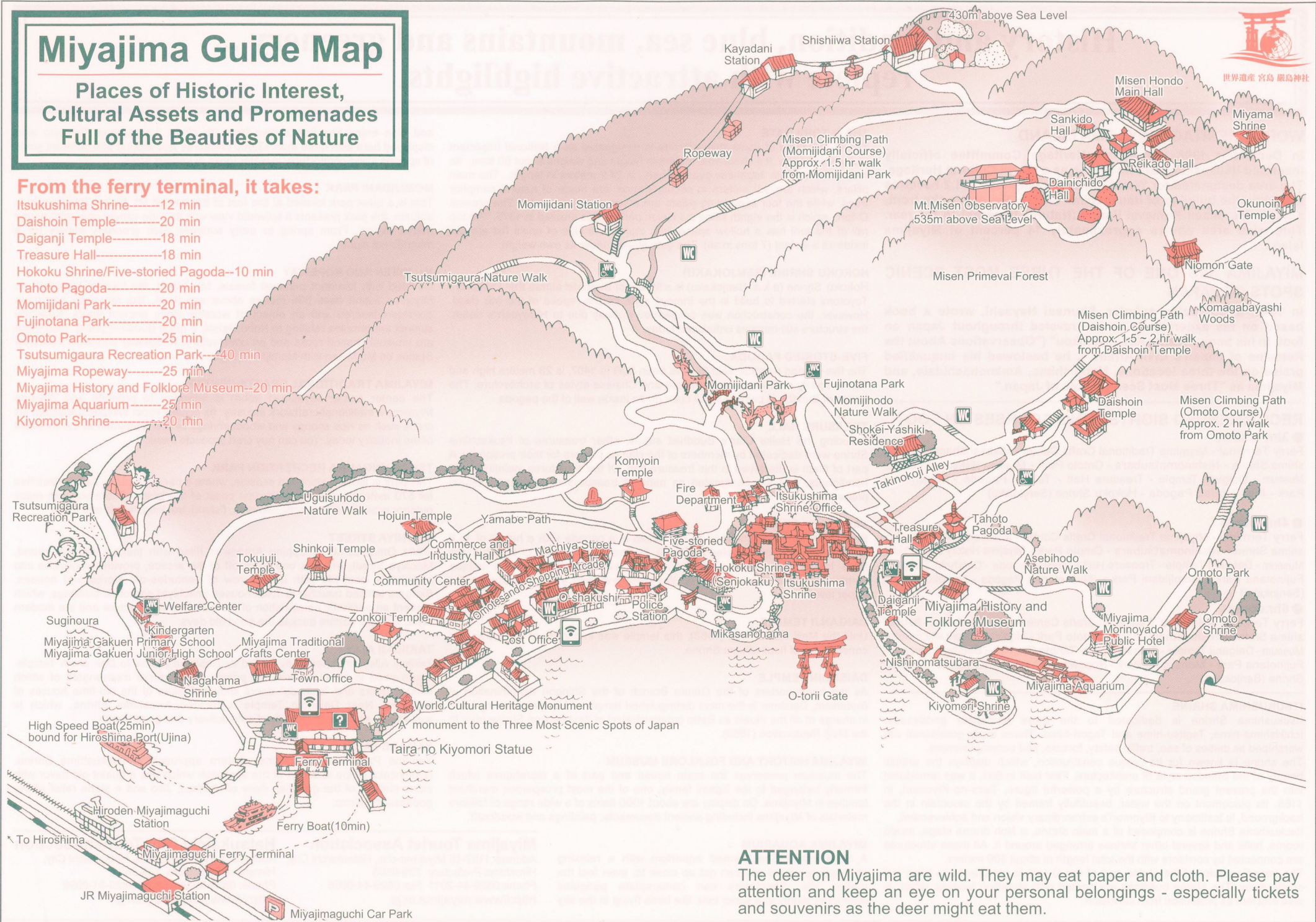


Miyajima Guide Map

Places of Historic Interest,
Cultural Assets and Promenades
Full of the Beauties of Nature

From the ferry terminal, it takes:

- Itsukushima Shrine-----12 min
- Daishoin Temple-----20 min
- Daiganji Temple-----18 min
- Treasure Hall-----18 min
- Hokoku Shrine/Five-storied Pagoda--10 min
- Tahoto Pagoda-----20 min
- Momijidani Park-----20 min
- Fujinotana Park-----20 min
- Omoto Park-----25 min
- Tsutsumigaura Recreation Park--40 min
- Miyajima Ropeway-----25 min
- Miyajima History and Folklore Museum--20 min
- Miyajima Aquarium-----25 min
- Kiyomori Shrine-----20 min



ATTENTION

The deer on Miyajima are wild. They may eat paper and cloth. Please pay attention and keep an eye on your personal belongings - especially tickets and souvenirs as the deer might eat them.

History and tradition, blue sea, mountains and greenery ... replete with attractive highlights.

WORLD HERITAGE MIYAJIMA ISLAND

In December 1996, the World Heritage Committee officially inscribed Itsukushima Shinto Shrine as a World Cultural Heritage. The area designated for World Heritage comprises 431.2 hectares including the building of Itsukushima Shrine, the sea to the front, and the Mt. Misen Primeval Forest (Natural Treasure) to the rear. This wide area covers approximately 14 percent of Miyajima Island.

MIYAJIMA AS ONE OF THE THREE MOST SCENIC SPOTS OF JAPAN

In 1643, a Confucian scholar, Shunsai Hayashi, wrote a book based on his experiences as he traveled throughout Japan on foot. In his book, "Nihon Kokujisekikou" ("Observations About the Remains of Japan's Civil Affairs"), he bestowed his unqualified praise on the three locations, Matsushima, Amanohashidate, and Miyajima as "Three Most Scenic Spots of Japan."

RECOMMENDED SIGHTSEEING COURSES ON FOOT

● 3hr. course

Ferry Terminal - Miyajima Traditional Crafts Center - Mikasanohama - Itsukushima Shrine - Nishinomatsubara - Omoto Park - Miyajima History and Folklore Museum - Daiganji Temple - Treasure Hall - Tahoto Pagoda - Momijidani Park - Five-storied Pagoda - Hokoku Shrine (Senjokaku)

● 4hr.course

Ferry Terminal - Miyajima Traditional Crafts Center - Mikasanohama - Itsukushima Shrine - Nishinomatsubara - Omoto Park - Miyajima History and Folklore Museum - Daiganji Temple - Treasure Hall - Tahoto Pagoda - Daishoin Temple - Fujinotana Park - Momijidani Park - Five-storied Pagoda - Hokoku Shrine (Senjokaku)

● 6hr.course

Ferry Terminal - Miyajima Traditional Crafts Center - Mikasanohama - Itsukushima Shrine - Nishinomatsubara - Omoto Park - Miyajima History and Folklore Museum - Daiganji Temple - Treasure Hall - Tahoto Pagoda - Daishoin Temple - Fujinotana Park - Momijidani Park - Ropeway - Five-storied Pagoda - Hokoku Shrine (Senjokaku)

ITSUKUSHIMA SHRINE

Itsukushima Shrine is dedicated to the three Munakata goddesses, Ichikishima-hime, Tagitsu-hime and Tagori-hime. These three goddesses are worshiped as deities of sea, traffic safety, fortune, and accomplishment.

The shrine is known for its unique construction, which displays the artistic beauty of the Shinden style of architecture. First built in 593, it was remodeled into the present grand structure by a powerful figure, Taira-no-Kiyomori, in 1168. Its placement on the water, beautifully framed by the mountain in the background, is testimony to Kiyomori's extraordinary vision and achievement.

Itsukushima Shrine is composed of a main shrine, a Noh drama stage, music rooms, halls and several other shrines arranged around it. All these structures are connected by corridors with the total length of about 300 meters.

The vermilion color of the shrine and of the O-torii is considered to keep evil spirits away. The shrine buildings are coated with vermilion lacquer, which is also efficient as protection from corrosion.

THE O-TORII GATE

The O-torii Gate of Itsukushima Shrine is designated as a National Important Cultural Property. It's about 16.6 meters in height and weighs about 60 tons. Its roof, thatched with Japanese cypress bark, is 24.2 meters in length. The main pillars, which are 9.9 meters in circumference, are made of natural camphor trees, while the four supporting pillars are made of natural cedar. The present O-torii, which is the eighth since the Heian period, was erected in 1875. The top rail of the torii has a hollow space, and stones the size of one's fist are put inside as a weight (7 tons in all). The gate stands under its own weight.

HOKOKU SHRINE (SEJOKAKU)

Hokoku Shrine (a.k.a. Senjokaku) is a library of Buddhist sutras that Hideyoshi Toyotomi started to build in the Irimoya style for the repose of the war dead. However, the construction was suspended midway due to Hideyoshi's death, the structure still remains unfinished today.

FIVE-STORIED PAGODA

The five-storied pagoda, said to have been built in 1407, is 28 meters high and harmoniously combines the Japanese and Chinese styles of architecture. The image of Buddha is painted in full color on an inside wall of the pagoda.

TREASURE HALL

Including the Heike Clan's Buddhist sutras, other treasures of Itsukushima Shrine were dedicated by members of the clan as prayers for their prosperity. A part of them is displayed in this treasure hall. Of the sculptures, paintings and handicrafts, 130 are designated as national treasures or important cultural properties.

TAHOTO PAGODA

Built by the priest Shunkan in 1523, Tahoto is a pagoda with a height of 15.6 meters. Although constructed mainly in Japanese style, parts of the structure have Indian and Chinese architectural features. It presents the unique combination of a square shape on the lower level and a round shape on the upper level.

DAIGANJI TEMPLE

Until the Meiji Restoration (1868), this temple was in charge of the repair and construction of Itsukushima Shrine.

DAISHOIN TEMPLE

As the headquarters of the Omuro Branch of the Shingon denomination of Buddhism, Daishoin is the most distinguished temple of Miyajima, having been in charge of all the rituals as Betto (administrator) of Itsukushima Shrine prior to the Meiji Restoration (1868).

MIYAJIMA HISTORY AND FOLKLORE MUSEUM

The museum preserves the main house and part of a storehouse which formerly belonged to the Egami family, one of the most prosperous merchant families in Miyajima. On display are about 1000 items of a wide range of folklore materials of Miyajima including ancient documents, paintings and woodcraft.

MIYAJIMA AQUARIUM

A Seto Inland Sea themed aquarium with a relaxing atmosphere where you can get up close to, even feel the marine life. Spectators can contemplate penguins swimming swiftly in a water tank like birds flying in the sky

and also enjoy sea lion shows from up close. Large-scale fish are also displayed here with more than 13,000 creatures and around 350 different kinds of species living comfortably in water tanks of various sizes.

MOMIJIDANI PARK

This is a quiet park located at the foot of the sacred Mt. Misen. Particularly in autumn, the park presents a splendid view with its wide variety of scarlet-tinged maple leaves. From spring to early summer, lush greenery makes for a magnificent sight.

Mt. MISEN AND ROPEWAY

Covered with luxuriant primeval forests, Mt. Misen, the highest mountain on Miyajima Island rises 535 meters above sea level. The mountain has been considered sacred and an object of worship since ancient times. Near the summit are temples relating to Kobo Daishi, a great Buddhist priest. Also there are unusual shaped rocks and an observatory. A ropeway connects Shishiwa Station on Mt. Misen with Momijidani Park.

MIYAJIMA TRADITIONAL CRAFTS CENTER

The center (a.k.a. Miyajima kobo) is intended to promote and develop Miyajima's traditional craftwork industry. Its display room exhibits traditional art crafts such as rice scoops and woodcarvings by the craftsmen at the forefront of the industry today. You can buy craft products there.

TSUTSUMIGAURA RECREATION PARK

This park is located along the seaside, where a beautiful sandy beach stretches for 570 meters along the north-east coast of the island. There you can enjoy outdoor activities and sports, camping, fishing, trekking, tennis and more.

MACHIYA STREET

While Omotesando Shopping Arcade is filled with tourists all year round, Machiya Street, which is one block off of the arcade, provides a glimpse into Miyajima's local life with a neat row of centuries-old stores and houses. Bengara latticed merchants' town houses (machiya) and other buildings, which present an aesthetic combination of the historical architecture and the modern style, will take visitors back to the good old days.

TAKIKOJI ALLEY

Takikoji Alley stretches from behind Itsukushima Shrine to Dai-shoin Temple. There used to be residences for priests and Imperial messengers of which latticed doors and "shikado" doors show a feature of the old-time houses of Miyajima. Near Daishoin Temple is located Awashima Shrine, which is well-known as a guardian deity of safe delivery and good health.

YAMABE PATH

Yamabe Path used to be the eastern approach to Itsukushima Shrine. Nyoninzaka Slope is a part of the approach which has a quaint old flavor with stone statues of the guardian deity of children, Jizo and a stone relief of the goddess Nyoninzo.

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