



## Okinawa celebrates Karate Day 2023

*To celebrate the event today, Okinawa, the home of karate, highlights some popular activities for enthusiasts of the sport*



*Left to right: Okinawa Karate Kaikan and Zen + Karate Program  
Images are available for download [here](#).*

**25 October 2023.** In celebration of Karate Day taking place today, Okinawa, the birthplace of the popular martial art, hosted a number of activities for visitors and locals to enjoy. Celebrations will take place on October 29 along the 1.6-kilometre-long Kokusai-dori Street in Naha, the prefecture's capital, and saw thousands of practitioners demonstrating their skills. Performances included multitudinous kata shows (choreographed pattern of movements and techniques). Additionally, a special demonstration took place at Shurei no Yakata dojo in [Karate Kaikan](#), the largest museum and exhibition dedicated to karate in Okinawa.

To commemorate the special day, the Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau has rounded up some unique experiences for visitors to challenge their inner karateka.

### **Explore the rich history of karate**

Whether a martial arts novice or sporting expert, the [Okinawa Karate History Tour](#) is a great way to understand more about the origins of the sport and the traditional Okinawan culture. The six-hour tour includes visits to less-frequented sites where locals practise, along with stops at museums and monuments of legendary karate masters. Tour prices start from JPY 30,000 (approx. £163) per person. For participants with a plus one or travelling in a group, reduced prices apply.

### **A karate-themed stay**

The three-day [Ryukyu Karate Stay](#) by HOSHINOYA Okinawa offers visitors a unique and immersive look into Okinawa's original Ryukyu karate, refined over the years as a means of self-improvement. The experience combines daily practice sessions with 'dozen meditation', a type of moving meditation practiced in the dark to reflect on the movements practiced during the day to achieve repeating these without thinking. Between sessions, participants will also enjoy traditional Shiatsu massage treatments and an awamori drink (Okinawa's iconic spirit) before bed. Prices start from JPY 84,300

(approx. £462) per person inclusive of three training sessions, two 'dozen meditations', one massage treatment, and awamori drinks. The price of the stay is not included.

### **Introduction to Japanese swordsmanship**

Using a real Japanese sword or katana, the [Tameshigiri Japanese Swordsmanship](#) programme is the perfect introduction to Japanese swordsmanship. The 60-minute session is led by an laido Master, who is an individual with the highest level of expertise and proficiency in the art of laido, the martial art of drawing and cutting with a Japanese sword. The experience starts with a demonstration by the Master followed by a good amount of practice of the *Tameshigiri* technique, a practice to test the quality of the swords by cutting on rolls of bamboo matting. Prices start from JPY 7,000 (approx. £38) per person.

### **Training for the body and mind**

Combining the Buddhist tradition of seated meditation with a physical martial arts class, the [Zen + Karate Program](#) at Shuri Kannondo Temple is ideal for those wanting to train both the body and mind. The 90-minute evening session begins with 45-minutes of 'zen' meditation led by famous local priest Jouei Yoshikuni, followed by a 45-minute karate class suitable for all skill levels. Prices start from JPY 6,000 (approx. £33) per person.

For more information about karate experiences in Okinawa, please visit: [karate.ocvb.or.jp/](http://karate.ocvb.or.jp/)

### **Note to editors**

Image credits:

*Image one Okinawa Karate Kaikan: Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau or OCVB*

*Image two Zen + Karate Program: Ageschio Japan*

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### **About Okinawa:**

Japan's southernmost prefecture, Okinawa, comprises 160 subtropical islands boasting a year-round warm climate comparable to Hawaii, Miami and Cancun. Just 3 hours by air from Tokyo and blessed with incredible natural beauty, from lush forests to crystal blue waters with abundant coral and golden sands, Okinawa is perfect for beach lovers and sport enthusiasts alike whilst still appealing to culture seekers thanks to its unique history and heritage. Using the bountiful fresh produce its natural environment produces, Okinawa's culinary culture is also unique and is believed to be a key factor in Okinawa's status as one of only five blue zones in the world recognised for longevity.

*For further media information and images contact:*

*Be Okinawa - UK & Ireland Representative, Laura Boo: E: [laura@humewhitehead.co.uk](mailto:laura@humewhitehead.co.uk) / T: +44 (0) 203 375 4056*