An inland archipelago and year-round shimmering seascape where people and nature live as one

Setonaikai National Park was established in 1934 as one of the first national parks in Japan. The national park is centered around the Bisan-seto Bridge and is surrounded by the five straits of Kitan, Nanmi, Kanmon, Komyo, and Akashi. The park extends over 11 prefectures and covers some 900,000 hectares including the sea area, making it the largest national park in the country.

The main feature of the national park is its archipelagic landscape formed by countless islands of all sizes. The Seto Inland Sea can be broadly divided into four regions: from the east, the Awaji Island region, Bisan-seto region, Goyo Islands region, and Siumada region. The national park’s landscape has a complex structure consisting of relatively large sea areas known as nada, “open sea” or “bay” and narrow channels known as seto or kaihyo, which both translate as “strait”. The inland sea, which is separated from the open ocean, is characterized by significant tidal variation and is known for its fast currents.

Culture has flourished in the Seto Inland Sea region since ancient times and a major feature of the region is its open, friendly local environment that integrates human life as part of the landscape in the form of terraced fields, fishing towns waiting for favorable tides, and many other scenic points. Since ancient times, the region has prospered as a major domestic and international port for sea traffic, including kimakubune cargo ships that sailed the Japan Sea during the Edo period (1603-1868), and when Korean delegations to Japan visited the region. The national park is home to various towns with a historical atmosphere, such as Ushimado, Shimotsuma, Tomonoura, Onomichi, Mitara, and Mureumi.

Access

Access routes are given as examples. Times indicated for each route section are approximate only. For more details, please visit the counters or websites of the transportation providers.

Information counter

Shikoku Tourism Promotion Association (general incorporated association)
Tél.: 087-813-04310
E-mail: info@shikoku.gr.jp
URL: https://www.shikoku.gr.jp/
Activity 01
Cycle along the Shimamani Kaido highway bridge route while enjoying the spectacular scenery and feeling the ocean breeze. The cycling route is 70 km long, and it’s yours to enjoy all year round.
Cycle the Shimamani Kaido bridge that cuts through the center of the national park.

Activity 02
Experience the whitecaps of the Kurushima Strait, one of Japan’s three major rapid tidal current sites. Set sail and see Kurushima Kaikyo Bridge, the world’s first bridge consisting of three successive suspension bridges, and the numerous shipyards of Imabari.
An unforgettable voyage on the Kurushima Strait Rapids and Tide Observation Boat.

Activity 03
Learn about the history and culture of the Murakami Pirates, the greatest pirates in Japanese history!
The Murakami Suigun Museum chronicles the adventures of the Murakami Pirates.
The museum tells the remarkable story of the Murakami Pirates, recognized as a Japan Heritage, in an enjoyable and accessible way. The museum is home to precious documents related to the history and culture of the Murakami Pirates, and you can try on Japanese armor and short-sailed kimonos and become a pirate yourself.

Activity 04
Guides with extensive knowledge of the islands will curate the perfect travel plan for you. We offer insider information on sightseeing, art, local culture, townscapes, and much more!
Personalized tours by the Koei Team give you local look at the national park.

The Koei Team offer custom plans according to your interests and itinerary so that you can enjoy a signature island experience. Our guides can cover a wide range of topics, including natural history, the arts, the quintessential island way of life, and more.

Additional Information:
- All year round
- Half day or longer
- Half day, 5,000 yen; full day, 10,000 yen
- Guided tours available in Japanese and English
- Transportation, admission, and meals not included
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