

About Urasoe City

The City of Tedako: Urasoe



Urasoe is known as the birthplace of the Ryukyu Kingdom. This is the site where one of the most powerful rulers of the Chūzan Kingdom, King Shunten, maintained his court. In the past, Urasoe covered an area much larger than that of the present-day city, including the expansive region of Ginowan, Naha Port, and parts of Nishihara. The name "Urasoe" stems from the word うらおそい (*ura-osoī*) which takes meaning from the phrase "to rule throughout the realm" (津々浦々を支配する *tsu-tsu ura-ura wo shihai-suru*). The pronunciation gradually changed to *ura-shī*, which then changed to the current spelling of "Urasoe."

Urasoe was the capital of the Chūzan Kingdom from 1187 to 1405, and the royal court was based at Urasoe Castle. It was a flourishing political, economic, and cultural center that traded with China and numerous other countries in Asia. In 1406, the Chūzan royal court moved to Shuri. After defeating the rulers of the the Hokuzan and Nanzan Kingdoms, Shō Hashi of the Chūzan Kingdom became the first ruler to unite the entire island of Okinawa, creating the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1429. Urasoe moved to the background until the 1500s, when the eldest son of King Shō Shin was banished from Shuri. He took up residence in Urasoe and brought renewed life to the castle.

In 1609, the Kyushu-based Satsuma Clan occupied the Ryukyu Islands and propagated Japanese language and customs. During the invasion much of the Urasoe area was destroyed. However, the region eventually recovered and while the rest of Japan was subject to the central government's policy of isolation, the Ryukyu Islands were not bound by this and benefited from continued trade with overseas countries. In 1872, the Ryukyu Kingdom was dismantled and designated as "Ryukyu Han." In 1879, the island chain officially became known as Okinawa Prefecture.

During World War II, Urasoe faced intense fighting and everything was razed to the ground. 4,117 people, 45% of Urasoe's population, lost their lives. After the Battle of Okinawa ended on June 23, 1945, the first task to be undertaken by Urasoe's village administration was that of accepting returnees who had evacuated because of the fighting. In 1946, the village office was re-established to coordinate official business and restore basic agricultural operations. Four years later, under United States occupation, Urasoe experienced a significant increase in the US military presence in the western area that today makes up Camp Kinser.

Urasoe was designated a city in 1970, two years prior to the return of Okinawa to Japan, and has been developing as a thriving suburb of Naha ever since. Though Urasoe covers a relatively small area of 19.09km², the city's population of over 110,000 makes it the fourth largest in the prefecture after Naha, Okinawa City, and Uruma.

In keeping with its historical experiences as a center of trade and overseas contact, Urasoe has established its motto "sunlit and green, a cultured city rich with international spirit" continuing to pursue a policy of increasing international understanding.

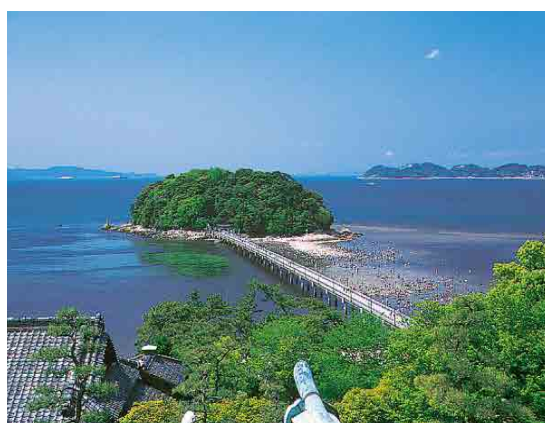


Climate

An abundance of sunny days combined with the beauty of the sea and the rolling hills around Urasoe make it a very pleasant city to live in or visit. Okinawa's climate is sub-tropical, with hot, humid summers and mild winters. The average annual temperature for Okinawa is around 23°C (73°F) with summer highs reaching 34°C (93°F) and winter lows of 10°C (50°F). Sunshine is abundant throughout the year, although the prefecture experiences a rainy season in May to June and a typhoon season from April to November. Average yearly rainfall is about 1,700mm (5.5 feet) and average humidity is about 75%.

Friendship Cities

Gamagōri (蒲郡市)



The city of Gamagōri is located in the southeastern part of Aichi Prefecture and has a population of around 82,000. Located on the seaside at the center of three estuaries, it is a beautiful and peaceful city. Thanks to its warm climate, it is known for its successful mikan cultivation.

Exchange between Gamagōri and Urasoe began in 1962 when a memorial was erected at the Urasoe Castle Site in order to honor the casualties of the Pacific War from Aichi Prefecture. On November 4, 1981, Urasoe and Gamagōri signed a Friendship and Cooperation City agreement to formalize their long history of exchange. These activities continue through the Youth Friendship Delegations that have participated in culture programs, sports competitions, and other exchange programs.



Quánzhōu (泉州市)



Quánzhōu is the provincial capital of Fujian Province in the People's Republic of China and has a population of about 7,790,000. The city's port has contributed to its long history of trade and exchange with foreign countries. Throughout the Sung Dynasty, up until the Mongol Dynasty, the city flourished through foreign trade. Trade and exchanges between the Ryukyu Kingdom (Okinawa) and Quánzhōu were particularly noteworthy. During the Ming Dynasty (1350 AD), King Satto of the Ryukyus, who ruled from Urasoe, began paying tribute and sent gifts to China. This relationship continued for approximately 500 years. Cultural, sports, educational, and other types of exchange continue to take place through delegation exchange programs.

Present-day Quánzhōu is a thriving city with active agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial industries. Lacquerware, pharmaceuticals, electronics, tea, and wheat are all principal products of Quánzhōu's economy.



City Symbols

Urasoe Citizens' Charter (浦添市民憲章)

We, the people of Urasoe, the City of the Tedako (Sun child), with our venerable history and our hopes for the future, establish this charter to help us achieve these hopes.

We will steward the natural environment and make our city green.

We will abide by the rules and make our city comfortable to live in.

We will build a dynamic community by taking joy in our work.

We will value peace and make our city culturally rich.

We will train our minds and bodies to create a happy and healthy community.



Urasoe Citizens' Flower (市民の花)

Allamanda, Golden Trumpet

Native to South America, this flower belongs to the oleander vine family. This flower, also called the "Golden Cup," blooms a vivid yellow for about half of the year (from April to October).



Urasoe Citizens' Plant (市民の花木)

Barbados Flower

Along with "Sandanka" (Ixora) and "Deigo" (Indian coral bean), the Barbados flower is one of the Three Flowers of the Ryukyu Islands.

Growing to a top height of 2-3 meters, this plant, which is colored with a beautiful mixture of red and yellow, blooms between June and November. In the Okinawan language, this plant is called "Akosa." It is also a very easy plant to grow and cultivate.



Urasoe Citizens' Tree (市民の木)

Elaeocarpus Tree

This tree is called "Tārashi" or "Tārasā" in Okinawan dialect. On the main island of Okinawa, this tree has long been known as a "Kari Tree" or "Special Tree." Its leaves are evergreen with red coloring on the underside.



Urasoe City Emblem (市章)

This emblem symbolizes the limitless progress of peace and homeland. The Japanese phonetic characters (katakana) that spell "Urasoe" (ウラソエ) are used as the base for the design. The character that is pronounced "U" expresses the concept of eternal progress. The four characters are placed in a circle that stands for peace and harmony.



Urasoe City Flag (市旗)

The indigo blue background brings to mind the deep blue of the Bingata stencil-dyed fabric, one of Urasoe's traditional arts, and expresses optimism for eternal progress. The color white in the emblem symbolizes hope for successful and healthy lives for Urasoe's citizens.

About City Hall

1-1-1 Ahacha, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2501

Telephone: (098) 876-1234

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 5:15 pm

(Closed for lunch 12:00-1:00 pm)

Closed on Saturdays, Sundays, and Public Holidays

Parking for City Hall is available in the underground parking lot, the parking area behind City Hall, and the lower parking lot down the hill from the Central Community Center.



Urasoe City Hall Floor Guide

Basement	Parking Lot	駐車所	Chūsha-jo
	City Hall Store	売店	Baiten
1F	Citizen's Affairs Section	市民課	Shimin-ka
	National Health Insurance Section	国民健康保険課	Kokumin Kenkō Hoken-ka
	Lively Old Age Support Division	いきいき高齢支援課	Iki-iki Kōrei Shien-ka
	Accounting Section	会計課	Kaikei-ka
	Hello Work	ハローワーク	Harō Wāku
2F	Tax Collection Section	納税課	Nōzei-ka
	Municipal Tax Section	市民税課	Shiminzei-ka
	Property Tax Section	資産税課	Shisanzei-ka
	Child's Welfare Section	こども家庭課	Kodomo Katei-ka
	Infant Welfare Section	保育課	Hoiku-ka
	Child's Policy Section	こども政策課	Kodomo Seisaku-ka
3F	Financial Assistance Section	保護課	Hogo-ka
	Information Policy Section	情報政策課	Jōhō Seisaku-ka
	Emergency Management Office	防災危機管理室	Bōsai Kiki Kanri-shitsu
	Welfare General Affairs Section	福祉総務課	Fukushi Sōmu-ka
	Persons With Disabilities Welfare Division	障がい福祉課	Shōgai Fukushi-ka
	Audit Committee Secretariat	監査委員事務局	Kansa I-in Jimu-kyoku
4F	Secretariat	秘書課	Hisho-ka
	Planning Section	企画課	Kikaku-ka
	International Relations Section	国際交流課	Kokusai Kōryū-ka
	West Coast Development Section	西海岸開発課	Nishi Kaigan Kaihatsu-ka
	Land Development Public Corporation	土地開発公社	Tochi Kaihatsu Kōsha
5F	Industrial Promotion Section	産業振興課	Sangyō Shinkō-ka
	Sightseeing Promotion Section	観光振興課	Kankō Shinkō-ka
	Environmental Conservation Section	環境保全課	Kankyō Hozen-ka
	Citizens' Livelihood Section	市民生活課	Shimin Seikatsu-ka
	Sewerage Section	下水道課	Gesuido-ka
	Building Repairs Division	建築営繕課	Kenchiku Eizen-ka
	Building Guidance Division	建築指導課	Kenchiku Shidō-ka
	Contract Inspection Section	契約検査課	Keiyaku Kensa-ka
6F	Road Section	道路課	Dōro-ka
	Land Acquisition Section	用地課	Yōchi-ka
	Land Readjustment Section	区画整理課	Kukaku Seiri-ka
	Churamachi Promotion Section	美らまち推進課	Churamachi Suishin-ka
	City Planning Section	都市計画課	Toshi Keikaku-ka
7F	Education Section	学校教育課	Gak'kō Kyoiku-ka
	School General Affairs Section	学校総務課	Gak'kō Sōmu-ka
	Education General Affairs Section	教育総務課	Kyōiku Sōmu-ka
	Facility Section	施設課	Shisetsu-ka
	Culture Sports Promotion Section	文化スポーツ振興課	Bunka Supōtsu Shinkō-ka
8F	General Affairs Section	総務課	Sōmu-ka
	Personnel Section	職員課	Shokuin-ka
	Administrative Reform Promotion Section	行政改革推進室	Gyōsei Kaikaku Suishin-shitsu
	Property Management Section	財産管理課	Zaisan Kanri-ka
	Finance Section	財政課	Zaisei-ka
9F	Auditorium	講堂	Kōdō





Assembly Building (Gikai-tō 議会棟)

The Urasoe City Council meets in the building next to Urasoe City Hall.



Water Section of Urasoe City (Suidō-bu 水道部)

The Water Section of Urasoe City is located west of City Hall adjacent to the Urasoe City Central Community Center.

1F	Storage / Machinery Room	倉庫・機械室	Sōko / Kikai-shitsu
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2F	Business Operation Section	営業課	Eigyō-ka
	Water Supply Section	配水課	Haisui-ka

3F	General Affairs Section	総務課	Sōmu-ka
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Akahira Station (あかひらステーションビル)

Akahira Station houses a few sections of City Hall that could not be accommodated in the main building. It is a red brick building located about 400m to the west of City Hall on the opposite side of the road (Route 38).

1F	Welfare Plaza	福祉プラザ	Fukushi Puraza
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2F	Culture Section	文化財課	Bunkazai-ka
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3F	Child and Youth Affairs Section	子ども青少年課	Kodomo Seishōnen-ka
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Prefectural Government

Responsible Organization: **Okinawa Prefectural Government**
 Exchange Promotion Division (Kōryū Suishin-ka)
 1-2-2 Izumizaki, Naha 900-8570
 Telephone: (098) 866-2479

The Exchange Promotion Division of the Okinawa Prefectural Government is a valuable resource for foreigners living in Okinawa. There are native English, Spanish, Chinese, and Korean speakers employed there to help out speakers of those languages. They also provide an external link with extensive information about foreigner's living in Japan in various languages online at:

<http://www.pref.okinawa.lg.jp/site/chijiko/kohokoryu/foreign/english/living/index.html>

