



OKINAWA'S 'LONGEVITY ISLANDS' OFFER A WELLNESS BREAK LIKE NO OTHER IN 2020



From L-R: Okinawa cuisine, paddleboard SUP yoga, karate

With its unique combination of Japanese culture, subtropical temperatures and stunning natural scenery, Okinawa is one of the most fascinating destinations in the Far East and promises a unique wellness retreat for travellers in 2020. From the world's first deep-sea-water hot spa facility to sunrise yoga on the ocean, there's plenty to experience across the prefecture's 160 islands this year to indulge the body and soul – and all just three hours south of Tokyo.

What's more, as a designated 'blue zone' for life expectancy Okinawa has one of the longest living populations in the world – so there's never been a better time to visit and discover the region's secrets for a long and healthy life.

Here we've rounded up some of our favourite wellness activities in Okinawa to make a truly unforgettable revitalising break in Japan's most southern prefecture:

Learn the local secrets of the 'blue zone'...

Newly opened in 2019, the Halekulani Okinawa is running a unique programme of new immersive wellness retreats throughout 2020, including one that will give guests an insight into the ['Secrets for Longevity'](#) of the Okinawan people. Exclusive to guests at the hotel, the programme is run under the supervision of the acclaimed professor Arakawa, who specialises in studying how Okinawa's distinctive lifestyle enhances longevity and wellness. The 2-night, 3-day package is available from ¥230,000 per person, excluding tax and service fees, and includes breakfast, lunch, dinner and a spa treatment.

Dine your way into wellness with Okinawa's superfoods...

Okinawa's longevity is often attributed to the local's traditional diet, which incorporates plenty of healthy fruits and vegetables and is centred around eating in moderation – ideal for a wellness break. [Taste of Okinawa](#) in the prefecture's capital city, Naha, offers a popular cooking class and food market tour where visitors can learn all about the local superfoods and ingredients to help them plan their own wellness diet. Prices start from ¥6,500 per person.

Plunge into the deep ocean... on land!

For those looking for a truly unique spa experience during their wellness retreat, [Bade Haus Kume Island](#) is the world's first deep-sea-water hot spa facility boasting pools filled with mineral-rich deep ocean water - thought to possess special powers of healing and rejuvenation. The water is collected from the depths of the sea, off the coast of Kume Island. Here guests can take a dip in the naturally revitalising pools with views of the ocean, followed by a range of therapeutic treatments including aqua therapy and water pressure massage. Admission to the pool facilities start from ¥2,000 per person, treatments at an additional cost.

Feel the power of sunrise yoga...

Some things are worth waking up early for and a morning beach yoga class, set to the backdrop of the spectacular sunrise in Okinawa, is certainly one of them. Whether visitors are early risers by nature or wanting to kick-start their wellness break in style, [Drifter's](#) 2020 calendar of classes includes 'Beach Yoga' which offers a morning session of restorative and relaxing exercises on the sand while the sun rises over the Pacific Ocean. Those that are feeling a little more adventurous can try their 'Sup Yoga Class' where participants attempt the healing poses while balancing on a paddle board in the sea. Classes start from ¥3,000 per person.

Wake up 'The Karate Kid' in you...

Karate is already a hot topic in 2020 as it's set to make its debut in the upcoming games, so no 2020 wellness retreat in Okinawa – which is widely known as the birthplace of the sport – would be complete without a visit to a local dojo for an invigorating session of martial arts. With over 400 venues across the prefecture offering classes, visitors are never far from being able to learn the techniques and natural benefits of traditional karate.

Reflect on your 'ikigai' at a sacred island...

For a mindful and spiritual end to a wellness break in the prefecture, visitors should visit the island of Kudaka, which is thought to be sacred and offers a different atmosphere from the other parts of Okinawa. Locals believe the island is inhabited by Amamikiyo, the god who created the islands, and Kudake is home to [Sēfa-utaki](#) which was revered as one of the most sacred places in the Ryukyu Kingdom. Here travellers can visit many of the spots where locals still worship and pray, to feel the island's spiritual energy and reflect on their 'ikigai' the Japanese concept of 'a sense of purpose'.

For more information on Okinawa please visit <https://www.visitokinawa.jp/> and <http://beokinawa.jp/>.

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About Okinawa:

Japan's southernmost prefecture, Okinawa, is comprised of 160 subtropical islands boasting a year-round warm climate comparable to Hawaii, Miami and Cancun. Just 3 hours by air from Tokyo and blessed with incredible natural beauty, from lush forests to crystal blue waters with abundant coral and golden sands, Okinawa is perfect for beach lovers and sport enthusiasts alike whilst still appealing to culture seekers thanks to its unique history and heritage.

Using the bountiful fresh produce its natural environment produces, Okinawa's culinary culture is also unique and is believed to be a key factor in Okinawa's status as one of four longevity hotspots in the world.

For more information, visit: www.visitokinawa.jp

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