

Seto Inland Sea and Shikoku Cycle Tour – 10 Days



Trip dates

2027 April 4 - 13
May 9 - 18
September 5 - 14
October 17 - 26
November 14 - 23

Tour Price

Per person for twin share/double: JPY 665,000
Single supplement: + JPY 88,000

Early Booking Offer: A limited number of places are available on each departure with a 5% discount on the tour price. See website for full details.

Highlights

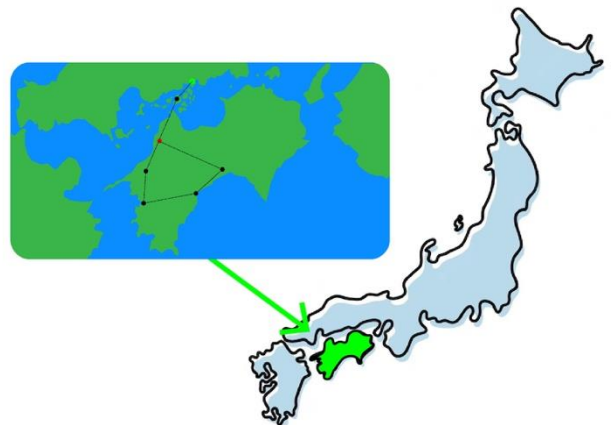
- ✦ Cycle on the islands and bridges of the famous Shimanami Kaido and explore the mystical islands of the inland sea
- ✦ Explore stunning Shikoku island, it's beautiful coastline, emerald green river valleys and ancient temples and shrines
- ✦ Relax with a soak in hot-spring and fantastic meal at our wonderful range of accommodation

Trip duration: 10 days / 9 nights
Grade: Level 2/5 - Moderate
Accommodation: 9 nights in premium Japanese and Western style accommodation

Overview

Shikoku Island is rapidly emerging as one of Asia's top cycling destinations, and for good reason. Renowned worldwide for its 88-temple pilgrimage, Shikoku is brimming with beautiful forests, deep river valleys, and dramatic coastlines, where history and culture can be discovered at every turn. It's also where we are proud to call home, and we'd love to share it with you!

Join us on this fully supported cycling tour as we delve deep into the Shikoku region, pausing to explore historic towns and villages, ancient temples, and Shinto shrines along the way. Immerse yourself in the delightful tapestry of local life, savouring wonderful Japanese cuisine crafted from the finest local ingredients. All this, while enjoying some of the finest cycling that Japan has to offer!



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Grading: Level 2/5 Moderate

This tour is graded level 2. A leisurely pace that allows us to explore shrines, capture viewpoints and enjoy conversations. Perfect for a recreational level cyclist who is comfortable with 4-5 hours/ 50-60 kms of cycling. There are some hills that can be challenging but we avoid the big mountain climbs.

Important notes:

Single travellers: If you are travelling alone, we will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender. However, if we are not able to find you a rooming partner by 60 days prior to the trip departure date, you will be required to pay a single supplement for the trip.

Getting to and from: The starts in Onomichi, a city in Hiroshima prefecture. You will need to arrive here by the afternoon of day 1 of the tour. Onomichi is on the shinkansen (bullet train) line, 1.5 hours from Osaka. The tour's finishes in Matsuyama city in the afternoon of day 10. Here you can easily connect by air, train or ferry to anywhere in Japan.

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Tour inclusions

- ✦ 9 nights in a variety of premium hotels and traditional high quality Japanese ryokan
- ✦ 9 dinners 9 breakfasts
- ✦ Support vehicle and full mechanical support
- ✦ 3-4 local guides depending on group size.
- ✦ Route GPX files for each day
- ✦ Scenic train ride
- ✦ Tasty and nutritious drinks, snacks and treats to keep you fuelled for the ride.

What's not included?

- Arrival and departure airport transfers, including any bike transfers to the hotel
- Most lunches (budget JPY 1500 per day)
- Cycle and helmet hire.
- Travel insurance – Please arrange your own

Hire Bikes

We offer a fleet of high-quality Specialized and Giant bikes for this tour, including carbon road bikes, e-bikes, and hybrid options to suit a range of riding styles and preferences.

Prices per bike for the duration of the tour:

Hybrid/Cross Bike:	¥30000
Carbon Road Bike:	¥77000
E-Bike:	¥77000



For more information, please see the FAQ below.

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Detailed Itinerary: (Please note this itinerary is subject to adjustment.)

Day 1: Meet and greet in Onomichi	Cycle distance 0km
Meet your guides and fellow guests in the afternoon at the hotel in Onomichi, close to the station. Afternoon briefing and bike setup after which you'll have some free time to explore fascinating Onomichi city, famous for its narrow alley ways and lanes connecting temples built into the hill-side. Later we head out for an evening meal where we get to know each other and eat some local specialities. Meals included: D	
Day 2: Shimanami Kaido	Cycle distance: upto 50km/400m
After breakfast, we hop on our bikes and set off straight from our accommodation. A short ferry ride takes us to the start of the Shimanami Kaidō, where we begin a stunning ride along one of the world's best cycling routes! As we explore the islands, we'll venture off the beaten path to visit a local shrine, pay our respects, and wish for a safe journey ahead. We finish today's ride at our beautiful accommodation in the small town of Setoda. You'll have time to explore the town and unwind in the hotel's spa before we come together for a delicious dinner. Meals included: B,D	
Day 3: Setoda to Imabari	Cycle distance: upto 65km/450m
Another fantastic day of cycling as we complete the Shimanami Kaidō route! Today, we venture off the main path to explore some of the islands in greater depth. Along the way, we visit one of the region's oldest and most prestigious shrines, renowned for its ancient camphor trees. We also ride across the Kurushima Bridge, a spectacular 4-kilometre suspension bridge that leads us onto to Shikoku Island. From there, it's a short ride to our hotel in Imabari, where you can relax in the spa before we head into town to enjoy some delicious local cuisine and celebrate completing the Shimanami Kaidō. Meals included: B,D	
Day 4: Imabari to Matsuyama	Cycle distance: upto 40km/300m
Today's ride offers a striking contrast to the last two days as we head inland in Shikoku. Scenic, gently rolling roads lead us through the countryside surrounding Imabari. Along the way we pass Imabari Castle and one of the temples of the Shikoku 88 Temple Pilgrimage before continuing through quiet rural landscapes. Our ride finishes in the small coastal town of Hojo, just north of Matsuyama. From here we'll load the bikes and drive into Matsuyama city, where we stay in Dogo, home to Japan's oldest hot spring spa. You will have the afternoon to explore the Dogo area, and, if you wish, visit Matsuyama Castle, one of Japan's most impressive hilltop castles. Meals included: B, D	
Day 5: Matsuyama to Uchiko	Cycle distance: upto 63km/400m
We start today with a short drive from Matsuyama into the mountains. Cycling on beautiful rural roads, we stop in at one of Shikoku's most beautiful temples. After exploring the temple, we get on our bikes and cycle to a small village alongside an emerald, green river where we'll have lunch. From here, we follow the river on a beautiful ride through quintessential Shikoku countryside. Uchiko is a beautiful town in a lovely setting. Here we stay in a selection of traditional houses within the historic district that have been refurbished into modern Japanese-style accommodation. Here you can feel at home away from home, enjoying the great local atmosphere and exploring this beautiful area. Meals included: B, D	

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Day 6: A rest day in Uchiko	Cycle distance: Various options
We have some great optional activities for you to choose from today including some excellent ride options, a visit and hands on experience at a Japanese washi paper factory and a Kimono fitting experience. These activities are selected to provide a deeper appreciation of Japanese culture and offer some very unique experiences. Whether you choose to relax and unwind or partake in one or more of the optional activities, we guarantee you'll have a great day. In the evening, we will re-group for our evening meal at a local 'izakaya' – a Japanese pub... Meals included: B, D	
Day 7: Uwa to Uwajima	Cycle distance: upto 65km /800m
After a short drive south to the town of Uwa, our Shikoku journey continues as we make our way to the port town of Uwajima. Today's ride is challenging but very rewarding with incredible views of the Uwa sea and surrounding mountains, adomed with terraced orange orchards. The scenery here is some of the best in Shikoku and with very few foreign tourists visiting, you'll be sure to get a few surprised smiles from the locals! Meals: B, D	
Day 8: Uwajima to the Pacific coast via the Shimanto river	Cycle distance: upto 45km/400m
We start the day with a scenic train journey that's takes us from Uwajima to the beautiful Shimanto river in Kochi prefecture. The 'Yodo line' covers around 75km of gorgeous Shikoku scenery, crossing over dramatic bridges, through river valleys, passing by rice fields and stopping in at some adorably retro local train stations. We alight the train at Kubokawa, where we meet our support van and jump on the bikes for an afternoon of cycling along one of Japan's most beautiful rivers, the mighty Shimanto. Finish the day in a beautiful setting with a soak in a natural hot spring and another wonderful meal. Meals: B,D	
Day 9: Tosa-Kure to Kochi	Cycle distance: upto 63km/800m
Our final ride of tour is a great one. Pacific coast cyding at its best as we make our way north towards Kochi city. Today's ride is a challenging one with a few climbs and a real adventure, with a mixture of coastal shrines, a beautiful temple and an old forgotten highway. Our goal, Kochi city, where we'll check-in to our riverside hotel and hit the town for a fantastic meal and, if you feel like, a sake bar to finish off a truly epic day. Meals: B,D	
Day 10: Kochi Farewell!	Cycle distance: 0km
After a delicious breakfast at our hotel, we'll have time to visit Kochi Castle. One of only twelve castles in Japan with its original keep still standing, Kochi-jo has retained much of its historic structure, making it a fascinating place to explore. Our tour finishes in Kochi mid-late morning, after the castle visit. From here, you can continue your travels by train towards Okayama and the Shinkansen network, or fly from Kochi Ryoma Airport (KCZ). If you are travelling towards Matsuyama, you are also welcome to travel back with the We Ride Japan team in our support vehicles after the tour. Please let us know in advance if you would like to do so. Meals: B	

Please note this itinerary is subject to adjustment.

FAQ: Here are some common questions we get asked:

How do I get to and from the start and finish of this tour? Where should I fly into?

Our tour starts in Onomichi, a charming coastal city in Hiroshima Prefecture. Onomichi is conveniently located on the Shinkansen (bullet train) line, making it easy to access from major cities across Japan. The closest major international airport is Osaka Kansai (KIX) but travel from Tokyo is also straightforward via the Shinkansen.

We finish in Matsuyama, the capital of Ehime, on Shikoku Island. While Matsuyama is not connected by the Shinkansen, it has:

- Regular limited express train services to/from Okayama (about 3.5 hours), where you can transfer to the Shinkansen.
- A domestic airport with frequent flights to major cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, and Fukuoka.
- A scenic ferry connection to Hiroshima – a great way to end the trip. There are both fast (1 hr) and slow (2 hrs) ferry options available.

If you'd like help figuring out the best route based on your full travel plans, we're happy to assist!

What kind of bikes do you hire?

We offer a range of high-quality Specialized and Giant rental bikes to suit different riding styles and abilities, including carbon road bikes, hybrid/cross bikes and electric bikes. For more details and photos, please check the [bike rental section on our website](#).

If I bring my own bike, how can I get it to the start of the tour?

If your bike is packed in a bag or box, you can take it on most Japanese train services, including the Shinkansen (bullet train). However, a seat reservation with extra luggage space is required, and handling the bike on busy trains can be challenging.

An alternative is to use one of Japan's reliable courier services, which can transport your bike from airport to hotel, or hotel to hotel. This can be a much easier option, especially if you're traveling with other luggage.

If you're planning to bring your own bike, we're happy to help with advice or recommend courier options—just let us know!

What is Japanese style accommodation?

Japanese-style accommodation, known as a *ryokan*, features traditional elements such as tatami mat flooring and futon mattresses that are laid out each night for sleeping. Rooms are typically minimalist and serene, reflecting Japanese aesthetics.

Many ryokan also include shared bathing areas or onsens (hot spring baths), which guests are welcome to use. You'll also be provided with a *yukata*—a casual cotton robe—that you can wear to dinner, breakfast, and while relaxing around the property.

The ryokan we use are of a very high standard, have private bathrooms, and also offer rooms with Western-style beds. If you have a preference, feel free to let us know and we'll do our best to accommodate it.

What is an onsen?

'Onsen' refers to natural hot springs, typically in the context of a public spa. Some of the regions we traverse on this tour are famous for onsen and many of the places we stay have one that you can use. In Japan bathing is ingrained into the culture and can be a real highlight of a trip here, especially a cycling one. Public baths are segregated by gender and swimsuits are not worn. For those who aren't keen, all our accommodation options have a private shower.

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How are the roads for cycling?

The roads we ride on this tour are great cycling roads. Quiet, with very few cars. Japan drives on the left and drivers are incredibly courteous to cyclists.

Standard cross/hybrid/road/gravel bikes with 28mm+ tyres are all suitable for this tour.

I'm worried about the climbing. What are the options?

While we don't ride over any big mountain ranges there is still a fair bit of climbing on this tour – it's hard to avoid in Japan! If it is a real concern for you then why not consider hiring an e-bike? This can really take the worry out of your trip and makes the uphill's fun! With that said, the roads are built and graded to a very high level, so generally the gradients are not too steep. Of course, we want to encourage you to ride as much as possible, but you are always welcome to use the van support to skip a hill. Also, once our guides have assessed your ability, they will be able to advise you on any sections you may want to miss.

I'm not a cyclist but my partner is. Can I join the tour?

Yes of course! While this is a cycling tour it's still a fantastic trip even without the riding. The great thing about Japan is there is always a beautiful shrine or temple to explore, a local market to peruse or a short hike to do. There will also be opportunity to check into the hotel early and unwind in the spa.

What kind of food do we eat on tour?

Japanese cuisine has an incredible variety of fish, meat and vegetarian dishes and there are opportunities to sample many kinds of local specialities on this trip. At the hotels we stay at, dinner and breakfast are often buffet style. This is great because it allows you to try lots of different dishes and avoid the ones you don't like. If you have any dietary requirements, please let us know in advance and we will do our best to accommodate.

When is the best time of year to come?

We run this tour in both the spring and autumn. Both seasons are extremely beautiful and perfect for cycling. Expect cooler temps in early April, especially up in the mountains. Average day time temps between 16 – 20 degrees Celsius (60 – 68F). In May and October/November it is a little warmer with temps often in the mid 20's (68-75F). To decide which season is best we suggest you come multiple times and let us what you think! We love cycling here all year round.

Yokoso! Welcome to We Ride Japan!

We Ride Japan was founded by Will and Tamie Turner in 2023. After meeting in Japan in 2005 they spent 2 years travelling the world on bicycles before settling in New Zealand. In 2020 they returned to Japan to embark on a new adventure. Through their work and life experiences in both the cycle and tourism industries, and their current work in regional tourism development in Japan, Will and Tamie offer professional well-planned and unique itineraries. Our goal is to give our guests once in a lifetime experiences in the country we love. Small groups, local guides and the spirit of adventure is what we're all about.

Thanks for your interest! We look forward to hosting you!

