

# THE PEACH COBBLER



Vol. 2, Issue 7, October 2025

Thanks to everyone  
who came to the  
Welcome Party!!



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# Okayama:

## Sights and Attractions



For a lot of people, when they think about “destinations in Japan”, more often than not, they’re thinking about places like Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto. Sometimes, even Hiroshima, Fukuoka, or Nagoya. Ask someone on the streets of your hometown to point at Okayama on a map of Japan, and I can probably guarantee you they have never heard of our prefecture, let alone find it on a map. Now, even though Okayama wouldn’t necessarily be on someone’s first Japan trip, that doesn’t mean there aren’t any hidden gems in our prefecture. In this article, instead of regurgitating information found on Wikipedia, I’ll mostly talk about the places I’ve personally been to and my own personal thoughts. I’ll also include places that the other AJET members suggest as well, but those places will be for you to discover yourself!

Don’t use this as a tourist guide, as this will have mostly personal opinions and experiences. If you’re interested in a place I talked about, definitely look into it more yourself! Now, with that being said, let’s start!



# Okayama Castle

What's a medium-sized Japanese city without its own castle? Completed construction in 1597, destroyed in 1945, then rebuilt and restored in 1966, Okayama Castle is also known as the Crow Castle, or the Castle of the Black Bird. If you see it in person, you'll know why (Hint: the castle has black walls). Entry is open to the public and costs 400 yen.

Like most Japanese castles, the interior has been retrofitted to be a museum, telling guests the history of the castle and the area surrounding it. If you're a history buff or like castles, the castle is a great activity for an afternoon!



I have to admit, I've never been to the castle. I've been to other castles, so I imagine it's no different. My honest opinion about castles in Japan is that if you've seen one, you've seen them all. Of course, if you personally like castles, I think Okayama Castle is still worth a visit, especially if you live in the city.

# Korakuen Garden

Next to the castle is one of the “Three Great Gardens of Japan”. Korakuen, meaning “Garden of Pleasure After”, boasts tea houses, lawns, ponds, streams, and hills. You can even see cranes in the garden! Since the garden is right next to the castle, it’s fairly easy to see both in one day. If you’re looking for an excuse to go (other than just enjoying the garden), there are events planned throughout the year in and around the garden.



When I went, it was for a guided tour after our Okayama orientation, so we had the opportunity to learn all about the park. The park was beautiful with paths that take you through the garden, circling the big pond in the middle, with one path leading you up a rocky hill, overlooking the pond below. Even in the late summer, it was still very pretty with the green of the flora and the blue of the pond and cloudless sky. However, it was so hot that day, all I could think about was having peach ice cream at one of the shops, then going to the mall for free A/C.

According to the website, Korakuen Garden is recognized every year by the Michelin Green Guide Japan.

# Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter

Located a 10-minute walk south of Kurashiki Station, lies a part of town that looks like it's stuck in time with its traditional wood buildings and cobblestone streets. This well-preserved merchant town used to be a bustling commercial center for the area. Take a short boat ride along the canal or shop for denim-related souvenirs. You can also take a ride on rickshaws and be taken for a tour.

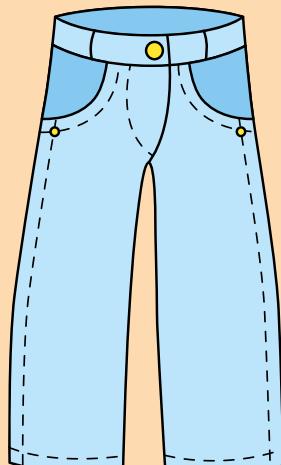


When I first went there, the first thing I thought was, "Wow, it reminds me of Kyoto but without the obnoxious crowds." I do admit that it was smaller than I thought, especially the canal area. However, the little artisanal shops that line the streets and canal really made up for it. There are shops that sell anything from Bizen pottery to local crafts to local sake. If you have a knack for art, there's even an art gallery with famous works that I can't currently remember.

# Kojima Jeans Street

If you're interested in denim, why not take a day trip to where a lot of Japanese denim is manufactured? A 30 to 45-minute train ride south from Okayama Station is Kojima, an area of Kurashiki. If you've heard of Momotaro Jeans, this is where it originated and is manufactured. The street itself is a short walk from Kojima Station. There, you can find an abundance of denim shops from large retailers to small shops. Of course, there are cafes where you can get snacks that are dyed blue!

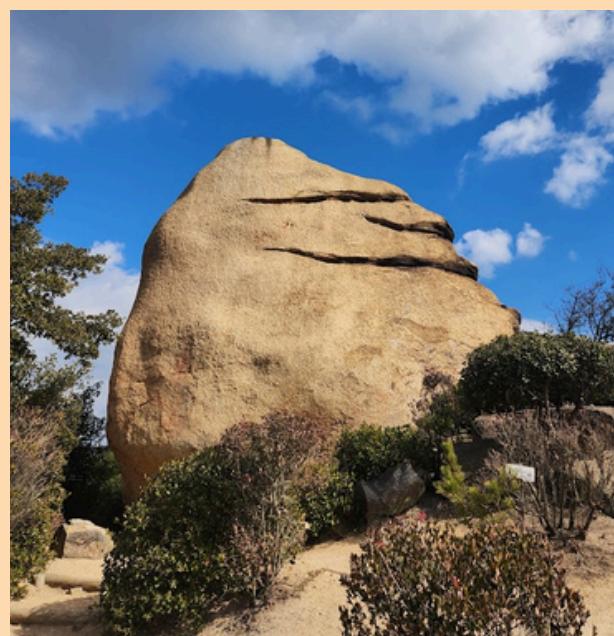
My first initial thought after stepping off the train and into the station is how much they lean towards the denim and jeans imagery. Even outside one of the exits, there lies an almost creepy display of denim jeans hanging from the ceiling over the walkway leading in and out of the station. You'll definitely know you're in the right place. Other than the denim jeans, Kojima is your typical Japanese seaside town with the sounds and smells of the Seto Inland Sea everywhere you go.



# Ojigatake and Nico Rock

If you're not as interested in denim and more so hiking, you can take a bus from Kojima Station to the base of Ojigatake. This hike, which starts right at the side of the road, will take you straight up a cliff face with views of the inland sea behind you. This hike is pretty demanding as the vertical gain is pretty high. It is relatively short, as it took us around an hour to get to the top. At the top, you are treated to views of the Seto Inland Sea, wild animals like boars, and a large rock that seems to be smiling, called the Nico Nico Rock.

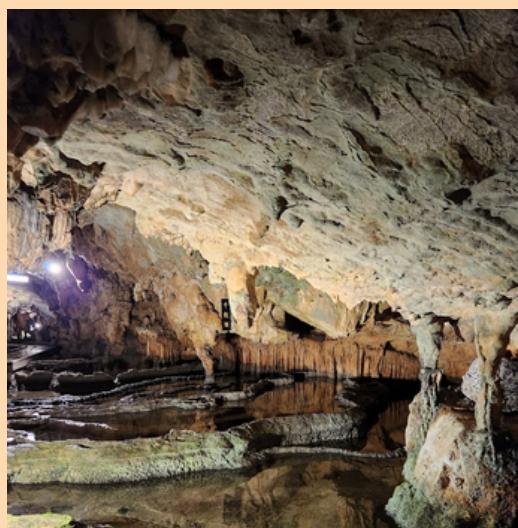
There is car access to the top of the mountain, so if you don't like hiking and have a car, Ojigatake is a nice place to spend an afternoon.



# Ikura Cave and Makido Cave

Being placed in Niimi, how could I not mention my own town? Accessible via the Hakubi line (hope you like long train rides) and 10-minute walk from Ikura station, lies Ikura cave. Ikura cave is a natural limestone cave that's inlaid on the side of a big cliff face along with a picturesque waterfall. Around the area, you can find a small food stall as well as a shop for souvenirs.

As for Makido Cave, this cave is not so easily accessible via public transit. There is a bus you can take from Niimi Station, but with it being inaka, don't expect buses to run frequently. It's much easier to get there if you have a car. This cave is very similar to Ikura cave, where it's a natural limestone cave. If you see ads about Niimi and see a cave with colourful lights, that's most likely Makido Cave.



Do note that the caves are not free to enter. As of 9 writing this, it costs 1000 yen to enter.

Places I've never been personally, but recommended by other AJET members

I've never been to the following places, so I can't really speak much about it other than what you can find on Google. These places, however, were suggested by the other members of OkajET, so I'm sure they are worth your time!

- Washuzan Highland - A Brazilian-themed amusement park near Kojima
- Shibukawa Beach - A nice beach in Tamano
- Bitchu-Matsuyama Castle - Another castle near Soja
- Okayama Nature Conservation Centre - A Conservation center where cranes are raised and visitors can learn more about the wildlife of Okayama.



There are also some shrines and temples that may interest you. Again, I have never been to these but have heard of them from other people.

- Saijo Inari Shrine
- Kibitsu Shrine
- Kibitsuhiko Shrine



Written by  
Wilson Yuan



On September 12th we all got what we had been asking for since the Switch 2's launch back in June. This Nintendo Direct was a combination of the Mario 40th Anniversary presentation, the latest on what we already know, and a handful of brand new reveals that should potentially keep us busy until Spring of 2026. All If I had to sum it up, I'd tell you to prepare your complaints or your wallets depending on which way you lean.



Nintendo  Direct

9.12.2025

6:00 a.m. PT | 9:00 a.m. ET

There seems to be a strange insistence to create 'Nintendo Switch 2 Editions' of games that expect players to shell out \$20 more for about \$5 worth of extra content. *Super Mario Bros. Wonder* + *Bellabel Park* being the latest of them.

*Wonder* isn't a bad game. It's a solid addition to the 2D Mario line, but it wasn't anything groundbreaking. Adding a collection of multiplayer minigames to the mix is a nice touch but alongside a visual upgrade, is that really enough to warrant a price hike? Maybe it really is those dreaded tariffs coming back to bite a certain someone.

Speaking of which, America once again imploded upon seeing the price of the new *Mario Galaxy* + *Mario Galaxy 2* re-release, coming in at \$70 for the bundle or \$40 each digitally. A reminder that these games came out in 2007 and 2010 and the re-release is little more than an HD port. The Amiibo line set to be companion pieces are also \$40. An average Amiibo usually costs between \$15-30...



Since they are two of my favourite games of all time, I pre-ordered without much deliberation, thankful that the yen's value hasn't yet tanked us into oblivion. Galaxy was very much the power star of the show, as we were also introduced to the sequel of the very successful Super Mario Bros. Movie, titled 'The Super Mario Galaxy Movie', to be released on April 3rd 2026. Illumination did a decent job establishing a fun, lighthearted world with plenty of fan service, comedic moments, and a fantastic soundtrack giving tribute to the source material. It will be interesting to see if they can capture the unique atmosphere of Galaxy whilst trying to do the story justice. I look forward to it.



Lastly I'll do a quick rundown of what else we saw in this Direct, starting with the reveal of the brand new 'Fire Emblem: Fortune's Weave'. It appears to take inspiration from ancient colosseum style combat, with yet another orchestral score the series has become very well known for. The tactical gameplay and neat character work keeps people begging for new entries, and finally Nintendo has obliged three years after Fire Emblem: Engage dropped.



Resident Evil: Requiem will release on Nintendo Switch 2 right alongside the other consoles, in what is quite a statement for its hardware. This, following Cyberpunk: 2077 + Phantom Liberty, shows that the Switch 2 is more than capable of fighting in its corner of the specifications world.



Pokemon: Pokopia appears to scratch an itch for a 'comfy' Pokemon experience mixed with Animal Crossing-like gameplay.



I barely even wish to talk about the Donkey Kong Bananza DLC that absolutely insults the consumer by being anything but a free update. \$20 USD of course, not worth it.



Finally, Yoshi and the Mysterious Book revives the franchise with visuals I can only describe as pastel passion and flip-book fun. It's not a series I've ever tried, but it does look quite promising if you are looking for a cozier platforming experience.



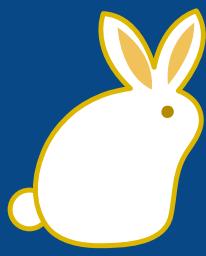
That's all for this month! The string of Nintendo-centric editions may finally be over, as next month will most certainly focus on a particular title for the PS5... See you then!



Written by



**@lewischissio**

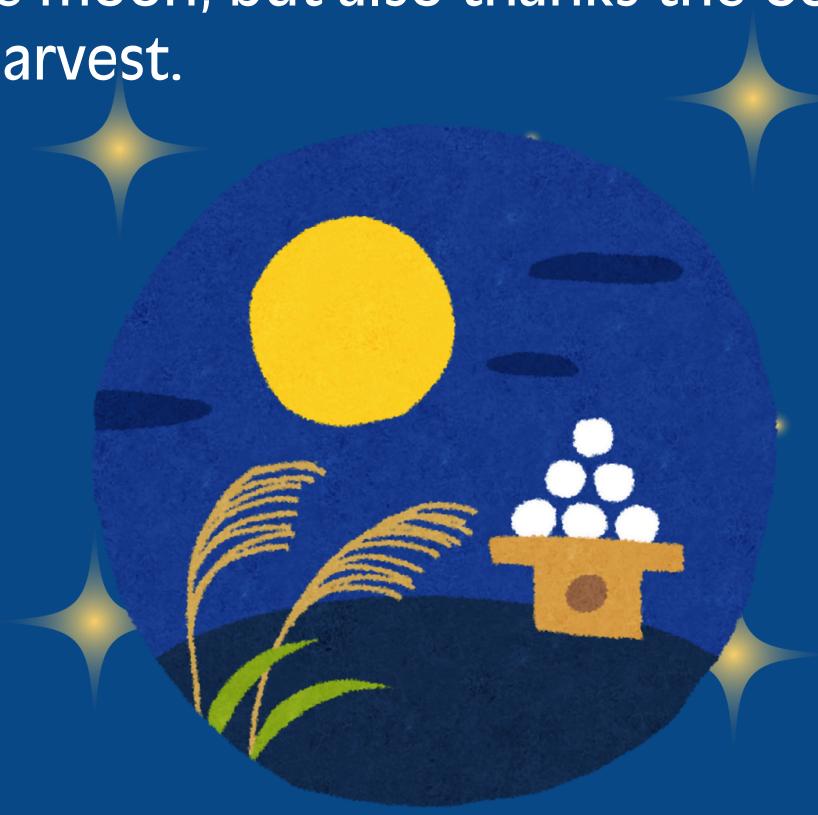


# Tsukimi: Moon Viewing



Tsukimi (月見) is a festival held in Japan every autumn that celebrates the harvest moon. The name “Tsukimi” means “looking at the moon”, and has remained an autumn tradition for more than one thousand years. Tsukimi is celebrated traditionally in September, dating back to Japan’s Heian period (794-1185).

It’s believed that Tsukimi was influenced by Tang Dynasty China’s (618-907) Mid-Autumn Festival. Japanese aristocrats would gather to play music, compose poetry, and take boats out in the evening to admire the moonlight’s reflection on the water. Eventually, Tsukimi has become a festival that not only admires the moon, but also thanks the Gods for a bountiful harvest.



Originally, Tsukimi was celebrated on the 13th day of the month. However, in 1683 when the calendar was changed, the timing of the full moon moved to the 15th. Now, the festival's date is dependent on the lunar calendar, usually when the moon is brightest. This year, it falls on Monday, October 6th.

One thing that may surprise you about Japanese culture is the common belief that there's a rabbit on the moon! The craters on the surface of the moon resemble a rabbit pounding "mochi", or Japanese rice cake. In Japan, rice has remained significant culturally, historically, and economically, so it's no surprise that mochi appears in this tale. Naturally, rabbits have become a special symbol in Japan during Tsukimi. You can find rabbit-shaped snacks during this time of year, as well as rice dumplings known as Tsukimi-dango.





Edamame, chestnuts, pumpkins, and pampas grass are a few among many seasonal offerings used and given during Tsukimi. Moon-viewing parties are also commonly held, with people inviting friends and family over to gather and watch the moon together. Moon viewing events also take place at several temples, shrines, gardens, castles, and at outdoor locations across Japan! You can enjoy traditional dancing, music and poetry recitals. You may even get your own chance to admire the moon by boat in some areas.

Himeji Castle in Hyogo Prefecture is one among many popular places where Tsukimi events take place. Located about an hour from Okayama by train, you can enjoy Tsukimi-dango, oden, sake, taiko drumming and more performances at “Japan’s Most Beautiful Castle”!

Written by Karissa Garcia

# 2025 Photo Costume Contest

Trick or Treat Peaches! With October among us ☺, its time everyone starts prepping for Halloween! Halloween this year falls on Friday, with a long holiday weekend, so we can only imagine the festivities that will go down this year. Therefore, we'd like to open up a costume contest for anyone living in Okayama!

To participate, one must only fill out this form before October 25th, and include an attached photo of you in your costume. We will judge the submissions and the winners will be selected on Oct. 31st! The winners will receive a prize.

There are 3 Categories: **Scariest**, **Most Creative/Original**, and **Best Overall**. Prizes will be distributed either at an organized date and time at Okayama Station, or at SDC for those who are JETS. Click the link below for the form.

[Costume Contest Submission Form](#)



Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Oct  
10:00 - 14:00  
Nagi Central Park

(1507 Tovosawa, Nagi-cho, Katsuta-gun, Okayama Prefecture)  
Parking: Central Park & Symbol Road Car Park

\*In case of rain,  
event will be moved to Spark Nagi



For more details  
check our Instagram page

# 2025 NAGI International Festival

It's a special day where foreign residents of Nagi  
share their cultures, cuisines, and traditions!

Free  
Entry



Booth

Stage

Special Event

Israel  
Sri Lanka  
India  
Britain  
Russia  
Phillipines  
etc.

Bali Dance  
Indian+Pop Live  
Covers  
Filipino Dance  
Taiko Drums

T-REX Race  
International Sports  
Lottery



Enquiries: Nagi Town Mirai Souzouka 0868-36-4117

More specific Information on the Next page --> 21

On Saturday, October 25, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, the Nagi International Festival will take place at Nagi Central Park (奈義中央広場). This special event invites residents of Nagi and the surrounding areas to experience the diverse cultures of foreign residents living in the town and to deepen 交流 (interaction) with the local community.

Visitors can enjoy:

Food booths featuring international cuisines from India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, the UK, and more.

Experience booths, including kimono try-on sessions and exhibitions by international exchange organizations.

Unique sports activities, such as the French game pétanque, cricket from India and the UK, the Korean game yunnori, and American "Grandma's Pants Relay."

The stage program will feature a variety of performances, including Bali dance, Indian and pop songs, Filipino dance, and Traditional Japanese Drum.

Special attractions for all ages include the hugely popular T-Rex Race and a lottery event.

Admission is free, and all JETs are most welcome to come with their friends, making this a perfect opportunity for families and friends to enjoy and explore cultures from around the world. We look forward to welcoming everyone to this exciting day!

TOTTORI AJETS  
**FALL 2025**  
**DAISEN HIKE**  
NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2025

Join Tottori AJET as we climb Mt. Daisen, the tallest mountain in the Chūgoku region at 1,729 m (5,673 ft). Hikers of all skill levels are welcome!

**MEET TIME:** 8:30 AM

**LOCATION:** NANKOGAWARA  
PARKING LOT, DAISEN-CHO

**TRANSPORT:** TOTTORI AJET WILL  
HELP ORGANIZE TRANSPORTATION

**RSVP:** VIA THE AJET GROUP CHAT  
BY FRIDAY OCTOBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, AT 5PM

大山に登ろう！



Our friends in Tottori are hosting a hike of Mt Daisen on November 8<sup>th</sup>, and extended the invite to Okayama JETs! If interested, please rsvp via this link by Oct 10<sup>th</sup> @10:00am (more detailed information on there as well)

[Mt. Daisen Hike Sign Up Form](#)

# Events in Okayama

## 大原秋祭り

### Ohara Autumn Festival

Date: October 11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>

More Info: [日本語](#)

Location: Furumachi Area, Mimasaka City, Okayama

Time: Not Specified

Admission: Not Specified



## 宇喜多隊武者行列

### Ukita Warrior Parade

Date: October 11<sup>th</sup> (Saturday)

More Info: [日本語](#)

Location: Okayama Art Theater Harenowa, Omotecho Shopping Street, Ishiyama Park, Okayama Castle

Time: 13:00 - 14:00 (planned)

Admission: Free

## 北房コスモスマつり

### Hokubo Cosmos Festival

Date: October 12<sup>th</sup> (Sunday)

More info: [日本語](#)

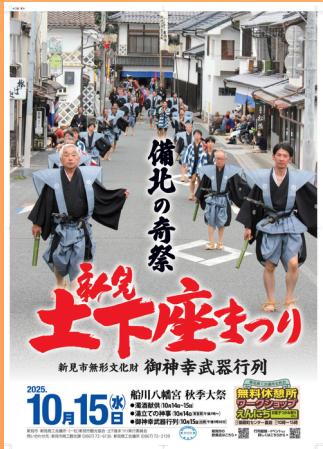
Location: Hokubo Cosmos Square, Maniwa City

Time: 10:00 - 14:30

Admission: Free



# 土下座まつり/Samurai Procession Dogeza Festival



Date: October 15<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

More info: [日本語](#)

Location: Funakawa Hachimangu Shrine and Gotenmachi area,  
Niimi City

Time: Shrine ceremony 10:00 / Procession departs 13:30

Admission: Free (food and drink costs apply)

## 備前焼まつり Bizen Pottery Festival

Date: October 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>

More info: [日本語](#)

Location: Around JR Imbe Station, Bizen city

Time: 9:00 - 17:00 (Saturday), 9:00 - 16:00 (Sunday)

Admission: Free



## 奈義国際交流フェスティバル Nagi International Festival

Date: October 25<sup>th</sup> (Saturday)

More info: [日本語](#)

Location: Nagi Central Park, Nagi Town (in case of rain, will be moved to Spark Nagi)

Time: 10:00 - 14:00

Admission: Free



## International Meetup Party 「せかつく」

Date: Saturdays, October 4th and November 1st

More info: [Insta](#)

Location: Matador (Bar in Okayama City)

Time: 20:00 - 22:00

Admission: \*Men ~¥4000

All you can drink and buffet

\*Women ~¥3500

style food included



# Answer Key

## Monthly Sudoku

### September 2025

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 2 |
| 2 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 3 |
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 9 |
| 7 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 5 |
| 8 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 4 |
| 9 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| 3 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 7 |
| 6 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 8 |

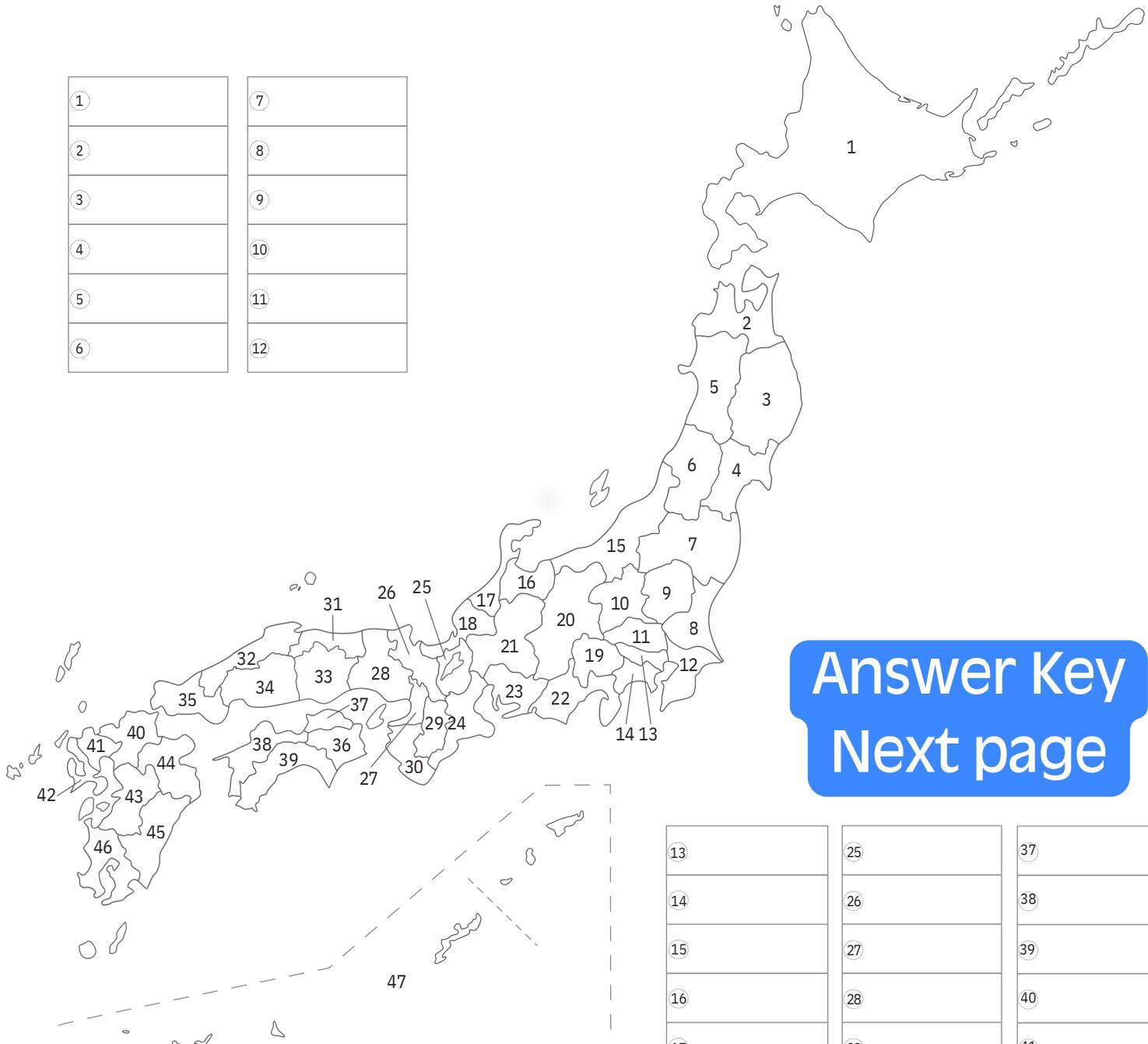
Fill in the puzzle so that every row across, every column down and every 9 by 9 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

## 都道府県テスト

☆都道府県の名前を書きましょう。

|   |
|---|
| ① |
| ② |
| ③ |
| ④ |
| ⑤ |
| ⑥ |

|   |
|---|
| ⑦ |
| ⑧ |
| ⑨ |
| ⑩ |
| ⑪ |
| ⑫ |



Answer Key  
Next page

Test your knowledge  
of Japan's  
geography!  
Do you know all the  
prefectures?

|    |    |    |
|----|----|----|
| 13 | 25 | 37 |
| 14 | 26 | 38 |
| 15 | 27 | 39 |
| 16 | 28 | 40 |
| 17 | 29 | 41 |
| 18 | 30 | 42 |
| 19 | 31 | 43 |
| 20 | 32 | 44 |
| 21 | 33 | 45 |
| 22 | 34 | 46 |
| 23 | 35 | 47 |
| 24 | 36 |    |

## Answer Key

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1 | Hokkaido |
| 2 | Aomori   |
| 3 | iwate    |
| 4 | Miyagi   |
| 5 | Akita    |
| 6 | Yamagata |

|    |           |
|----|-----------|
| 7  | Fukushima |
| 8  | Ibaraki   |
| 9  | Tochigi   |
| 10 | Gunma     |
| 11 | Saitama   |
| 12 | Chiba     |

|    |           |
|----|-----------|
| 13 | Tokyo     |
| 14 | Kanagawa  |
| 15 | Niigata   |
| 16 | Toyama    |
| 17 | Ishikawa  |
| 18 | Fukui     |
| 19 | Yamanashi |
| 20 | Nagano    |
| 21 | Gifu      |
| 22 | Shizuoka  |
| 23 | Aichi     |
| 24 | Mie       |

|    |           |
|----|-----------|
| 25 | Shiga     |
| 26 | Kyoto     |
| 27 | Osaka     |
| 28 | Hyogo     |
| 29 | Nara      |
| 30 | Wakayama  |
| 31 | Tottori   |
| 32 | Shimane   |
| 33 | Okayama   |
| 34 | Hiroshima |
| 35 | Yamaguchi |
| 36 | Tokushima |

|    |           |
|----|-----------|
| 37 | Kagawa    |
| 38 | Ehime     |
| 39 | Kochi     |
| 40 | Fukuoka   |
| 41 | Saga      |
| 42 | Nagasaki  |
| 43 | Kumamoto  |
| 44 | Oita      |
| 45 | Miyazaki  |
| 46 | Kagoshima |
| 47 | Okinawa   |

# Monthly Sudoku

October 2025

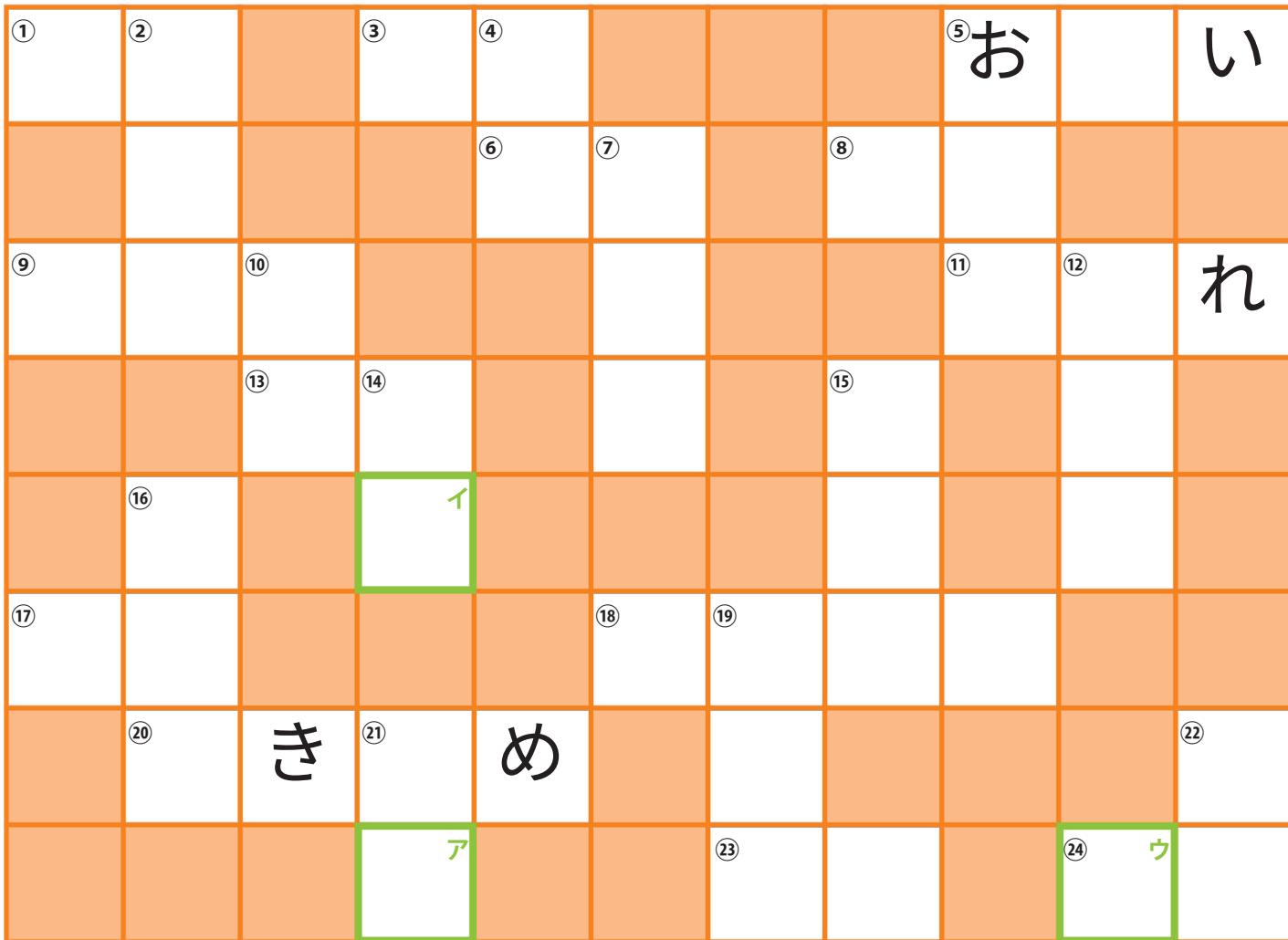
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 |   | 9 |   | 6 | 4 | 3 |   |   |
|   | 4 | 6 |   | 5 | 3 |   | 9 |   |
| 1 |   |   |   |   | 7 |   | 6 | 2 |
|   | 8 |   | 6 |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 5 |   | 3 | 1 |   | 8 | 7 |   |
| 3 |   | 1 |   | 7 | 8 | 5 |   |   |
|   |   |   | 5 | 3 | 6 |   | 2 | 4 |
| 4 | 1 |   | 7 | 8 |   |   |   | 5 |
|   |   | 3 | 4 |   |   | 9 |   | 7 |

Fill in the puzzle so that every row across, every column down and every 9 by 9 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

クロスワードパズルだよ！全部書けたら、Ⓐ～Ⓑの文字を順にならべて、言葉を作ってね。

## ヒント：冬のお楽しみ

## 答元



タテのかぎ

② ゾウやライオンがいる。  
④ ○○の変わり目はかぜを引きやすい。  
⑤ お正月にもらう。  
⑦ 角度をはかる道具。  
⑩ 私たちの住む星。  
⑫ 新一年生を、むかえる式。  
⑭ 雨の○○は中止です。  
⑯ ○○○とノートを出して下さい。  
⑮ 出来事を絵と文で書こう。  
⑯ 本がたくさんある部屋。  
⑯ その年、初めてふる雪。  
⑯ お昼より後。  
① 手で動かす事。  
③ 春夏秋冬。  
⑤ おめでとうを伝える、お○いの言葉。  
⑥ 豆をまいて、オニを追いはらう。  
⑧ 一月一日から。  
⑨ ジエットコースターに乗りたい。  
⑪ 赤と白どっちが多く入ったかな?  
⑬ 野球をやる所。  
⑯ 実験や観察をする科目。  
⑯ 学校は文、ゆう便局は④。  
⑯ お正月に書く習字。  
⑯ 部屋の中の事。  
⑯ 戦争の後。

# Advice Corner

Per a suggestion from one of you wonderful readers, the newsletter would like to try introducing an Advice corner!

With the arrival of new 1<sup>st</sup> year Jets, if you have any tips or tricks about Okayama, Japan, work, or the like, please send them through this link! And if any of the new first years want to share anything you've learned in your first month or so here in Japan, please fill out this form as well!

We would like to include this monthly, but we will start on a trial basis. This will require some participation from you all, we want to find a way to include everyone's voice in this! So please consider sending in some advice, no matter how small or big!

## Advice Corner Form



Additionally, if you would like to write an article for the November newsletter, please email the newsletter. Any submissions must be made by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month. Anything is welcome, but if looking for inspiration, themes may include:

## Novembers's Themes:

Thanksgiving/Fall/Sumo

# Want to be part of the Newsletter?

We are always looking for new talent and help at the newsletter, so if you have a writers itch you want to scratch, or have some ideas for the newsletter look, please contact us at our email!

[newsletter@okayama-ajet.com](mailto:newsletter@okayama-ajet.com)



Additionally, if you have any suggestions or feedback for our newsletter, please fill out the form below!

## Newsletter Feedback/Suggestion Form



**See you next issue!**