

Dazaifu



Dazaifu City Guide Book



春

Spring



▲Kamado Shrine cherry blossoms

In Dazaifu, both nature and people come alive in the spring

The Dazaifu Government Office Ruins overflow with cherry blossoms in the spring. The sight of visitors picnicking amongst the pink blossoms and the gentle spring breeze will take you back to Dazaifu when it was in its prime. Feel the passion of the townspeople as you take in the lush nature that has been carefully preserved for over a thousand years. That's the kind of history we can learn from, and the kind of passion that will bring Dazaifu through the next thousand years.



▲Gomadaki fire ceremony at Kamado Shrine



▲Rhododendron flower at Kamado Shrine

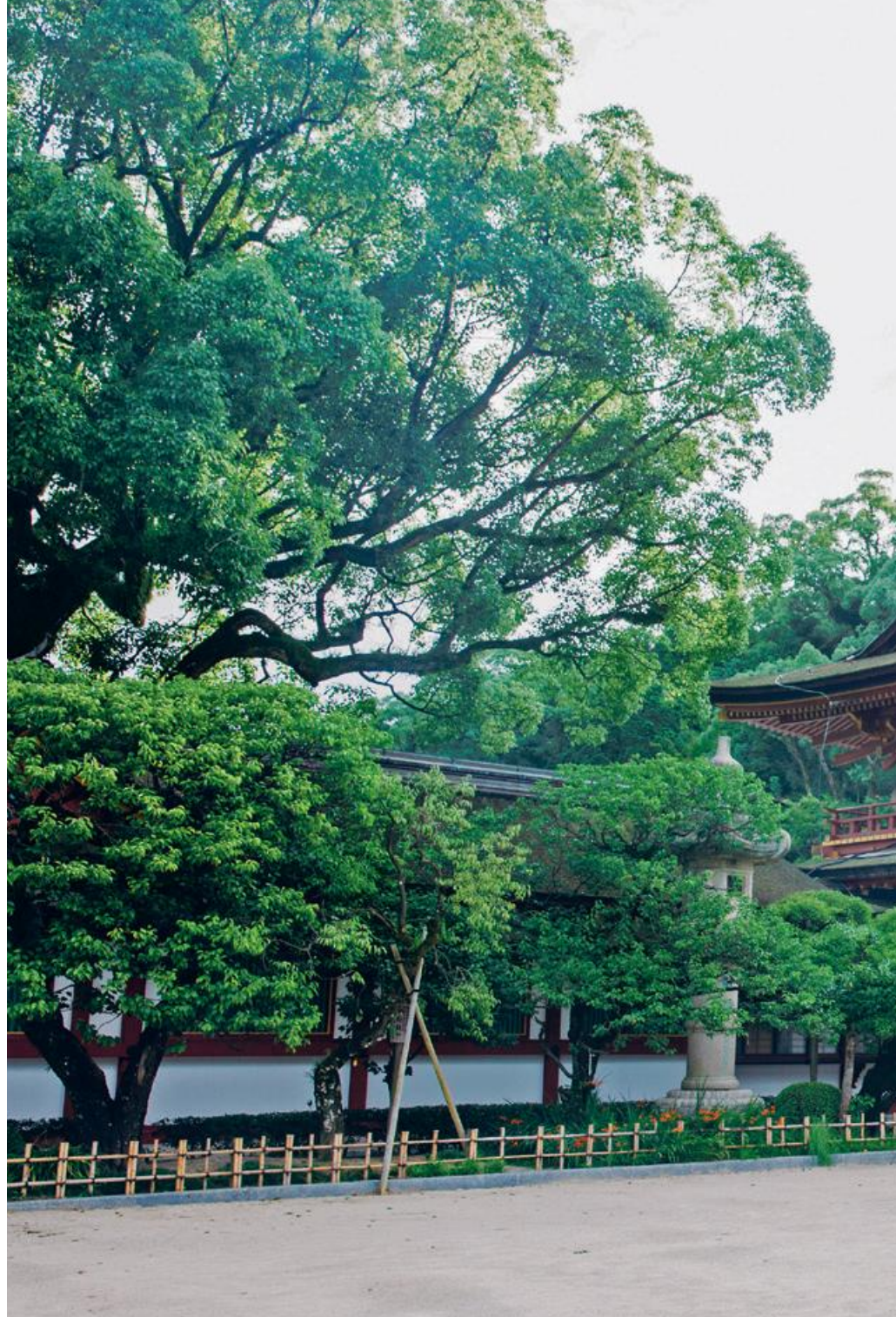
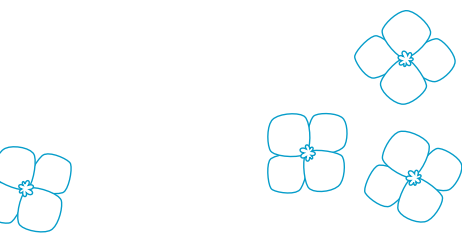
◀Nanohana flowers at Mizuki Fortress Ruins



▲Kanzeon-ji Temple surrounded by lush greenery



▲The summer landscape reflected in the glass wall of Kyushu National Museum



▲Camphor trees near the Romon (two-storied) Gate at Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine



▲Zazen gathering at Kaidan-in

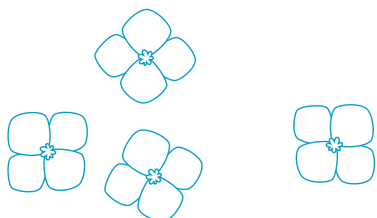


▲The Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine summer Tenjin Festival



夏

Summer



Enjoy the gentle breeze and the scent of fresh flowers that overflow in Dazaifu in summer

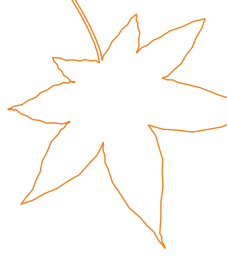
How old do you think this camphor tree is? How many people do you think it's seen rest in its shade? Green leaves appear on its branches, turn red, scatter, then grow anew.

This is the perfect place to come for refreshment and encouragement when you're worn out - you're sure to head home with renewed energy after spending a while reflecting on its history and grandeur.



秋

Autumn



Let the vibrant colors of Dazaifu in autumn awaken something new in your heart

Live in the present.

Let yourself bathe in the beauty of nature and culture right here, right now. Find someone special to share that joy with today. Now is the time to look to the future and a new generation.

The present is where tradition and innovation meet – and that's right where we need to be.



▲Lucky charm (amulet) stall at Kamado Shrine



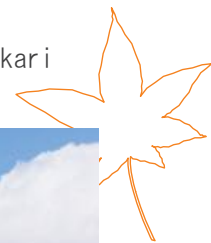
◀Dazaifu Koto no Hikari



▲Autumn foliage at Komyozen-ji Temple



◀Cosmos blossoms at Kanzeon-ji Temple



冬

Winter



▲The main hall of Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine blanketed in snow



▲Kyokusui no En festival at Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine

Dazaifu in winter will warm your heart with hope for the future

Listen as the temple bell at Kanzeon-ji Temple rings in a new year. What feelings might this sound have stirred up in the hearts of the ancestors of Dazaifu?

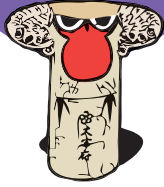
Why not put yourself in their shoes by joining in one of the long-standing traditions of Dazaifu? Let your heart become one with theirs, and come alongside us as we create the next five, ten, or twenty years of Dazaifu's history and legacy.



Onisube ritual at Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine



The top ten sightseeing spots in Dazaifu



①Dazaifu Government Office Ruins

These were the headquarters from which Kyushu was governed from the late seventh to late eleventh century. During this time the Dazaifu Government Office played a central role in foreign and military affairs. The structure of the original buildings resembled a palace, but nowadays the site is home to a historical park built around the preserved and restored foundations of this building.

②Mizuki Fortress Ruins

The Mizuki Fortress Ruins are what is left of a defense wall built in 664 to protect the country from possible invasion by the Tang Dynasty and the Kingdom of Silla (present-day China and the Korean Peninsula). Its name, meaning “water castle,” comes from the moat dug along the wall measuring 1.2 km long, 60 m wide on the outer side, and 4 m deep.

③Onojo Fortress Ruins (Mt. Shioji)

Onojo Fortress was built in 665 and is said to be the oldest mountain castle in Japan. Earthen walls built around the approximately 8 km mountain ridge and stone walls used to fortify the valleys can still be seen and are an impressive sight. The area became known as a sacred Buddhist site since Shio-ji Temple (Shio-in) was built there in the late eighth century.

④Homangu Kamado Shrine

Mt. Homan has long been considered the guardian mountain of Dazaifu, and the Homangu Kamado Shrine at the foot of the mountain is well-known for good luck in match-making and marriage. The shrine grounds overflow with seasonal beauty that has long been enjoyed by aristocrats of the past, including beautiful cherry blossoms in spring and vibrant red leaves in fall.

⑤Mt. Homan

Mt. Homan has long been thought to be home to many gods, or a god itself, and it is a popular mountain for hikers from Fukuoka that enjoy a steep climb. Kamado Jogu Shrine is situated on the peak of the mountain and offers a 360° view of the surrounding scenery.

⑥Kanzeon-ji Temple

Famous for being featured in the well-known Japanese novel “The Tale of Genji,” the Kanzeon-ji Temple was completed in 746 and was one of the largest temples in Kyushu. The temple grounds are home to the oldest temple bell in Japan (a national treasure) and sixteen statues of Buddha (all important cultural properties), including some in the treasure room that measure over 5 m high.

⑦Kaidan-in

The Kaidan-in was originally established in the late eighth century in the Kanzeon-ji Temple grounds as a place for teaching the precepts monks must adhere to in order to become priests. It is counted among the three major kaidan (ordination platforms) in Japan, alongside Todai-ji Temple and Shimotsuke Yakushi-ji Temple. It split off from Kanzeon-ji Temple during the Edo period and is now a Rinzai Sect (Zen-Buddhist) temple.

⑧Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine

The Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine is the head shrine of approximately 12,000 shrines around the country that enshrine Tenjin (Sugawara no Michizane), believed to be the god of learning. Each season, the shrine grounds come alive with beautiful flowers and traditional ceremonies, rituals, and festivals, amazing its visitors.

⑨Komyozen-ji Temple

Located south of Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine, this temple is more commonly known as “Kokedera Moss Temple.” It is famous for its gardens; one garden uses moss to represent land and white sand to depict the sea, and the other is a stone garden in which stones have been arranged to create the character for “light.” These gardens are great places for enjoying fresh summer greenery and rich autumn foliage.

⑩Kyushu National Museum

Throughout Japanese history, Kyushu has always played a central role in foreign relations. Kyushu National Museum was the fourth national museum established in Japan, following museums in Tokyo, Nara, and Kyoto. In particular, the museum aims to help its visitors “understand the shaping of Japanese culture from an Asian historical perspective.”

Related Websites

Dazaifu City
(<http://www.city.dazaifu.lg.jp/>)
Japan Heritage Dazaifu
(<http://www.dazaifu-japan-heritage.jp/>)
Dazaifu Tourist Association
(<http://www.dazaifu.org/>)
Homangu Kamado Shrine
(<http://kamadojinja.or.jp/>)
Kaidan-in
(<http://www.geocities.jp/kaidanin925/>)
Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine
(<http://www.dazaifutenmangu.or.jp/>)
Kyushu National Museum
(<http://www.kyuhaku.jp/>)



Japan Heritage - Dazaifu - The Western Capital of Ancient Japan

“The Western Capital of Ancient Japan - Exchange Hub with East Asia” tells the story of Dazaifu’s unique geography and history, and has been included in the national Japan Heritage project.

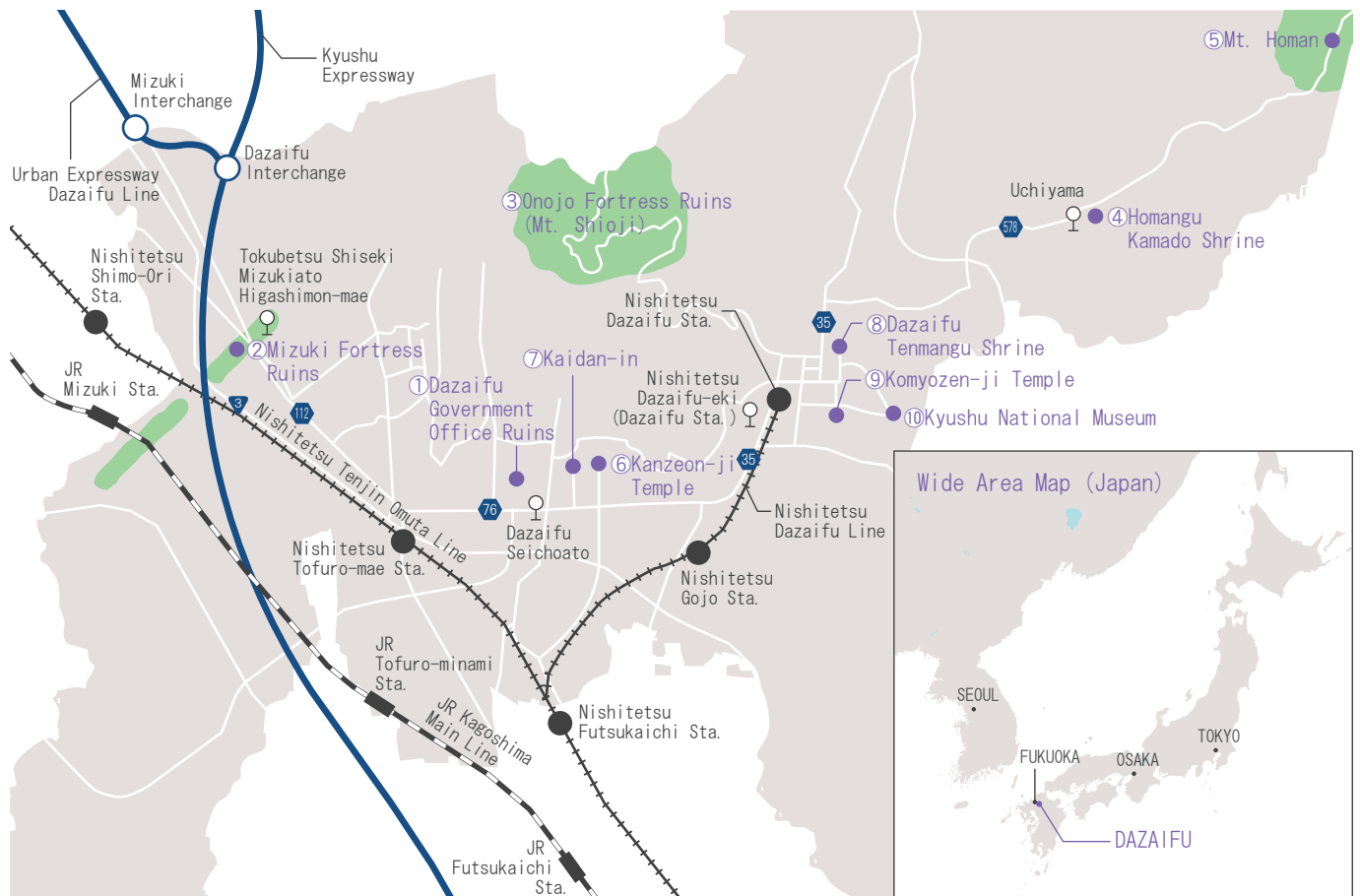
Take some time to read about the depth and beauty of Dazaifu’s history.



Western Capital Dazaifu

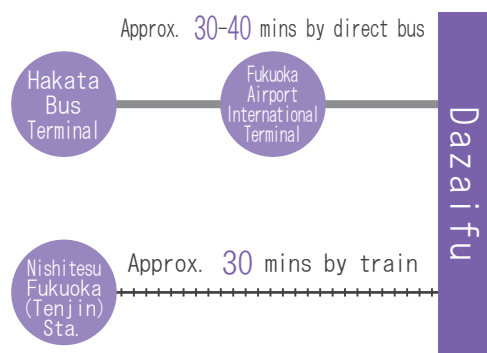


Detailed map of Dazaifu



Access to Dazaifu

Now getting to Dazaifu is even easier and more enjoyable!



Dazaifu Liner Bus Tabito

Use the Dazaifu Liner Bus to get straight to Dazaifu from JR Hakata Station and Fukuoka Airport.



Dazaifu Tourism Train Tabito

Take the Dazaifu Tourism Train and enjoy the surrounding scenery while you travel to Dazaifu from Nishitetsu Fukuoka (Tenjin) Station.



Inquiries: 0570-00-1010 (Nishitetsu Customer Center)

About the cover design



“Hakata Dazaifu Zu Byobu” by Saito Shuho; Privately owned, photograph provided by Kyushu Historical Museum

The “Hakata Dazaifu Zu Byobu” (Folding Screen Picturing Dazaifu, Hakata) is a painting of the Dazaifu town area from Sekiya to Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine that depicts the bustling crowds of people flocking to the shrine town as so often seen during the Edo period.

This painting, alongside photographs of present-day Dazaifu, show how the area has been and continues to be cherished; making it the place it is today.

The image frame and background pattern feature the city flower, the Japanese apricot, and the color red was chosen to be reminiscent of the Dazaifu Government Office Ruins.

Issued by/point of contact for inquiries: Tourism Promotion Section, Dazaifu City Phone: 092-921-2121 Fax: 092-921-1601

This pamphlet was produced using history and culture environmental taxes.

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