



# Shikoku

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## Best Places to Eat

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- ➔ Bahati (p654)
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## Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Shimanto-no-yado Iyashi-no-sato (p668)
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- ➔ Sen Guesthouse (p672)

## Why Go?

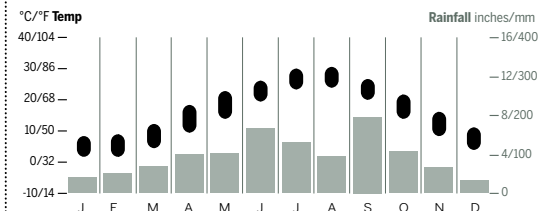
The birthplace of revered ascetic and founder of the Shingon Buddhist sect Kōbō Daishi (774–835), Shikoku (四国) is synonymous with natural beauty and the pursuit of spiritual perfection. It's home to the 88 Sacred Temples of Shikoku, Japan's most famous pilgrimage.

In Japan's feudal past, the island was divided into four regions; hence the name *shi* (four) and *koku* (region). Considered remote and isolated for centuries, Shikoku is now easy to access from Honshū via three impressive bridge systems built in the last three decades.

The island's stunning Iya Valley, rugged Pacific coastline, gorgeous free-flowing rivers and mountain ranges all beckon to be explored with hiking boot, kayak, surfboard and your own earthly vessel. Your physical incarnation will feast upon the remote temples, historic castles and gardens, excellent regional cuisine and modern pleasures of Tokushima, Kōchi, Matsuyama and Takamatsu.

## When to Go

### Takamatsu



**Apr** Enlightenment may know no weather, but any pilgrimage is best taken in spring.

**Jul–Sep** Rivers are running, surf is rolling, and the sun is, well, shining.

**Aug** Join every man, woman and child for Awa-odori Matsuri, Japan's wildest dance party.

# Shikoku Highlights

- 1 88 Temple pilgrimage** (p654)  
Walking the time-worn route.
- 2 Muroto-misaki** (p655)  
Finding seclusion, if not enlightenment, like Kobo Daishi did.
- 3 Ishizuchi-san** (p679)  
Hiking up the sacred mountain, one of Japan's most gripping ascents.
- 4 Iya Valley** (p656)  
Picking your way across swaying vine bridges in gorgeous isolation.
- 5 Dōgo Onsen** (p678)  
Soaking in the venerable waters of the historic onsen in the castle-town metropolis of Matsuyama.
- 6 Konpira-san** (p691)  
Trekking up 1368 stone steps to pay homage to the god of seafarers.
- 7 Ritsurin-kōen** (p685)  
Walking off Japan's most famous udon with a stroll through Takamatsu's exquisite Edo-period garden.
- 8 Tairiyū-ji Ropeway** (p663)  
Riding the spectacular ropeway up to mountain-top Temple 21 of the 88 Sacred Temples.
- 9 Naruto** (p649)  
Marvelling at the vitality of the whirlpools from close up while aboard a sightseeing boat.
- 10 Ōkinohama** (p668)  
Surfing beautiful swells or relaxing on the beach.

