

**Come for the Sumo,
Stay for the Sights!**

大相撲九州場所
 KYUSHU SUMO TOURNAMENT
 at Fukuoka Kokusai Center
 2025 **11.9** SUN **23** SUN
 ×
**Two attractive
cities in Kyushu**
 Fukuoka City and Kitakyushu City



Experience the Spirit of Grand Sumo in Kyushu
 Factbook

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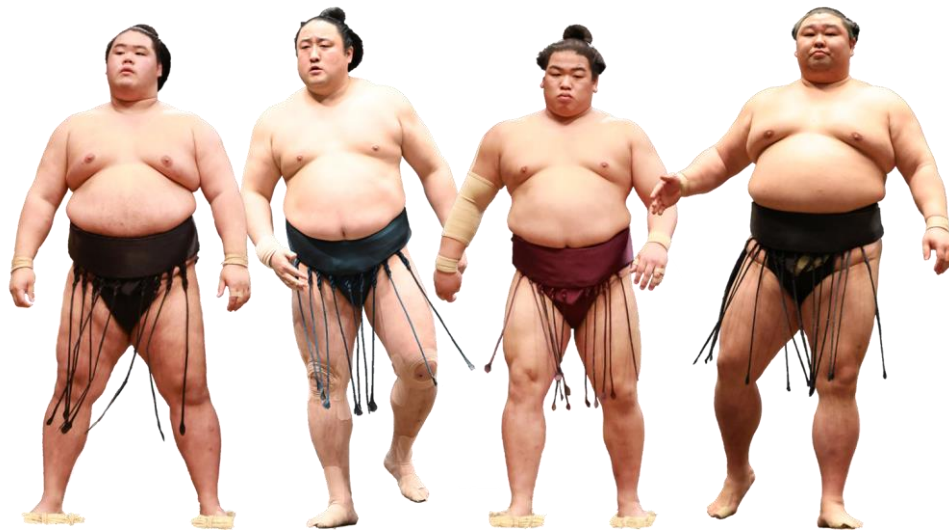
Introduction

- The Kyushu Grand Sumo Tournament is one of the six official Grand Sumo tournaments held each year, and takes place every November in Fukuoka.
- For sumo fans and travelers from around the world, this event is a once-in-a-lifetime cultural and sporting experience.
- An event that transcends sports: It offers an immersive cultural journey, blending Japan's national sport with Kyushu's rich traditions, seasonal beauty, food culture, and local landscapes.
- **The 2025 tournament (Nov 9–23) is already sold out,** but there are still media coverage opportunities and special access possibilities.



The Fukuoka Venue at Kokusai Center:

Event Fact Sheet



First held in 1957, the Fukuoka Grand Sumo Tournament is the only official Grand Sumo tournament in Kyushu and has been deeply connected with Hakata's history and culture for decades. During the tournament, visitors can watch thrilling sumo matches at Fukuoka Kokusai Center, spot sumo wrestlers as they make their way by bus or subway to the venue, and savor Fukuoka and Hakata's unique food culture, from Hakata Ramen to lively street food stalls. It's a special opportunity to experience both the excitement of sumo and the charm of the city in one visit. In Japan, people affectionately and respectfully call sumo wrestlers "O-sumo-san."

Event Fact Sheet

- **Event:** Grand Sumo Kyushu Tournament (*Kyushu Basho* / 大相撲九州場所) — one of the **six official honbashi** organized by the Japan Sumo Association.
- **Dates (2025):** November 9–23 (15 days).
- **Venue:** Fukuoka Kokusai Center (Fukuoka International Center), Fukuoka City.
- **Access (approx.):** ~15 min by car from Fukuoka Airport; ~10 min from JR Hakata Station. (*Traffic dependent*)
- **Ticket status:** Public tickets for the Fukuoka tournament are **sold out** (per JSA notice); media coverage inquiries via official channels.
- **Official info:** Japan Sumo Association (JSA) — Grand Tournament Schedule / Kyushu Tournament Special Website.



Basho (場所) = tournament / *Honbashi* (本場所) = official Grand Sumo tournament /
会場 = venue (Fukuoka Kokusai Center).

Unique Selling Points

- **Cultural:** The unique opportunity to experience **Japan's prestigious traditional sport** with full **rituals and atmosphere**.
- **Distinct regional angle: Fukuoka** viewing offers a perspective **outside of Tokyo/Osaka** while still offering **easy access** for visitors.
- **Seasonal hook (autumn):** Fukuoka highlights **autumn foliage** and seasonal city experiences, ideal for travel tie-ins and **packages**.
- **Food & culture:** Fukuoka is renowned for its **food culture** and **yatai (street stalls)** offering a rich and immersive cultural experience to pair with sumo coverage.
- **Gateway to broader Kyushu: Day-trip access across Kyushu's prefectures** from Fukuoka invites add-on itineraries (Kitakyushu, Beppu, Kumamoto, Nagasaki, etc.).
- **Positioning cue:** The campaign actively promotes **"SUMO × FUKUOKA CITY & KITAKYUSHU CITY,"** reinforcing the event-plus-destination narrative for overseas visitors.

Sumo Viewing & Experience Packages

As of the end of September 2025, sumo tickets have officially sold out. However, this year's campaign offered the following "Sumo X Kyushu" experience packages* with more to come in 2026:

Yakatabune Cruise & Chanko Nabe Dinner:



A luxurious half-day journey into the heart of Fukuoka. The itinerary begins with a leisurely rickshaw ride through Hakata's temple district, passing historic temples and cobblestone lanes on the way to Kushida Shrine, the stage of the Hakata Gion Yamakasa festival, and a symbol of the city's traditions. The program continues with a riverside cruise aboard a

yakatabune, gliding past the lively yatai of Nakasu, with chanko nabe (the hot pot famously associated with sumo wrestlers) served on board.

Yakatabune (屋形船) = traditional Japanese houseboat

**Please note that the content of the culture experience packages may vary.*

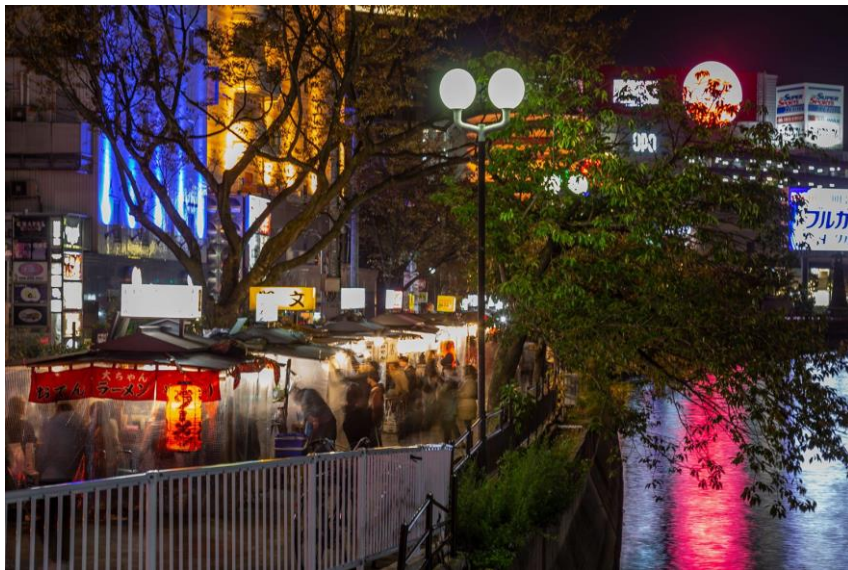
Shopping Street Tour & Sake Tasting:



Shintencho Shopping Street is a symbolic postwar reconstruction shopping district located in the heart of Tenjin, Fukuoka. Since its establishment in 1946, it has been a beloved historic shopping area for locals. While strolling through the shopping street in traditional Japanese attire, visitors will have the opportunity to peruse specialty

shops (such as a hanging scroll shop, a tea shop, and a knife sharpening workshop), followed by a sake tasting, often referred to as Japan's national drink.

Explore Fukuoka

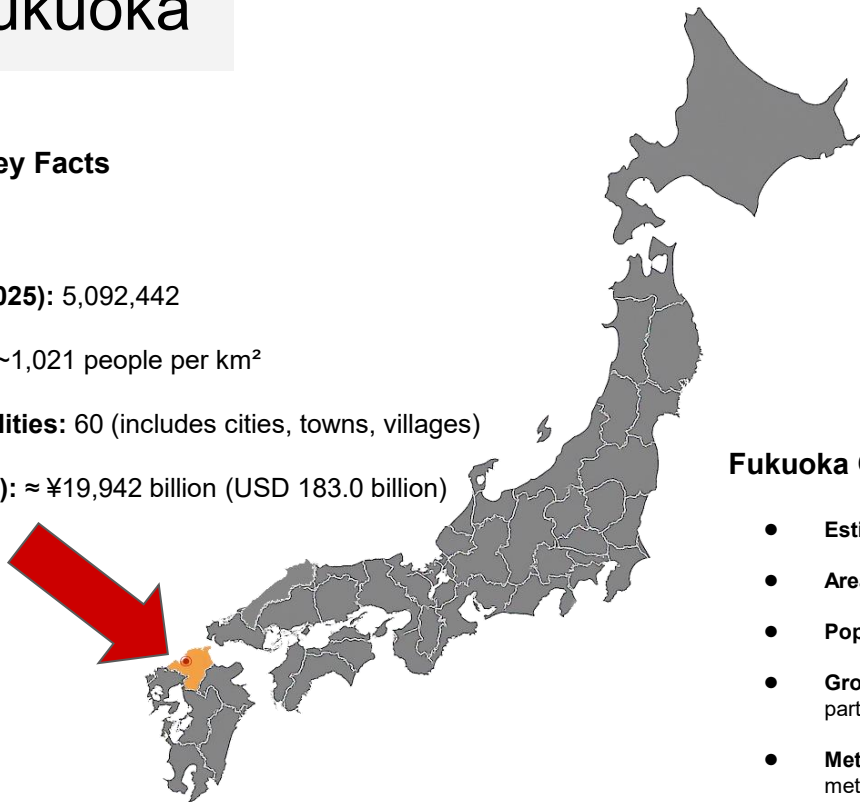


Fukuoka, the **largest city on Kyushu Island** and **capital of Fukuoka prefecture**, is known as a dynamic gateway to Asia. Located just 10 minutes from the airport to the city center, it combines modern urban energy with deep cultural traditions. For centuries, Fukuoka has served as a **crossroads between Japan and the Asian continent**. Its **port city of Hakata** flourished as a center of trade with China and Korea, and it played a pivotal role in Japan's history, from the Mongol invasions of the 13th century to its rise as a key merchant town in the Edo period. In **1889**, the **castle town of Fukuoka** and the **merchant district of Hakata** were officially merged to form today's Fukuoka City.

Explore Fukuoka

Fukuoka Prefecture — Key Facts

- **Area:** 4,986.52 km²
- **Population (Feb 1, 2025):** 5,092,442
- **Population density:** ~1,021 people per km²
- **Number of municipalities:** 60 (includes cities, towns, villages)
- **Economic size (2019):** ≈ ¥19,942 billion (USD 183.0 billion)



Fukuoka City — Key Facts

- **Estimated population (March 2023):** 1,632,713 people
- **Area:** 343.39 km²
- **Population density:** ~4,515.6 people per km²
- **Growth trend:** The city has been attracting net in-migration, particularly from elsewhere within Kyushu.
- **Metro region (Fukuoka–Kitakyushu):** The combined metropolitan area population around 2025 is ~5,466,000

Explore Fukuoka

Dazaifu Tenmangu:



Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine is the head shrine of the roughly 12,000 shrines in Japan dedicated to Sugawara no Michizane, known as the god of learning. Many tourists from abroad visit the shrine, which has over 10 million visitors annually. The gokensha-nagarezukuri style main shrine is designated as a national important cultural property. The renovation works for the main hall will be completed in 2026.

Ohori Park:



The name Ohori means “trench” and it derives from the fact that Kuroda Nagamasa, the old lord of Fukuoka, reclaimed the land called Kusagae which was facing Hakata Bay and made a trench to protect Fukuoka castle.

The present park was re-constructed by Fukuoka City, and reopened in 1929. This park is one of the most beautiful water parks in Japan and loved by local people as a relaxation spot. Close to Fukuoka Castle Ruins, Ohori Park features a traditional Japanese garden and teahouse.

Hakata Port Tower:



Hakata Port Tower is well known as a symbol of Hakata Bay. From the observatory floor 70 meters above the ground, you can enjoy the great 360-degree panoramic view while overlooking the ships coming and going. The building was designed by Naito Tachu, who is known for building the Tokyo Tower and the second Tsutenkaku Tower. The Hakata Port Tower is the sixth tower in Naito Tachu “Six Tower Brothers” architectural design.

Canal City:



Opened in 1996, **Canal City Hakata** is a “city within the city” that blends shopping, dining, entertainment, and hospitality around a scenic canal flowing through the entire complex. Boutiques and cafés sit alongside a full theater, a 13-screen United Cinema, lively game arcades, and two on-site hotels. The central fountain stages projection, light, and music shows several times a day throughout the year. Entertainment options include **Canal City Theater**, **United Cinema**, and **TAITO STATION**, a large arcade with medal games and claw machines.

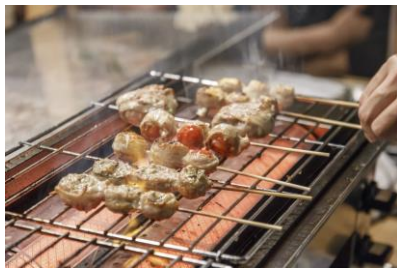
Explore Fukuoka

Yatai Food Stalls:



Some would say that the Yatai food stalls are the city's best-known symbol. Serving everything from yakitori (grilled skewers) to tempura and Hakata-style ramen, Yatai are generally open from 6pm to 2am almost every day, varying slightly from stand to stand. Found in Fukuoka's main areas like Hakata, Nakasu-Kawabata, and Tenjin, these stalls seat around seven to eight people and offer a casual yet cozy atmosphere where visitors can chat with locals and experience Japanese hospitality up close. Visiting a Yatai promises unforgettable memories and an incredible culinary experience in Fukuoka.

Yakitori:



When it comes to yakitori, skewered meat dishes, Fukuoka offers more than just chicken. Yakitori restaurants serve skewered beef, pork, and vegetables too. Each skewer often represents a specific part of the meat. For instance, chicken skin, rolled and skewered as "torikawa", and pork belly skewers known as "buta bara" are popular in Fukuoka. While Yakitori is a popular street food across Asia, in Fukuoka, it's enjoyed as a proper meal with family or a dish to savor with friends over drinks.

Hakata Ramen:



Within Fukuoka's food scene, Tonkotsu Ramen (Hakata Ramen) takes the crown as the most well-known and liked dish from here. It consists of a rich pork-bone broth that is the perfect mix of creamy, savory, and full of flavor that never gets old. Unlike other ramen specialties, it is paired with thin, firm noodles that never feel too little or too much. While Fukuoka is the mother of Ichiran, a viral chain for Tonkotsu ramen, it is also home to a more local chain, Shin Shin.

Mentaiko:



Another specialty with deep roots in Fukuoka is a dish brought from Korea in the 1940s, Mentaiko, or spicy cod roe. Introduced by Toshio Kawahara, the man who opened the first mentaiko shop in Fukuoka, it has since then become a culinary symbol of the city. Served in rice balls, pasta, tamago, and even ramen (as a topping), it is packed with umami that tastes a little salty, but most definitely worth a try if you enjoy bold and briny flavors. It also makes a popular souvenir sold packaged in many restaurants and markets.

Beyond Fukuoka: Kitakyushu



Situated on the northernmost tip of Kyushu, Kitakyushu is brimming with allure, from beautiful landscapes surrounded by seas and mountains to seafood and wild foods blessed by nature. The city has long welcomed people from Japan and abroad, carefully preserving and enhancing its diverse tourism resources. Known historically as one of **Japan's leading industrial hubs**, Kitakyushu also offers a wealth of cultural and natural attractions, from **World Heritage-listed Meiji-era steel industry sites** to castles, gardens, and traditional crafts. Today it is a vibrant urban center of nearly **940,000 people** and an integral part of the wider Fukuoka–Kitakyushu metropolitan region. In autumn, colorful foliage paints the landscape with warm hues, creating the perfect setting for peaceful moments.

Beyond Fukuoka: Kitakyushu

Kitakyushu — Key Facts

- **Population:** ~939,000 (2020 census)
- **Area:** 491.7 km²
- **Population density:** ~1,910 people per km²
- **Administrative structure:** 7 wards (Moji, Kokura Kita, Kokura Minami, Tobata, Yahata Higashi, Yahata Nishi, Wakamatsu)
- **City status:** Designated city (政令指定都市) in Fukuoka Prefecture
- **Established:** 1963, through the merger of five cities (Moji, Kokura, Tobata, Yahata, Wakamatsu)
- **Industrial role:** Historic center of Japan's steel industry, home to the Yahata Steel Works
- **Port activity:** One of Japan's major cargo ports, handling over 100 million tons annually



Beyond Fukuoka: Kitakyushu

Kokura Castle:



Constructed in 1602, this is the only castle in Kyushu to feature a keep structure rebuilt in the Showa Period (1926-1989).

*Besides Kokura, other castles have keeps. Within the keep is an exhibit that showcases the history of the castle, and on the top floor, a small café serving refreshments. In the Kokura Castle Gardens, one can even enjoy a traditional Japanese tea ceremony.

Mount Sarakura:



Mount Sarakura is said to be the foremost of Kitakyushu nightscapes. Transfer from the cable car to the slope car (a kind of monorail) to arrive at the mountain's summit of 622 meters, where an observation deck affords you an unbroken view of the city. The scenery spread out beneath your eyes is called "the 10-billion-dollar nightscape," and is recognized as one of the New Three Major Night Views of Japan. The observation deck's restaurant allows you to enjoy a panorama view with a field of view of over 200 degrees while dining. Some paths also available for mountain climbing, for which the area is also loved by city residents.

Mojiko Retro District:



The Port of Moji (Mojiko) is an international trade port opened in 1889 and located at the northern edge of Kyushu. Its prosperity as a transport hub attracted many Western-style buildings housing shipping companies and trading firms around it. The Mojiko Retro district is a restored reproduction of the district around the port in olden times. In this district, various buildings have been preserved and are open to visitors, including the iconic Mojiko Station, the former Moji Mitsui Club, where Einstein stayed, and the former Kyushu Railway Headquarters (currently Kyushu Railway History Museum). You can immerse yourself in the atmosphere of Japan in the late 19th to early 20th centuries here.

Kanmon Bridge:



This iconic rope bridge spans the Kanmon Strait, connecting Moji in Kitakyushu City and Shimonoseki City in Yamaguchi Prefecture. This 1,068-meter-long bridge was the longest rope bridge in Asia when it was opened to the public in 1973. In consideration of the landscapes, the bridge is colored in greenish gray, and it well matches the blue sea and greenery surrounding it. You can enjoy various views of the bridge from different positions: for example, closely looking up at the bridge from the seaside promenade in Mekari on the Moji side or enjoying its overall view from Hinoyama on the Shimonoseki side. The bridge is illuminated at night, so you can also enjoy a dramatic view of the illuminated bridge.

Beyond Fukuoka: Kitakyushu

Sushi & Seafood:



Surrounded by the sea on three sides, Kitakyushu is blessed with an abundance of fresh seafood. Here, you can enjoy Kyushu-mae sushi—a unique local style found only in this region. Whether it's a specialty restaurant exclusive to Kitakyushu or a sushi spot ranked No.1 nationwide on review sites, delicious sushi experiences await every visitor.

Baked Curry:



When visiting Mojiko Retro, baked curry should be your top lunch choice. The rich, spicy curry is perfectly complemented by gooey melted cheese and a soft-cooked egg, enhancing the flavor with every bite. Just a short walk from Mojiko Station, you'll find a row of restaurants, each offering its own unique take on this local favorite.

Yahata Gyoza:



Back in the day, steelworkers in Kitakyushu turned to hearty, nutrient-rich gyoza (dumplings) to keep their energy up during tough shifts. This tradition gave rise to the many delicious gyoza spots still thriving in the Yahata area today. Serving gyoza in iron skillets, so they stay piping hot, is a tradition unique to this city of steel. While the iconic iron-skillet gyoza remains a favorite, Yahata now offers a wide variety of gyoza styles, each bursting with flavor and character.

Kokura Beef:



Only about 100 head of carefully selected black wagyu cattle raised in Kitakyushu are certified each year as Kokura Beef. With vibrant marbling, a beautiful color and sheen, and exceptional quality, Kokura Beef is a true luxury. Just seven local farms produce this brand, meticulously tracking each cow's diet, health, and treatment history before shipping. Amazingly, it's only available at 20 specially designated restaurants within the city. The moment you take a bite, the aroma fills your mouth, the juices flow, and the meat melts like butter—an unforgettable experience for any meat lover.

Future Outlook

2025 Media Engagement – Sold Out, but still open to Media

- Tournament **completely sold out**, proving high domestic and international demand
- **Exclusive media access available** for coverage opportunities
- Chance to capture the **energy of sumo in Fukuoka** and share it globally
- Highlights both **Japan's national sport** and **Kyushu's cultural appeal**

Campaign Expansion from 2026 Onward

- Kyushu Grand Sumo Tournament to become a **regular product for inbound tourism** (the current program will be expanded and adapted in the future)
- Structured packages to combine:
 - **Tournament tickets**
 - **Culinary experiences** (local cuisine, sake, seasonal foods)
 - **Cultural programs** (tea ceremony, crafts, city tours)
- Creating a **reliable annual anchor event** for international visitors each November

Future Outlook

Future Outlook: Sumo × Kyushu

- Tournament as the **cornerstone of a regional brand**
- Links sumo with diverse Kyushu assets, such as:
 - **Fukuoka** – vibrant food and nightlife
 - **Beppu** – world-famous hot springs
 - **Kitakyushu** – rich history, pottery and traditional crafts
 - **Kumamoto & Nagasaki** – historic sites and natural scenery
- Goal: Transforming the Grand Sumo Tournament into a **gateway to discovering Kyushu as a whole**

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