

Yoron Island Tourist Information

Yoron Island has its own special culture and history. We hope that this information prepared by Yoron Island's Board of Education will give you a taste of island life and encourage you to visit us one day. Please browse our site and learn more.





=About Yoron=

Yoronjima is one of the Amami Islands. It is situated in the East China Sea in the prefecture of Kagoshima, 600km south of Kagoshima City. It is 20.8 square kilometers in size and has a coastline of 23.5 kilometers. The main island of Okinawa can be seen 23km to the south. Part of the island is contained inside the borders of the Amami Guntō Quasi-National Park. Yoron Island is surrounded by coral reef and has a subtropical climate. Summers are very warm and winters are mild. The average yearly temperature is around 23 degrees. There are about 5,000 local inhabitants. Agriculture and farming are very important to the economy. A wide variety of fruit and vegetable crops are grown as well as some beautiful flora. Another interesting feature of Yoron is the native language known as “Yunnu Futuba”. Although the grammar is not dissimilar to the Japanese language, Yunnu Futuba has a larger range of sounds and a more regimented order of hierarchy in speech.

=Access to the island=

There are two companies (**A-Line Ferries** and **Marix Ferries**) servicing the Kagoshima - Okinawa ferry route. Both routes provide access to Yoron. The companies alternate the days they sail and both sailing experiences are very similar. The companies only provide one ferry per day in each direction, so please check schedule times carefully. <http://www.marixline.com/>
<http://www.aline-ferry.com/>

Yoron also has a small airport quite close to the ferry port. **Ryuku Air Commuter** flies to and from Naha Airport in Okinawa and **Japan Air Commuter** services Kagoshima and Okinoerabu Airports.

http://www.jal.co.jp/en/dom/airport/japan/rnj/rnj_00.html

<http://www.jac.co.jp/> <http://rac.churashima.net/>

= Getting about=

Because of its small size visitors can pick and choose how they wish to get about. Of course there are no train services, but the island does have public buses that operate a service several times daily travelling the north south route. **(They do not operate from the airport or ferry terminals)**

There are also two taxi companies. **Minami Taxi** (tel. 97-3331) or **Taiyo Taxi** (tel. 97-2161).

Northbound buses leave Chabana at 7:30/9:30/10:30/13:00/15:30

Southbound buses leave Chabana at 8:30/11:30/14:30/16:40/17:40

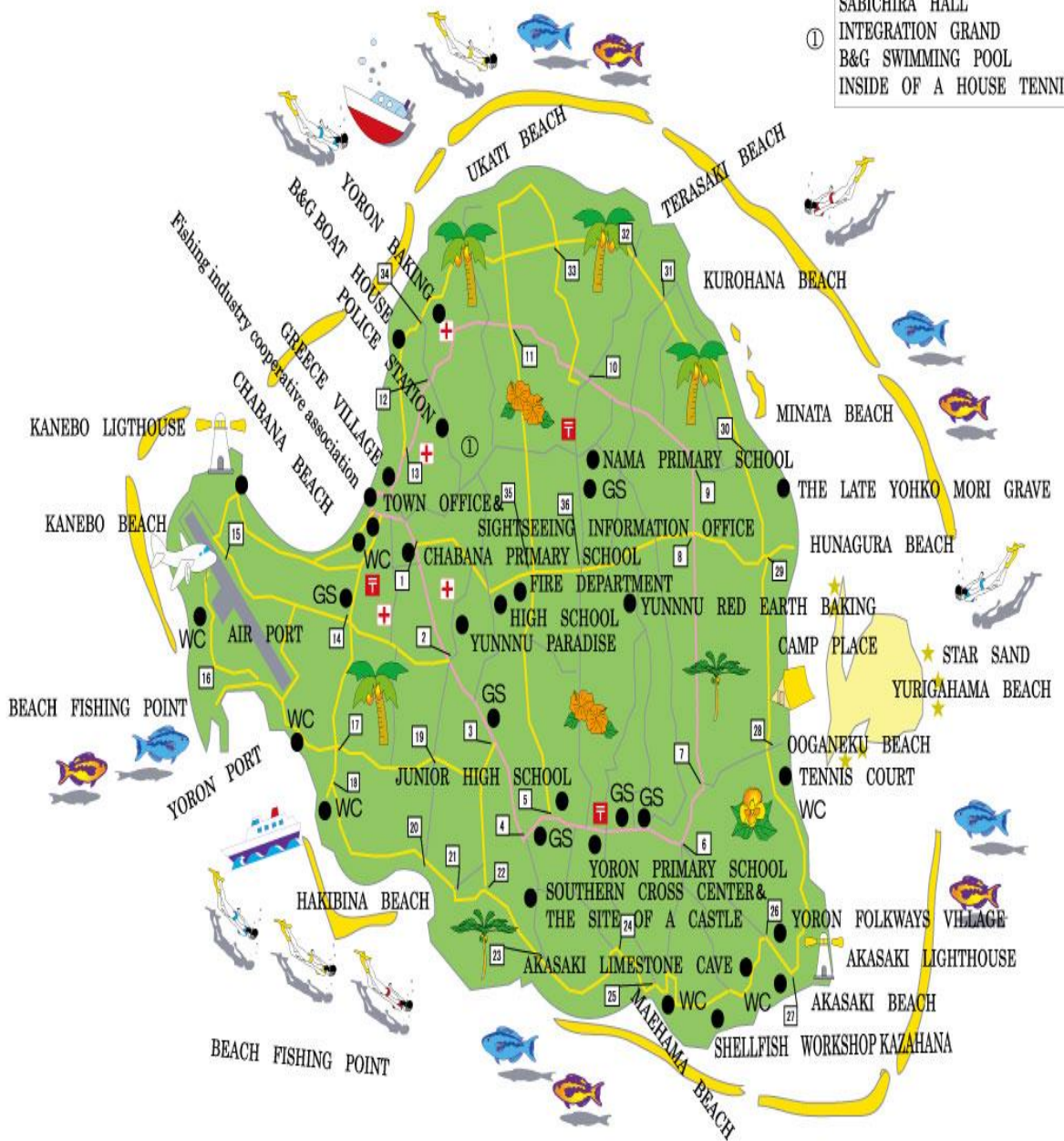
Rental companies offer cars, mopeds and bicycles for hire. Bear in mind that if you do not have a Japanese driving license then you will need an international driving permit. **(Check immigration rules on initial entry date into Japan and validity of international permits)**

=Come and see Yoron=

YORON ISLAND MAP

□ Location beacon

- ① SABICHIRA HALL
- ② INTEGRATION GRAND
- ③ B&G SWIMMING POOL
- ④ INSIDE OF A HOUSE TENNIS COURT



Yoron is one of the Amami Islands. It offers plenty of things to do for the outgoing tourist or peace and quiet for those looking for tranquility. Whatever your holidaying desire, you can find a nice balance on Yoron Island. The island has some of the most beautiful beaches in Japan. The sand is pure and the water crystal clear. There are a total of 60 beaches around the island. That means you have a great chance of finding a beach all to yourselves!



Yoron has many tropical fish to see, including the famous white and orange clownfish (see the above photo). There are also many interesting coral and rock formations to view, not to mention some spectacular marine vegetation. There is also an underwater artificial shipwreck for high level divers. On the east side of the island, you can see the famous **Yurigahama** (a long white sand bar) at low tide, 1.5km from the shore. The beach on the shore has a campsite for people who enjoy camping. You can pitch a tent or stay in one of the affordable cabins. From there you can hop on a boat and see Yurigahama for yourselves!

YURIGAHAMA



There are several tourist companies that offer great water sports and boat trips for visitors. Various marine sports are available with these companies. There are also a few diving orientated companies that offer a superb and affordable service for all levels of divers. All your diving requirements can be met on Yoron!

Visitors can also go on boat trips or just enjoy walking along the beaches and relaxing. And don't forget that Yoron has some cultural and historical places of interest!



=The Southern Cross Center= (tel. 0997-97-3396). Entrance fee is 300 円 for adults and 150 円 for children. Visiting hours are 9:00-18:00.



At one of the highest points in Yoron (about 97 meters above sea level) is the Yoron Museum, Southern Cross Center. At this museum you can learn many things about Yoron's history and culture. On the first floor is a display of the Amami Islands. You can learn about the history of each island and the relationship between them. This floor also has costumes from Yoron's festivals, including the Jyu-Go-Ya (Full Moon Festival).

The second floor has historical pictures of Yoron. You can see pictures that show Yoron's fishing and farming life. There are also pictures of school life and the different festivals on the island. On this floor there is an excellent display of the shells, fish, insects and flowers that can be found on the island. Here you can see the beautiful "Star Sand" which is very famous because of its shape. On the top floor is a 360-degree panoramic view of the island. From this point you can easily see Chabana Town, the airport, Yoron Junior High School and Okinawa. On clear days you can see Iheya-jima and Izena-jima. At night, the outside lookout is a great place to see the stars and the lights of Yoron Town. Near the center is Konpira zinzya (see top right photo), an interesting shrine to visit.



=Yoron Minzokumura(Folk Village)=

Yoron has a wonderful traditional village to visit. Here visitors can see farming tools and household items that were used in the old days. For example, “Warazouri” is a sandal made of straw. There are also wooden vases that were used to store food. The staff explains about each item and about how people in Yoron used to live. You can experience fabric making and color dyeing (Kusakizome), and learn about making brown sugar from sugarcane. You can enjoy some old-style food, such as cookies, brown sugar candy and tea. There is an excellent website (in Japanese) providing detailed visual information about the village.

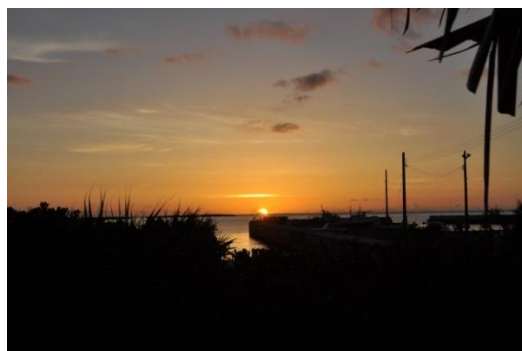
<http://www.minzokumura.jp/>

TEL 0997-97-2934 FAX 0997-97-3092 (Japanese language only)

=Watching the sunset in Yoron=



Yoron is one of the best places in the world to watch a sunset. The beautiful red sun seems so close that you can touch it. One place in Chabana (right next to Yoron Town Office) overlooks the water and visitors have a perfect view of the ocean. It's a great place for anybody to see Japan's national symbol. On the opposite side of the island in Ooganeke is a great place to see the sunrise. A short drive along a track leads to the perfect place to see the sunrise. But you have to get up early!



=Yoron's Train Platform=



Yoron has a train platform near the airport. Of course, there are no trains on this small island, but our platform is an interesting place to visit. It's a great place to take a family photo. But if you are waiting for a train, you will be waiting forever! To the left of the train platform are steps that take you along a cliff walk track. You have an excellent view of the coastline and beautiful clear water. If you are lucky, you can see two or three turtles that live and swim in the water there. They swim quite close to the shore. Between January and April you may be able to see whales in the distance. They often make water spouts that can be seen from afar.

= Yunnu Rakuen. =

Yoron has a beautiful botanical garden called the Yunnu Rakuen. “Yunnu” is the name of the island in its original language and “Rakuen” is the Japanese word for paradise. Here you can see a variety of plants and see traditional huts that people in old times used.

YUNNU RAKUEN



=The Greek Village=

Yoron has a spectacular white building known as the “Greek Village”. It sits on the top of a hill and offers a wonderful view of Yoron and the ocean. The architecture reminds one of buildings found in the Greek Islands. The village has an authentic stone oven used to bake pizza, a shop and café/restaurant. English is spoken by some of the staff.



=Jyu-go-ya Odori (Full Moon Festival) =

Yoron's most traditional festival is Jyu-go-ya. The festival is held three times a year in March, August and December. The people of Yoron pray for peace, safety and a good harvest. Jyu-go-ya means "full moon", so the festival is held on the fifteenth of the lunar month.

There are two kinds of dance that celebrate the festival that date back to 1561- the Ryukyu (Okinawan) style and the main land (Kagoshima) style. In the Ryukyu dance, the performers wear a black robe and a black hood. In the Kagoshima dance, the dancers wear a white robe. At the festival you can enjoy dancing, a tug-of-war, and eating delicious food. There is also the "Shisa" dance - the dance of the lion that protects one's home. At the final festival in October, you can watch sumo matches. Many students from Yoron's schools participate. On this day a "Yokozuna" (sumo champion) is made at each sumo division.

=Sango Matsuri (Coral Festival) =

Yoron is surrounded by coral reef and coral is an important part of Yoron culture with shops selling coral products. To celebrate this, a festival is held every August on the island called Sango Matsuri (Coral Festival). The whole island celebrates and there is a real feeling of togetherness. There are parades and many children dress up in marching costumes with their classmates. The town of Chabana comes alive with the sound of families and friends. There are many food stores selling delicious local foods and children can play different arcade games like "Catch a Goldfish". The sounds of music like the Okinawan "Eisa" can be heard everywhere and there are music concerts to enjoy. On the final day there is a display of fireworks that fills the night sky.

= The Yoron Marathon =

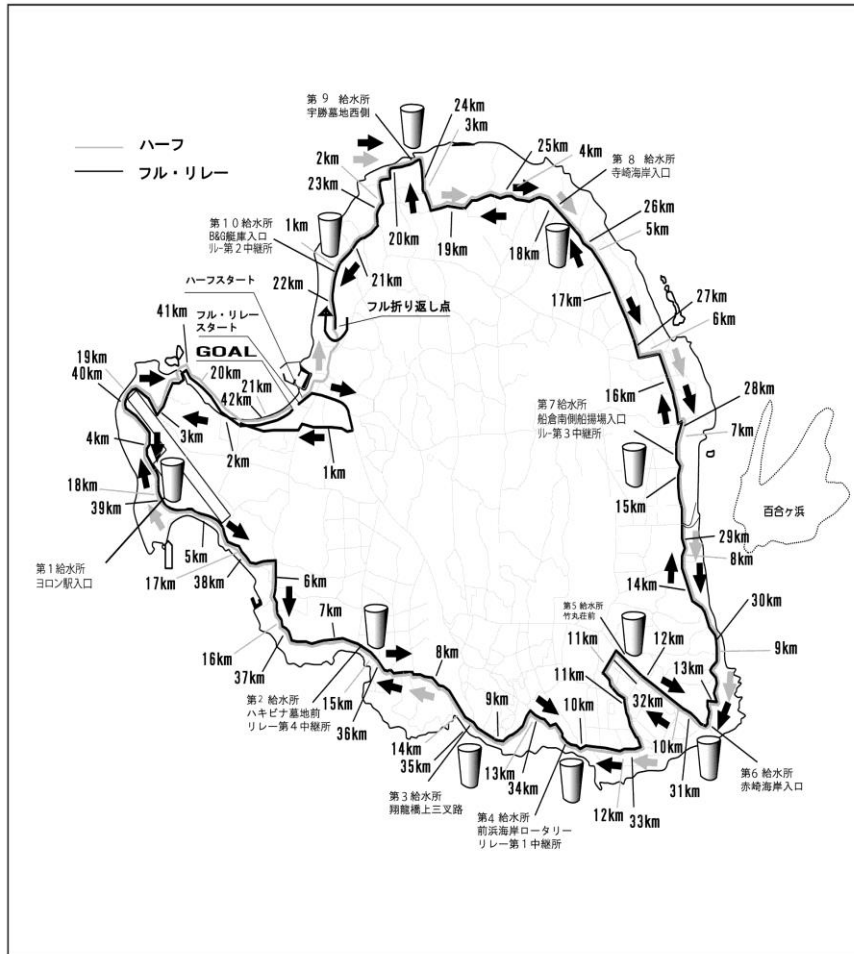
Every year in March, Yoron holds one of the best Marathons in Japan. Many runners come to the island to participate. The island has a circumference of about 22.8 kilometers, so this means that runners have to run twice around the island to complete the course. There is also a half marathon for people who prefer running shorter distances. The winners in 2015 finished in 2:41:55 for the men's event and 3:25:14 for the women's. The race also attracts runners from other countries.





YORON MARATHON 2014

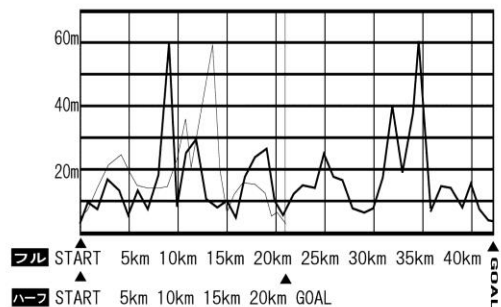
ヨロンマラソンコース図・給水所配置図



リレーマラソン中継点

区	間	給水	距離 (km)
1区	スタート 前浜ロータリー	第4給水所	9.8
2区	前浜ロータリー B&G船庫入口	第10給水所	11.5
3区	折り返し地点經由 船倉南側船揚場入口	第7給水所	7.6
4区	船倉南側船揚場入口 ハキビナ墓地前	第2給水所	7.4
5区	ハキビナ墓地前 ゴール		5.895

ヨロンマラソンコース高低差



=Places to eat and shop=

Yoron has about 30 places to dine and a plethora of different menus to experience. Not all restaurants have picture menus and English is rather limited, but do not let that put you off! Enjoy the hospitality of Yoron's eating establishments just as the locals do!

Yoron also has some quaint little souvenir shops that have a variety of local products. Some are actually handmade on the island. You can browse from shop to shop and chat with the friendly store clerks. Whatever your shopping choice, Yoron has something special to make your holiday complete!

=Yoron Sightseeing Center=

The sights on this information file and a range of other interesting places are on a map available at the **sightseeing center** (tel. 0997-97-5151). The center is a stone throw from the Chabana bus stops, and right next to Yoron Town Office. Some English is spoken by some of the staff.

