

Tour in Japan



NAF Atsugi: www.atsugi.navy.mil



CFA Sasebo: www.cfas.navy.mil



CFA Yokosuka: www.cfay.navy.mil



NAF Misawa: www.naf-navy.misawa.mil



CFA Okinawa: www.cfao.navy.mil

So what should a Sailor coming to Japan expect to find?

"It's a perfect place for a family. The kids have plenty of after school and summer activities to choose from. Misawa is centrally located for travel throughout the Far East as well as getting back to the States. I would say Misawa is Neighborhood U.S.A." *LNI Ursula Brown, NAF Misawa.*

"I like it when it snows here! I like the driving space and countryside. There's never bumper to bumper traffic. I'm from the San Francisco Bay area. I've always seen buildings, buildings, and buildings; here I see trees, trees and trees. It's absolutely beautiful!" *AK2 Reynaldo Altares, NAF Misawa*

"The opportunity to learn and experience one of the world's richest cultures, first hand, is fantastic. There's a lot more to do on the bases out here than in the States and the MWR programs don't even compare! The opportunity to travel anywhere in the Pacific is another great reason why I like it so much." *Lt. Wayne Watts, Okinawa*

"The intensity level is higher here than anywhere else in the world. You can never lose your edge because every day is a new challenge. If anything ever happens, we'll be the first to be called." *EM3 Jubal Castilla, USS Thach (FFG 43)*

"What I like most about Japan is the kindness of the people and the natural unspoiled beauty of the country (when you get away from the cities). I find the culture to be fascinating since it is so different than ours in the U.S., and it really peaks my interest to find out new and exciting aspects of Japanese culture and customs." *YNC(SW) James Fox, NAF Atsugi*

"We're out here doing what we are trained to do more often than anywhere else in the world." *ETC Phil Molter, USS Mobile Bay (CG 53)*

"Sasebo reminds me of a small town. The Japanese are so receptive to the Navy here, and it's a great chance to meet people who really aren't that different from Americans." *FN Neil Crawford, CFA Sasebo*

In an age of tightening budgets and shrinking overseas billets, there is no tour more exotic – and few more professionally rewarding – than a hitch with a ship or shore unit forward deployed to Japan.

Today, the U.S. Navy maintains 17 ships and 43 shore facilities forward deployed in Japan. Among those facilities are three fleet activities, at **Yokosuka, Okinawa** and **Sasebo**. In addition, two naval air facilities – **Atsugi** and **Misawa**. Aboard those ships and facilities are approximately 19,829 active duty Sailors, 1,259 government civilian workers and 18,842 family members.

Duty in Japan offers something for everyone: travel, money, recreational activities galore, and the unique chance to study a foreign culture up close and in depth, and not to mention, the variety of off-duty education programs available. If you have your doubts about just how good it is, check the numbers for yourself and see, not only how many people opt for multiple tours in country, but also how high the Navy's retention rate is among Sailors forward deployed to Japan.

Now more than ever, the ties of friendship and cooperation with the local communities offer Navy citizens opportunities to experience "hands-on" cultural events that most Americans only read about.

The mix of the old and new Japan permeates the entire culture, not just its buildings and activities but its attitudes as well. Step outside the gate of any base in Japan and everything from street signs and billboards to store and restaurant displays are written in those distinctive and elaborately decorative Japanese characters called kanji. But after a few weeks and a few lessons, most Sailors grow

accustomed to the cultural differences and begin exploring - and there is so much to discover!

Praise for the local's helpfulness is a common theme among Sailors who are forward deployed to Japan. Sailors feel safe leaving their families behind as they go on deployment. Parents don't mind letting their children ride the trains alone; they are not only comfortable with the low crime rate, they are also confident that the Japanese will offer help in the event of any problem.

Americans in Japan may find themselves being treated like celebrities when curious locals see them in uniform or hear them speak a little Japanese. For example, at the Shimoda Black Ship Festival in the Izu Peninsula, Sailors from *USS Thach* (FFG 43) and *USS O'Brien* (DDG 975) found themselves posing for pictures and signing autographs for swarms of excited schoolchildren.

Traveling in Japan is a snap, thanks to an intricate and well-managed system of public transportation, centered on Japan's famous trains.

Imagine working in a city with a friendly, small-town atmosphere, which was just a stone's throw from a world-famous shopping and nightlife district in the world's largest city. And what better way of getting there....the train of course. Leave home without the hassle of parking your car or paying highway tolls.

For those who enjoy road trips, picture living a short drive from the ocean, from 700-year-old temples, and from a mountain so famous and sacred it is the symbol of a nation.

The base's MWR programs provide all the facilities available stateside and more. They host numerous events and trips that make it

easy to enjoy ski trips, camping trips, Mt. Fuji climbs and trips to Tokyo Disneyland, just to mention a few. There are also many events held in conjunction with the local community as well. These events include marathons, concerts, cherry blossom festivals, golf tournaments, and Japanese "bon odori" dance festivals and Children's Day festivals.

There is also a great opportunity to travel outside of Japan, either via commercial airlines or for free on the military "space available" flights.

That goes not just for ports the ships hit, like Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand, but also for more exotic destinations like Russia, Vietnam, Bali and Australia.

Professionally, Sailors in Japan are finding themselves in a fast-paced, high op-tempo environment that constantly offers them a fresh supply of challenges. Whether at sea or on shore, surface, air or submarine, interacting with the Japanese Self Defense Forces or serving the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet, Sailors forward deployed to Japan have daily opportunities to learn, grow, and hone their professional skills.

"Welcome aboard!"

Or, as the Japanese say, "Irasshaimase!"

For information on the forward deployed ships, Visit the Commander 7th Fleet website at:

www.c7f.navy.mil

For additional information regarding U S Naval Forces, Japan, visit

www.cnfj.navy.mil

**JOIN US, YOU WON'T BE
DISAPPOINTED!**