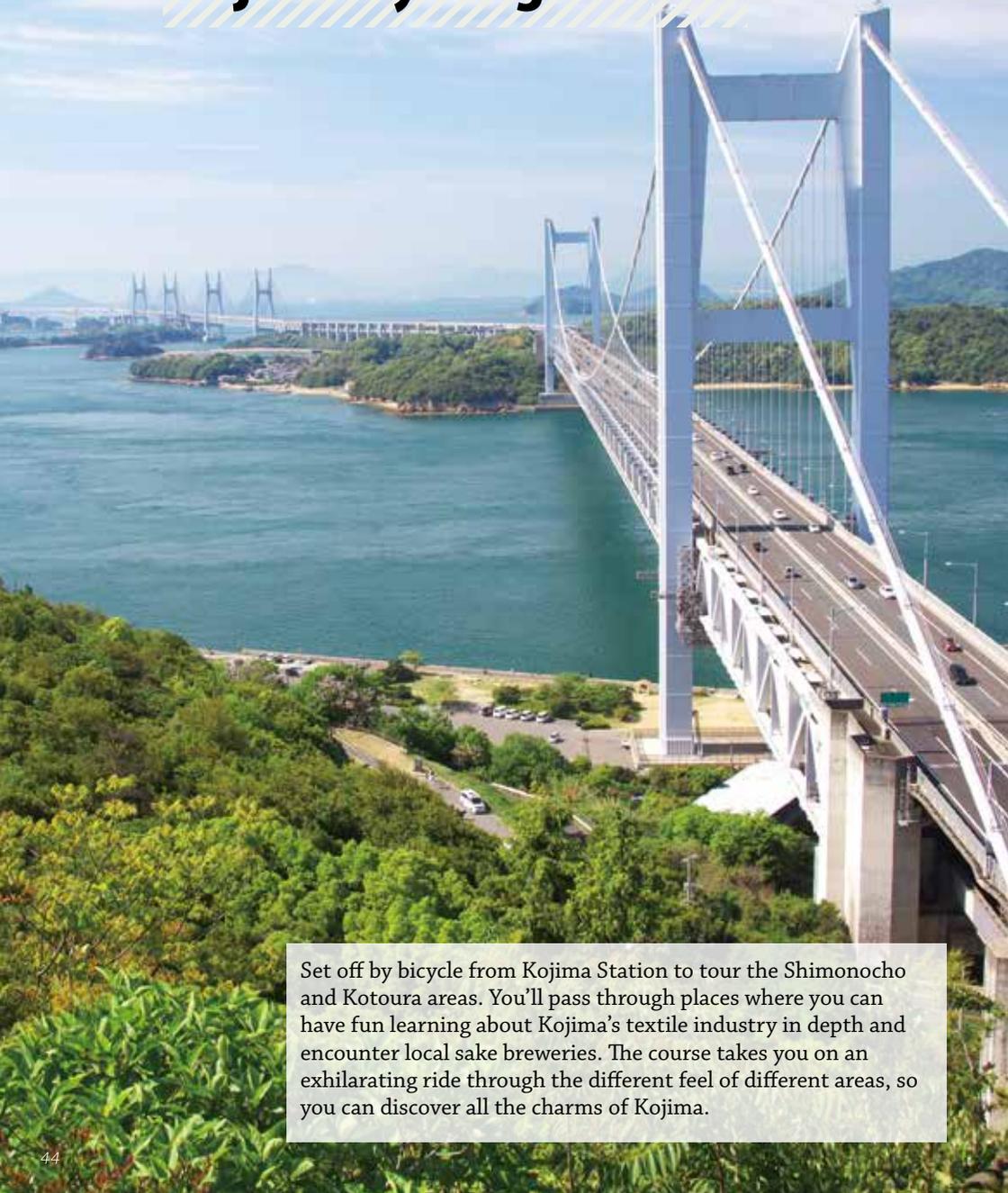


4

Explore school uniforms, *tatami* mat edging, and locally-made sake

Kojima Cycling Course



Set off by bicycle from Kojima Station to tour the Shimonochō and Kotoura areas. You'll pass through places where you can have fun learning about Kojima's textile industry in depth and encounter local sake breweries. The course takes you on an exhilarating ride through the different feel of different areas, so you can discover all the charms of Kojima.



Start the Kojima Cycling Tour here!

1 JR Kojima Station

Alight at Kojima Station on the Seto-Ohashi line and head to the Tourist Information booth inside the station building. Here you can rent a bicycle and begin your cycling tour of Kojima.



You'll be riding up some hills over the course so we recommend an electric bicycle!



"School Uniform Toilets" in front of the station. The outside of the men's toilet is painted to resemble *tsume-eri gakuseifuku* (standing collar school uniform), while the women's resembles *sera fuku* (sailor suits).

Tourist Information booth inside the station

2 Kojima Station Tourist Information (Rent Bicycles)

Here at the Tourist Information booth inside the station, to your right once you leave through the ticket gates, is where you can rent yourself a bicycle.

☎086-472-1289 ☎9:00-16:30 (rentals not available 12:00-13:00) ¥300 (per session per day) *Electric bicycles, ¥500 ☒Year-end

You can also rent bicycles from Kojima Industrial Promotion Center (p61).



A pair of bijou stores set in the heart of the forest

3 Mori no 8 Katen

These two stores, situated on the second floor of what used to be a sewing factory, opened in 2017. Rather than a department store – known in Japanese as a "one hundred item store", or *hya* (100)-*katen* – these stores style themselves as the "eight item store", *ha*(8)-*katen*, comprising *rolca*, a home living store selling "little luxuries" for home and daily living, such as clothing and local honey, and *BUONO UNO*, an Italian restaurant.

☎086-472-2257 (rolca) / 086-472-8039 (BUONO UNO)
☎11:00-16:00 (rolca) / 11:30-15:00 (last orders) (BUONO UNO)
☒Tuesdays ☒(e.g.) Kojima Seto Inland Hundred-Flower Honey, ¥1,980 (rolca) / (e.g.) Daily pasta lunch ¥1,490 (BUONO UNO)



Home-made honey collected from the Mori no 8 Katen gardens



Italian restaurant BUONO UNO



Linen aprons dyed here in Kojima are a best-selling item

Discover – and dress up in – the history of school uniforms in Japan

4 Kojima School Uniform Museum

This museum is situated in the grounds of school uniform manufacturer Nippon Hifuku. On display on the first floor are some 200 signs and posters advertising the various school uniform manufacturers based in Kojima. There are also examples of pre-war school uniforms and some very retro paper storage bags. On the second floor you can try on a wide selection of school uniforms, so don't forget to take a commemorative photo in your favorite style! Next door is Kojima Tokumeikan where you can buy local specialties and outlet student uniforms.

☎086-436-7707 (weekdays only) ☎10:00-17:00
☒Year-end ☒Free



The second floor has a dress-up corner

Focus

Local Textile Products

The Kojima area was unsuited to rice cultivation and so was used to grow cotton from the middle of the Edo period onwards. This was the starting point for the Kojima textile industry, which has since blossomed in many directions.

In the earliest years of the industry, *sanada himo* (Sanada woven cord, p53) became popular as a souvenir associated with the pilgrimage to Mount Yuga. From the dawn of the Meiji period, the industrial revolution saw the opening of multiple spinning factories, and the introduction of motorized sewing machines sparked a boom in the production of *tabi* socks.

During the peak years of the Taisho and Showa periods production of *tabi* socks dwindled and the focus shifted onto the production of school uniforms and denim jeans, both ideally suited to the Kojima textile industry given its skill in working with thick fabrics.

In 1963, Kojima produced 10.06 million school uniform sets in a single year, the highest volume ever recorded. Even now, around 70% of all school uniforms in Japan are manufactured within Okayama prefecture. In 1965, the first ever entirely made-in-Japan jeans were produced in Kojima, leading to the area becoming renowned as the



Sanada himo woven cord



Tatami-beri (tatami mat decorative edging)



Sailcloth



Japanese tabi socks

birthplace of Japan-made jeans. Kojima produces many other fabrics besides, including sailcloth (p67) and *tatami-beri* (tatami mat decorative edging, p51). One of the area's great strengths is that it is home to companies working along each stage of the production chain, from weaving, where fibers are woven into fabric, to dyeing, where fabric is dyed, and sewing, where fabric is sewn into garments.

Today, Kurashiki boasts the highest production by value in the textile industry across the whole of Japan. It is Japan's leading city of textiles.

This mark indicates destinations that are Japan Heritage cultural properties.

The more you know about jeans, the more there is to love about them!

5 JEANS MUSEUM & VILLAGE

Operated by Betty Smith, the leading manufacturer of women's jeans, this is the only jeans museum in Japan. Building 1 was opened in 2003 as a way to ensure the history of jeans was remembered and to enable children to discover that history. In the following decade, a number of additional facilities were added to the museum. Now, the museum includes Building 1, which features displays on the history and historical contexts of jeans, and Building 2, dedicated to tracing the development of jeans in Japan over time. Other facilities include the oldest denim sewing factory in Japan, a hands-on experience factory, a Betty Smith showroom shop, and an outlet store—making this truly a village worth visiting.

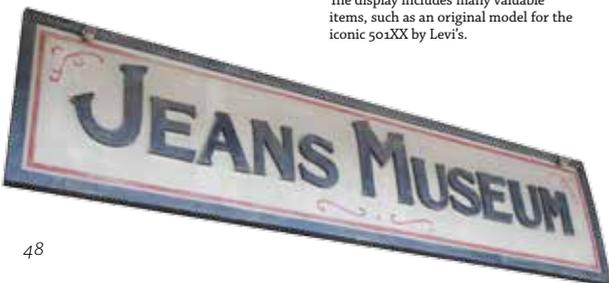
☎086-473-4460 🕒9:00-18:00 🗓Year-end 🆓Free



Building 1 of the Jeans Museum



Inside Building 1 of the Jeans Museum
The display includes many valuable items, such as an original model for the iconic 501XX by Levi's.



The second floor of Building 1 is a bespoke salon
Here you can order a fully bespoke pair of jeans, guided by specialist staff who will also take your exact measurements



The sewing factory founded in 1962



Building 2 is a converted washing factory



The factory outlet store sells non-standard and bargain items



Have a go at customizing your own jeans
Add your choice of buttons, rivets, and leather patches to ready-made jeans for a bespoke look



Cotton in front of the hands-on experience factory
Every year, many cotton flowers blossom in the fall

Betty's Store is where you'll find everything from new products to classic items



Jeans can be customized with embroidery and patches

You'll be welcomed by brand mascot Betty-chan



The Hands-on Experience Factory



Utmost respect for the tradition of denim jeans

6 TCB jeans

This brand specializes in raw denim, where the fabric has not been treated or pre-shrunk. These are stiff and sturdy jeans that grow with you, gradually softening and molding to your body. Each item comes with a tag that shows which decade that particular style is paying homage to. The brand recreates the best styles from years gone by, paying close attention to every detail.

☎080-3873-8476 🕒10:00-18:00 🗓Year-end 🏷(e.g.) CATBOY JEANS, ¥23,100



The second floor shop

The shop carries a wide range of sizes including plenty for taller and larger frames



The first floor is an open factory



Tags show the decade being paid homage to by each style, e.g. 20's



The closest sake brewery to Kojima Station

7 Sankan Brewery

A brewery established in 1806. To this day it continues to make sake that is rich and dry, in order to pair well with fish from the Seto Inland Sea—as was the original founder's intention. Despite being coastal soil, the *shikomi-mizu* (brewing water) has been filtered through granite, leaving it pure and crisp. The brewery also offers a popular range of non-sake products, including an *amazake* (non-alcoholic fermented rice drink) set, during the summer months only, and *kakigori* (shaved ice).

☎086-472-3010 🕒10:30-16:30 (open until 18:00, Jun-Sep) 🗓Tuesdays (open every day Jun-Sep), year-end.



Each stage of the brewing process is explained on bilingual (Japanese, English) panels



Kakigori (shaved ice) made with *shikomi-mizu* (brewing water) and topped with sake lees syrup



Everything is good in its season

8 Juhachi Zakari Brewery

This brewery, standing at the entrance the approach to the Mount Yuga, dates back to 1785. It is determined to be loyal to its locality and uses 100% Okayama-grown rice. The resulting sake is fresh with subtle acidity and has won acclaim overseas as well as in Japan. Its Takaji label of sake is particularly exquisite and is only available as a limited edition in selected stores.

☎086-477-7125 🕒9:00-12:00, 13:00-16:00 🗓Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays; years-end (check brewery website for details)



Discover the limitless versatility of *tatami-beri*

9 Takada Orimono (FLAT)

Tatami-beri is the word for the decorative edging used on *tatami* mats. Takada Orimono was founded in the Meiji period, meaning it has long been dedicated to the production of *tatami-beri*. Today, the company has an incredible thousand-odd designs in its range. Recently, *tatami-beri* has been enjoying renewed attention as hand-made material. You can buy this edging and associated goods at FLAT, the company's factory shop which also offers free recipes, product displays, and hands-on experiences such as making walnut buttons. This is a place to have fun with this unique decorative textile.

☎086-477-6777 🕒10:00-15:00 🗓Sundays, national holidays (irregular closures on Saturdays) 🏷(e.g.) *tatami-beri* roll end, ¥165



Coin purses



Have a go at making walnut buttons!



An end-to-end manufacturer that starts with the fabric and ends with in-house production

10 DENIM HOSTEL float

This hostel with an in-house cafe opened only recently in 2019 but is already famous for its dry chicken curry. This slowly simmered dish is made without any water, instead getting all the moisture it needs from coconut milk and the water content of the vegetables used. The design concept for the cafe is denim, as evidenced by nods to denim everywhere—even the benches and counter are stained with indigo. It also boasts an incredible close-up view of the Seto Inland Sea, and of course is a great place to stay overnight too!

☎050-8880-3135 🕒11:30-22:30 🗓Tuesdays 🏷(e.g.) dry chicken curry, ¥800



The cafe's famous dry chicken curry



Denim goods on sale



One of the hostel rooms

*You are able to try sake samples at breweries but riding a bicycle after drinking is illegal so please refrain if cycling.

Take a little trip

Mount Yuga

Access

- Approx. 35 min by bus from JR Kojima Station on a Shimoden bus bound for Yugasan
- (*two departures daily, none on Saturdays, Sundays, or national holidays)
- Approx. 15 min by taxi from JR Kojima Station



A Grand Head Temple where the feudal lords of Bizen came to pray to ward off evil

A Yugasan Rendai-ji Temple

Mount Yuga (Yugasan) enshrines the Bodhisattva Yuga Daigongen and is renowned as a sacred mountain with the ability to ward off evil. Ritual prayers at Rendai-ji, in which temple priests take turns to read the Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra, leave a profound impression. Each year the temple welcomes some 400,000 visitors. Rendai-ji was the official prayer hall during the period when the Ikeda family held the feudal lordship. As such, you can also appreciate the architecture of the temple's guest hall, gardens, and *shoheiga*, or large surface paintings.

- ☎086-477-6222 ☎9:00-16:00 (prayer service applications)
- ⊗None 🏠Free (fee payable for *gokito* prayer service)



Ritual prayers



The onari-no-ma (guest hall)



A yakubarai purification ritual



Yuga Shrine go-shuincho, books used to collect seal stamps given to shrine visitors

Original go-shuincho collection books are must-haves!

B Yugasan Yuga Jinja Hongu Shrine

In the past, a visit to Mount Yuga was often paired with a visit to Konpira-san (Kotohira-gu Temple). Yuga Jinja has 52 *bunsha* sub-shrines across Japan, but this is the *hongu* (head shrine). The shrine is popular for its incredible *otorii* entrance gate, crafted in Bizen-yaki pottery, and its *go-shuincho*, books used to collect seal stamps given to shrine visitors, which are available in denim and canvas versions.

- ☎086-477-3001 ☎9:00-16:00 (prayer service reception)
- ⊗None 🏠Free (fee payable for *gokito* prayer service)



Relax with natural hot spring waters and a seasonal lunch

C Kurashiki Yuga Onsen Hotel Santoka

After visiting Mount Yuga, take a relaxing break in a tranquil *onsen* (hot spring). This particular *onsen* was founded after it was noticed that pilgrims found their symptoms would alleviate when they visited the area. The exquisite lunch menu offered by the hotel, which changes monthly in order to reflect the most seasonal ingredients, is another highlight of a visit here.

- ☎086-477-5588 ☎11:00-15:00 (*onsen* day use) / 11:00-14:00 (lunch) ⊗None 🏠Day use of *onsen* and lunch package, ¥3,300



The Irodori Set (pictured) is packed with seasonal ingredients, while the Steak Set and Fish of the Day Set are also popular choices

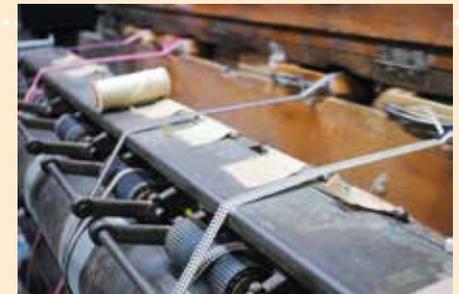
Focus

Sanada Himo

It's said that one of the factors behind the textile industry flourishing so robustly in the Kojima area is that *sanada himo*, a type of woven cord, had been manufactured in this area since the Edo period. During that period when it was the fashion to go on a dual pilgrimage to Yuga and Konpira, visitors to Mount Yuga would find *sanada himo* on sale at the temple entrance. Over time, it became a popular souvenir for visitors to the area.

Sanada himo is a narrow woven fabric, woven by warp and weft, and is even said to be the world's narrowest woven fabric. After the Battle of Sekigahara, Sanada Masayuki and Sanada Yukimura are said to have woven this type of cord during their imprisonment in Kudoyama; this led to the cord being sold under the claim that it was "a strong cord made by the Sanadas". Compared to braided cord, *sanada himo* was strong and resistant to stretching, making it ideal for use in sword straps and adjustable straps for armor. The cord was also used to tie paulownia wood boxes containing implements used for the tea ceremony, as well as *obijime* to keep the *obi* sash in place.

Today, *sanada himo* manufacturers are rare—and therefore precious—nationally. Sakamoto Orimono uses old power looms previously used in the Kojima and Karakoto districts to make *sanada himo* cords that are rich with the warmth of this local heritage.



Power loom



Various products are available



Sakamoto Orimono

- ☎086-477-6340 ☎9:00-17:00 ⊗Saturdays, Sundays, national holidays, year-end, O-bon, during exhibition/event appearances 🏠*Sanada himo* roll end, from ¥100

Feature

Kojima Udon

Kojima used to be a place where people from Shikoku came en masse to find employment. They brought with them udon culture from the Shikoku city of Sanuki. Here we introduce some of the top udon restaurants in Kojima, be that authentic, orthodox, or unique.

MAP → See p45

Super juicy, just-fried tempura

Ishiharu Udon

This udon place is best known for its incredible tempura udon. They only start frying once an order is placed. Add a splash of udon broth to their battered, fried shrimp to literally hear how juicy the dish is before you try it. The premium Naruto wakame, with its springy texture, is a perfect sidekick.

☎086-477-6887 🕒10:00-18:00 🗓Mondays, every third Sunday 🍽(e.g.) Nikuten Udon, ¥800



Noodles as deliciously glossy and firm as any you'll find in Sanuki itself

Udon no Tsukasa Takato

If you like your udon noodles firm, this is the restaurant for you. The signature dish is a simple soy sauce udon. This masterful dish combines firmly textured, glossy udon noodles with richly-spiced broth cut through with the fresh acidity of sudachi citrus. Another firm favorite is the Tamago Toji Udon, generously swirled with two egg yolks.

☎086-474-5847 🕒Weekdays, 11:00-14:00 / Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays, 11:00-14:30, 16:30-19:00 🗓Thursdays 🍽(e.g.) Shoyu Udon, ¥650



Admire with the eye, devour with the tongue

Tanaka-ya

The noodles served up at Tanaka-ya are, according to the owner, "not trying to be like Sanuki udon". They are relatively thin and soft with just a slight bite. Each serving bowl is actually an example of high-grade Arita-yaki pottery. The restaurant interior is clean and calm and packed with customers bringing clients and family alike.

☎086-473-7690 🕒11:00-14:30, 17:30-20:00 🗓Fridays 🍽(e.g.) Tempura Udon (Jo), ¥1,045



Bound to impress meat lovers and volume seekers

Tsuru Tsuru

The combination of silky smooth noodles, as suggested by the restaurant name (*tsuru tsuru* is onomatopoeia for smooth and slippery), with a bold and deep broth is simply sensational. The main branch also operates as a butcher, which is why its meat toppings taste so good! The restaurant offers a strong selection of set meals, so you could go every day without tiring of its taste.

☎086-473-3386 🕒10:00-19:30 🗓Tuesdays 🍽(e.g.) Niku Niku Udon, ¥550



Hand-made udon crafted using only the very best water

Donpachi

This place is famous for its Tama (Egg) Butter Udon, a Carbonara-style dish made with firm noodles, and the distinctive taste of butter and cracked black pepper. Also popular is the Donpachi Set Meal, comprising two kinds of udon, *kitsune* and *zaru*, as well as mixed rice. The secret to their great-tasting dishes is their insistence on using only the very best water.

☎086-472-0207 🕒11:00-14:30, 17:00-20:30 🗓Mondays(excluding national holidays, closed on Tuesdays instead) 🍽(e.g.) Tama Butter Udon, ¥700



Warm up with miso-simmered udon

Hiroyoshi

The star attraction here is the Miso Nikomi Udon, and this dish is no pale imitation of the miso-simmered udon found in Nagoya. The owner was inspired by the staff meals he used to be served at his previous work. The taste of this exquisite dish, which combines with depth and sweetness of miso with a hint of acidity from yuzu citrus, is unique to this restaurant.

☎086-473-6075 🕒11:00-14:00, 17:00-20:00 🗓Tuesdays 🍽(e.g.) Special Miso Nikomi Udon, ¥900



Udon to relish, made with carefully selected ingredients in an old private residence

Baiso

Housed in an old private residence, built 120 years ago as the second home of the Nozaki family (see p41). Baiso uses noodles made with 100% grown-in-Japan wheat and uses no sugar in its *tsuyu* broth base, instead simmering soy sauce, Japanese sake, mirin, and red and white wine to create a wonderfully sweet broth. This is a place to enjoy a truly indulgent dining moment.

☎086-473-0900 🕒11:00-14:00(closes when noodles sell out) 🗓Mondays 🍽(e.g.) Ebi-Mochi Bukkake Udon, ¥1,280



Before you set off

All About Cycling in Kurashiki

Cycling is the ideal way to take a tour of Kurashiki's Japan Heritage, but it's important to make a few checks before you set off to ensure a pleasurable ride. So before you start riding, be sure to check the lights and reflectors, the brakes, and other key parts for any defects or damage. You should also make sure to cycle safely by following the rules of the road.



Brakes

Are the front and back brakes working properly? Are any of the brake wires loose?



Tyres

Are the tyres inflated properly? Are they showing any wear? When riding, make sure to keep any bag ties, scarves, or other trailing items well away from the tyres to avoid tangling.



Lights & reflectors

Are the lights working properly? Are the reflectors free from dirt? Are there any problems with the placement or angle of the lights and reflectors?

Follow the Five Rules for Safe Cycling when Riding in Kurashiki!

In Japan, bicycles are defined as "light road vehicles" under the Road Traffic Act. When riding a bicycle, you need to be conscious of the fact that you are in control of a vehicle and follow the rules and etiquette of the road, and ride in a way that enables all road users to have a safe and pleasant experience on the road.

Particular Points to Remember

- Park bicycles in the right place, e.g. designated bicycle parking area.
- Make sure to always lock up bicycles to prevent theft.
- Take care to avoid bags and clothing becoming tangled up in the wheels.
- Be aware that it is not permitted to ride a bicycle when listening to loud music on headphones.

Five Rules for Safe Cycling in Okayama Prefecture

- 1. In principle, ride on the road and use sidewalks in exceptional cases only**
[Ride on the sidewalk only when]
 - There is signage showing you can ride on the sidewalk
 - The rider is under 13 or 70+ years old
 - It would be dangerous to ride on the road
- 2. Ride on the left side of the road in the direction of travel**
- 3. Pedestrians take priority on sidewalks; bicycles must give way**
- 4. Observe all safety rules**
 - No riding after drinking alcohol, no riding double, no riding side by side
 - Use bicycle lights at night
 - Obey traffic lights at intersections, stopping and checking for safety
 - No using mobile phones or umbrellas while riding
- 5. Children must wear helmets when cycling**

Where to Rent Bicycles

1 Kurashiki City Travelers Rest

☎086-425-6039 ☎9:00-16:30 📄¥300 (1 day)



2 Kojima Station Tourist Information

☎086-472-1289 ☎9:00-16:30 (reception closed 12:00-13:00) 📄¥300 (per session per day) *Electric bicycles, ¥500



3 Shin-Kurashiki Station Tourist Information Corner

☎086-526-8446 ☎9:00-16:30 (reception closed 12:00-13:00) 📄¥300 (per session per day, electric bicycles ¥500), ¥500 (2 days, non-electric bicycles only)



4 Chayamachi Station (Omiyage Kaido Chayamachi Branch)

☎086-428-5883 ☎9:00-17:30 📄¥300 (1 day), ¥500 (2 days)



5 Kojima Industrial Promotion Center

☎086-441-5123 ☎9:00-17:00 📄Tuesday 📄¥500 (electric bicycle, 1 day)



6 JR Rent-A-Car Kurashiki Station Office

☎086-422-0632 ☎8:00-20:00 (bookings taken until 19:00, reception closed 12:00-13:00) 📄¥350 for up to 4 hours, ¥500 for 4+ hours to full day

