Discover Sailing Asia was founded to provide an opportunity for people of all ages & abilities to sail in a fun and safe environment. We currently operate a fast growing fleet of charter boats in 8 countries, 18 ports across Asia

We all come from the sea, but we are not all of the sea. Those of us who are, we children of the tides must return to it again and again. Until the day we don’t come back leaving behind only that which was touched along the way – Chasing Mavricks
If you’re looking for a beach holiday in Japan then there are few, if any locations, which can rival the beautiful coastlines which surround Ishigaki and its neighbouring islands in the Yaeyama archipelago. Net-protected beaches, such as those found at Maezato and Fusaki, are particularly popular with families, but more adventurous individuals may choose to head out to more secluded spots where coral reefs can often be found just meters from the shore.

What Ishigaki lacks in terms of man-made tourist spots, such as the shrines and temples which are ubiquitous throughout much of Japan, it more than makes up for in terms of natural beauty. In 2009 the island received international attention when Kabira bay was awarded 3 stars by the Michelin guide. This came as no huge surprise among those who have visited Ishigaki, but if the truth be known there are other spots on the island, such as the capes of Uganaki and Hirakubo along with the peak of Mt. Nosoko, which comfortably rival the beauty of the emerald green waters of Kabira bay.

Although it’s beaches, sights and nature which attract hundreds of thousands of Japanese tourists to the island every year, Ishigaki has a surprisingly vibrant late scene which is based around the entertainment district of ‘Misakichō’. Like most cities in Japan the doors of many bars stay open until the early hours of the morning as customers sip their way through Orion beer and bottles of awamori.
MEETING TIME AND LOCATION

Meeting Point: Ishigaki Yaeyama Yacht Club Marina, 1400hrs

After everyone settles in aboard, we will have a quick chart briefing on what to expect for the coming week and a quick tour of the boat. On the evening of Day 1 and the morning of Day 2, passengers will be able to purchase any alcohol and beverages for the week as well as any last minute personal provisioning. Please text your captain if you have any travel delays. It is recommended ensuring connectivity to a messaging service such as iMessage, Viber, Line, Wechat, Whatsapp, or SMS until you reach the boat.

AIRPORT AND TRANSPORTATION

There are direct flights into Ishigaki International Airport from Hong Kong and Multiple flights from various cities in Japan. It takes approximately 30mins to get from the Airport to the Marina. Taxis are readily available outside the airport.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure relevant visas are obtained where necessary. Please ensure your passport is valid for the period of travel and for six months after you return with at least 3 blank pages for visa stamps. Your passport name must match the name on the flight ticket otherwise you may not be able to travel and insurance may be invalid.

CURRENCIES / MONEY EXCHANGE

The local currency is the Japanese Yen (Yen). Visa and MasterCard are also accepted in most places. ATMs can be found at the airport and throughout the island but it is recommended that you travel with the necessary cash. Most small restaurants and shops do not accept credit cards, so it is best to have local currency available for making purchases.

WEATHER

Ishigaki basks in a sub-tropical maritime climate. Rainfall is moderately low for tropical islands. Scattered showers are common throughout the year, but all day rain is very rare. There is little seasonal variation in temperature during the year with relatively mild winters. The peak summer months are a good time to visit as the weather is mostly sunny. Brief rain showers can be frequent so please bring a light raincoat.
PROVISIONING

Upon arrival, you and your team can head to a nearby supermarket to stock up on healthy, fresh and flavorful local foods and produce from the region. Most of the anchorages we are staying overnight at have shops and restaurants that you can purchase food, so if you do not plan to cook, all meals can be taken on shore. Do plan to have plenty of non-perishable snacks as well as fresh fruit to stay hydrated during the trip. Sometimes we may arrive late at our anchorage, so it is best to have something on board to eat in the event of a late lunch/dinner. Breakfast is best prepared on board as we may want to sail out each morning early and will not have too much time to head to shore for breakfast. Cooking utensils as well as crockery and cutlery are available on the boat.

ADDITIONAL COST

Recommended spending for the week, $200 - $300 per person, varying on your spending habits. Provisioning for alcohol and soft drinks $50-100 average per person. All expenses on shore including meals and drinks are not included in the charter fee.

PACKING LIST

Life aboard our journey is uncomplicated so it is recommended packing appropriately. Collapsible bags in place of large rigid suitcases are advised for ease of transport on and off the boat. Island attire is very casual at all times so we recommend packing light and embracing the simple life.

- light rain coat / wind jacket
- boat shoes or other non-slip shoes
- hat / sunglasses / sailing gloves (optional) / sun screen
- warm clothes just in case / fleece
- swim / beach towels (bath towels are provided)
- iPod/music player
- camera
- books, games, etc.
- any special dietary foods or medications
- toiletries
- shower flip flops*

* Conserving water on the boat is very important so we shower in the marina facilities where available. Otherwise, we take “1-minute” showers on the boat.
Day 1 – Check In, Yaeyama Port / Marina

Upon Arrival, you will check into the boat and attend a short briefing on the boat and charts. This is followed by a tour around the shopping district as well as supermarkets for provisioning. Provisioning can be arranged in advance so you don't have to spend time shopping. The boat will stay at Marina or alternatively you can proceed with a short sunset sail around the harbor on day 1.

Day 2 – Kabira Bay

We depart from the Marina after breakfast and head to Kabira. Famed for its beautiful white sand beaches as well as a popular dive site for Manta Ray sightings, this beach is a must visit when you are at Ishigaki. Its a 17 miles (approx. 3.5hr - 4hr sail) We will anchor off the bay and you can proceed to go snorkeling / scuba diving (can be arranged with prior notice) as well as use the Dinghy to explore the mangroves around the bay. There is also a couple of hotels / restaurants around the bay which you can dine-in at if you do not wish to cook.

Day 3 – Iriomote North

After spending an evening at anchor stargazing into the beautiful Ishigaki night sky, we will depart Kabira Bay and sail towards Iriomote. This is the biggest Island to the west of Ishigaki. We should arrive at Iriomote just in time for lunch and you can spend the rest of the afternoon exploring the island. There are numerous restaurants serving local food as well as river canoe tours on the Urauchi river, the longest river in the Okinawa Prefecture. You can also rent a bicycle to explore the island at a leisurely pace with your fellow adventurers and catch a glimpse of the endangered Iriomote Wildcat on the prowl for its next meal.

Day 4 – Iriomote South

We will spend the morning around Iriomote where you can get onto a buffalo cart and head to Yubijima, a small island to the east of Iriomote. Sing to popular local tunes accompanied by the Sanshin (local Okinawan string instrument). We depart our anchorage in the late afternoon for a leisurely sunset cruise down to the south of Iriomote where we will pass Shirahama during sunset and anchor off Funauki Bay where one of the most beautiful beaches in the whole of Japan can be seen at sunset. There are also Black Pearl cultivation and shops you can visit on land at Funauki Bay upon arrival at the anchorage.

Day 5 – Hateruma

We depart for the southern most point of Japan, Hateruma after breakfast at Funauki Bay. The 23 miles passage will take approximately 4 hours. We will spend the rest of the day at Hateruma visiting the numerous monuments as well as hiking to the southern most point of Japan. The beaches on the north of the island is also famous for its fine white sand where you can sit down to enjoy the beautiful sunset and stargaze into the night.

Day 6 – Aragusuku, Kuroshima

We depart bright and early after breakfast at Hateruma for Aragusuku Island. We will stop at the island for lunch and then proceed onto Kuroshima. Known for its Star Sand beach, we head from Kuroshima to Taketomi on our final day of exploration in Ishigaki. Taketomi is one of the smallest islands around Ishigaki, but because of its close proximity to the island, it sees a great number of visitors everyday. Pick out the star sand on the beach or hop onto a water buffalo cart ride. Bicycles are also available for rental on the island for hire. After lunch, we will head back to Ishigaki Town in the evening where you can head for the numerous bars / yakitori restaurants to celebrate your week of adventure sailing around Ishigaki.

Day 7 – Ishigaki City

Check Out (1000hrs) After Breakfast
Our Beneteau Oceanis 45 is a true blue-water cruiser featuring a self-stacking mainsail with integrated sail cover, roller-furling genoa, and a 57 hp Yanmar diesel engine. An electric windlass with handheld remote makes anchoring easy. The yacht also comes fully equipped with a diesel powered marine generator and air-conditioning. A soft-top bimini shades the Helm. The cockpit has walk-through access to the hydraulic activated swim platforms, blue-tooth stereo with speakers in the saloon and cockpit.
ISHIGAKI, JAPAN

Say Yes to New Adventures in 2018
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