues of twelve divine generals preserved here are all nationally designated as important cultural properties.



## Rengeji Temple

Built in 1332, this temple preserves the"Gohyaku Rakan," or 500 statues of the disciples of Buddha lined up next to one another, which a Buddhist priest Jitsunyo started creating in 1784.



## Awaji-Kokubunji Temple

This is one of the temples built in various provinces for protection of the nation by Emperor Shomu in the Nara period. The remains of the pagoda and the seated statue of Shaka Nyorai are nationally designated important cultural properties.



## Honpukuji Temple "Mizumido"

This temple of the Omuro school of the Shingon sect is said to have been constructed in the late Heian period, and it is the 59th temple of the Awaji-Shikoku Temple pilgrimage. Mizumido was designed by the world-renowned contemporary architect Tadao Ando and has a modern exterior. The artificial pond with blooming Oga lotuses and the principal statue of the Yakushi Nyorai (healing buddha) are also not to be missed.

# 3 Nature / Flowers



## Onaruto Bridge and Uzushio (Whirlpools)

Uzushio (whirlpools) in the Naruto strait are a natural phenomenon caused by the rise and fall of the tide that occurs every six hours, the swift current and the geographical features of the seabed of the Naruto strait. The tidal current can go as fast as 20 km per hour, and the size of a whirlpool can be up to 30 meters in diameter, making it the largest in the world. The whirlpools are largest at high tide and low tide but the timing of the tides varies from day to day, so make sure to check a tide table to see when the whirlpools will occur before going to watch them.



## Awaji Island Akashi Kaikyo National Government Park

The three-dimensional flower beds found here are the largest in the Kansai area, and they are truly a sight to see. They were also the venue for the 2000 "Awaji Flower Expo-Japan Flora 2000", and offer a diverse array of flowers year round. Other events are held throughout the year, and the springtime flower beds of tulips, muscari, and other bulbs are especially impressive. In addition to large-scaled flower beds, visitors can enjoy flowers in many ways, such as walking paths featuring rare flowers in bloom.



## Awaji Hanasajiki

Spreading out before you is a panoramic view of flowers covering the gently sloping hill over about 15 hectares against the backdrop of the Akashi Kaikyo-Ohashi bridge and Osaka Bay. It is a perfect place to view beautiful seasonal flowers like something out of a dream.



## Awaji Farm Park England Hill

Awaji Farm Park England Hill is divided into two areas: the Green Hill Area where rare koala bears from the southern hemisphere live and the England Area where you will find the scenery of the Lake District of England. You can experience making crafts, picking vegetables from a vegetable garden, spending time with small animals and viewing seasonal flowers.



## Nadakuroiwa Suisenkyo

Located in the southern part of the island, the Nadakuroiwa Suisenkyo presents a magnificent view of five million wild daffodils spreading over about 7 hectares steep hill that lies between Mt. Yuzuruha and the sea. From the end of December until the end of February, the area is covered with pale yellow flowers and wrapped in their sweet scent.



## Awaji Yumebutai Greenhouse Kiseki no Hoshi Botanical Museum

Having one of the largest open ceilings in Japan, this botanical museum exhibits 30,000 plants of about 3,000 varieties, including succulent plants from dry regions, tropical plants, plants from temperate regions, and alpine plants.



## Parchez Kaori no Yakata

Various seasonal flowers are planted on the hill and the view from the hilltop is not to be missed. There is a large greenhouse where Fuchsia flowers are in full bloom, and also places where you can actually experience making fragrant candles and perfume. You can also try picking seasonal herbs.



## Aiya Waterfall

The no.1 waterfall on Awaji Island, revered as a place of spiritual power. The area is enveloped by the sound of falling water, with sunbeams filtered through the trees onto the falls creating a sacred atmosphere. Promenades will take you right to the waterfall, at which fireflies can also be seen in the early summer.

# 4 Activities/Leisure



## Hyogo Prefectural Awaji Island Anime Park NIJIGEN NO MORI

The anime park "NIJIGEN NO MORI" is home to cutting-edge technology and the world of Japanese manga, anime, and game contents, combined with abundant nature, located within the Hyogo Prefectural Awaji Island Park, which has an area about the size of 28 Tokyo Dome stadiums. The Park offers completely new "experiences" in which visitors can move about in nature while experiencing two-dimensional worlds with their entire bodies.



## Uzuno Oka Onaruto Bridge Memorial Hall, Uzushio Science Museum

A science center at which one can learn about uzushio (whirlpools). Facilities also include a restaurant with impressive views and local cuisine. Gigantic works of art and crane games with onions as prizes can be found here, along with the Awajishima Island Burger, winner of the Burger Grand Prix, located on the first floor.



## Awaji World Park ONOKORO

This is a theme park with an exhibition area called Miniature World where famous buildings from around the world are displayed at 1/25 of their original size, and offer popular attractions such as the Zip-line adventure and go-carts, and activities such as grass slope sliding. They also offer workshops to make crafts and such, so adults and children alike can enjoy themselves here.



## Swimming with the dolphins

You can learn how important it is to co-exist with nature and protect the environment by learning about the life of dolphins, seeing their incredible abilities and touching them.



## Awaji Island Monkey Center

This is a park where you can see wild Japanese monkeys close up. The monkeys are gentle and have created their own peaceful society. They do not appear in the park in autumn as they are back in the surrounding mountains feeding on nuts.



## Bicycle Rentals

A wide array of bicycles, ranging from sports bikes to city bikes, can be seen on the "Awaichi" cycling route that goes around Awaji Island. Renting a bicycle is a highly recommended way to enjoy Awaji Island and its abundant nature, in an easy and laid-back way.



## Sea Bathing

There are many clear water beaches for swimming in Awaji Island.



## Parasailing

Take a walk in the air as if you were flying like a bird; feel a sense of liberation and get a thrill out of parasailing! You can enjoy it in regular clothes without worrying about getting wet as you take off or land on the boat.



## Sea Kayaks and SUP

SUP is a fast growing water sports activity in which one paddles while standing and balancing on a board. The board provides a stable feel, so even beginners can easily enjoy this activity. Kayaking is popular too.



## Fishing

Surrounded by the sea, Awaji Island is a perfect place for fishing! The marine fishing parks and sea fishing parks can supply you with everything you need to go fishing.



## Horseback Riding

First-time riders can take strolls along various courses on horseback. Of these courses, the "Awaji Hanasajiki" course is the most popular. Other courses include the 'Umioyogi' course, in which one rides a horse right into the ocean, a unique experience only an island can offer.



## Tile Splitting

Anyone can feel like a karate master and split tiles here. These tiles are specially manufactured to split easily, enabling people of all ages to enjoy cracking them! It is a fun activity for everyone!



## Sea Fireflies

Sea fireflies emit a dreamy blue light. The coastal area of Ama Kaigan and Keinomatsubara in Minami Awaji City are one of the few places in Japan where sea fireflies can be found. Viewing tours are also offered for guests staying at designated facilities.



## Uzushio Cruises

A one-hour cruise to observe "uzushio (whirlpools)" up close on a large sightseeing ship "Kanrinmaru" modeled after Japan's first steamship to cross the Pacific Ocean of the same name.

# 5 Gourmet



## Awaji Beef

Many Kobe beef cattle and Matsuzaka beef cattle breeds, which are Wagyu brands that Japan boasts to the world, have their roots in Tajima beef cattle produced in Awaji Island. Only the Tajima beef produced in Awaji Island that satisfies strict certification requirements is allowed to be called "Awaji Beef". It is marbled meat so tender with such a delicate flavor that it melts at body temperature.

## Awaji Island Onions

The distinctive feature of Awajishima Island Onions is that they are sweeter and softer than the onions produced in other areas.

The onions are planted in autumn and pass the winter, and after 6-8 months, they are harvested in spring. Nurtured with care in a warm climate and the rich soil of Awaji Island, they are packed with nutrients. After harvested, they are dried and aged by using natural air to increase their sweetness.



## "Awaji Island 3-year Japanese Pufferfish"

Generally, farm-raised pufferfish are shipped in two years. However, the Awaji Island 3-year Japanese pufferfish (Torafugu) are cultured carefully for one more year in a farm, despite the risk of their poor survival rate. They are bigger, and their flesh is tighter and more resilient to chew, offering a richer in taste.



## Awaji Island Beef Bowl

The rice bowl using three carefully selected ingredients: beef produced in Awaji, Awaji Island onions and Awaji rice. It is popular among many, from children to adults.



## Rice Bowl Topped with Fresh Spanish Mackerel

Spanish mackerel is extremely perishable so it is not customary to eat it raw, but only in Awaji Island you can enjoy this "fishermen's dish", a rice bowl topped with fresh raw Spanish mackerel.



## Red Sea Bream

The red sea bream grows in the rapid streams of the Akashi strait and the Naruto strait. Their flesh is thick, firm to bite and filling. Some well-known methods of eating sea bream include Ikizukuri (sashimi arranged in the original shape of the fish to bring out its simple yet elegant flavor) and "Horakuyaki" (the steamed meat in a Horaku pan with Nachiguro stones laid on the bottom).



## Awaji Noodles

This is a noodle dish made with original hand-made noodles produced by Awaji's traditional hand-stretching soban noodle methods combined with clams, seaweed, various types of seafood, seasonal local vegetables, and ingredients such as boar-pigs and Awaji beef.



## Island Sweets

Awaji's original sweets made with fresh ingredients nurtured by the nature of Awaji Island. The sweets created by the island's chefs are delicious because they are "grown and made" on the island.



## Pike Conger

In Awaji Island, pike conger (Hamo) are fished up one by one by a fishing method called "Hamo Haenawa", so they are not damaged much when caught. They have plenty of fat and their flesh is especially delicious. "Hamosuki-nabe" made by boiling the meat of seasonal pike conger and Awaji onions is a local specialty of Awaji Island.



## Awaji Island Raw Baby Anchovies

Extremely fresh, raw baby anchovies (Namashirasu) landed at the Iwaya port, Awaji Island. These raw baby anchovies of Awaji Island are unique produce of Japan, certified as a Hyogo Prefecture Pride Fish by the National Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Associations.



## Awajishima Island Burger

"Awajishima Island Burgers" are made with delicious ingredients nurtured by the nature of Awaji Island. Enjoy the abundance of nature and food with all of your five senses and take a big bite out of Awaji Island!

# 6 Hot Springs / Souvenirs



## View Matsuho no Sato

This is a hot spring resort popular for its open air bath where you can soak in the hot water while enjoying the view of the world's longest suspension bridge, the Akashi Kaikyo-Ohashi Bridge. It is a weak radon spring, which is good for symptoms like neuralgic pains, poor circulation and hypertension.



## Foot Bath Uzunoyu

The hot spring foot bath "Uzunoyu" located within the "Michi-no-Eki (roadside rest area) Fukura" is open to all visitors.



## Ichinomiya Hot Spring "Parchez Kaori no Yu"

It has a large bath where you can soak while gazing at the sunset, and also an open air herbal bath.



## Goshiki Hot Spring "Yu-Yu-Five"

There are 10 Western-style baths and 10 Japanese-style ones. The types of the baths change weekly between medicated baths and fragrant baths.



## Sumoto Hot Spring

This is the location of the largest hot spring on Awaji Island that flourished as a town around the Sumoto castle. The hot spring resort along the coastline is lined with hot spring inns with attractive baths such as an open air bath looking over the ocean. It is a simple Alkaline hot spring, effective for symptoms like fatigue, poor circulation and neuralgic pains.



## Minami Awaji Spa Resort

This resort contains six spa water sources: Uzushio Hot Spring, Nandan Hot Spring, Shiozaki Hot Spring, Mihara Hot Spring, Sunrise Hot Spring, and Tsutsui Hot Spring, each with its own characteristics such as refreshing effects and skin-beautifying effects. There are four bath facilities for you to enjoy, and there is also a hot spring at each Japanese-style inn, hotel, and tourist home in Minami-awaji City.



## Local Sake

There are only two sake breweries remaining on Awaji Island today. The sake created here is carefully and painstakingly made using traditional brewing techniques; it is a taste you will not find in mass-produced sake.



## Ikanago no Kugini (boiled sand eels)

This is a salty-sweet dish made by boiling young sand eels in soy sauce, sugar and other condiments. It is popular as a souvenir.



## Salt

As a Miketsukuni, Awaji Island was obligated to supply salt to the Imperial Courts. Salt is still carefully and painstakingly made in Awaji Island today.



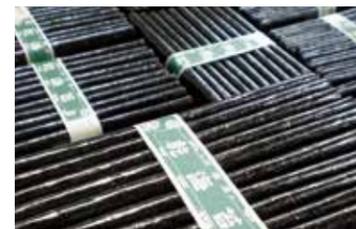
## Orange peel of Awajishima Naruto Oranges

This is candied orange peel with a refreshing and rich taste, made of Awaji Island's specialty "Awajishima Naruto Oranges." Orange Sticks are orange peels coated with chocolate, which are also popular.



## Awaji Tenobe Somen (hand-stretched wheat noodles)

Awaji Tenobe Somen with about 180 years of history has won prizes at various competitions including the gold prize at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915. Produced using a traditional method, the noodles are distinctive and unique in their full-bodied flavor and firm texture.



## Nori (seaweed)

Awaji Island is one of the leading producers of seaweed in Japan. Awaji seaweed is full of flavor and is also crispy and holds together well.



## Onion Soup

This is a granular base for flavorful onion soup full of the rich flavor, sweetness and deliciousness of Awaji Island onions. It is a common souvenir from Awaji Island.



## Awaji Tiles

With a 400 year history, Awaji Tiles are one of the three finest quality tiles in Japan. The craftsmanship has been handed down for posterity, and there are several thousand varieties of tiles with different shapes which have been perfected with intelligence and a sense of beauty.



## Chirimen (baby anchovies)

Baby anchovies caught in the coastal waters of Awaji Island, which are white and recognized as the finest, are carefully selected and half- or fully-dried to make Chirimen. It is a typical seafood product of Awaji Island.



## Awaji Island Milk

Milk produced in Awajishima Island is fresh and straight from the cow. This non-homogenized milk is loved by many people for its full-bodied taste and mild yet rich flavor.



## Incense sticks

70% of incense sticks produced in Japan comes from Awaji Island. Awaji Island is a pioneer of Japanese fragrance culture, producing incense sticks of the highest quality using excellent techniques and revolutionary ideas.



## Fukimodoshi

A Fukimodoshi is a traditional toy of which coiled paper is blown straight, to curl back up again. This facility is the only place in Japan where one can experience hands-on "Fukimodoshi" making.