



## As Netflix documentary series *'Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones'* launches, Visit Okinawa shares its top tips for a healthy lifestyle of longevity



Left to right: Okinawa cuisine, Ogimi Homestay Experience and Kerama Islands.  
Images are available for download [here](#).

**05 September 2023** - To commemorate the release of the four-part Netflix series *'Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones'*, Visit Okinawa has rounded up its top tips for living a healthy life like an island local and things to embrace when visiting.

For travellers looking to visit Okinawa in the coming months and learn directly from the locals, Ogimi village in the north of Okinawa's main island is a must-visit. Known locally as the 'village of longevity' and proclaimed the 'longest-living village in Japan', the community offers homestay experiences welcoming travellers into their homes. During the stay, the friendly locals share their wisdom on the different factors believed to contribute to their longevity, including eating habits and how to manage an active yet less stressful lifestyle. The overnight stay starts from ¥42,500 per person (approx. £230) including accommodation, dinner, breakfast and activities such as an e-bike tour of the area. Further details are available here: <https://yonna-ogimi.com/en/>.

Further north in Jashiki village, [Endemic Garden](#) offers a selection of tours for visitors to discover Okinawa's nature and produce. Tours include the '[Nature Guide and Farming Experience](#)' to explore the products farmed locally (starting at ¥7,000 per person, approx. £40) and a three-hour '[Forest Park Tour](#)' (from ¥2,300 per person, approx. £13) to discover the flora and fauna of the stunning UNESCO-listed area, recognised by the UNESCO for its 'outstanding universal value'.

### Embrace the Okinawan mindset

People living in Okinawa feel less stress than those living anywhere else in Japan, which is largely attributed to the 'Okinawan mindset'. Locals live with an open mind, a tendency not to get too stuck into the unnecessary details of a situation and a laid-back approach to life. This mindset has a positive effect on health and helps to control the all-important mind-body balance.

### **Live with the Yuimaru spirit of community**

A strong sense of community is seen across Okinawa's 160 islands and the ties and relationships between family and community are hugely important. Participation rates in local events and social activities are high and such bonds of supporting each other are referred to as the "**Yuimaru spirit**". This sense of community is also reflected in the Okinawan word "**Icharibachodee**" which means that once you meet, you are brothers and able to share.

### **Let go and put on a show**

Okinawa is often referred to by locals as the islands of entertainment thanks to all the singing and dancing which takes place there. These fun activities are not only great for exercise they also relieve stress leading to a healthy mind and body. Many Okinawans add this type of activity into their daily schedules and groups of people can often be seen in local parks and public spaces dancing and singing in union.

### **Live on "Uchinaa" time**

Okinawa reputedly has a more relaxed sense of time than the punctuality prevalent in mainland Japan and the common term used to describe this is "**Uchinaa time (Okinawa time)**". The local people have a very forgiving attitude towards being late and don't like to rush, an attitude thought to have developed thanks to the warm climate the islands are blessed with.

### **Be at one with nature**

Living together with nature is the foundation of Okinawan life and many see true beauty as something that is natural and untampered with. This is reflected in so many aspects of Okinawa, from the local environments to the foods preferred and even what is considered beautiful in appearance - all natural is always best. It's thought this deep connection with nature and its surroundings plays an important role in Okinawa's famed healthy lifestyle.

### **Eat what you grow**

For locals in the prefecture, food is considered '**kusuimun**' meaning 'medicine' and great attention is given to maintaining a balance in diet. Fresh nutritious vegetables, known locally as '**nuchigusui**' meaning 'the medicine of life', dominate the cuisine and many people grow their own crops to ensure their flavour and freshness.

One of the most popular veggies eaten in the region is **Goya**, known as the king of summer vegetables. Characterised by its unique bitterness, it contains momordicin which stimulates digestion and improves appetite - it also has four times the amount of vitamin C than a lemon! The **purple sweet potato** with its vivid colour and delicious sweetness is another crop used in many traditional Okinawan dishes. Full of vitamins and minerals the vegetable contains anthocyanin which has antioxidant effects. Alongside these, **taro** which is high in iron, calcium and potassium, **handama (Okinawan spinach)** which is said to be effective against anaemia due to its high quantity of magnesium and iron and **shibui (winter melon)** which is used as a digestive aid and diet food, are all regularly eaten.

Find out more about the traditional way of life in Okinawa here:

<https://visitokinawajapan.com/discover/food-and-longevity/>

**ENDS**

**About Okinawa:**

Japan's southernmost prefecture, Okinawa, comprises 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 only five blue zones in the world recognised for longevity.

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