

Join us in 2027 for a journey to underexplored Okinawa.

While the pace is measured, there are regular opportunities for more active exploration throughout.



Okinawa. A Different Rhythm.
1 small group journey
with R. Crusoe & Son

Eisa drummers.

Okinawa is often described through its longevity, but what makes the islands compelling is their distinct cultural identity. Once the independent Ryukyu Kingdom, Okinawa developed through centuries of trade with China and Southeast Asia before being incorporated into Japan in the late 19th century. That layered history, along with a more recent American influence, has shaped a way of life that feels notably different from mainland Japan.

Daily life here is structured differently, shaped by a steady relationship with the natural environment, local food traditions, and strong community ties. Often described through the concept of *ikigai*, this sense of purpose is expressed not abstractly, but through everyday routines, relationships, and work.

This journey is designed to explore Okinawa through its daily life, cultural traditions, and changing landscapes. It begins in Naha, where markets, neighborhoods, and craft traditions offer an introduction to the islands, before continuing north into more open, natural settings where food, community, and environment become more closely connected.

The journey begins with an overnight flight to Japan, arriving into Okinawa where the atmosphere feels immediately distinct from mainland Japan. The pace is slower, the light softer, and the experience unfolds gradually. The first evening is left open to rest or take a short walk nearby.

Okinawa is distinct from mainland Japan in ways that are both historical and cultural. Once the independent Ryukyu Kingdom, the islands developed their own traditions through centuries of trade with China and Southeast Asia before being incorporated into Japan in the late 19th century. The legacy of that history remains visible today, from language and food to a cultural identity that often feels separate from the mainland.

There is also a more recent layer, shaped by the post-war American presence, which has influenced everything from infrastructure to daily life. Combined with its subtropical climate and island geography, Okinawa can feel closer in spirit to Hawaii than to Tokyo or Kyoto. This blend of influences creates a setting that is quieter, more localized, and distinctly its own.

Your time in Naha is based at a refined, residential-style hotel in the heart of the city, just moments from Kokusai-dori. From here, the focus is on understanding the city through its everyday rhythms rather than formal sightseeing. Time is spent walking through residential neighborhoods near the Tsuboya Pottery District, exploring small workshops along Yachimun Street, and stopping at local cafés and shrines. A private visit to a Bingata studio introduces one of Okinawa's most distinctive textile traditions.

A guided visit to Shuri Castle, once the center of the Ryukyu Kingdom, provides historical context for Okinawa's distinct identity. Food culture is explored through local markets and meals, from simple bowls of Okinawa soba to shared dinners in traditional izakaya settings. An evening of Ryukyu music and dance offers a more immediate sense of the island's cultural traditions.

Leaving the city behind, the journey continues north, where the landscape becomes more open and the pace slows further. Your base here is along the coastline at a thoughtfully designed resort that emphasizes space, quiet, and connection to the surrounding environment. In Ogimi Village, often associated with longevity, the experience focuses on daily life rather than formal study, with time spent walking through the community and observing how routines, food, and social connection come together.

Time in the northern part of the island includes a walk to Hiji Waterfall through subtropical forest and a guided visit to Yanbaru National Park, where the landscape itself becomes central to the experience. In nearby villages, long-standing practices such as the use of Fukugi trees and traditional textile weaving offer a practical view of how communities have adapted to their environment over time.

There is also space to experience this part of Okinawa more independently, with opportunities for time on the water, light coastal walking, or other more active exploration depending on interest.



From here, the journey continues to the Yaeyama Islands. After traveling via Ishigaki, arrival on Kohama Island introduces a setting defined by simplicity and a slower pace. Your accommodation here is spread across wide, open grounds near the sea, with individual villas and a layout that encourages wandering rather than structure.

Time is divided between exploring the island itself and visiting nearby islands such as Taketomi, where traditional Ryukyu village life remains visible, or Iriomote, known for its dense jungle and mangrove waterways. These days can also include more active experiences such as kayaking through mangrove waterways, cycling between villages, or time on the water.

Returning to Okinawa's main island provides a final contrast, as the energy of the city is experienced differently after time spent in more remote settings. The journey concludes with a farewell dinner paired with a traditional Eisa performance, where music, movement, and community come together in a more lively and celebratory setting.

As the journey comes to an end, departure concludes with private transfers to the airport.

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Consider this option: Arrive a day early to visit the Okinawa Peace Memorial Park and Museum with private guide.

Day 1: United States
Sunday, 7 November 2027
Fly overnight to Japan.

Day 2: Naha, Japan
Monday, 8 November 2027
Arrive Naha; transfer to hotel.
Overnight: Okinawa Kariyushi Resort - EXES Naha

Days 3-4: Naha
Tuesday-Wednesday, 9-10 November 2027
Tsuboya Pottery District, Bingata studio visit, izakaya dining experience, Shuri Castle, Makishi Public Market, Ryukyu performance.

Day 5: Naha, Ogimi, Onna
Thursday, 11 November 2027
Visit to "Longevity Village," Ogimi. Local lunch and walk to Hiji Waterfall.
Overnight: Halekulani Okinawa

Days 6-7: Onna
Friday-Saturday, 12-13 November 2027
Yanbaru National Park, Bise Village, Ryukyu textile weaving, cooking class.



Okinawan cuisine features fresh ingredients, including goya ("bitter melon").

Day 8: Onna, Naha, Ishigaki, Kohama
Sunday, 14 November 2027
Transfer to airport to board short domestic flight to Ishigaki. Transfer by public ferry to Kohama.
Overnight: Haimurubushi.

Days 9-10: Yaeyama Islands
Monday-Tuesday, 15-16 November 2027
Explorations of nearby islands, active adventure options, village walks.

Day 11: Kohama, Ishigaki, Naha
Wednesday, 17 November 2027
Ferry to Ishigaki to board domestic flight to Naha, afternoon at leisure for shopping and wandering, Eisa-accompanied dinner.

Day 12: Naha; United States
Thursday, 18 November 2027
Fly home, or continue on with R. Crusoe & Son.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- A small group (anticipated 8-12 travelers)
- I will be traveling with the group throughout the journey, helping to guide the overall flow and experience
- A balanced rhythm of guided experiences and time to settle into place
- Thoughtful access to local guides, artisans, and food traditions

PRICING

While final pricing will be confirmed once the itinerary is complete, the anticipated range is: \$13,000 - \$15,000 per person. A fully refundable \$1,000 per person deposit is required to hold your space.

AIR

R. Crusoe & Son can assist with international air tickets for a seamless travel planning experience.

INSURANCE

R. Crusoe & Son recommends travel insurance that helps provide coverage for trip cancellation or interruption; illness or injury while abroad; baggage loss, theft, or damage; emergency medical evacuation; and more.

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Ways to Shape Your Time

While this journey has been thoughtfully structured, there is flexibility throughout to layer in additional experiences depending on individual interests and energy levels.

Northern Okinawa (Halekulani Okinawa | Onna & Yanbaru Region)

This portion of the journey offers the most opportunity to incorporate a more active or varied pace, depending on preference:

- Additional forest walks or light hiking in the Yanbaru region beyond the included visit
- Coastal walking along the shoreline near the hotel, with access to quieter stretches of beach
- Snorkeling, paddleboarding, or time on the water, depending on conditions
- A visit to a small-scale salt producer or local food artisan for a more tactile connection to Okinawan ingredients
- A gentle introduction to Okinawan karate, approached through movement and philosophy rather than intensity
- Optional wellness-oriented experiences such as guided stretching, breathing, or a quiet session by the sea

Yaeyama Islands (Haimurubushi | Kohama Island & Surrounding Islands)

Time in the Yaeyama Islands is intentionally open, with opportunities to explore at a slower or more active pace:

- Cycling around Kohama Island, with quiet roads and easy access to coastal viewpoints and small village paths
- Boat excursions to nearby islands, with time for swimming, snorkeling, or simply being on the water
- A visit to Taketomi Island, best explored on foot or by bicycle through its preserved Ryukyu village, coral stone walls, and sandy lanes
- A day trip to Iriomote Island, where kayaking through mangrove waterways and light trekking offer a more active, nature-focused experience
- Time on quiet beaches or along the coastline, with space for independent exploration