



Seto Inland Sea Art Tours: Naoshima & Inujima

Naoshima and Inujima: Day 1

Your journey into the Seto Inland Sea begins in Takamatsu City, a city that still bears the trappings of Shōwa Era Japan. Not quite traditional and not quite modern but rather somewhere in between, this city embodies all that is charmingly quirky, kitsch, and sometimes outright absurd, making it the perfect point of departure for two days of artistic discovery.

From Takamatsu Port a yacht will carry you to Naoshima. The private vessel is an ideal method of travel as it glides over the vibrant blue waters of the Seto Inland Sea allowing for clear unhindered views of the various islands rising verdantly from the azure waters to showcase their emerald hills amid the sea breeze and nearly Mediterranean climate of the area.

At Naoshima, electrically assisted “E”-Bikes will be used for touring the island. With their electric motor, the bikes provide an eco-conscious means to get up close and personal with the art installations dotting the island.

Stops will also include the Chichu Art Museum, Benesse House Museum, and famous spots such as the beach side pumpkins on the island.

Designed by the famous Japanese architect Tadao Ando to incorporate the natural features of the island into the design of the building, the seamlessly integrated Chichu Art Museum houses works of art created by contemporary artists such as James Turrell and Walter De Maria.

The end of this day of artistic exploration and discovery will take place on the yacht. Here you will be able to enjoy vibrant dishes prepared on board by a private chef that take advantage of variety of fresh regional ingredients found in Kagawa as the sun slowly dips beneath the waters of the Seto Inland Sea. The evening will be spent on the yacht as it is softly cradled by blue currents.



Naoshima and Inujima: Day 2

The day begins with a cruise around the small islands that dot the Seto Inland Sea as the orange rays of sunlight creep across blue waters at sun rise. Lunch once again prepared by a private chef, will also be taken before your next stop on Inujima.

For most of its history, Inujima was the location of stonemasons and quarries. A reputation for quality stone lasted into the turn of the century and as Japan modernized, the island's position in the Seto Sea led to it becoming a storage lot for stone, ore, and even magazines of gunpowder. Starting in 1909, a copper refinery was successfully run until its closure in 1919 which essentially killed the island economy as well as damaging the local environment and the structure was abandoned.

Since 2008, the island has become the centerpiece of a new project to beautify and restore the relics of wanton industrialization. The old refinery is now covered in vines that cling to the well-preserved turn of the century architecture and brick smokestack. By turning these remnants of the past into open-air art installations, the transformative power of art to create good is realized. Not only are these fascinating and creative works of art but also serve as reminders of the lasting dangers and damages that careless industry can pose not only to the environment but to communities as well.

With the smokestack of the refinery disappearing as the yacht pulls away from the harbor, the end of the day will be spent leisurely as the currents of the Seto Inland Sea gently pull the yacht back to Takamatsu Port. This time is the perfect setting to reflect on or discuss the art experienced over the past two days as the sun once more slowly dips beneath the azure waves.

