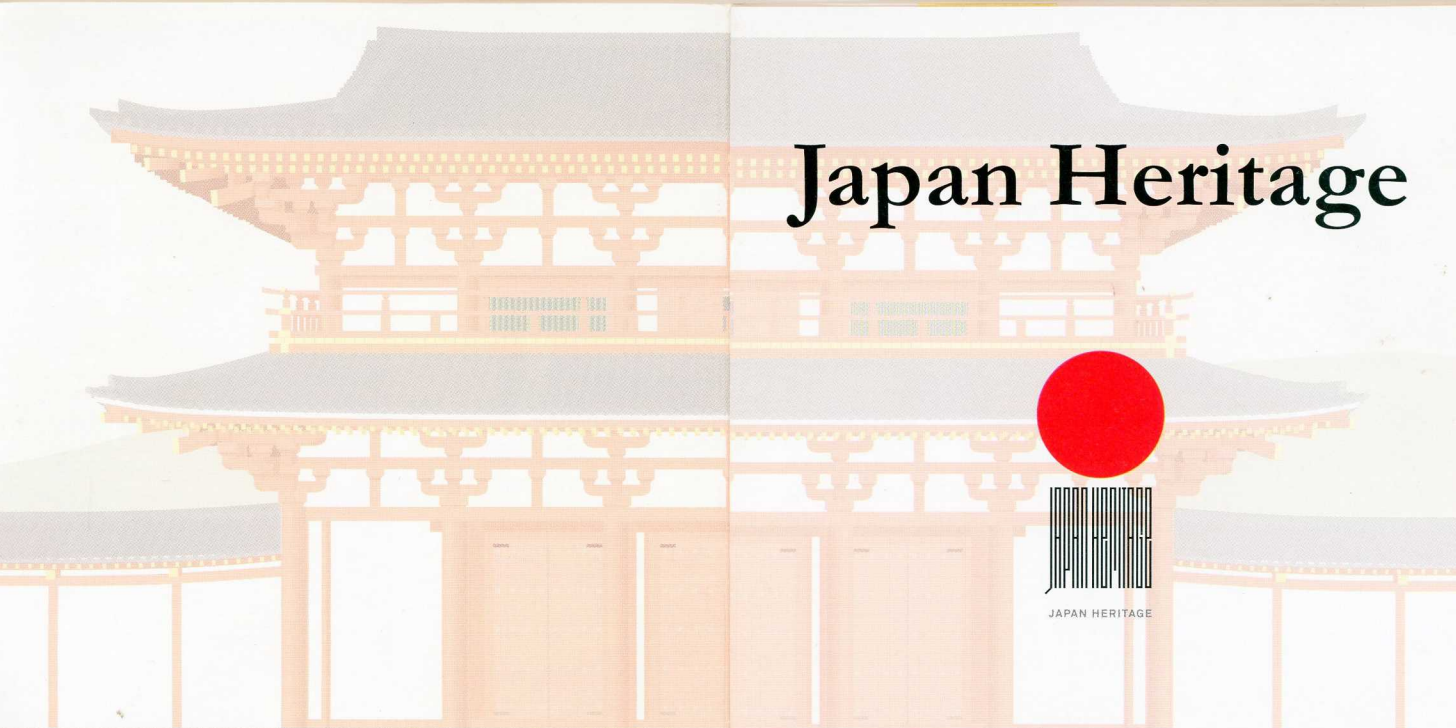


ENGLISH

日本語



Japan Heritage



Access Map

The Western Capital of Ancient Japan
TIME TRIP
The navigation function for visiting historical sites and cultural assets.

Get the app for free and roam ancient Dazaifu, the western capital.

Commemorative photos at the sites
Routes for the configuration of cultural assets

Scan here to download.
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Download the e-book and you can use the app while traveling. You can access more information than this pamphlet. Enjoy your trip with the convenient functions of the e-book!

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Dazaifu City Japan Heritage Utilization Council
1-1-1 Kanzeonji, Dazaifu City, Fukuoka, Japan 818-0198
TEL 092-921-2121
http://www.dazaifu-japan-heritage.jp

Do you know? DAZAIFU

The Western Capital of Ancient Japan ~Exchange Hub with East Asia~

Dazaifu was the Western Capital of Ancient Japan

Many people remember "Heijokyo" of Nara and "Heiankyo" of Kyoto as the ancient Japanese capitals. But there was also a capital-like city at Dazaifu in western Japan. We would like to introduce Dazaifu as the "Western Capital" of ancient Japan which was established as the exchange hub for East Asia.

[Dazaifu (大宰府), Dazaifu (太宰府)]
Dazaifu (大宰府) meant the government office in this great in ancient times. After the Middle Ages, Dazaifu (大宰府) became the name of the area.

[Tsukushi (筑紫), Chikuzen (筑前)]
These are the past names of the Fukuoka region.

[Tsukushi no Murotsumi (筑紫郡), Korokan (筑紫館)]
Tsukushi no Murotsumi (known as Korokan) was the ancient guesthouse in coastal Fukuoka.

This pamphlet was created for people to learn about Dazaifu, which has been selected as a Japan Heritage site. Along with the app and website, it supports your trip to Dazaifu. Try out the app at the actual site, you will see...? Please enjoy the exciting experience of the Western Capital.

※ When you use the app at the sites, please show consideration for the other people around you.

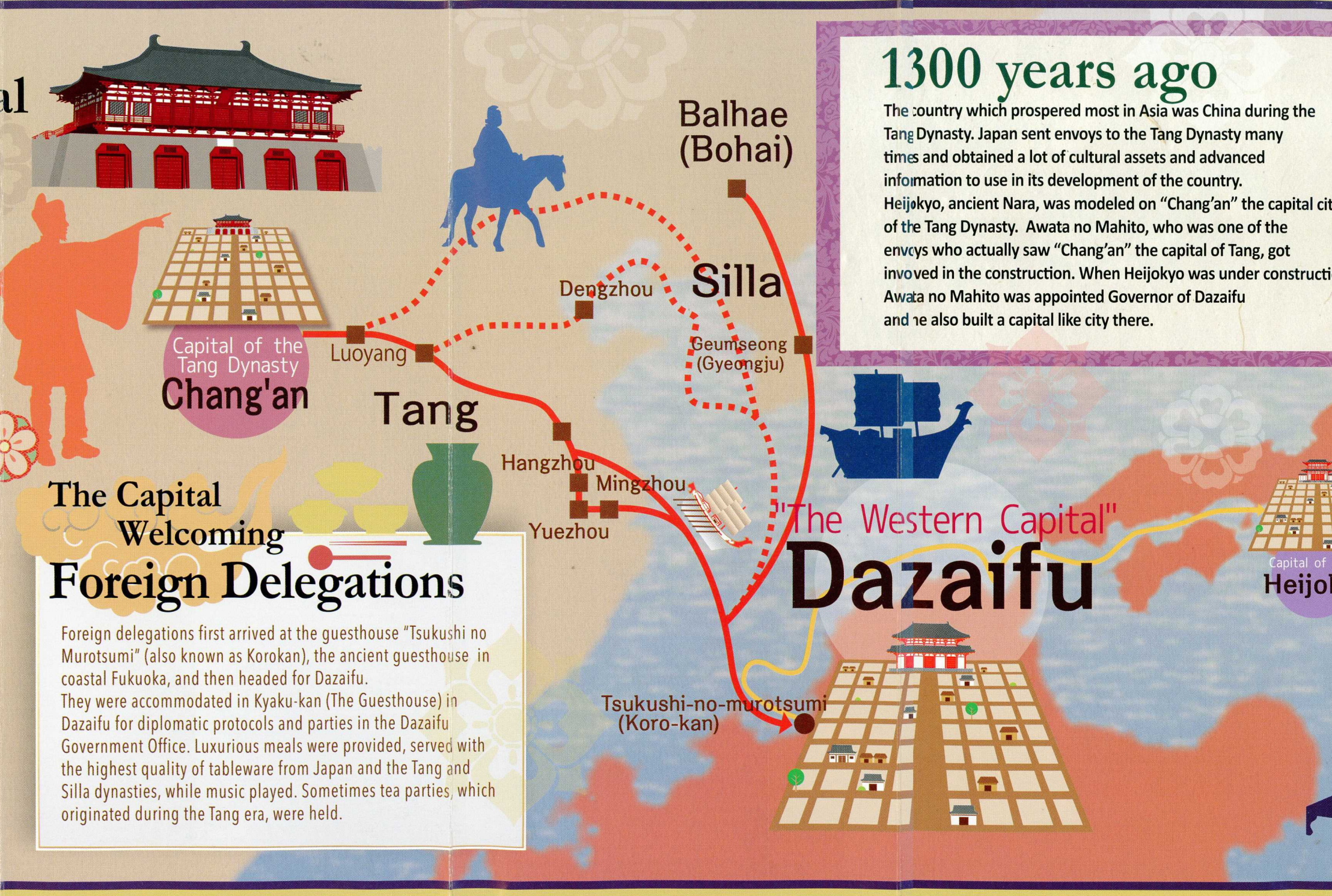
This guide is foldable and handy for traveling!

- Cut along the dotted lines.
- Fold in half so the inside page should be facing out.
- Fold according to the figure.
- Complete to make a handy pamphlet.

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The Western Capital Connected to the World

The government of Dazaifu had the role of hosting delegations from foreign countries and trading with them, on behalf of the capital. A capital to act as a stage for guest formalities (ceremonies to welcome foreign delegations) of an international standard was needed. Although the area already had fortresses (Mizuki/Ono-jo/ Kii-jo) modeled after the capital of the Baekje Kingdom (one of the ancient nations of the Korean Peninsula), using the fortresses as outer walls, set a government offices in the north and constructing Suzaku Road in the center, the area was turned into "the western capital", Dazaifu.



Accumulation of Advanced Cultures

Dazaifu was an international city, where people from other areas in Japan and abroad gathered, and it was filled with many products. Overseas influences are observed in the design of roof and floor tiles. Today, the collected cultural artifacts found in the Western Capital, Dazaifu, can be seen in the museums of the city, Kanzeonji Temple and Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine.

Blossoming Culture

People with cultural skills and knowledge were required to properly treat important foreign visitors in the Western Capital, Dazaifu. New cultures grew through the cultural exchange of such people. "Waka", a 31 syllable style of Japanese poetry, was introduced here as a new cultural pastime, through admiring plum blossoms, which came to Japan from the Chinese continent. After that, along with the legends related to Sugawara no Michizane, plum blossoms became known as the flowers of Dazaifu, and were widely admired by people.

The Western Capital Connected to the World

Witness the historical breadth of this ancient western capital city by visiting its many important sites.

- Mizuki Fortress Ruins**: This remains of defensive walls and moats was built in 663. It had an east and west gate, both serving as doorways to domestic and foreign lands.
- Chikuzen Kokubunji Temple Ruins**: In the mid-8th century, provincial temples, called Kokubunji, were built all over Japan by Emperor Shomu, who built the Todaiji Temple in Nara.
- Onojo and Kijio Fortress Ruins**: Excavated remains from the construction of these fortresses in 663, as protection from the Tang and Silla dynasties. Later, they also were used as storage places for food, such as rice grain.
- Dazaifu Government Office Ruins**: The governmental office was the nucleus of Dazaifu which had jurisdiction in ancient Kyushu and handled Japanese military affairs and diplomatic Government affairs and formalities were also performed there.
- Kanzeonji Temple**: This was the most important temple in ancient Kyushu. It was built by Emperor Tenji, in memory of his mother, Empress Saimei, who died in 645.
- Kyushu National Museum**: This museum of diverse artifacts and objects is located in the heart of Dazaifu.
- Dazaifu Fureai Museum**: This museum is located in the heart of Dazaifu.
- Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine**: The shrine is dedicated to Tenjin, the deity of the sea, who is believed to be the ancestor of the Japanese people.

Tracing the Route of the Foreign Delegations

Retrace the path of the foreign delegates along Suzaku Road, from the guesthouse to the Government Office.

- Dazaifu Government Office Ruins**: At this centralized public institution, envoys from the Imperial Court and public servants of Dazaifu met with foreign delegates.
- Enokisha Shrine (South Hall Site)**: Highly-ranked public servants from the capital resided here. Today, the shrine is dedicated to Amatsukami, who took care of Sugawara no Michizane.
- Kanzeonji Temple**: Groups performed international court dances and music here. It's believed that such groups performed for decorative since 8th.
- Kyakuken Guesthouse Site**: Foreign delegations were accommodated here during the Sana and at the beginning of Heian era. Tableware of the highest grade, from Japan, China, and Korea, were found here, revealing the quality of hospitality.
- Mizuki fortress West Gate**: This served as the entrance from the coastal guesthouse to Dazaifu.
- Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine**: The shrine is dedicated to Tenjin, the deity of the sea, who is believed to be the ancestor of the Japanese people.

Blossoming Culture

Experience the culture of this ancient western capital, as the poets and nobles of the Nara and Heian eras once did.

- Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine**: The shrine is dedicated to Tenjin, the deity of the sea, who is believed to be the ancestor of the Japanese people.
- Dazaifu Plum Blossoms**: Dazaifu is famous for its plum blossoms. There are about 6,000 trees at Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine. The best season to see the 200 or so varieties of red and white blossoms is from mid-February through the beginning of March.
- Donkan Road**: The road is believed to be the main street of Dazaifu during the Heian era.
- Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine**: The shrine is dedicated to Tenjin, the deity of the sea, who is believed to be the ancestor of the Japanese people.
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Visiting Collections from The Ancient Advanced Culture

Experience the culture and artifacts collected by the Western Capital through exchange with foreign countries.

- Dazaifu Fureai Museum**: This museum is located in the heart of Dazaifu.
- Dazaifu Exhibition Hall**: This exhibition hall is located in the heart of Dazaifu.
- Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine**: The shrine is dedicated to Tenjin, the deity of the sea, who is believed to be the ancestor of the Japanese people.
- Kyushu National Museum**: This museum is located in the heart of Dazaifu.

The Western Capital of Ancient Japan DAZAIFU MAP

Find the QR code sticker on the direction board and have even more fun!

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History of Dazaifu

Japan Heritage The Western Capital of Ancient Japan (CULTURAL ASSETS)

- 661 The Empress Saimei died in Tsukushi.
- 662 Emperor Tenji dispatched troops to reconquer Baekje.
- 663 Emperor Tenji Defeated by Tang and Silla at the Battle of Bakhung.
- 664 Mizuki fortress was built.
- 665 Onojo and Kijio fortresses were built.
- 689 Dazaifu Jobu (Grid based city) was constructed around this time.
- 694 Fujiwara no Ason was designated as the capital.
- 703 Enactment of the Taiho Code.
- 703 Awata no Mahito, the envoy to the Tang Dynasty, visited Chang'an, the capital of the Tang Dynasty.
- 710 Heijokyo in Nara was designated as the capital.
- 718 Dazaifu Government Office was built around this time.
- 730 Onono no Tabito hosted Baika no En (plum blossom party).
- 732 Kyakuken guesthouse was built around this time.
- 741 After this, Chikuzen kokubunji Temple was built.
- 746 Kanzeonji Temple was completed.
- 753 Ganjin (Jian-zhen), the Great Tang Monk presided over Jishu in the Buddhist ordination ceremonies at Kanzeonji Temple.
- 794 Heijokyo in Kyoto was designated as the capital.
- 803 Kakuai prayed for the success of the voyage to the Tang Dynasty on Mt. Homan.
- 806 Kakuai stayed in Dazaifu after returning from Tang Dynasty.
- 901 Sugawara no Michizane was demoted to Dazaifu.
- 903 Sugawara no Michizane died.
- 1101 Jinko Event at Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine started.