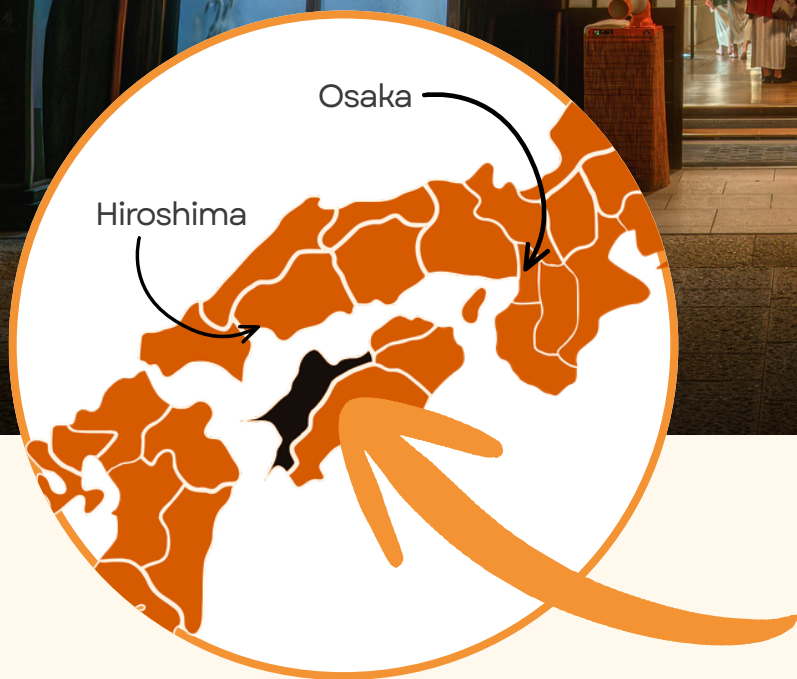


HIDDEN JAPAN



EHIME PREFECTURE



Most visitors only see Ehime Prefecture from Miyajima Island in Hiroshima over the Seto Inland Sea and vow to see it up close one day. Next time, consider taking a short ferry or train ride over to the island of Shikoku for an authentic experience in Ehime Prefecture to escape the crowds.

Ehime Prefecture isn't just the citrus capital of Japan (although you must try the different fruits whilst you're there) but full of important cultural sights, hot springs, vibrant cities and incredible vistas.

Our Ehime Driving Itinerary - continued

HIDDEN JAPAN: EHIME

5-DAY SELF DRIVE ITINERARY

**FROM \$1450AUD
PER PERSON TWIN SHARE**

Forest to the Sea: A Peek into Historical Japan's Untapped Frontier

Explore Ehime at your own pace with our recommended self-drive itinerary! This route can be customised as you wish.

What is included:

- Car Hire
- 4-nights accommodation
- Train ticket from Osaka to Matsuyama
- Train ticket from Onomichi to Hiroshima

Start from Osaka

From Osaka, take the famous bullet train & an express train for 3-hours to JR Matsuyama Station in Ehime Prefecture.

Day 1: Matsuyama City

Arrive into Matsuyama city by limited express train and make your way towards the city centre. Looming over the entire city, Matsuyama's own original castle stands atop a mountain in the heart of the city. Take the ropeway up to **Matsuyama Castle**, and take in a panoramic view of the entire city. After descending, explore the nearby **Okaido** downtown shopping area to sample delicacies such as Matsuyama's famous mikan citrus. From there, make your way to **Dogo Onsen**, Japan's oldest onsen and the one that inspired Studio Ghibli's film 'Spirited Away'.

Day 2: Ohenro Pilgrimage

The **Ohenro**, or the **Shikoku 88**, is a 1,200 year old historical Buddhist pilgrimage of 88 temples hopeful acolytes embark on to renew themselves. Today, you'll be getting a little snippet of these sacred sites. After picking up your rental car from Matsuyama City, No. 51, **Ishiteji Temple**, features a 200-metre cave, a small pocket of serenity inside the busy city. From there, No. 44, **Daihoji Temple**, is hidden deep with the lush green ticket of Ehime's forests. Finally, considered the highlight of the Ohenro, No. 45 **Iwayajji Temple** sits atop a cliffside, with countless picturesque statues and unmatched views of Ehime's valleys. From, make your way to the historic castle town of Ozu for your stay this evening.



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Day 3: Ehime's Old Towns

After staying overnight in a traditional Japanese house in Ozu castle town, make your way to the aesthetic **Garyu Sanso**, an old merchant villa. No visit would be complete without scaling the town's namesake, **Ozu Castle**. From there, make a stopover at the neighbouring town of **Uchiko** to browse the boutique cafes and businesses along the **Yokaichi Old Town**, including visits to **Uchiko-za** – an ornate Kabuki theatre – and to the **Kamihaga Residence** – a preserved villa from a family that flourished in Uchiko's wax economy. Next make your way to the sea to Imabari with an optional stopover at the **Imabari Towel Museum** before returning your car in Imabari.

Day 4: The Shimanami Kaido Cycling Route

Feel refreshed with the salty sea breeze on your skin, the sunny **Shimanami Kaido** is the premier cycling route in Japan. Pick up an e-bike and hop from island to island on your way back to Honshu. Get a macroscopic view of the Seto Inland Sea atop the summit at **Kirosan Observatory**, before cruising down to sea level to get a closer look with the **Miyakubo Seto Tidal Stream Cruise**. Learn about the pirates that once governed these water at the **Murakami Kaizoku Museum** before paying respects to the gods of the seas at the tranquil **Oyamazumi Shrine**. After a busy day of cycling, kick back at WAKKA, your accommodation for the night.

Day 5: The Seto Inland Sea & Onomichi

Arranged through your accommodation WAKKA, consider taking a fishing trip or a visit to the nearby Okunoshima Rabbit Island. After checking out, it's time to say goodbye to Ehime prefecture. Go onwards into neighbouring Hiroshima prefecture to finish the Shimanami Kaido and meet your train at Onomichi Station.

