

# The Okayama Insider presents the ultimate list of things to do and see in Okayama!

For further information on each of these locations, read the back-issues of the Okayama Insider online

[http://www.geocities.com/inside\\_okayama/](http://www.geocities.com/inside_okayama/) or browse through the hard-copies available at the Okayama International Center

or Kurashiki City libraries.

The following articles might also be useful if you plan to travel around the prefecture.

- [Tips for Cheap Travel \[page 1, December 2007\]](#): The information may be out of date, but knowing about past specials might help you plan future trips.
- [Stations Without Trains \[page 1, November 2006\]](#): A list of roadside stalls that you might come across as you drive around the prefecture.
- [Bus and Train IC Cards \[page 1, May 2007\]](#): More about commuting than leisure.
- If you plan on staying longer, [Working in Japan \[page 1, November 2007\]](#) is a “must read.”

## Public Hot-Springs in Yubara

Okayama has three famous Hot-spring areas, each with numerous bath-houses. Yubara is unique in that it has a FREE outdoor bathing area on the riverbanks.

[\[See page 1, December 2006\]](#)

## Momotaro

This ubiquitous folk-lore hero is said to be based on the ancient Kibi district legend of prince Kibitsuhihiko.

[\[See page 1, August 2006\]](#)

## Kurashiki Bikan Area

Kurashiki City publishes its own English language newspaper called “[What’s up in Kurashiki](#)” [[www.city.kurashiki.okayama.jp/kurakoku/whatsup/index.html](http://www.city.kurashiki.okayama.jp/kurakoku/whatsup/index.html)] which will be your best source of information on events in the Kurashiki area.

Kurashiki’s primary tourist area is the Bikan Area and now the area even has a guest-house with full kitchen facilities.

[\[See page 1, August 2008\]](#)

## Kojima Jeans

Some of the world’s best jeans brands are based in Kojima, Kurashiki City. Join a tour or visit the manufacturers yourself. Some will even let you design your own jeans.

[\[See page 1, June 2008\]](#)

## Bizenyaki Pottery Studio

Bizenyaki is a traditional form of pottery from the eastern area of Okayama. Nick Jennings is a British born Bizenyaki artist who offers English-language instruction to visitors to his Kasaoka studio.

[\[See page 1, September 2007\]](#)

Two full-length movies were filmed in Okayama in 2007. The book *Battery* was written by an Okayama-based author and filmed on location in the prefecture’s north. *Tsuribaka Nisshi* 18 was filmed at various seaside locations in the south.

[\[See page 1, March 2007\]](#) and [page 1, August 2007](#) respectively].

## Beaches in Okayama

Okayama Insider published a list of popular beaches, the facilities available, and how to get to them as part of a summer special in 2008.

[\[See page 1, July 2008\]](#)

There are three UNESCO World Heritage Sites located in the prefectures bordering Okayama and they are not too far to be destinations for day-trips.

## Himeji Castle (Egret Castle):

A short walk from Himeji Station, this is one of very few castles preserved in its original condition and free from war damage.

## Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome):

Almost directly below the hypocenter, this was actually one of the only buildings to remain standing after the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima.

## Itsukushima Shrine (Miyajima):

The shrine’s “floating” gate is one of the most famous images of Japan. The present day buildings were built in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century but the site dates back to 1168.

## Saidaiji Eyo Festival (Aka. the Naked Man)

Held on one of the coldest nights of the year (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in February) this festival involves thousands of men clad only in loincloths and socks. The men fight over two sacred sticks that are dropped into the crowd from the temple ceiling.

[\[See page 1, February 2009\]](#)

## Osafune Sword Museum

Fukuoka in Osafune, Setouchi City was one of Japan’s most prolific and well renowned centers of sword production. Fukuoka in Kyushu was named after this township.

[\[See page 1, January 2008\]](#)

## TAKEHISA, Yumeji

Yumeji Takehisa was one of Okayama’s most famous artists. The Yumeji Kyodo Bijutsukan is a museum of art devoted solely to his works and is located just a stone’s throw from Korakuen Garden.

[\[See page 1, June 2007\]](#)

## Inujima: The “Other” Art Island

The island of Inujima (administered by Okayama City) may not have the expensive art galleries of Naoshima Island (technically part of Kagawa prefecture but only a 15-minute ferry ride from the port of Tamano) but it still has many art-related facilities. The new Benesse Corporation funded Art Project is also an amazing example of recycling architecture.

[\[See page 1, May 2008\]](#)

