

Explore the Best of Shikoku by E-bike and SUP

Shikoku is an island in southwest Japan. It's the smallest, least developed of Japan's main islands. The center of Shikoku is dominated by Mt. Ishizuchi whose dramatic peak is the remnant of an ancient caldera. On this adventure, we travel across Shikoku from the Seto Inland Sea, passing over the Ishizuchi range by e-bike and descending the Niyodo River by SUP to the Pacific Ocean. Our tour is conceived as an introduction to the best of Shikoku.



We first get on our e-bikes to cycle the Shimanami Kaido, a chain of islands and bridges crossing the Inland Sea. It was once home to maritime clans (pirates!), who took some cargo in return for guiding ships through the racing currents and whirlpools of the hazardous sea. From the islands, we can see Mt. Ishizuchi, looming ahead.

The climb up to Ishizuchi is challenging, but e-bikes make it possible for any person of average fitness. Traversing the mountain on the 'UFO Line' is quite a trip – the views over Shikoku roll on and on, blending into the distant ocean.

The pure blue Niyodo River rises on Ishizuchi and flows down to the Pacific. We ride its translucent waters on SUP boards, stopping occasionally to jump off boulders and the rustic bridges used by local people.

Along the route, we meet the ancestors of pirates, the Shinto priests whose deities watch over the mountains and seas, and the craftspeople who use the water from the mountains to make beautiful washi paper and deliciously fresh sake.

Highlights:

- Pray for a safe trip to the gods of the sea and mountains at Shikoku's major Shinto shrines.
- Cycle the renowned Shimanami Kaido and take a boat ride into the raging currents that flow between the islands of the Seto Inland Sea.
- Ride 940 m up Mt. Ishizuchi rides an e-bike and cycle the loopy UFO Line along the mountain ridge.
- Paddle a SUP board down the pure, clear Niyodo River, visiting a sake brewery and paper making atelier.

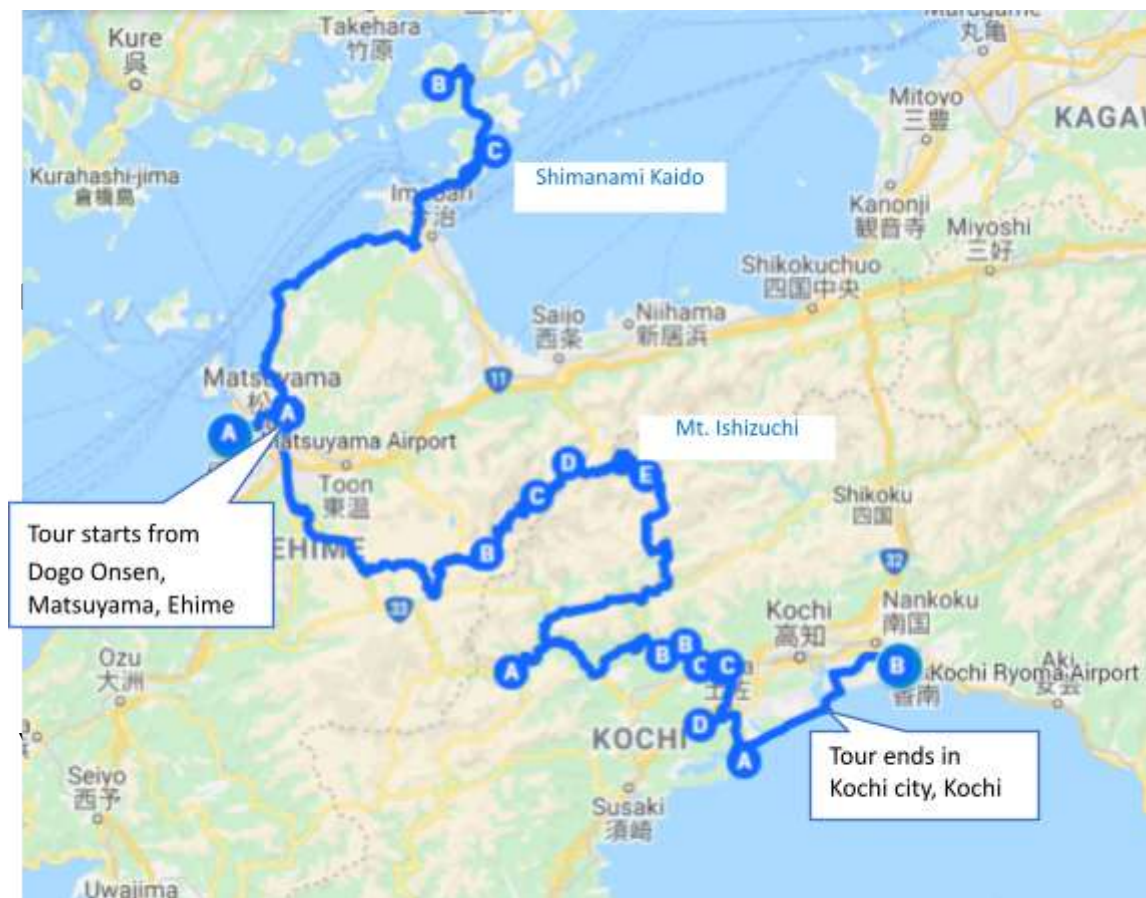
Location: Ehime and Kochi Prefecture, Shikoku Island
Main Activity: E-bike cycling and SUP
Difficulty: 3
Tour Dates: September 5, 2023, to September 10, 2023
Pax: Minimum: 4 Maximum: 8
Price: JPY 430,000 per person



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Route map



Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day 1 – September 5: Arrive in Dogo, Matsuyama

You arrive in Dogo, Matsuyama, and check into your single room at Dogo Hakuro hotel. The hotel has its own hot spring bath, and is located close to the famous Dogo Onsen Honkan, Japan's oldest spa. We have a short orientation covering what to expect during the adventure. Then you can have a relaxing soak at the hotel, or one of the local hot spring baths.

Dinner

Your guide, Rod Walters, will meet you at the hotel and take you to Hanahimero, Dogo's geisha house, to enjoy traditional geisha dances and games, with dinner and excellent local sake. This is the perfect way to relax and get to know your companions on the adventure.



Day 2 – September 6: Cycle the Shimanami Kaido

The local baths in Dogo are open early, so if you fancy a dip, the opportunity is there.

Breakfast

The buffet at Hakuro offers an extensive choice of soups, breads, and salads to suit both Japanese and western palates.

We drive for 1:30 hrs. by a scenic seaside route to Wakka on Omishima Island, a cycling base in the middle of the Shimanami Kaido, known as one of the most interesting cycling destinations. The e-bikes make it easy to explore the hilly islands and scoot up the ramps to the massive bridges. We cycle to the romantic Oyamazumi Shrine, where Japanese warriors from time immemorial have dedicated their weapons and armor in thanks for victory, and we pray for a safe journey.

E-bike from Wakka to Oyamazumi Shrine and back

Distance: 8.2 km | Time: 1:00 | Up: 80 m, Down 70 m



Lunch

Wakka provides a tasty boxed lunch which we can eat at some scenic spot whenever we feel like it.

At the Murakami Suigun Museum on Oshima Island, we learn about the pirates of the Inland Sea. Then we take a boat out into the fast currents and whirlpools of the Inland Sea, passing the tiny island fortress of Noshima from where the pirates conducted their operations. Finally, we cross the great Kurushima Straits Bridge and drive for 1:00 hr. through the mountains back to Matsuyama, where we stay another night at Hakuro.



E-bike from Wakka to Sunrise Itoyama

Distance: 31.4 km | Time: 1:40 | Up: 320 m, Down: 300 m



Dinner

Seafood from the Inland Sea and local sake at an izakaya in Dogo.

Activity: E-bike cycling and boat cruise

Difficulty: 3

Day 3 – September 7: Cycle up Mt. Ishizuchi

This is your last chance for a morning bath in the waters of Dogo.

Breakfast

Buffet at Hakuro.

We drive for 1:30 hrs. through the lovely scenery of Kuma Highland to the foot of Mt. Ishizuchi where we meet our e-bikes again. From the pretty Omogo River valley at 600 m, we make a long ascent by a paved road that winds up through deciduous woodland before emerging above the tree line at 1,500 m. Here, weirdly shaped peaks rise above slopes cloaked in dwarf bamboo. At Tsuchigoya, we visit Ishizuchi Shrine for a Shinto blessing. The priest shows us how mountain priests blow conch shells in honor of the gods.



E-bike from Omogo to Tsuchigoya

Distance: 22.2 km | Time: 2:00 | Up: 940 m, Down 250 m



▲ Highest Point 1,510 m

▼ Lowest Point 570 m

Lunch

At Tsuchigoya Terrace, we're served delicious pasta with locally sourced wild boar sausage.

After lunch, we cycle the dramatic UFO Line, a largely flat traverse across the shoulder of the mountain to Mt. Kamegamori, with views of Ishizuchi and vistas stretching over much of Shikoku.

E-bike from Tsuchigoya to Mt. Kamegamori trailhead

Distance: 9.81 km | Time: 1:00 | Up: 390 m, Down: 250 m



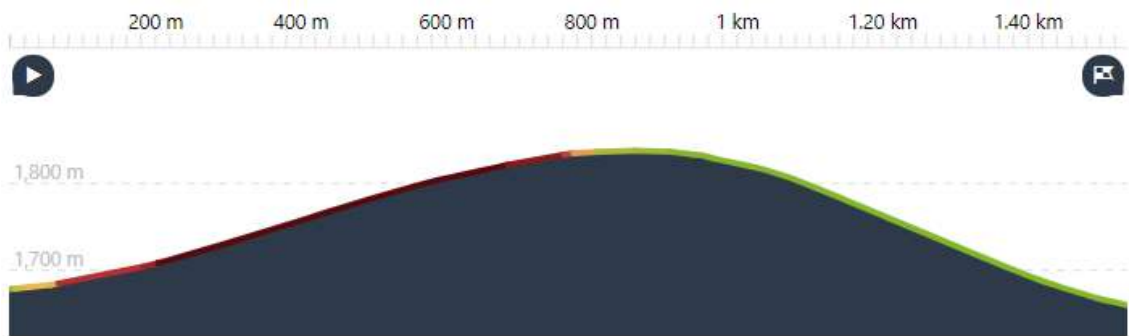
▲ **Highest Point** 1,670 m

▼ **Lowest Point** 1,360 m

We get off our bikes to hike up over and down the peak.

Hike over Mt. Kamegamori

Distance: 1.54 km | Time: 1:00 | Up: 160 m, Down: 180 m



▲ **Highest Point** 1,840 m

▼ **Lowest Point** 1,660 m

The support vehicle meets us at the other end with our bikes. After the hike we cycle mostly downhill to the Kanpuzan rest stop.

E-bike from Mt. Kamegamori to Kanpuzan

Distance: 15.4 km | Time: 1:00 | Up: 160 m, Down: 680 m



▲ **Highest Point** 1,630 m

▼ **Lowest Point** 1,110 m

At the next rest stop, we meet the bus for the 1:20 hrs. drive to Akiba no Yado, an inn with Japanese-style rooms beside a reservoir on the Niyodo River.

Dinner

Local cuisine sourced from the rivers, mountains, and ocean of Kochi.

Activity: E-bike cycling and hiking

Difficulty: 3

Day 4 – September 8: Descend the Niyodo River by e-bike and SUP

At breakfast time, the dawn sky is reflected on the lake below the inn. Today, we actually get into the river.

Breakfast

We're served a traditional Japanese breakfast of locally grown rice with fish, pickles, and miso soup.

The Niyodo River is known for its translucent, turquoise blue water and the beauty of the scenery along its banks. From the inn, we cycle on a paved road beside the river to Suggoi Sports, the SUP base.

E-bike from Akiba no Yado to Suggoi Sports

Distance: 33.9 km | Time: 1:40 | Up: 410 m, Down: 650 m



▲ **Highest Point** 270 m

▼ **Lowest Point** 40 m

Lunch

Lunch is a light Japanese meal in the traditional old house where Suggoi Sports is headquartered.



After covering safety and the basics of paddling, we get on SUP boards to continue our curving descent of the river. Our route includes some highly picturesque bends in the river, with deep, calm stretches, and some shallow rapids for a bit of excitement. There are also opportunities for a refreshing leap off boulders. You're sure to see some big river fish and numerous kinds of birds.

SUP from Suggoi Sports to Ino

Distance: 4 km | Time: 3:00 | Up: 0 m, Down: 0 m

After a shower and getting changed at Suggoi Sports, we drive 15 min. to the nearby riverside hotel, Qraud.

Dinner

Qraud is renowned for its French cuisine that uses local foodstuffs, served with locally-brewed sake.

Activity: E-bike cycling and SUP boarding

Difficulty: 3

Day 5 – September 9: Explore the products of the Niyodo River

The early morning view of the Niyodo River from your hotel balcony invites you to follow its course all the way to the sea.

Breakfast

We're served a hearty Japanese breakfast of locally grown rice with tofu, fish, pickles, and soup.

The mulberry trees and glue-bearing vines that grow along the Niyodo River are essential for making traditional paper, a material of great importance in Japanese life. We cycle to the Ino Paper Museum to learn about the steps required to turn these plants into high quality paper, and we try our hand at making some washi paper by the traditional method. Be prepared to be amazed by the sophisticated applications of simple paper.

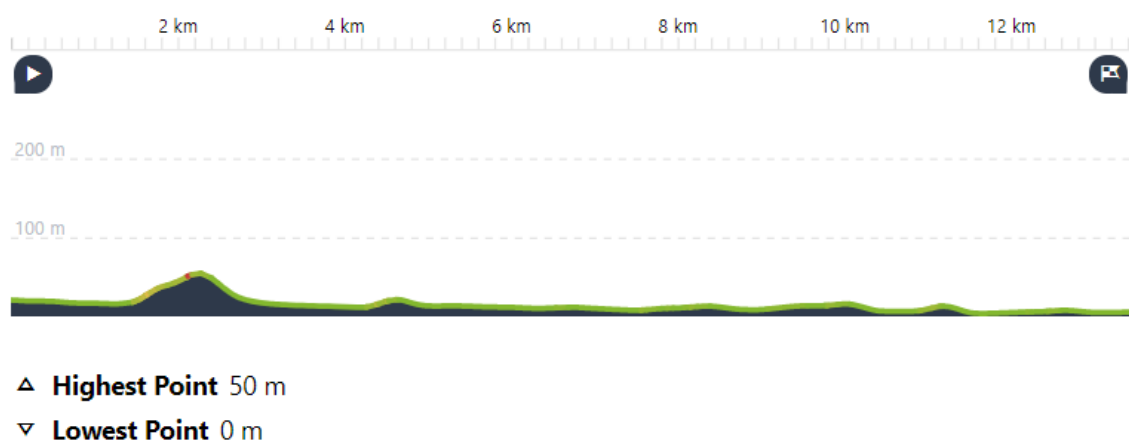
Lunch

Uokane is an elegant Japanese restaurant with a focus on sustainability. Lunch features sweetfish, caught with a rod by a local fisherman.

After lunch, we cycle from Uokane to the mouth of the Niyodo River where it flows into the Pacific Ocean.

E-bike from Uokane to the mouth of the Niyodo River

Distance: 13.4 km | Time: 1:00 | Up: 80 m, Down: 90 m



Water from the Niyodo River and its tributaries is an essential ingredient of the excellent sake brewed in Kochi. We drive 20 min. to Kameizumi Brewery, whose name means 'the spring that never dries up', where the master brewer takes us on a tour of the facilities and serves tastings of the brewery's extensive lineup.



From the brewery, we drive 40 min. to Richmond Hotel, comfortable modern accommodation in central Kochi city.

Dinner

For our last meal together, we visit Hirome Market, a lively food court popular with local people. Here, the signature dish of Kochi, fresh tuna seared over flaming rice straw, is prepared in front of you.

Day 6 – September 10: Transfer to Sapporo

The morning finds you on the southern edge of Shikoku beside the vast Pacific Ocean.

Breakfast

The hotel offers a buffet and a wide selection of freshly cooked Japanese and western dishes.

Now it's time to say goodbye to your guide and make your way north to Sapporo. It's 40 min. drive from the hotel to the airport. You've seen some of the best of Shikoku and learned about the history and traditions that set the island apart from other regions of Japan. We hope you've enjoyed the expansive scenery, the delicious food and sake, and the simple hospitality of the people. And we hope you'll be back some day to experience some of the many other adventures that remain to be discovered here.

Accommodation:

September 5 and 6: Dogo Hakuro, hotel, double room with shower + toilet, onsen

September 7: Akiba no Yado, Japanese-style futon room, shared bath + toilets

September 8: Qraud, single room with shower + toilet, spa

September 9: Richmond Hotel Kochi, single room with shower + toilet

All accommodation is non-smoking, with free Wi-Fi and coin laundry.

What's included

- All road transport during the trip.
- A professional tour guide for the duration of the trip, and qualified, experienced activity guides.
- All accommodation, meals, and drinks, including alcoholic drinks.
- All cycling and SUP equipment.
- Flight from Kochi to Sapporo (JPY 22,000 using the JAL Japan Explorer Pass)

We provide & What to bring

We provide

For cycling:

- Rental e-bike (tell us your height in advance)
- Helmet (2 sizes)
- Spare parts and tools
- Saddle cover if desired
- First aid kit
- Support car

For SUP:

- Life jacket and helmet
- Necessary equipment such as paddles and boards
- Wet suit (3L and 2L sizes available)

What to bring

Temperatures in Shikoku are typically around 20 – 25 °C in September.

For cycling:

- Clothing suitable for cycling, change of clothes (quick-drying, highly visible)
- Cycle pants and fingerless gloves
- Shoes suitable for both cycling and light hiking
- Breathable rainwear (upper and lower)
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen, sunglasses
- Knapsack or rucksack

For SUP:

- Swimsuit for under wetsuit
- Sports sandals or water shoes (sizes 22-28 cm available to borrow)
- Towels
- Sunscreen
- Goggles or spare lenses if you use contact lenses
- A strap or string if you wear glasses

Nice to have:

- A compact, waterproof camera with a robust strap for attaching to a life jacket. This could be a smartphone with a suitable case.
- A map app that works in Japan.

About us

Shikoku Tours was established with the goal of introducing adventurous people to the wonders of the smallest of Japan's main islands, and to help preserve its unique heritage and culture. We work closely with local stakeholders to craft tours that satisfy our international customers while contributing to regional economies.

We're constantly learning, from our partners and friends in Shikoku, and from the feedback that we receive from our customers. Our website is the most comprehensive library of Shikoku travel content, reflecting our decade-long effort to document and promote the island we call home.

ShikokuTours.com

Guides

Rod Walters – Tour guide

Rod has spent 30 years in Japan, 20 of those in Shikoku. A regular outdoorsman, he loves cycling, hiking, and just about anything involving water. He likes to jump off high places. Rod regularly travels all over Shikoku, consulting to local governments on inbound tourism, researching and planning tours, and of course guiding visitors. His interests include history and culture, the natural sciences, and food. He's qualified as a Sake Sommelier and Educator by the Sake Sommelier Academy.

Having developed a particular affinity with the heroic maritime clans of the Inland Sea, he could be accused of a bit of regional nationalism.



Watanabe Hiroki – Cycling guide

Hiroki is a cycling guide from Hiroshima. He's a very experienced tour conductor specializing in the Shimanami Kaido. When he's not guiding, he's creating and marketing attractive products using the good things grown on the islands.



Ochi Kenji – Cycling guide

Kenji owns a popular bicycle shop in Saijo and is certified as a guide by the Ehime Cycling Guide Association.

Based on the experience of attending cycling events for 35 years as a bike shop owner, he started developing guided cycling tours around the Ishizuchi mountain range. Although the slopes are many and steep, using e-bikes allows you to enjoy dynamic cycling in nature regardless of your physical fitness level.



Sasaki Hiromichi – SUP guide

Hiromichi, nicknamed Rangi, was originally from Tokyo, but he became the first professional Japanese lifeguard in New Zealand, and today, he speaks perfect NZ English.

Based on the Niyodo River in Kochi at his company Suggoi Sports, he maintains contacts with water and MTB adventure professionals worldwide.



We look forward to seeing you in Shikoku!

Information and Requirements

Dietary Restrictions

We may be able to accommodate allergies to specific foods, but we're unable to accommodate vegans and vegetarians on this tour. Please note that uncooked fish is a major element of Shikoku eating and it features in many of the planned meals. It's a taste that most people acquire very quickly.

Emergency Response Plan

The tour activities are conducted in areas with road access and cell phone reception. Support vehicles are also on hand. The guides are trained to handle rescue and emergency medical situations, and they can respond to any equipment issues that may occur.

Information about you required in advance

Please provide us with the following information when you book:

- Level of experience with cycling and SUP
- Nationality, passport number, date of birth
- Height, weight
- Emergency contact information
- Chronic conditions, medications taken, allergies, dietary restrictions, etc.

Reservation & Cancellation Policy

Payment Methods

We will send a booking confirmation by email with an invoice for full payment by 30 days before the start of the tour. If we do not receive the payment by the due date, the booking will be canceled. We accept payment by all major credit cards and by TransferWise.

Cancellation

If you must cancel, please let us know by email. In case of cancellation, the following fees apply.

- 20 days before the day of the start of the tour: 20% of the total fee
- 7 days before the day of the start of the tour: 30% of the total fee
- The day before the day of the start of the tour: 40% of the total fee
- The day of the start of the tour: 50% of the total fee
- After the start of the tour or no-show without notice: 100% of the total fee

Disclaimer

Shikoku Tours reserves the right to cancel or change the itinerary of a tour. In the event of the tour being canceled due to exceptional or unavoidable circumstances, we will refund all your costs. Shikoku Tours is not responsible for compensating any additional costs such as flights.

Our liability, and compensation for damages

In the performance of the travel contract, we will compensate you for any damage caused to you intentionally, or due to a mistake by us or our agents. However, you must notify us of the damage within two years from the day after the damage occurs. Regarding damage to baggage, if you notify us within 14 days from the day after the damage occurs, we will pay compensation with a limit of JPY 150,000 per traveler (except in cases of damage caused intentionally or due to serious negligence by us).

We are not liable for compensation if you suffer damage due to the following reasons.

- i. Damage caused by natural disasters, wars, riots, government decrees, fires, and suspension of accommodation services
- ii. Food poisoning
- iii. Damage caused by your own wilfulness or negligence
- iv. Damage due to other reasons beyond our control or of our agents

Tour Operator / Contact

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Partner Companies

Wakka Corp.

Bicycle rental, support vehicles and staff, catering. [Website](#)

B-Shop OCHI

Bicycle rental, support vehicles and staff. [Website](#)

Suggoi Sports

SUP rental and staff. [Website](#)