



歓迎

Welcome to Yomitan Village,
Okinawa Prefecture, Japan

日本国
沖縄県

読谷村





Zakimi-jo Castle Site: A World Heritage under the Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu

At the onset of the 15th century, leading figures in various regions of Okinawa constructed castles atop hills that commanded spectacular views, fortifying their fortresses with great stone walls around the grounds. These leaders held influence over the people as they engaged in intermediary trade with East Asian countries, prospered, and eventually led to the unification under one kingdom. The Zakimi-jo castle site is a historical monument from that time in our past.



Yomitan Festival

In 1372, a heroic young man from Yomitan Village by the name of Taiki, was the first ambassador to pay a tributary visit to China across the seas. A stage production titled Shinkosen, or Tributary Ship, depicts Taiki, a historical figure of Yomitan Village, returning by ship from China. The play is performed every November at the Yomitan Festival where visitors can also enjoy the grand performance of traditional music and dance in honor of Akainko, the founder of the musical instrument, Sanshin.



Yachimun-no Sato (Pottery Village)

In the 17th century, during the period of the Ryukyu Kingdom, a type of pottery called the Kina-Yaki was produced in Yomitan Village. Nowadays, the techniques of the Kina-Yaki are still practiced by the potters in Yomitan, and there are kilns located all across the village.



Yuntanzan Hana Ori (Textile Village)

A particular type of textile known as the Yuntanzan Hana Ori is still being handed down in Yomitan Village. Today, there are over 100 weavers who have inherited this weaving technique.

Discover the History & Culture of the Ryukyu Kingdom Era in Yomitan Village, Okinawa Prefecture, Japan

The population in the Prefecture of Okinawa, where Yomitan Village is located, is approximately 1.4 million. The region enjoys a subtropical climate where the islands formed by coral reef are surrounded by the brilliant clear seas. The Ryukyu Kingdom prospered between the 14th and 17th centuries when it engaged in intermediary trade by ship with the countries surrounding Japan, which included China and across East Asia. During that time, the Ryukyu Kingdom saw an age of independence, with its own politics, economy, history and culture.

Even among the various parts of Okinawa Prefecture, Yomitan Village is home to important historical monuments and traditional craftsmanship techniques that remain from the Ryukyu Kingdom era. Among them, the Zakimi-jo castle site is one of the most famous historical monuments, one in a group of Okinawan sites designated as a World Heritage Site under Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu. In the area of traditional craftsmanship, there are three nationally designated Important Intangible Cultural Property Holders (living national treasures) in ceramics and textiles. Presently, Yomitan Village has become a village of ceramics with over 50 kilns. In addition, in the field of textiles, there are over 100 weavers who are carrying on the traditional techniques, and thus the village is also known for its textiles.

Yomitan Village is also known as the place of origin for Okinawa's famous string instrument, the Sanshin, and within our communities, the traditional music and dance of Okinawa is being preserved and handed down to the next generation. We invite you to visit Yomitan Village in Okinawa Prefecture, Japan, to experience the history and culture of the Ryukyu Kingdom.

<http://www.vill.yomitan.okinawa.jp/>