

# How to get to Awaji City

Directions  
and approximate  
travel times  
to Awaji IC from  
major areas



Awaji City mascot characters:  
Awajin & Awahime



## Travel tips



Scan here for busmo, an  
app for searching for bus and  
boat transfers covering public  
transport to and from Awaji Island



Scan here for a map of the  
Awajin-Awahime Bus, the best  
way to get around Awaji City



Rental bicycles are also recommended  
for getting around the island.  
For more information, scan here for  
Awaji Island Cycle Tourism

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Awaji  
Island Tourist  
Association

## ENGLISH



# 淡路



AWAJI CITY  
A JOURNEY OF HEALING

## Awaji City Healing Travel Guide



AWAJI CITY 10 RETREATS TO FILL YOUR HEART





Awaji Island is the largest island in the Seto Inland Sea. According to Japanese mythology, it was the first island of the Japanese archipelago to be born. Awaji City occupies the northern third of the island, and is just a stone's throw across a 4-km strait from the major metropolitan area. It is close to urban areas but also filled with relaxing nature and mythology.

The area has long attracted people with its mix of traditional and modern lifestyles. Each has its own story, an appeal that can only be found here, nurtured by the nature and history of Awaji.

This book is a condensed guide through these attractions for a peaceful trip to Awaji.



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# Retreat 01 Enjoy the breeze at the top of the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge

As you exit the elevator on the 98th floor and crawl out through the heavy door resembling a submarine hatch, the ocean breeze catches your hair and the sunlight reflects off the pure white steel frame. As you approach the steel wall, you can see Awaji Island before you and Kobe behind. When you look down, you see a convoy of cars traveling across the bridge. Although nobody thinks twice about driving between the mainland and the island today, it took every bit of Japanese bridge technology and the passion of the people involved to meet the challenge of building the world's longest suspension bridge over a turbulent spot where the tidal current can reach 4.5 m/s.

One of the world's  
longest suspension bridges

Length: 3,911 m  
Span (between towers): 1,991 m

## Overcoming a magnitude-7.3 earthquake to build the world's longest suspension bridge

The Akashi Strait connects Osaka Bay and the Seto Inland Sea, and has always been an excellent fishing ground. With more than 1,400 vessels sailing through it each day, it is a pivotal stretch for marine traffic. The project to construct this unprecedented bridge included building a foundation capable of withstanding vertical forces of 120,000 tons amid rapid tidal currents, and erecting a bridge deck nearly twice as long as the longest suspension bridge at the time. Seven years after construction began, the Great Hanshin Earthquake (1995) struck. The magnitude-7.3 earthquake centered on the seafloor near the Akashi Strait caused extensive damage, mainly in Kobe City and on Awaji

Island. At the time, both towers were built, and the main cables were being installed. The distance between the towers changed due to ground movement under the foundations. Fortunately, no serious structural damage was found. The bridge was designed to withstand wind speeds of 80 m/s and earthquakes centered directly beneath. The Akashi Kaikyo Bridge took 10 years and a total of 2 million people to construct. It made the northern edge of the island a new gateway, changing the boat-centered transportation network in place for all of recorded history. On Akashi Kaikyo Bridge tower tours, visitors will be guided by staff and visit places they would not normally see. Once you have reached the top, you can see the main

cables up close. These are the lifelines of the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge.

## Highlights

### Grating walkway

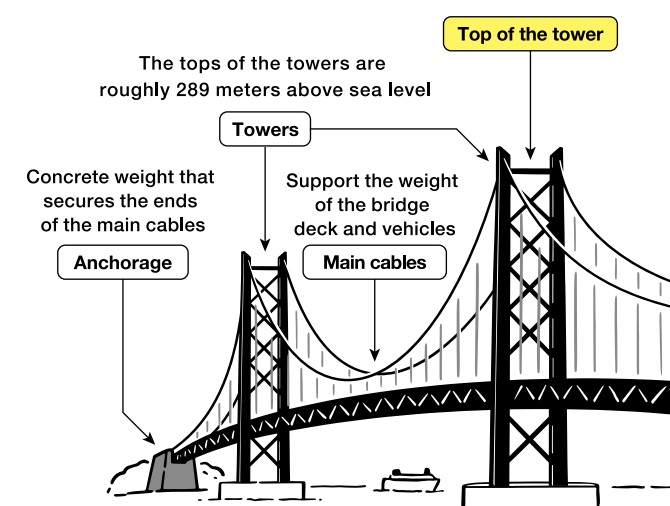
The walkway is made up of grating through which you can see ships passing by below.



**Tower foundation** You can see the tower foundation from the walkway.



**Views from the walkway** Enjoy views of ships entering and leaving Iwaya Port.



## HOW TO

### Bridge World for Akashi Kaikyo Bridge: Tours to the top of the tower

These tours are offered by Honshu-Shikoku Bridge Expressway Company Limited. They include a walk to the tower on a grating bridge 50 m above the water below, followed by a visit to the top of the tower by elevator. For more details, please check the homepage.





# Rejuvenate the mind on Awaji time

Columns:  
Out and About  
in Awaji

On the drive to Awaji, you gaze up at the tall towers. As you travel across the bridge with the sparkling sea on both sides, your body and mind gradually drift away from everyday life. Without realizing it, you breathe more deeply, your mind synchs with the calming scenery, and your tension slowly dissipates.



1. Sunset spots on the west side, sunrise spots on the east side. Enjoy the drama of the open skies (Cape Myojin, Main Map on p. 46) 2. Clear your mind with a trip to this vast flower garden overlooking Osaka Bay. Decorated with seasonal flowers, and includes a café with spectacular views (Hyogo Prefectural Park Awaji Hanasajiki, Main Map on p. 46) 3. Many places on the island offer relaxing views of ships at sea (Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, Main Map on p. 46) 4. The site of one of the largest ironware production settlements of the early first millennium. A special place that played an important role through iron during the establishment of the ancient state of Japan (Gossa Kaito Site, Main Map on p. 46) 5. An excellent view of a large Yoshino cherry tree stretching its branches over terraced rice paddies (Tamoyan Sakura, Main Map on p. 46) 6. The highlands are full of terraced rice paddies, a change of pace from seaside landscapes. The view of the sea and the paddies filled with water after rice planting is exceptionally beautiful at twilight (Ishida Rice Terraces, Map of Hokudan on p. 45) 7. Magnificent yellow leaves of large ginkgo trees from fall to winter (Iwagami Shrine, Main Map on p. 46)





Yokagura  
dances  
at Izanagi  
Shrine  
Monthly

Photo | Masamichi Hirata

## Retreat 02 Enchanted by mystical Yokagura dances

Izanagi Shrine is the oldest shrine in Japan. The approach to the shrine is guided by over 300 candles, creating a sacred and mysterious atmosphere. It is a sacred place dedicated to Izanagi and Izanami, creator deities of Japanese mythology. 12 years ago, a kagura dance based on the myth of the emergence of the Japanese archipelago made its debut here. The performers are members of Awaji Kuniumi Sousei Kagura, a group of children who live in the area around the shrine. Their earnest dance is a moving portrayal of the world depicted in Japan's creation story. The dance is performed as an offering to the shrine. It is performed on the 22nd of each month and is open to all visitors.

Photo | Masamichi Hirata



1



2



3

1. Practice 2. Scene from the monthly offering by Awaji Kuniumi Sousei Kagura 3. The dancers also do their own makeup for the performances (Photos 2 & 3 | Masamichi Hirata)

### HOW TO

#### Special evening prayer

On the 22nd of every month (except April), Izanagi Shrine hosts a Special Evening Prayer Illumination and Kuniumi Sousei Yokagura dance. Special evening prayers and invocations are also held in the worship hall (reservations required). For overviews, application procedures, and other details, please contact Sekirei-no-Sato at 0799-70-1010.



Every year on September 23, the Three Great Mythological Kagura Festival is held, in which, in addition to Kuniumi Kagura, Takachiho Yokagura (Miyazaki) and Izumo Kagura (Shimane) are invited to join the Kuniumi Kagura in an offering for the three great kagura of Japan. For reservations and details, please contact Sekirei-no-Sato.

Yokagura dances are performed as offerings on the 22nd of each month except April. They are held on a different day due to the annual festival.

### Child performers don't steal the show—they are the show!

It is just after seven o'clock in the evening. A dozen or so local youths, from preschoolers to university students, and a few adults gather in a sparse gym-like room and begin to practice. The children gather into pairs, with the older ones helping to teach the younger ones. Eventually, people move on to practice individual parts. The room fills with noise as the participants discuss the dances and chant to keep the beat, and the younger children lose interest and begin running around. Suddenly, the singer's dignified voice penetrates the space, gathering everyone together to rehearse as one. They gather and continue to practice for the monthly offerings to the shrine.

A woman who leads the group says that there is a moment where a child's dance rapidly changes. According to her, children grow when their awareness of kagura changes. Despite the difference in their maturity levels, the children all say that kagura is fun. A high school student who has been doing it for 12 years says that kagura is their life. Many children leave the island after they graduate from high school, but they return to practice during the holidays.

It is a moving sight to see the children in their beautiful costumes, dancing earnestly amid the tension of the performance. This must be how folk performing arts are born and nurtured by local people to build the solidarity to pass them down to future generations. It fosters a type of excitement that is difficult to experience in the big city.

Protected  
species  
of Hyogo  
Prefecture



#### Giant "married couple" camphor tree of Izanagi Shrine

On the grounds of Izanagi Shrine (p. 10), which enshrines Japan's first married couple, Izanagi and Izanami, is "Meoto-no-Okusu," a 900-year-old giant "married couple" camphor tree. Originally, two trees were planted, but they merged into a single tree as they grew, hence the name. As a sacred tree inhabited by the spirits of Izanagi and Izanami, it is believed to impart marital bliss, safe childbirth, good matchmaking, and other benefits.



# Clear the mind on Awaji time

Since ancient times, Japanese people have sensed the presence of gods on isolated mountain peaks, deep in forests, and in rocks, trees, and waterfalls. These are distinctly Japanese beliefs born from deep spiritual connections with nature through farming and fishing. You are invited to spend some tranquil time visiting shrines in harmony with nature in this place that appears in classical Japanese mythology from the 8th century.

Columns:  
Out and About  
in Awaji



①

## Iwagami Shrine

Main Map on p. 46

Nestled against the colorful Kasuga-style main shrine is a giant rock about 12 m tall and about 16 m wide, revered by many since ancient times as a place where the gods descend. In autumn, the Japanese maple and large ginkgo trees on the temple grounds turn brilliant colors. It is a popular spot for viewing the autumn leaves.



Important tangible cultural property of Hyogo Prefecture  
Main shrine



④

## Iwaya Shrine (Tenchi Daimyojin)

Map of Iwaya on p. 45

Iwaya Shrine is a highly prestigious shrine listed in the Englishiki Jinmyocho, the oldest list of shrines in Japan compiled in the Heian Period (794 to 1185). Facing the sea, the shrine welcomes deities from the sea with a torii gate and a 50-m wide Nagaya-style gate with a statue of Ebisu, the god of good fortune, on the roof tiles. Originally located 300 m north on Mt. Santai, it was relocated to the current location during the construction of the castle in the Muromachi Period (1336 to 1573). On the spring and autumn equinoxes, the sun can be seen rising in the center of the torii gate from the worship hall.



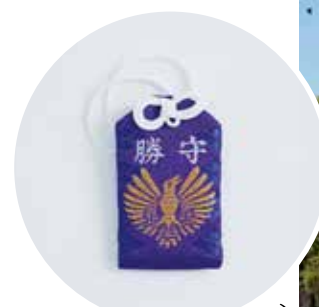
②

## Izanagi Shrine

Map of Ichinomiya on p. 45



The oldest shrine in Japan, mentioned in classical Japanese mythology, and dedicated to two deities: Izanagi and Izanami. The origin of the shrine's founding is believed to be the mausoleum built on the site of the secluded palace at which Izanagi spent his last days. The shrine has been revered since ancient times as the top shrine of Awaji Province.



A Yatararasu amulet (for victory)



③

## Kamo Shrine

Map of Tsuna on p. 45



A shrine that has served as a place of prayer for our ancestors at this location for 1,500 years. From 1877 to 1926, Ikuho Elementary School was located here, and it served as the local place of learning, nurturing many talented people. The Yatararasu amulets depict a mythical crow that lives on the sun and feeds on dragons and is believed to lead people to victory and happiness.



Awa At Mizubi, an indigo-dyed amulet made of "mizubiki," a decorative Japanese cord made from twisted paper





Retreat  
03

Buying food  
from the  
“land of divine  
offerings”

From the end of the Asuka Period (592 to 710) to the end of the Nara Period (710 to 794), when power over the Japanese archipelago was centralized and the modern nation of Japan was taking shape, select provinces offered marine products and other regional delicacies to the Imperial Court (the Emperor) in the capital. These provinces were known as “lands of divine offerings.” In the Man’yōshū (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves), Ise-Shima and Awaji are mentioned as “lands of divine offerings.” According to the Engishiki, Awaji regularly paid tribute to the Imperial Court with marine products such as sea bream, seaweed, and drinking water. The island is surrounded by straits on three sides—north, south, and east—creating tidal currents that nurtured high-quality seafood, earning it an endorsement by the Imperial Court as a land blessed with high-quality ingredients. Its history and traditions have been handed down to the present, and the area is known throughout Japan for its rich variety of foods, from sea bream, sea eel, and octopus to the highest quality Awaji Beef and onions with high sugar content. Here, we recommend some of these foods for a healthy breakfast.



1 Sweet  
onions

Shichi Onions  
Masaya Shichi



Awaji onions are characterized by their high sugar content and tenderness. New onions harvested around April are extremely sweet, so we recommend eating them raw or putting a cross cut from the top about halfway down and microwaving them whole. Onions harvested around June hold their shape even when cooked for a long time, making them perfect for pot-au-feu and other dishes that require a lot of cooking time.

2

Fragrant  
seaweed

Edible seaweed is harvested from winter to spring. Seaweed grown in the seas around Awaji is highly aromatic, rich in flavor and nutrients, crispy, and resistant to tearing! The aroma of seaweed when wrapped around freshly cooked rice hits you like a breeze. Who knew that seaweed could have such flavor?



Maruishi Suisan  
Koji Ishigami

3

Richly flavored  
strawberries

Awaji Country Garden  
Naoyuki Suzumura

Main Map on p. 46



Although strawberry season is from January to May, I recommend trying strawberries in January and February. The cold weather rounds out the fruit and boosts the sugar content! Strawberries that are smooth with a head shaped like a diamond and no seeds near the base are sweeter than those that are triangular. Plump heads are a sign of higher sugar content.

4

Fresh fish

Nothing is more luxurious than eating seasonal fish caught in nearby waters. For breakfast, how about horse mackerel or scorpionfish? It was just caught, so it couldn't be any fresher!



Osaka-ya  
fish shop  
Ikuo Ebisu

Map of Higashiura on p. 45

5

Fresh  
eggs

Changes in the weather bring about changes in the physical condition of hens, which affects the size and taste of the eggs they lay. Each egg is truly one-of-a-kind. As time passes, the pores on the surface of an egg release water and carbon dioxide, enriching the flavor. Eggs that were laid approximately one week before are recommended to use as boiled eggs. Fresh eggs are harder to peel and tend to have a softer texture. Smaller eggs are richer in flavor, and bigger eggs have more egg white.



Kitasaka Chicken Farm  
Masaru Kitasaka

Map of Hokudan on p. 45

Signs of spring:  
Fishing for Japanese  
sand lance

People who live around the Seto Inland Sea know the Japanese sand lance as a fish that heralds the arrival of spring. In Awaji, sand lance fishing season begins in March. Pairs of boats leave port in the dark before dawn and seek out schools of sand lance. Fishermen look out for places where two currents meet, stretch out nets between them, allow them to drift for a while, and then pull them in. The older sand lance caught in the nets are quickly transferred to cages, and from there it is a race against time. The boats fly through the wind toward port, dock and unload their catches onto conveyor belts, and the fish are immediately put up for auction. The fresh sand lance are turned into “kamaage,” boiled, or “kugini,” simmered and seasoned with soy sauce, dishes that are a signature taste of spring on the Seto Inland Sea.



Kugini (literally “nail stew”), so called because the fresh sand lance look like rusty nails

Special thanks:  
Awaji Island Iwaya Fishery Cooperative

HOW  
TO

Information  
about Awaji  
Island food  
AWAJISHIMA  
The island for food lovers



Loads of information on the delicious foods of Awaji Island, including peak seasons and restaurants that use seasonal ingredients. Operated by the Awaji Island Food Brand Promotion Council.

For information on stores selling fresh produce, see the Marche tour section (p. 43–44).





## Sushi

Awaji City has 10 landing ports for fast distribution. The seasonal flavor of local fish grown on the tidal currents and abundant food produced by the straits is great to enjoy as sushi toppings!

Genpei



Fresh conger eel char-grilled to add a savory aroma. The sizzling strikes the appetite

# Tasty Food Guide

This “land of divine offerings” is full of delicious food. What’s on the menu today?

Columns:  
Out and About  
in Awaji

## Guide to Awaji Island Cuisine

For categorized descriptions of Awaji Island’s cuisine, visit this website run by the Awaji Island Tourist Association.



## Awaji Beef

Exquisitely marbled with a fine, tender texture, the authentic flavor and aroma of beef and fat that melts on the tongue. An unforgettable experience.

Restaurant Taiko



## Char-grilled conger eel

Char-grilling the fresh and live conger eel makes the meat fluffy and tender. Even the skin and bones can be eaten.

Asaji

## Awaji Island Burger

A specialty burger made with local ingredients, including flavorful Awaji Beef, sweet and juicy Awaji Island onions, fresh vegetables, seafood, Awaji rice, and Awaji Island eggs.

Hasami Kitchen



## Wild boar



Wild boar meat immediately transported by refrigerated truck after being hunted by professionals. The fresh meat has a clean taste and the natural fat is sweet with none of the foul odors typically associated with wild game. Excellent meat with lower calories and higher protein than pork.

Koryuji Village

## Beef bowl

Awaji Restaurant Mamii



## Noodles

Enjoy noodle dishes featuring Awaji onions, local fish, and other local ingredients.



## Fresh pasta

Local octopus and Yura Wakame seaweed with tomato and shichimi spices

Pasta Fresca Dan-Men



## Soba

Awaji Okina



## Udon

“Hana” onion tsukemen

Izumoan Noodle Masters



## Awaji Island Noodles

Conger eel tempura noodles

Restaurant Hamachidori

Thick, long, chewy hand-pulled somen noodles

## Rice bowl dishes

These satisfying, highly nutritious rice bowl dishes are a Japanese soul food loved by many. The island is full of rice bowl dishes topped with fresh seafood and meat.



## Seafood bowl

Awaji Island Beef Bowl Project



A map of restaurants featuring Awaji Island beef bowls



## Raw whitebait bowl

Late April to November

Restaurant Wataribune



## Raw Spanish mackerel bowl

Late April to November

Restaurant Kaikyoro at Michi-no-Eki Awaji



Principal  
image  
**Medicine Buddha  
(Bhaisajyaguru)**  
Important cultural  
property of Awaji City

Retreat



## Encounter a new perspective from architecture

The parking area with an expansive view of Osaka Bay under the blue midsummer sky. A young couple—maybe college students—are seen climbing the stairs. This is Honpukuji Temple, an ancient Shingon esoteric Buddhist temple said to have been founded around 1,000 years ago. At the end of the wooded path leading to the main hall, a concrete wall suddenly appears. The large roof you would expect of an ancient temple is nowhere to be found. Instead, the place looks like a modern art museum. At the end of the narrow corridor between the walls, reaching an open space, a large concrete lotus pond appears. This is the main hall.



The design allows the setting sun to filter through the lattice behind the Medicine Buddha (Bhaisajyaguru), creating a magical atmosphere.



### Tadao Ando's unorthodox perspective

The main hall, which does not feel in the slightest like a temple, was designed by world-renowned architect Tadao Ando. Ando heard patrons lament that nobody visited the temple, and decided to reimagine what constitutes a temple. He also wanted to create a spiritual center where people would naturally gather. Replacing the large roof, a symbol of power, with a lotus pond, he designed the building so that visitors could walk through it. Patrons opposed his unconventional temple building

concept. However, they relented when the high priest of the head temple in Kyoto commented that entering a temple through a lotus pond was actually good form given that lotuses are the origin of Buddhism. When our perspective changes, the world we see also changes. Tadao Ando was never bound by precedent, and sought to capture the essence of things. His perspective attracts many young architects. Many visitors still make the trip to this Water Temple, which was completed in 1991.

### Honpukuji Temple/ Water Temple

Map of Higashiura on p. 45

The main hall is located under an oval-shaped lotus pond made of reinforced concrete. The wall at the end of the wooded approach separates the secular world from the sacred, and a staircase situated in the center of the lotus pond leads down to a vermillion-lacquered corridor. The Medicine Buddha (Bhaisajyaguru) is enshrined in the center of the corridor. When light comes through into the main hall, the area takes on a vermillion hue, creating a mystical atmosphere. June and July are the best months to see lotus blossoms.





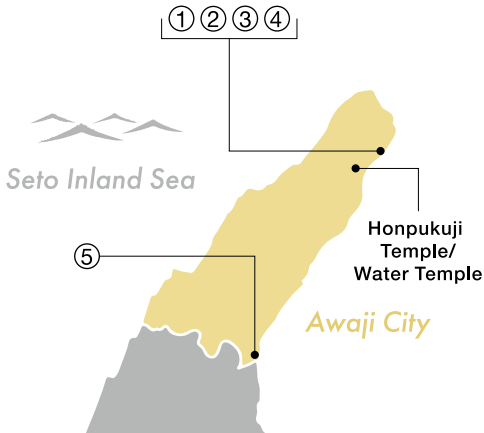
# Scenery created by Tadao Ando

Tadao Ando's architectural concept is "return to nature." One example is the Awaji Yumebutai complex constructed on the site of a quarry used in the reclamation for Kansai International Airport. The complex is intended to manually restore greenery to land that was carved away by man. The space is designed for visitors to stroll the grounds and feel the water, wind, light, shade, sky, mountains, ocean, and other aspects of nature that are normally overlooked.

Columns:  
Out and About  
in Awaji



- 1. Awaji Greenhouse, one of the largest greenhouses in Japan. On display in the wide-open space are roughly 3,000 species of plants from around the world, including a 300-year-old quiver tree (Awaji Yumebutai, Main Map on p. 46)
- 2. The Hillside Gallery, a rooftop garden with an aesthetically pleasing space created by a colonnaded corridor. The scallop shells were laid out by hand (Awaji Yumebutai, Main Map on p. 46)
- 3. Sky Garden, a cubic garden measuring 18 m on each side. Featuring symmetrical intersecting staircases around the main pillar (Awaji Yumebutai, Main Map on p. 46)
- 4. The Hundred-Step Garden, 100 flower beds designed as a garden of prayer for the victims of the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995 (Awaji Yumebutai, Main Map on p. 46)
- 5. Located on a steep slope overlooking Osaka Bay on clear days, and a "sea of clouds" created by fog on rainy days. A hotel where guests can feel the changes of nature (TOTO Seawind Awaji, Main Map on p. 46)







Main Festival  
of Izanagi Shrine  
4/20-4/22

# Retreat 05 Awe-inspiring festival float sculptures

The time has come for the Main Festival of Izanagi Shrine. The futon-danjiri floats bearing taiko drums are carried by around 40 men. The loud drumming seems to come up from the ground. The giant scarlet futon cushions on top are imposing. This type of float is said to have originated from the practice of drumming in the streets to announce the coming of portable shrines carrying gods. They are ritual implements created during summer festivals in Osaka 300 to 400 years ago, and have spread throughout the Seto Inland Sea region and as far away as Kyushu. Awaji's floats are renowned for the many forms they take. The intricate carvings looming from above on the floats are eye-catching. It's amazing that such elaborate details exist next to the overwhelming size of the floats and the palpable power of their carriers. Just ask any carrier about the carvings on their float, and they will gush about the effort that went into them. The unfettered passion of the carriers is part of what makes the festival so extraordinary. The sound of the taiko drums reaches deep into the hearts of all who come to see the festival.



Photo | Masamichi Hirata

"Nunobiki-no-taki: Matsunami Kengyo saves Kozakura" by sculptor Hiraki Seimin. Father-and-son wood carvers Hiraki Seito and Hiraki Seimin left their mark on the world of sculpture with their masterpieces of festival floats and shrine and temple sculptures on Awaji Island, as well as taiko stands and festival floats throughout the Kansai region.



"Ama-no-iwato-biraki: Multitudinous gods performed kagura dance" by sculptor Hiraki Seito  
Photo | Masamichi Hirata

## Interviewee: Masamichi Hirata

Born in the Ikuho area of Awaji City. Photographer and member of the Danjiri Wood Carving Art Study Group. Lecturer in the Photography Department of the University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences.



## Appeals of festival float carvings

Festival floats known as danjiri appear at festivals on Awaji Island and the rest of the Seto Inland Sea. These floats can be carried or pulled. Both types of floats are valiant, brilliant ritual implements, but their carvings are also magnificent and noteworthy. The floats for the Kishiwada festival are also well known for their detailed, dynamic carvings, and Awaji is one of the origins of the techniques used to create them.

Floats in Awaji are often carried, and usually take the form of futon-daiko, floats with what appear to be scarlet futon cushions on top. The place to look is the

narrow space between the frameworks supporting the top. Laminated wood in the spaces is decorated with three-dimensional carvings that serve as horizontal picture scrolls depicting scenes of nature, sacred beasts, Japanese mythology, famous battles, and other stories. The carvers use more than a hundred different chisels, faithfully rendering facial expressions and armor decorations in detail. Note the branches of the pine trees and autumn leaves that frame the sculpture, as well as the intricacy of the leaves. Each sculptor elicits different feelings, and they are all worth seeing.

## Festival highlights

The spring festival at Izanagi Shrine in the Ichinomiya area is just one of 35 festivals in Awaji City that feature danjiri floats. Awaji City has more than 80 futon-danjiri floats.



### The energy of float lifting

In front of the shrine and at intersections and other major gatherings, the carriers lift the floats high and make sweeping turns and daring tilts that are thrilling to watch.  
Photo | Masamichi Hirata



### Evening return to the shrine

To clear the way for the portable shrines to return to Izanagi Shrine and announce the arrival of the gods, carriers shout "Chosaja!" and drummers beat their taiko.



### Children

Several elementary-age or younger children ride inside the floats and beat the taiko drums. They brace themselves against the pillars to avoid falling off amid the tumult.

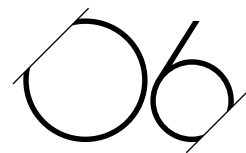


### Portable shrines

After the Main Festival on April 22 of each year, the divine object is transferred to a magnificently decorated portable shrine and carried to Hama Shrine (an auxiliary shrine) amid a procession of valiant floats.



## Retreat



# The excitement of choosing “Mamesara” small plates

This tranquil wooden one-story house was once a village clinic. It has hardwood floors, wood-framed windows, and stucco walls. A cat is curled up, asleep on an antique chair. The place is comfortable, as if time has stopped. This pottery studio produces and sells works inspired by Minpei ware, a type of pottery that once flourished in the southern part of Awaji Island. Although they are fashioned after traditional shapes, they are designed to complement modern dining tables, and are available in more than 10 colors. We recommend using these plates in combination, allowing you to fully enjoy the wide variety of colors and shapes. It is a thrill to select these small plates that add color to your dining table or change the mood of everyday life.

## Creating dishes that will last a century

Junichi Okamoto,  
owner of Awabi ware



“Mamesara” offer a unique expression even amongst other types of tableware. They are perfect for serving condiments, pickled vegetables, stewed hijiki seaweed, spinach steeped in dashi broth, cherry tomatoes, olives, etc. It is fun to think of the colors and combinations and to discover different ways to use them, including as sugar cube plates, used teabag holders, chopstick rests, or even as a plate to hold hearings.

Awabi ware is intended for everyday use. We continue to make original molds and uphold traditional practices that keep these dishes available for future generations.

Awaji once flourished as a leading ceramics town alongside Seto and Arita in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. There was even a pottery school in Tsuna, an area of present-day Awaji City. Hopefully one day potters and mold makers will gather here and the city will be known for its ceramic manufacturing.



## Learn about Minpei ware

Minpei ware—also known as Awaji ware—was created during the 19th century by Kashu Minpei, a village headman in what is now Minamiawaji City, who studied under master craftsmen of Kyoto-style ceramics. It grew into a leading industry of Awaji Island, and became the official ceramic ware of the Hachisuka clan that ruled over the provinces of Awa and Awaji. It is characterized by the use of yellow, green, brownish-red, and other bright colors influenced by the Qing dynasty in present-day China.



1. Sugar, the well-behaved cat who serves as the face of the store. The sun-bathed chair and sofa are her favorite places to sit 2. Plates are displayed by color, making it easier and fun to choose your favorite combinations 3. The extensive lineup includes curry dishes, gratin dishes, and vases



## Awabi ware

Main Map on p. 46



The characters of “Awabi” mean “the beauty of Awaji Island.” We produce and sell Awabi ware for everyday use, imbued with the warmth of handiwork and the reliability of a well-designed product, while incorporating the characteristics of Minpei (Awaji) ware that flourished in the 19th and early 20th centuries.



Summer only!  
120-min swim with horses  
Mid-July to  
late September



**Nijiko**  
(23 years old, female)  
A superwoman with  
endless stamina.  
Princess of outdoor  
riding

**Drum**  
(23 years old, male)  
A calm swimmer  
who loves the sea

Photo location: Near Ura Kenmin Sun Beach

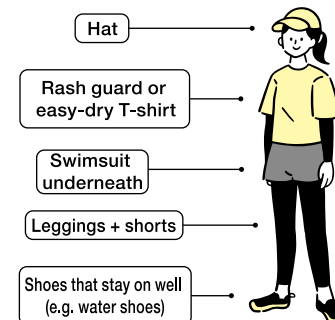


1. Day-to-day fatigue melts  
into the scenery and flows  
away with the tide 2. Riding  
along the beach on the  
backs of Drum (right) and  
Nijiko (left) 3. Drum looks  
like he's enjoying himself,  
too! 4. The reliable  
instructor, Shinoda-san, is  
perfectly in tune with Drum



## Retreat 07 Swimming in the sea with horses

Climb onto horseback for a unique view of the beautiful ocean. One minute, the rider sways from side to side in time with the horse's steps on the sand. The next, they charge into the sea and splash about together. As the horse's front hooves sink into the sand, the rider leans forward and dips their feet into the water. You can feel the breath and the warmth of the horse through the horse's sides. Long ago, people moved around on the backs of animals unlike with the blocks of metal used today. Riding a horse requires communication, which opens the heart and brings joy.



Harmony world, a horse riding club, offers this rare course for swimming in the sea with horse only during the summer. The well-trained, docile horses make this experience welcoming even to those who are new to horse riding. Once in the water, grab the horse's tail and see if you can keep up as it swims along! Experience the joy of powerful and gentle horses in the beautiful seas around Awaji.

HOW TO



### Harmony world

Main Map on p. 46

Swim in the sea or enjoy one of many outdoor rides through the beautiful scenery of Awaji. Scan here for overviews, reservations, and other details.



# Treats

The epitome of traveling is to enjoy the local gourmet. Here are some recommended treats made with local ingredients.

Columns:  
Out and About  
in Awaji

Fluffy



## ① Malassadas

shima  
Donut-style malassadas are a classic Hawaiian treat. The menu is seasonal, and the ones served with “Taiyo-no-ichigo” strawberries from Awaji Country Garden are very popular.

Map of Iwaya on p. 45

## ② Croquettes

Awaji Beef Shintani  
in Carillon square

Everyone loves freshly fried croquettes from the butcher. They are crispy on the outside and juicy on the inside. Freshly fried is the way to go!

Map of Tsuna on p. 45

Juicy!



Creamy



Refreshing



## ③ Gelato

Shima-no-Megumi Gelato Nora  
The mild taste of fresh milk delivered by dairy farmers every morning. The gelato are made with fresh milk delivered by the dairy farm. The menu features seasonal fruits and vegetables, allowing you to taste the gifts of Awaji. The corn served on the side is also homemade.

Main Map on p. 46

## ④ Iced matcha latte

COFFEE BARN

Every corner of Awaji has boutique coffee shops, each delicious in its own way and worth a visit.

Main Map on p. 46



Mouth-watering

## ⑤ Fruit sandwiches

Iwaya Coffee Shop

Awaji is also a land of fruits, including figs and loquats. Take a chance and enjoy the seasonal fruits.

Map of Iwaya on p. 45

Hot and flaky



## ⑥ Onion tempura

Ebisumaru at Michi-no-Eki Awaji  
Awaji onion tempura is sweet and juicy, like no other. It is a must-try menu.

Map of Iwaya on p. 45

Crunchy



Crunchy

## ⑦ Cream puffs

Bentendo

Cream puffs are made with the finest ingredients. The homemade whipped cream is light with a rich-yet- mild flavor. These lovingly made cream puffs are very popular with the locals.

Map of Tsuna on p. 45

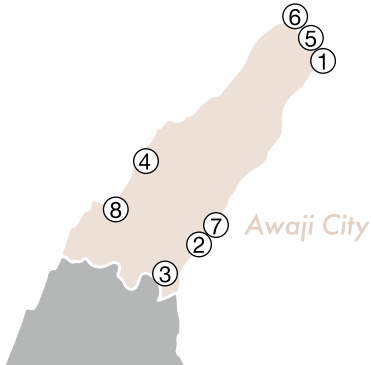
## ⑧ Kudzu bars

Horaido

Distinctly textured ice cream bars made by freezing kudzu with lots of fruit. Crunchy and chewy at the same time, they do not melt, making them perfect to eat on the go. These colorful, low-calorie, mildly sweet treats are a hit!

Map of Ichinomiya on p. 45

Mandarin Strawberry Blue soda







# Arts

Unwind in a calming spot with views of the ocean, the feel of the breeze and sun through the trees, the chirping of wild birds, and the scent of the soft soil. Here are some of the best places to connect with nature in Awaji.



Special thanks: Kakuya  
Oishi Museum of Art-yama

## ① Feel the time

A favorite spot of architect Tadao Ando

### Kakuya Oishi Museum of Art-yama

Main Map on p. 46

A museum on top of a hill overlooking Osaka Bay, featuring a comfortable atmosphere with gentle ocean breezes, sunlight filtering through the trees, and fresh air that pervades the entire property. On exhibit are the works of Kakuya Oishi, a Western-style painter, and his wife, Shoco, from Awaji City who lovingly depicted the sea and the people who live near it. Construction of the museum began in 1994 with volunteers cutting down trees, and completed in 2004. After Oishi's death in 2018 at the age of 94, the museum continues to be managed and operated by the many people who love him and his work. Art-yama has a café with a great view, and a plaza decorated with numerous objets d'art, including a stone tower, a favorite of Tadao Ando. The space is filled with the presence of the great artist, who worked as an elementary school teacher for 20 years and loved to travel abroad. Lean back on a lounge on the terrace, look out to the ocean, and let your thoughts drift back to Oishi's time and the countries he visited. One visit is all it takes to discover a special place to calm the mind.



The exhibition room on the second floor of the main gallery. Huge pieces of driftwood that stretch to the ceiling exude the warmth of passing time and organic matter.

Car parking is limited, so we recommend parking at the Awaji Yumebutai parking lot and taking the 10-min walk up the promenade in front of the Grand Nikko Awaji to the museum. For more information on how to get here and business hours, please visit the website.



## ② Learn the soil

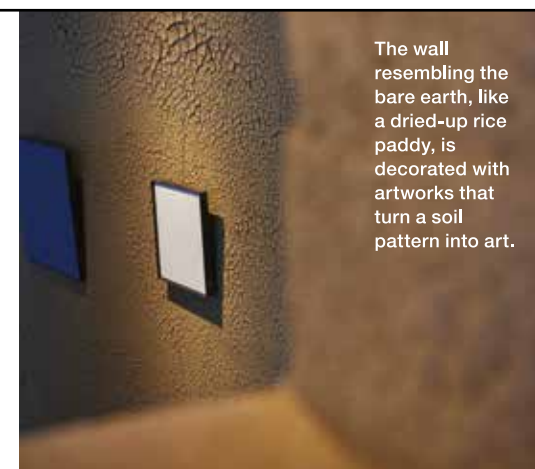
The Earth, expressed as art

### Soil Museum SHIDO

Map of Ichinomiya on p. 45

Sunset spot

A museum that expresses the natural appearance of soil, with spaces produced by world-renowned plasterer Naoki Kusumi from Awaji Island. All the floors and walls of the museum are plastered with Awaji Island soil using traditional techniques to express the appearance of the soil of the natural world. The dried soil and the surfaces of cliffs that have collapsed due to rain are part of nature. The strata-like reception counter, the wavy floor, the unbaked Awaji roof tiles on the restroom walls, and the hand washing stations are all made of soil, each with a distinct appearance made by a different construction method. The museum is built in a location with gorgeous sunset views with highlights that include the way the appearance of the earthen walls changes when the light hits them differently. The museum is run by a local construction material manufacturer in business for more than 110 years. The museum's concept is to introduce the splendor of soil and plaster walls, which regulate temperature and humidity and are also fire-resistant, from an artistic perspective.



The wall resembling the bare earth, like a dried-up rice paddy, is decorated with artworks that turn a soil pattern into art.



A concept book summarizing the vision of bringing Awaji's earth and mythology to reality through soil art (left) and five-color crayons made from Awaji soil (right) are available for purchase.

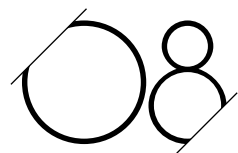


Reservations are required for tours outside of special exhibition periods when contemporary art is on display. Please contact us for business hours and other details.





## Retreat



An old fishmonger takes out her cutting board and knife and quickly slices up a freshly landed sea bream. Old men chat on a bridge lined with flower pots. A cat naps in the eaves of someone's house. The port town of Iwaya, which once flourished as the gateway to the island, has been a busy place since ancient times, and many old legends remain. These calming, heartwarming scenes of everyday life are different from what you usually see at tourist sights. A stroll through this port town is the best way to see the daily life on the island. Hop on a boat across the only remaining shipping route between Honshu and Awaji Island to see for yourself!



Marin-Awaji high-speed boat

## Boat ride to a retro port town

How to Go



13 min from Honshu by high-speed boat!  
**Awaji Jenova Line**

This route connects Iwaya Port and Akashi Port. Enjoy the extraordinary feeling of gliding across the sea under the huge bridge on this high-speed boat. In only 13 min, you will arrive at the welcoming port town of Iwaya. Scan here for fares, timetables, and other details.



## A walk through the Iwaya Shopping District

Located in the northern part of Awaji City, Iwaya Port was much more lively and acted as an important route connecting Awaji and Honshu before the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge opened. Today, the shopping district retains the nostalgic atmosphere of many decades ago. On certain days of the week, the fishmongers gather to enjoy small talk and exchange information, giving the town a welcoming feel with smiles all around. Who knew that this relaxing shopping district was just a short high-speed boat trip from the Port of Akashi?

## Rock cave believed to be final resting place of Izanagi

Classical Japanese mythology offers differing accounts of where Izanagi spent the rest of his life after giving birth to Japan and its major deities. One volume maintains that he settled at Taga in Omi Province, while another holds that he built a secluded palace in Awaji. This rock cave in Iwaya is said to be that secluded palace, and a small Iwakusu Shrine was installed in the cave in remembrance.



Map of Iwaya on p. 45 Photo | Masamichi Hirata

Photo: The Japan Heritage Awaji Island Committee



## Eshima Island: the first island in Japan

In the creation story at the beginning of the Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters), Japan's oldest history book, Onokoro Island is described as Japan's first island, formed when drops of salt fell as the divine couple Izanagi and Izanami rummaged around the chaotic newborn earth. Many places on Awaji Island are considered to be Onokoro Island according to the legend; Eshima Island is one of them. It has long been a popular scenic spot for moon-viewing, with descriptions of moon-viewing poetry gatherings and poems about the moon in various works of classical Japanese literature, including The Tale of the Heike and Sankashu.

Map of Iwaya on p. 45



Photo | Masamichi Hirata



Sandstone layers around 35 to 38 million years old have been exposed by the rain and waves, and iron has formed into beautiful patterns along the cracks. The stone tower at the top is said to have been erected by Taira no Kiyomori as a memorial to Matsuomaru, who became a human sacrifice for the safety of the construction of the port of Owada-no-Tomari for trade with the Southern Song dynasty. It is a special place where many ancient legends remain.



# Discover More Hidden Gems

Columns:  
Out and About  
in Awaji

No trip to Awaji is complete without discovering and exploring interesting places like these.

## ① Largest party horn producer in Japan

Most people probably don't know exactly what to call party horns, so it stands to reason that even fewer know that the vast majority of party horns in Japan are manufactured in Awaji City. What better reason to tour the party horn factory at Fukimodoshi-no-Sato?

Main Map on p. 46

June 6 is  
Party Horn  
Day



## ③ Unmanned gyoza shop

Shima Gyoza Haru-chan

Gyoza vending machines in Awaji City. And not just any gyoza—authentic gyoza made with local wild boar meat and venison meat. There's nothing in the world like it!

Map of Ichinomiya on p. 45



## ② Pokémon manhole covers

Somewhere at Michi-no-Eki Awaji is a manhole cover bearing the image of the Pokémon Lugia, who is said to be the god of the sea. HINT: Look in the higher ground. Other facilities with interesting manhole covers include Hokudan Earthquake Memorial Park, which bears the memory of the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995, and the Parchez Incense Museum, where iconic fragrances of Awaji Island are produced and enshrined. See if you can find them all.

- 1. Michi-no-Eki Awaji [Map of Iwaya on p. 45](#)
- 2. Parchez Incense Museum [Main Map on p. 46](#)
- 3. Hokudan Earthquake Memorial Park [Map of Hokudan on p. 45](#)

©Pokémon. ©Nintendo/Creatures Inc./GAME FREAK inc.  
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I talk!



## ④ Onion soup from a faucet

Awaji onions are known for being the sweetest and juiciest around. Locals want everyone to know how delicious they are so badly that they built a faucet that serves hot onion soup. It's just sitting there waiting for you at Awaji Highway Oasis. And it's free (for now). The same soup is also sold as a powder, the store's top-selling product.

Main Map on p. 46 Awaji Highway Oasis



## ⑤ Golden bus that brings happiness

Awajin-Awahime Bus, operated by Honshi Kaikyo Bus, is a local bus that travels through Awaji City. The blindingly brilliant wrapping may give some passengers pause at first, but don't worry—you can't see it from the inside. Locals say that encountering a golden bus is lucky, a belief that has not been proven . . . yet.

## ⑥ Esaki Lighthouse, an important cultural property of Japan

Following the opening of the Port of Hyogo to international trade in the last year of the Edo shogunate, five Western-style lighthouses were installed on the Seto Inland Sea to ensure safe navigation for foreign ships. There is one each on the Sea of Japan and Seto Inland Sea sides of the Kanmon Straits, one at the Port of Kobe, one on a small island in the strait between Osaka Bay and the Kii Channel, and one on the northern tip of Awaji Island. The Esaki Lighthouse was completed in 1871 and still stands almost exactly as it was when it was built. Given its historical and cultural value, it was designated as an important cultural property of Japan in 2022. The lighthouse is not open to the public.

Main Map on p. 46

## ⑦ Nojima Fault at Hokudan Earthquake Memorial Park

On January 17, 1995, the Great Hanshin Earthquake struck, causing extensive damage in the Hanshin area and northern Awaji Island. This memorial park was established two years later. The Nojima Fault exposed by the earthquake has been preserved intact to convey the power and danger of earthquakes to future generations. Guides are on hand to talk about the horror of earthquakes, the value of life, and the importance of being prepared for earthquakes.

Map of Hokudan on p. 45

## ⑧ Egg vending machines

Egg vending machines at Kitasaka Chicken Farm (Hokudan, Shizuki, Higashiura)

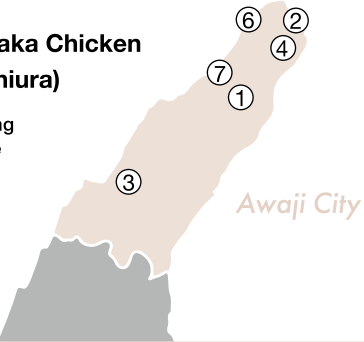
When a place sells rich eggs from vending machines, it is definitely a "land of divine offerings." If you find one, give it a try.



Scan here for a map of egg vending machines.



The vending machines near Higashiura store of Supermarket Kinki





April 18 is  
Incense  
Day

Retreat  
09

## Enveloped by the scent of incense

It smells like incense here. Not in an ephemeral way, but in the sense that every particle in the air carries the scent, as if the entire city has been burning incense for decades. Today, Awaji Island is the largest producer of incense sticks in Japan, and incense factories are scattered throughout the Ichinomiya area. Hundreds of years ago, the streets of Eiura were lined with shipping agencies, making it the most prosperous port town on the island. However, most cargo vessels stopped sailing on the west side of the island in the winter because of monsoons. Eventually, ship owners went into the business of making incense sticks to ensure the seafarers have a secure job during the offseason. Around 1850, they inherited the techniques of incense-making from Sakai, a thriving incense-producing area of Osaka at the time. In the late 1960s, thanks to the ingenuity and efforts of the predecessors, Awaji became the largest producer of incense sticks in Japan.

## Preserving tradition and creating modernity

Incense makers in Awaji preserve traditional methods and techniques while mass-producing high-quality incense sticks; their flexibility to adapt quickly to changing lifestyles is evident. They have developed incense sticks that give off less smoke, deodorizing incense sticks, incense made of Japanese paper and string, incense with built-in matches, etc. They have also explored different fragrances and expressions. In recent years, the sales channels have expanded to overseas, including Paris and New York. Awaji is home to professional incense makers whose pride and well-honed skills underlie all aspects of the craft. With exquisite blends, they create scents that are worthy of applause. The shipping agents who started incense-making businesses had a vision that eventually grew into a leading industry for Awaji. Their willingness to create new things in response to changes over time while also preserving traditions is responsible for the calming scent that has filled the air here for the past 170 years.



### Baikundo

Map of Ichinomiya on p. 45

Established in 1850 by a shipping agency. The company uses traditional techniques to create and sell products that are natural, healthy, and convenient.



Sunset  
spot

## Where fragrant wood was introduced to Japan

Ichinomiya is home to Kareki Shrine, origin of the ancient legend of fragrant wood. According to classical Japanese mythology, Awaji Island is the place where fragrant wood was introduced to Japan. "Jimi," a type of aromatic tree, drifted ashore from Southeast Asia during the reign of Empress Suiko in 595. Unaware of its aromatic properties, the islanders threw it onto a fire and noticed its pleasing fragrance, so they presented it to the Imperial Court. It is believed that the divine object of Kareki Shrine may be the fragrant wood that washed ashore that day.

### Kareki Shrine

Main Map on p. 46

Enshrined here as the divine object is a piece of fragrant wood over 2 meters in length. Residents funded its restoration in 2019.

Japanese paper incense



### Kunjudo

Map of Ichinomiya on p. 45

Established in 1893. Using traditional techniques and innovative technology, we create new forms of incense from Japanese paper, string, and organic materials. The showroom also offers an incense-making workshop.

### Parchez Incense Museum

This facility offers visitors the opportunity to learn more about fragrances, including through a map of the world's fragrances and an exhibit on making Japanese incense. In addition, there are workshops for making herbal soap and perfume. It also has a hot spring (onsen) to enjoy. Also features an extensive selection of Awaji incense sticks.





# Enjoy the style of fishermen’s coats

A close-up look at donza fishermen’s coats reveals distinctive traditional Japanese embroidery, with different combinations and arrangements of patterns. The stitching that covers the entire donza overflows with the sincerity of the stitcher, and the carefully layered handiwork is quite eye-catching. Fishermen on Awaji Island used donza for work until the late 1920s. Indigo-dyed cotton cloth with layered embroidery was long used to protect seafarers from the cold and rain. This cold-weather clothing, known as donja in Hokkaido and Aomori, zonza on Sado Island, and donda in Oita, were a typical garment in fishing villages throughout Japan. Only a few pieces exist today, and around 30 pieces of indigo-dyed, traditionally embroidered Awaji donza are carefully preserved in private homes and archives. These donza were made by women who were neither writers nor artisans; they were everyday people making work clothes for the men in their families. Given the magnitude of the work involved, a modern person would not be able to make more than a few in a lifetime.



## Prayerful traditional embroidery for life at sea

Donza were used as cold-weather clothing against severe ocean winds, while traveling to fishing grounds, gathering around bonfires, and selling fish as well as for celebrations and other formal occasions. The women who made them probably imbued every stitch with their prayers for the safety of their husbands and sons at sea. It takes years—and a great deal of patience and dedication—to collect old kimonos and scraps and turn them into sturdy work clothes with traditional embroidery. There were surely many frustrations along the way. Seafarers must have been proud to wear donza made with so much love. They must have felt so special to walk around with their donza fluttering in the breeze. When a fisherman passed away, he was interred together with his donza.

Donza Patterns

Persimmon flower

Double persimmon flower

Staggered cross and diamond lattice

Cedar

Flower

Hemp leaf

Traditional Japanese embroidery was initially for reinforcement, but gradually came to involve expressive patterns. Persimmons, hemp, and other symbols of fertility and protection against evil were often used to signify prayers for people’s safety.

## Indigo-dyeing workshop

From the 17th to early 20th centuries, indigo dyers were found in every corner of Awaji City, but their numbers declined with the advent of chemical dyes. Recently, natural indigo has regained attention for its antibacterial and deodorizing features.



The seal of Myoshoji Temple near the workshop is also made with indigo dye. Myoshoji Temple is associated with Ashikaga Takauji.

### AWAJI Ai-LAND project

Map of Higashiura on p. 45



Onokoro-ai is a pesticide- and chemical fertilizer-free indigo grown in fields on hills overlooking the sea. Dye is made by fermenting the leaves, and only natural ingredients are added to make the dyeing solution. Traditional indigo dyeing is non-chemical and eco-friendly.

The indigo-dyeing experience is done with plastic gloves. The process involves soaking the fabric in the dyeing solution and washing it in water several times to produce a vivid indigo color.

## See authentic donza fishermen’s coats!



A curtain decorating a futon-danjiri float



Kanshaku-dama, a game from the 1910s–1920s  
A game played at inns in the former town of Hokudan. Players lined up 30-cm tall sumo dolls on a shelf and tried to knock them off with a fabric ball.

Awaji City is home to many of the donza remaining on Awaji Island. Authentic donza can be seen at the Awaji City Hokudan History and Folk Museum. There are several on display to view and compare.

### Awaji City Hokudan History and Folk Museum

Map of Hokudan on p. 45

A facility displaying the history and culture of Awaji City, with exhibits of farming tools, octopus pots, ritual implements, and many other folk artifacts. Visitors can enjoy up-close views of the textured embroidery of a curtain decorating a futon-danjiri float.



Travel  
Information

Kominka  
Restaurants

## Satisfaction for the appetite and the mind

Open the sliding door with a rattle and step onto the earthen floor. Permeating the high ceiling, solid pillars, and beams is the lovely smell of a freshly cooked meal. You will feel at home in the coziness that only a traditional Japanese house can elicit. In these restaurants located inside Kominka traditional Japanese houses, you can take your time and enjoy the chef's specialties made from a variety of local ingredients.

Special thanks: La Casa Vecchia

- RESTAURANT -

Italian

**La Casa Vecchia**

Map of Higashiura on p. 45

A 100-year-old traditional house with minimal renovations. Opened in 2013 by a couple from Kyushu who wanted to serve the distinctive appeals of Awaji Island cuisine in a course format. The chef, who also farms, renews the menu every two weeks to capture the 24 solar terms. Experience the best each season has to offer. This restaurant enriches both body and mind.



Handmade pasta from homegrown wheat



**Taste seasonal local ingredients  
infused with warm hospitality**

Japanese

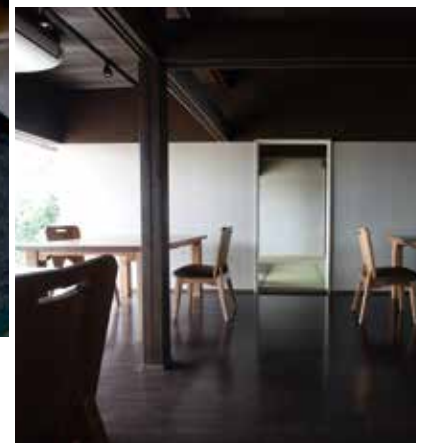
**Kokochiyo**

Map of Higashiura on p. 45

Opened in 2015 in a 45-year-old house renovated by a young architect living on the island. Characterized by comfortable interior design and a menu centered on local seafood based on the owner-chef's training at a kappo restaurant in Kyoto. The owner-chef engages in daily exploration to define and realize true comfort. Each lovingly prepared dish satisfies the appetite, the eyes, and the mind.



Tessa (fugu sashimi) (raw blow fish)



**Taste carefully prepared fish dishes**

French

**Harenosara**

Main Map on p. 46

A 120-year-old farmhouse renovated into a restaurant based on the concept of local food. A magnificent old Japanese house with a Nagaya-style gate, main building, and annex. Opened in 2013, the restaurant offers a course lunch from Tuesday through Saturday. The meal is prepared with great patience and effort with seasonal ingredients to offer the guests a tasty and healthy meal. Dinner service is for one group only on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. A restaurant to enjoy rich, delicious ingredients in a relaxed environment.



An appetizer featuring marinated sea bream, homemade ham, and plenty of vegetables sourced directly from local farmers



**Enjoy a casual, fun, delicious  
experience**



# Relax and forget about time

Awaji City offers various types of accommodations, from hotels and Japanese-style inns to rental houses and glamping. In this guide, we introduce several lodging options with the relaxed and cozy experience only traditional Japanese houses can provide. Enjoy your morning coffee while gazing out at the ocean. Write a letter to a loved one while listening to the sounds of the forest. Watch the sunset change the color of the sky. Enjoy a drink while watching the flames of the wood stove. Shed your armor and relax. These old houses are perfect places to take a breathe, relax, and refresh.



Special thanks: Kotan

## AKIYA cornerstone

Map of Hokudan on p. 45

A long-abandoned traditional house, fully restored by a Japanese-Australian couple. This cozy lodging combines European antiques with a Japanese-style interior. Enjoy BBQ, bonfires, and a relaxing break from daily life. Dogs are welcome, and there is a grass dog run to enjoy.



**An antique Japanese house full of stories, saved from abandonment**

## Sasasauna

Map of Tsuna on p. 45

A renovated 96-year-old one-story Japanese house with a private sauna. The owner worked with a carpenter to design the wood-burning sauna. Enjoy the spacious porch, solid wood and earthen floors, and wood stoves. Relax and enjoy the smell of the wood, the texture of the earth, and the flickering of flames at this healing oasis away from the hustle and bustle of the city.



**Detox in a traditional Thai herbal sauna. Special sauna experience at a traditional Japanese house, limited to one group per day**

## Kotan

Map of Tsuna on p. 45

A local construction company operates this renovated Japanese house where only one group per night can stay. In a modern space with traditional architecture, enjoy a quiet, enriching time while experiencing the mythology, food, and art of Awaji Island. A rental facility, Shoin, on the property is available for training, private exhibitions, and other opportunities for learning and sharing.



**Special course prepared by a local chef on call. A truly unique experience**



# Share your trip with others

Shopping for souvenirs is one of the pleasures of traveling. It is a joy to spend time imagining the smile on the recipient's face and choosing locally distinct flavors to serve as future memories of your trip.

## Chocolate brooches (Asuna Chocolat)

Main Map on p. 46

Raw chocolate is made by melting cacao below 48°C and pouring it into molds imported from Belgium. Each and every piece is brushed with vegetable powder coloring. No eggs, dairy products, or animal products are used. The owner has worked through extensive trial-and-error to discover production methods that bring out the nutrients and medical power of cacao. They hope the people who eat their creations will become healthy from the core. Their detailed chocolate brooches even show stamens and petal veins, and are recommended as souvenirs for loved ones.



1. Coffee beans from Shundo Coffee Roaster (Map of Higashiura on p. 45) | Drip bags roasted in small quantities to preserve freshness at a specialty coffee shop that roasts its own coffee 2. “Chiyo-no-Enishi” Japanese sake from Sennenichi Brewery (Map of Higashiura on p. 45) | An elegant premium sake aroma with a clean, refreshing taste that has won several gold medals at sake competitions. Made in a sake brewery established 150 years ago. Only available on Awaji Island 3. Galettes from Boulangerie RURAL (Map of Tsuna on p. 45) | Crispy galettes made by a bakery that insists on using wheat from Hokkaido (only available from autumn to spring). Featuring Naruto oranges, chestnuts, and other seasonal ingredients 4. Onion soup 10-packs from Awaji Highway Oasis (Main Map on p. 46) | Enjoy the intense flavor of delicious Awaji onions 5. Seaweed sprouts from Michi-no-Eki Awaji (Map of Iwaya on p. 45) | Freshly harvested spring seaweed sprouts boiled in sweet soy sauce 6. Indigo tea & Indigo chai from the AWAJI Ai-LAND project (Map of Higashiura on p. 45) | Caffeine-free tea grown without pesticides. The stems of indigo—a medicinal plant—have antioxidant properties 7. Soap from Shima Sekken | Additive-free soap made from local ingredients. Available at Awaji Highway Oasis 8. Gingered young sardines, naruto oranges, and kelp stalks boiled in sweet soy sauce from Nakano Suisan (Main Map on p. 46) | No additives, made by fishermen 9. Jams from farm studio (Map of Higashiura on p. 45) | Enjoy the amazingly rich flavor of strawberries, tomatoes, fresh ginger, and other lovingly grown fruits and vegetables 10. Awaji onion ponzu sauce from Michi-no-Eki Awaji | Contains the equivalent of one entire onion!

Some souvenirs listed here are made on a small scale by independently owned businesses. Please check their websites and social media for details.



# Useful information

## Marche tour

With an abundance of seafood throughout the year as well as onions and other fresh vegetables, fruits, beef, pork, chicken, and rice, Awaji is a treasury of food. Visit the local stores, enjoy the seasonal food, and look for local souvenirs.

### Awaji Highway Oasis

Main Map on p. 46

A food theme park packed with the appeals of Awaji Island. Featuring stores selling onion soup, craft beer, sake from Awaji City's only brewery, and a wide variety of souvenirs, as well as restaurants offering seasonal food.



Direct access from the Awaji Service Area on both sides of the Kobe–Awaji–Naruto Expressway, as well as from local roads.

### Souvenirs



### Michi-no-Eki Higashiura Terminal Park

Map of Higashiura on p. 45

This roadside station, which includes the Higashiura Bus Terminal, features a variety of fresh food brought in every morning by farmers. Fresh local vegetables and fruits at reasonable prices. You'll want to get here early on Saturdays and Sundays—chefs and locals from Awaji Island and beyond come to shop as soon as the store opens!

### Vegetables



### Awaji Beef Touge

Map of Ichinomiya on p. 45

Awaji Beef is a brand given only to the highest quality Awaji cattle. Only around 200 purebred Tajima cows are selected each year. Exquisitely marbled with refreshing fat, a fine, tender texture, and an authentic flavor and aroma. Chilled delivery available (domestic only).



### Awaji Beef



### Osaka-ya fish shop

Map of Higashiura on p. 45

Fresh local fish landed that day in Osaka Bay at reasonable prices. The store displays seasonal seafood fresh from the harbor. The selection includes local fish that cannot be found in supermarkets, so it's worth coming just for a look!

### Local fish



## Handy 2D codes

These websites contain a wealth of information about Awaji Island. Please visit these sites before your trip.

### Awaji Island

This website run by the Awaji Island Tourist Association provides information on Awaji Island's history, food, hot springs, and other tourism topics, as well as several suggested sightseeing plans.



The island for food lovers

### AWAJISHIMA

A website containing information about food on Awaji Island, operated by the Awaji Island Food Brand Promotion Council. The website includes information on restaurants where you can taste local food.



Awaji Island local information magazine

### dan

A free magazine full of local information that is inserted in newspapers and distributed throughout Awaji Island. Also includes information on new restaurants and other hot topics.



### Awaji Island Tourism Awatabi

An Awaji Island tourist information site run by a person from Awaji Island. Extensive information on tourist attractions as well as suggested driving routes and souvenirs.



## Akashi Kaikyo Bridge tours

Here are some spots to get a close-up look at the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, the world's longest suspension bridge.

### An impactful view from below

You can go right under the bridge from Michi-no-Eki Awaji (Map of Iwaya on p. 45).



### View from an open-air bath

Onsen Matsuho no Sato (Main Map on p. 46) offers excellent views of the bridge.

### Up close on a cruise!

The large three-masted sightseeing cruise is a replica of the Kanrin-maru, a steamship that under Captain Katsu Kaishu in 1860 became the first Japanese ship to cross the Pacific Ocean. The 75-min tour passes under the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge and circles around the west coast of the island. The on-board guides weave together the history of the island and local information.

Air-conditioned main cabin



### Akashi Kaikyo Bridge cruises

Map of Iwaya on p. 45



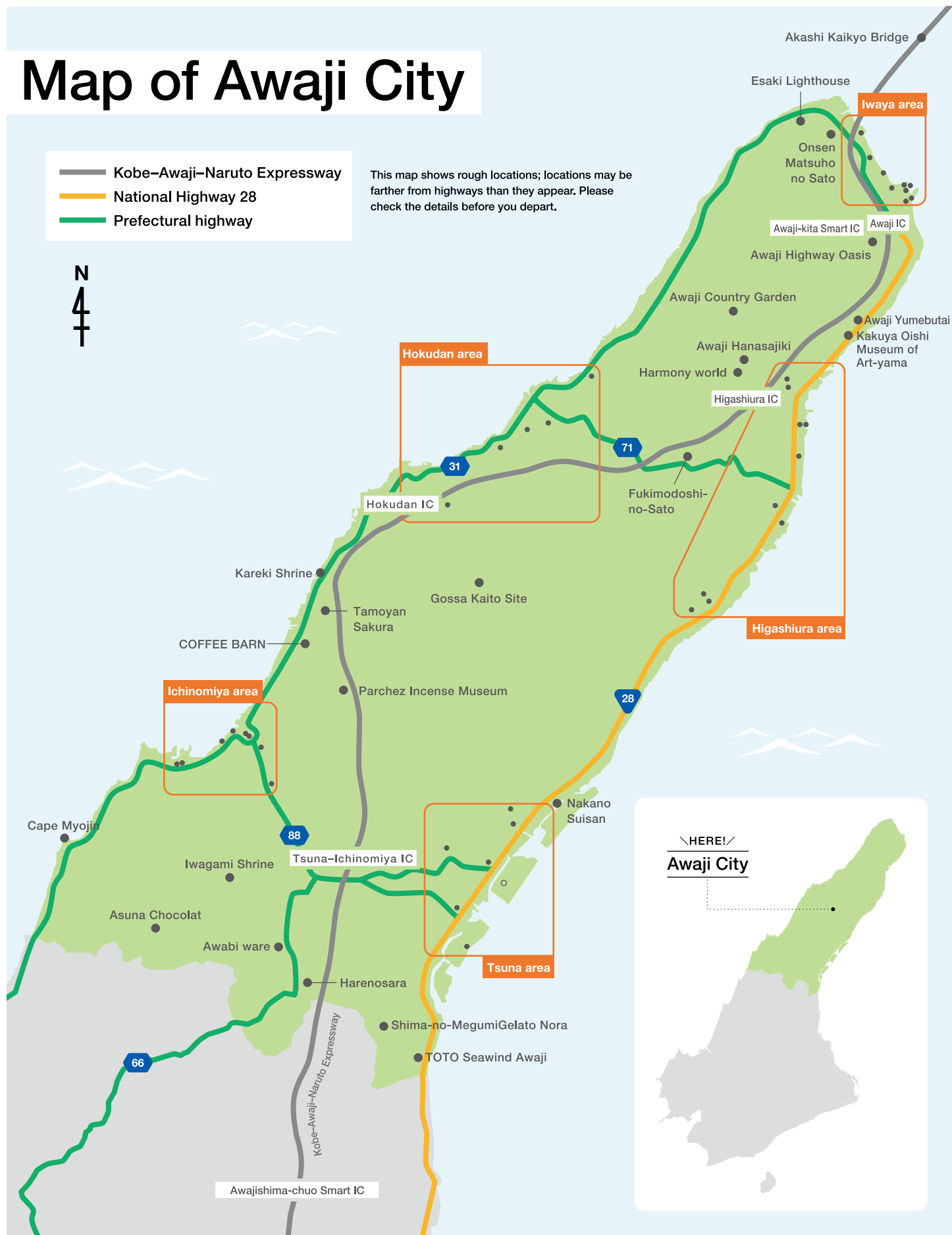
Scan here for schedules, timetables, fares, and other details.



# Map of Awaji City

- Kobe–Awaji–Naruto Expressway
- National Highway 28
- Prefectural highway

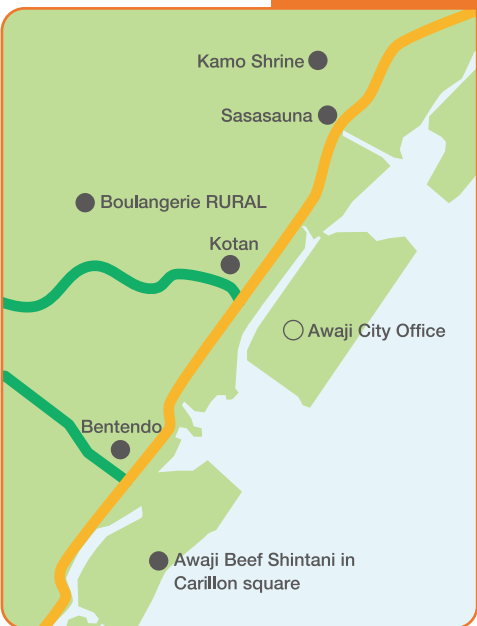
This map shows rough locations; locations may be farther from highways than they appear. Please check the details before you depart.



## Iwaya area



## Tsuna area



## Ichinomiya area



## Higashiura area



## Hokudan area

