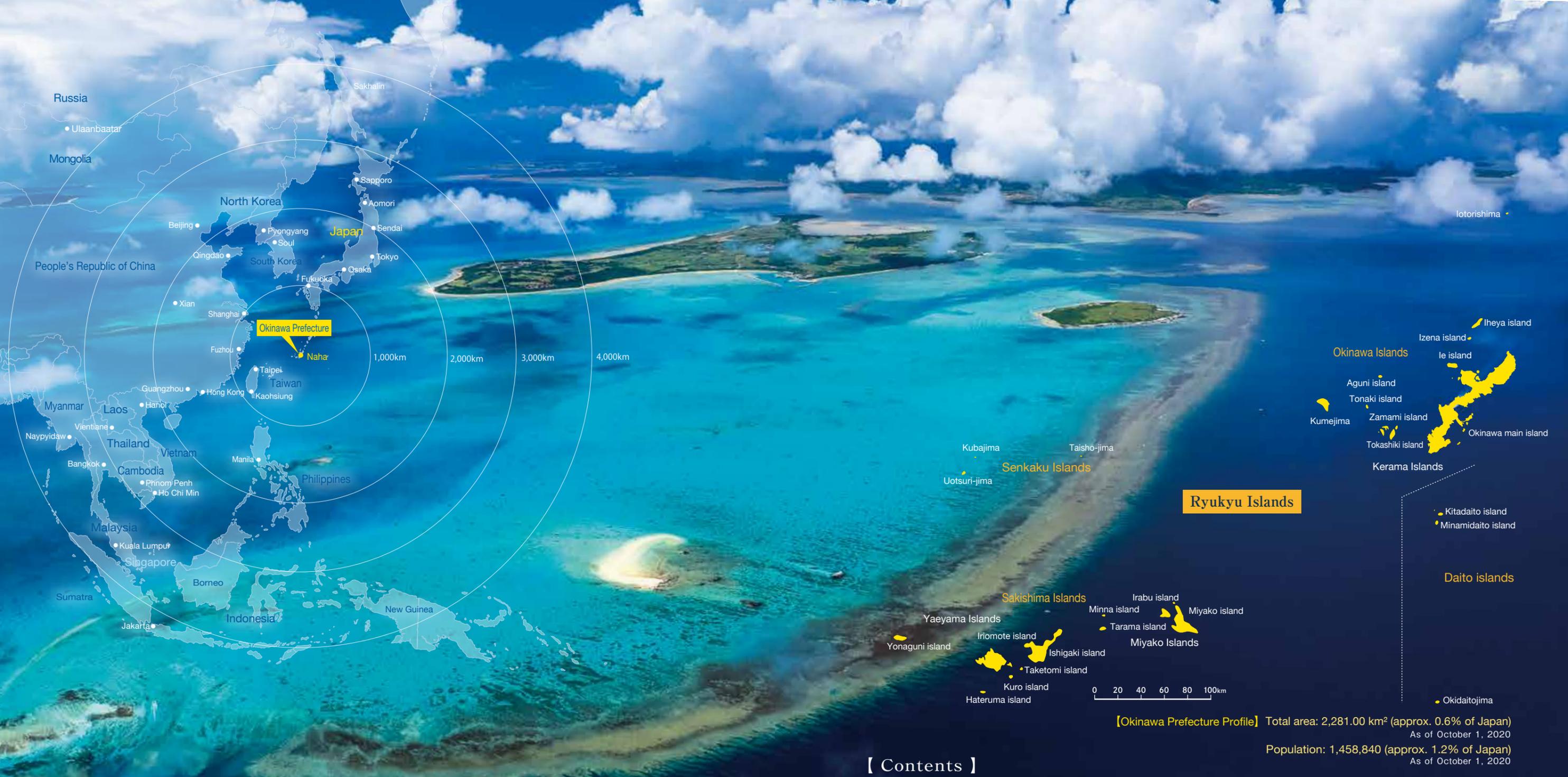




Outline of Okinawa Prefecture

**ABOUT
OKI
NAWA**

 **Okinawa Prefecture**



Islands of rich nature and warm-hearted people

Lying to the east of the Asian continent, Okinawa Prefecture is at the westernmost tip of the crescent-shaped Japanese island chain. The prefecture comprises 160 small-to-large islands (47 of which are inhabited) dotting a vast sea area extending roughly 1,000 km east to west and approximately 400 km north to south. In a subtropical maritime climate, the Ryukyu Islands are blessed with a magnificent natural environment of beautiful coral reefs and precious wildlife. The islands have formed their own unique culture through historical trade and exchange with China, Southeast Asia, and other regions. On these islands, more than 1.45 million people make their home, proud to be Uchinanchu, revering their ancestors and cherishing tradition. They are devoted to developing these islands while maintaining a common community with people throughout Japan and the world.

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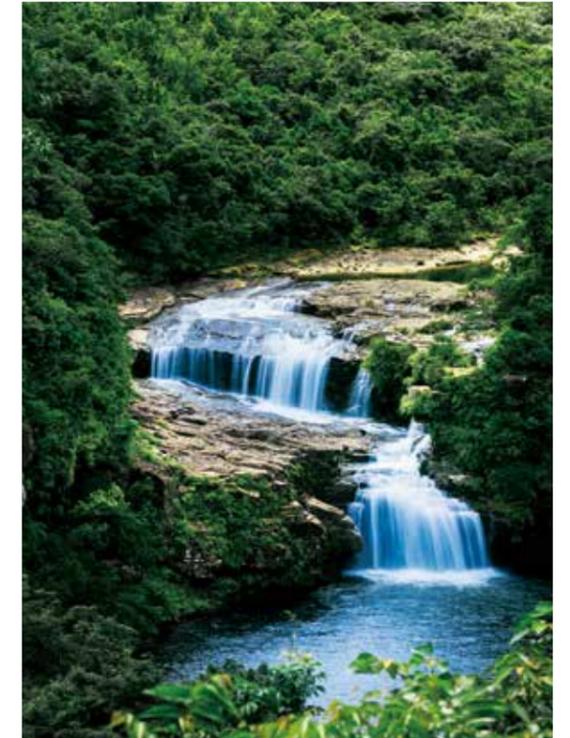
- Okinawa Prefecture Data 58

[Okinawa Prefecture Profile] Total area: 2,281.00 km² (approx. 0.6% of Japan)
 As of October 1, 2020
 Population: 1,458,840 (approx. 1.2% of Japan)
 As of October 1, 2020

NATURE



Kerama islands



Maryudu waterfall/Iriomote island

Beautiful nature and unique creatures

All of Okinawa Prefecture is subtropical, blessing the region with a temperate weather throughout the year. The blue sea enveloping the islands is a treasure chest of life where tropical fish, coral reefs, and other creatures thrive. The Okinawa main island's northern area and outlying islands are covered in a lush jungle-like forest where rare plants, animals and insects dwell, which are rarely found anywhere else in Japan or throughout the world. This nature, abounding with the vitality of life, is one of the riches that Okinawa Prefecture is proud to share with the world.



Coral reefs extend throughout the seas around Okinawa



Okinawa rail (Yanbaru kuina)



Yanbaru long-armed scarab beetle



Looking-glass mangrove/Iriomote Island

The richness of nature emanating from the islands is what draws many people here



Cold scarlet cherry blossoms



Bougainvillea



Fukugi Tree-lined/Motobu Town



Mangrove/Kohama Island



Tatami-mat rocks (turtle shell stones)/Kume Island

HISTORY

From Ryukyu Kingdom to Okinawa Prefecture

Okinawa Prefecture, once an independent state known as the Ryukyu Kingdom, prospered through trade with China and other neighboring countries. The 1609 Satsuma invasion brought the Ryukyu Kingdom into the folds of Japan's feudal system. In 1879, the Ryukyu

Kingdom became a prefecture of Japan when feudal domains were abolished and prefectures established. In 1945, Okinawa Prefecture was the site of Japan's only land battle during the Pacific war and a time when many precious lives were lost. After the war,

Okinawa was placed under US military administration and returned to Japan in 1972. Since reversion, the prefecture has achieved remarkable growth that has continued up to the present day.



Chinese-style ceremonial costume
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)



Hokey-type blade sword mounting (Chiyo-gane-maru)
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)



Omoro Soshi Collection of Poems & Songs
(Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum Collection)



Royal Crown (with Ornamental Hairpin)
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)



Aerial picture of Shuri and Naha (Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)

Procession on Mission to the Ryukyu (Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum Collection)



Set of Gold Goblets
(Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum Collection)



Commodore Perry and his entourage visit Shuri Castle

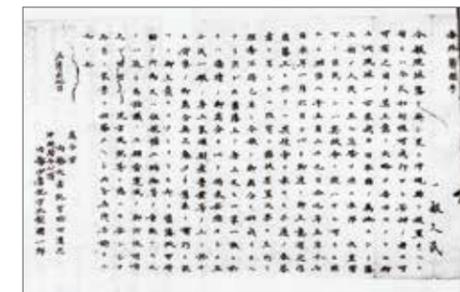


Naha at the time of Perry's visit
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)

Former Shuri-jō Castle Seiden (State Chamber) Bell (The Bridge of Nations Bell)
(Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum Collection)



Posthumous Portrait of King Sho Iku (restored color reproduction)
(Produced by the Japanese Painting Conservation Studio, Graduate School of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts; Okinawa Churashima Foundation Collection)



Edict Abolishing Han (Feudal Domain) System and Establishing Prefectures
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)

Portrait of Gakudoji (Young Boy Artist) Riding Horse
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)

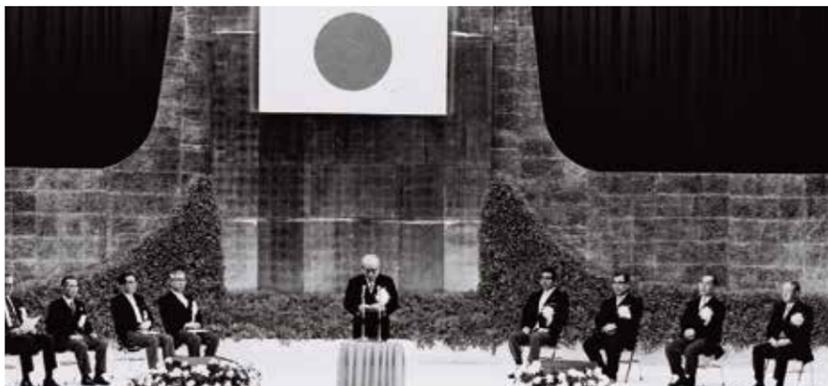


HISTORY

605	187	1429	1458	1531	1609	1623	1835	1853	1872	1879	1945	1951	1952	1969	1972
The characters "ryūkyū" first appear in a historical Chinese document	King Shunten enthroned	King Sho Hashi unifies the three centers of power and establishes the Ryūkyū Kingdom	Gosamaru-Amawari Rebellion	First volume of Omoro Soshi compiled	Satsuma army invades and brings the Ryūkyū Kingdom under rule of the Shimazu clan	Gima Shūpō produces raw sugar	King Sho Iku, 18th ruler of Ryūkyū Kingdom's Second Sho Dynasty, enthroned	Commodore Perry arrives at Naha	Ryūkyū Domain established	Okinawa Prefecture established (fūfan-chiken: Japan's feudal domains abolished and prefectures established)	Japanese military signs the instrument of surrender	San Francisco Peace Treaty places Okinawa and Amami Islands under US administration	Gov. of the Ryūkyū Islands established	Japan-US Joint Communiqué on Okinawa's Reversion	Okinawa reverts to Japan, dollars changed to yen



Battle of Okinawa
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)



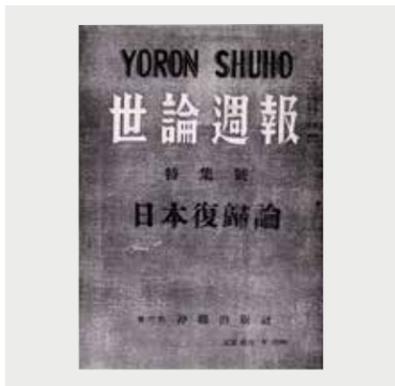
Okinawa Reversion Ceremony (Courtesy of the Okinawa Prefectural Archives)



26th G8 Summit (Kyushu-Okinawa Summit)
attended by heads of major nations
(Courtesy of the Ryukyu Shimpo)



Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium



Yoron Shuho published articles about Okinawa's return to Japan
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)



Photo taken in front of an officially-designated dollar-exchange bank
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)



People changing currency from dollars to yen
(Courtesy of the Okinawa Prefectural Archives)



Okinawa Urban Monorail (Yui Rail)



Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum



Kerama Islands



EXPO 1975 Okinawa
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)



Driving switched from right-hand to left-hand
(Courtesy of Naha City Museum of History)



42nd National Sports Festival "Kaiho Kokutai" held in Okinawa
(Courtesy of the Ryukyu Shimpo)



Okinawa Karate Kaikan Special Dojo "Shurei no Yakata"



Yanbaru designated a national park

Okinawa Prefecture continues to grow with the times

1975	1978	1987	1990	1995	2000	2002	2003	2007	2012	2014	2015	2016	2017	2019
EXPO 1975 Okinawa opens	Traffic switches from right to left side of road	42nd National Sports Festival "Kaiho Kokutai" held in Okinawa	1st World Uchinanchu Festival held	"Cornerstone of Peace" erected	26th G8 Summit (Kyushu-Okinawa Summit) held	Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium opens	Okinawa Urban Monorail (Yui Rail) service begins	Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum opens	Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University founded	Kerama Islands designated a national park	Irabu Ohashi Bridge opens	Yanbaru designated a national park	Okinawa Karate Kaikan opens	Annual tourist arrivals top 10 million



Irabu Ohashi Bridge (© OCVB)