



食の遺産「原爆ドーム」、日本三景「安芸の宮島」、広島に世界遺産を見る旅へ。

Hiroshima

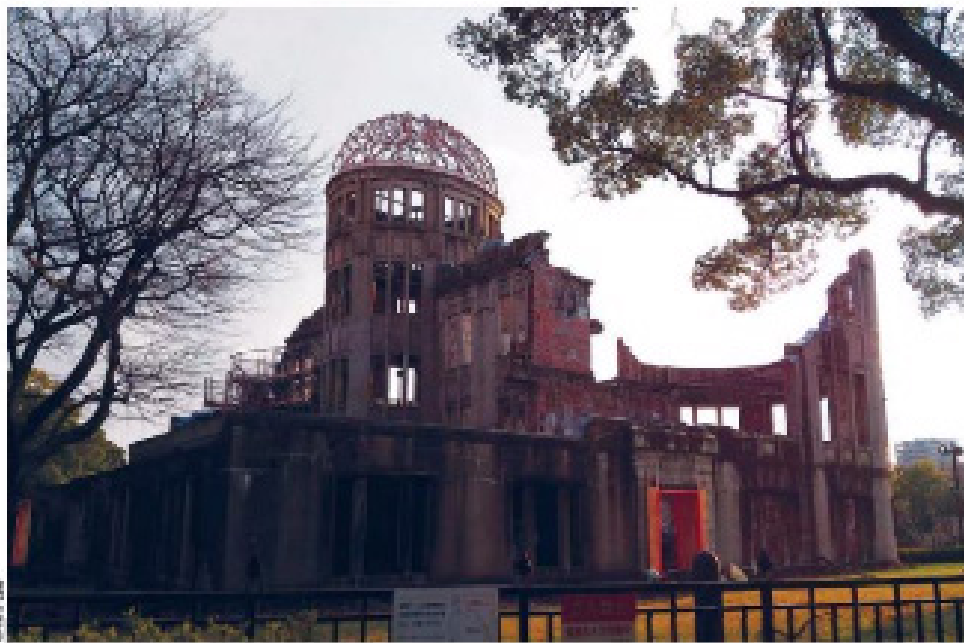
This city is home to many beautiful and contemplative destinations that are off the beaten path.

If you only visit Japan once, you must make a stop in Hiroshima (広島). Home to numerous World Heritage Sites, Hiroshima is a relatively small, compact, easy-to-navigate city with friendly locals, delicious food and many sights to see.

While established in 1589, Hiroshima did not become a major urban centre until the Meiji period in the 1870s, when it became an important port city. By the late 1800s it had become an industrial

centre, and during the First Sino-Japanese War the emperor stationed his headquarters at Hiroshima Castle. Over the decades that followed, Hiroshima became a focal point for military activity, particularly as a supply and shipping depot. As a result, Hiroshima was selected as a primary target for the detonation of the first atomic bomb during the Second World War. The catastrophic results not only killed over a hundred thousand people in the Hiroshima area alone, it perma-





nently altered the area's landscape and forever changed how we would view war.

The Peace Park and Peace Memorial Museum are often the first stops for visitors to Hiroshima, and with good reason. The park features more than 60 memorials, historic points of interest and buildings that survived the bombing, while the museum features numerous displays describing the components of the bomb, depictions of the damage by the blast and resulting radiation, as well as several dioramas and original possessions that survived the destruction. The museum recounts stories of survivors, such as Sadako and the 1,000 paper cranes, and messages of peace from world leaders. A portion of the museum is currently undergoing renovations; it's expected to fully reopen in July 2018.

Not far from the Peace Park is another monument to Hiroshima's military past: Hiroshima-jō, a castle originally built in the 1590s. It served as one of the headquarters for the Imperial Japanese Army during the First and Second World Wars, in addition to housing Emperor Meiji and the Japanese government from 1894–1895. Though the castle was destroyed by the atomic bomb, it was rebuilt to its original state in 1958.

Another worthwhile experience is a scenic hike from Hiroshima Station to the Peace Pagoda at the summit of Futatabiyama, erected to pray for everlasting peace and for the souls of the atomic bomb victims. Along the path, you'll have the opportunity to visit no less than 15 temples and shrines. While several were burned to ashes by the atomic bombing, they have a history tracing back as far as 1,000 years.

Glimpses of the future

True to its industrial past, and with eyes to the future, Hiroshima also offers tours and museums dedicated to the industrial arts. The Mazda Museum tour encourages visitors to experience concept cars, learn about innovative technologies and even visit the assembly line to see actual vehicles being built.

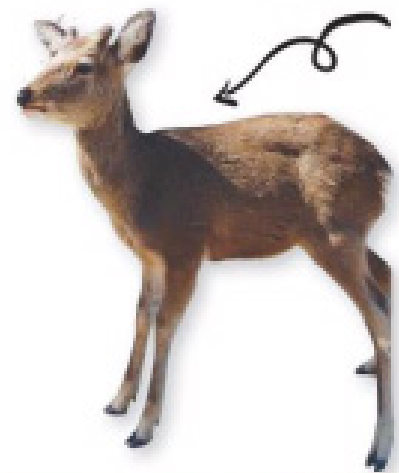
For 300 years, the Saijo area near Hiroshima has been famous for its sake breweries. With seven breweries within walking distance of each other, you can spend a day exploring and sampling local brews. Hiroshima is also known for its food—particularly *okonomiyaki* (a layered, savoury pancake topped with noodles and a fried egg), sweat-invoking *tsukemen* (cold noodles eaten with a spicy dipping sauce) and locally harvested oysters. While popular at many restaurants, one of the best ways to enjoy oysters is at the many local festivals (15 and counting) during January and February. Grilled in the open air on a *hibachi*, there is nothing more intoxicating than the smell of steaming seafood on a cool night.

Contemplating war and peace

No visit to Hiroshima is complete without a visit to Itsukushima-jinja (厳島神社) on famous Miyajima Island (宮島). A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the island is home to one of the most famous Shinto shrines in the world. Arriving by ferry, you'll pass the famous red torii gate before docking at the port. As you near the vermilion-coloured shrine, you'll be approached by deer from every direction. The shrine is surrounded by sacred sites,



Tame deer abound on Miyajima Island





A city with rich history delivers rich food. Local chefs celebrate the city's culinary range with common street delights and opulent seafood.

Food & souvenirs



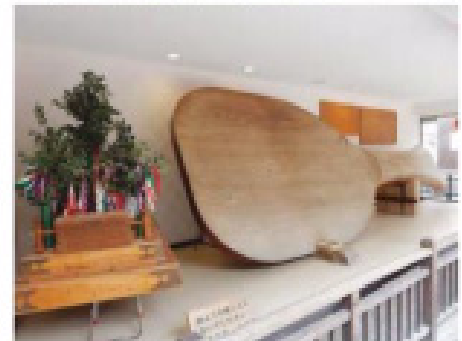
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Miyajima Shamoji



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sites, museums, shops and ryokan (inns). Its status as a tourist destination has given rise to many popular local snacks and confectioneries such as momiji-manjū (a maple-leaf-shaped cake), anago (broiled salt-water eel), niginten (fish cakes grilled on a stick) and souvenirs such as rice paddles (or shamoji), deer- and maple-shaped toys, and makeup brushes made from horse hair.



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As the tide rises and falls, you'll have the opportunity to see the shrine and its gate enveloped within the inland sea. With its water lapping the soft sands of the beach and rising to the green summit of Mt. Misen, the island has been worshipped as a divine location since ancient times. Taking the ropeway up Mt. Misen offers spectacular views of the small local islands, enormous trees, ports and cerulean waters of the Seto inland sea. Hiking sacred Mt. Misen brings you to numerous observatories, shrines and sacred sites, including Kiezu-no-hi (消えずの火), the home of the eternal flame burning for more than 1,200 years and used as the pilot flame for the "Flame of Peace" in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

From its rich history to its beautiful sights, Hiroshima is a destination not to be missed.

Okonomiyaki: This savoury pancake may be Japan's favourite dish. There are more than 30,000 restaurants in Japan serving okonomiyaki, and 2,000 in the Hiroshima area alone—the dish even has its own district in the city. "Okonomi-mura." Hiroshima-style okonomiyaki involves layered ingredients topped with noodles and an egg.



Oysters: With seven rivers leading into the city and numerous ports, Hiroshima Prefecture produces more oysters than any other area of Japan. Often eaten yaki-gaki—grilled on the half shell with a porcu-based sauce—oysters are known here as "the milk of the sea."