

How to use this guide. Go online, open google maps, then paste the google coordinates, hit enter, and turn on the photo option in google maps. Look at the wonderful pics and decide if you would like to go there.

Also, ask your teachers about these places. Kumamoto people love to tell you about their area, and they will be more than happy to tell you about these places or help you get more info about them if needed.

Also, in Japan google maps enter the names of the places in Japanese (kanji) and see what comes up.

Check out the websites. For those of you that can't read Japanese there may be English options. If there is no English, ask a teacher or a fellow ALT who can read Japanese.

And of course use the information resources at the bottom.

All these places listed are great, but they represent only 1 percent of the things to do in Kyushu. And I have not listed much downtown stuff because you will all discover wonderful places on your own as you explore the city. A little needs to be left luck, the unknown, discovery, and mystery.

**NOTE- I have put smiley faces ☺ next to the places you should to see while you are in Japan. I have written NO BUS if a place probably doesn't have public transportation to it.**

"JAPANESEY" STUFF and STUFF in or close to Kumamoto city

### **Kumamoto Castle (熊本城)**

It's a cool castle and worth a gander.

<http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumamsi/ksiro/ksiro.htm>

Google coordinates: 32.805889,130.705547

### **Ninomaru koen (二の丸公園)**

This is a great park to chill, sunbathe and play Frisbee in, and its also good for cherry blossom viewing parties in the spring.

It is right next to the castle.

### **Hanaokayama (花岡山)**

From here you can enjoy a great view of the city – the night view is especially nice. It's also a bit of a date spot in the evening, in case you are in need of such a place. And the road up is lined with love hotels, in case you were curious what they look like, or are in need of one, for, uh, because your place is being fumigated.

<http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumamsi/hanaokayama/hanaokayama.htm>

32.796564,130.685227

### **Honmiyoji (本妙寺) ☺**

This is a really big temple complex in the city. Make sure to hike up the stairs to get a great view of the city.

<http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumamsi/honmyoj/honmyoj.htm>

32.815213,130.693188

### **Fujisakigu** (藤崎宮)

A big temple in the city.

<http://www.fujisakigu.or.jp/>

32.775801,130.740137

### **Suizenji park** (水前寺公園)

A nice traditional Japanese style garden. Biggest one in the city. See it once, but just once.

<http://www.suizenji.or.jp/>

32.790702,130.734429

### **Ezuko Koen** (江津湖公園) ☺

A very beautiful park in the city, and also the largest park in the city. There are natural springs you can drink from there. Good for jogging and bike riding.

<http://wakuwaku-kumamoto.com/download/ezuko.pdf>

32.775801,130.740137

### **Kinpouzan** (金峰山)

The big mountain to the west of the city. Amazing view from the top of Kumamoto city. Great view in the day and at night. It is a great bike ride to the top for those that really like to exercise. Also a good long hike for those looking for an all day trek. You can take a bus up route 1 and get kinda close to the peak, kinda.

32.813932,130.63875

### **Tastuda Shizen Koen** (立田自然公園)

A natural park with a fair number of walking trails.

[http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumamsi/tatta\\_park/tatta.htm](http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumamsi/tatta_park/tatta.htm)

32.820605,130.731125

### **Iwatonosato koen** (岩戸の里公園) ☺

This place has many stone statues and a cave where the famous swordsmen Miyamoto either 1) contemplated on his life OR 2) worked on his book, The Five Rings, OR 3) maybe all of the above. I don't recall. This is worth a visit.

<http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumanaka/iwatonosato/iwato.htm>

32.820028,130.620747

## TEMPLES AND SHRINES

### **Dazaifu Temple (大宰府)**

A very big and cool temple in Fukuoka prefecture. There is also a traditional style Japanese street lined with traditional looking Japanese shops. Definitely go ☺

<http://www.dazaifutenmangu.or.jp/>

33.521147,130.534079

### **Aso Shrine (阿蘇神社) ☺**

This is a nice shrine in Aso city. If you go to Aso you should check it out. There is also a neat little traditional style shopping street nearby. The street is lined with natural springs, so great for getting hydrated.

<http://www.asocity-kanko.jp/spot/24/>

32.948218,131.115432

### **Kiyomizuyama (清水寺)**

A huge temple complex in the mountain. Really cool! I was a little stunned by its existence. Why is it there?

<http://www.e-kiyomizu.or.jp/>

33.150846,130.52526

## SHOPPING

### **Parco (パルコ)**

Not too overpriced. Two floors for guys, and the rest is primarily for ladies. The top floor has a cool knickknack store called Vagabond.

### **Tsuruya (鶴屋)**

Get ready to break the bank. Name brand, name brand, and a little more name brand. They have clothes, cosmetics, jewelry, cookware, and much more. In the basement they have food shops where you can get hard-to-find foods for a premium.

### **Don Quijote!!!! ドンキホーテ**

Anything and everything you could ever want, from food to electronics to S&M costumes to Heinz Ketchup to car wax to liquor to the Shake Weight.

32.811354,130.71884

32.820519,130.70065

### **Hamasen Youme Town Mall (はませんゆめタン)**

This is a decent sized mall. There is an international food store where you can buy ALL kinds of food, including dill and Thai curry. There is also a Subway in the mall.

32.771308,130.72664

**Eon Mall Kumamoto Clair** (イオンモール熊本クレア) ☺

Big-ass kick-ass mall. Do it!

32.739566,130.74357

**Canal City** (キャナルシティ) ☺

A big big mall in Fukuoka. Worth a visit if you like malls and like to shop.

<http://www.canalcity.co.jp/>

33.589688,130.41074

**Tenjin** (天神) ☺

The downtown shopping area in Fukuoka. This also has night life.

<http://tenjinsite.jp/>

33.591082,130.399153

**Costco** (コストコ)

Big sized food! Get ready to show your O face. It's in Fukuoka.

33.652244,130.486979

## KARAOKE

### **Monte Carlo Karaoke Studio**

This is where my Japanese friends go karaoking. It's cheap and ...yeah, cheap. Alts do seem to like this place. I do though. I guess I like it cheap and dirty.

32.786733,130.714366

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Sight**

Popular with the city ALTs. Off of the Shimotori.

## GAME CENTERS and BOWLING

**Round 1 Game Center** ☺

All you can play for 3 hours. They have arcade games, electric pocket bikes, rollerblading, ping



<http://www.nichirinji.com/newpage3.html>

33.039788,130.685484

### **Reef Burger Place**

If you have had too much Japanese food, need a break, and are craving a big, huge, massive burger, go here. Yum Yum!

32.762645,130.693949

### **SWIMMING AT THE RIVER!!!!!!!**

#### **Ezuzo park (江津湖)**

A so so place to swim at in the city.

32.784571,130.734274

#### **Yuusui Pool [湯水プール]**

This is a pool that was built over a natural spring. The pool is shallow, so no really diving and swimming. Next to the pool is there is a pond, also shallow. Both are nice to paddle around in if you need to cool off - the water is very cold. However, its too bad that its not deeper, the water comes up to about my chest.

<http://www.mlit.go.jp/tochimizushigen/mizsei/mizusato/shichoson/kyushu/kashima.htm>

Google coordinates: 32.753499,130.771465

#### **Kikuchi Keikoku (菊池溪谷) ☺**

**(may be closed for a while due to damage caused by recent floods)**

This is a gorge on the Kikuchi river. Cold water to swim in! There are also natural water slides. And it is a beautiful gorge with nice hiking trails. A great place to cool down in in the summer.

<http://www.kikuchikanko.ne.jp/modules/group/index.php?cid=7>

32.784571,130.734274

#### **Kikuchi River (菊池川) ☺**

Great swimming and a bridge to jump off of.

33.008286,130.882337

#### **Kikuchi River**

Great swimming! Waterfalls, too.

33.005173,130.868154

#### **Yatani Keikoku (矢谷溪谷)**

A nice gorge to cool down in. There are some natural waterslides that are so so, and a deep pool to jump into. No proper swimming though.

33.086921,130.817256

**Mother Nature Campground** ☺

Awesome place to swim at. And there are waterslides! Loooooove this place.

33.090858,130.821955

**Ryuumon no taki** (竜門の滝) ☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺

BEST SWIMMING HOLE IN KYUSHU!!!!!! F YEAHHHHHHHHHH.

33.275678,131.206992

**Todoroki no taki** (轟木の滝)

This is a nice place to swim at in Amakusa. There is a waterfall to jump off of into a nice pool.

32.421486,130.032849

NATURE and stuff

**Kikuchi Gorge** (菊池溪谷) ☺

Mentioned before. Nice hiking. Beautiful, fresh, and cool (its always a little chilly there, year-round)

<http://www.kikuchikanko.ne.jp/modules/group/index.php?cid=7>

32.784571,130.734274

**Aso-san** (阿蘇山) ☺

The famous volcano in Kumamoto. Its worth a visit. There is some good hiking to be done there. It's fun hiking there in the winter in the snow.

<http://www.aso.ne.jp/~volcano/eng/index.html>

32.886507,131.082662

**Shirakawa Suigen** [白川水源] ☺

This is an amazing freshwater spring. Tasty water!

<http://www.ajkj.jp/ajkj/kumamoto/hakusui/kanko/shirakawasuigen/shirakawasuigen.html>

32.825654,131.095219

**Takamori Yuusui Tunnel** (高森湧水トンネル)

They were digging a train tunnel and hit a spring, and they gave up on the project. Now you can go into the tunnel, enjoy the cool air, drink from the spring, and enjoy a neat water show.

<http://www.aso-aso.com/009sightseeing/05see/tunnel/>

32.813806,131.122534

**Nabegataki** (鍋ヶ滝) NO BUS??

This is a beautiful waterfall that you can walk behind. During certain times it's lit up at night.

Check out the amazing pics online.

<http://www.ajkj.jp/ajkj/kumamoto/oguni/kanko/nabegataki/nabegataki.html>

33.136886,131.035566

### **Kujuu-san (九重山) ☺**

There is lots of hiking to be done in the Kuju area. There is a onsen that is in the middle of the mountain range and it can only be accessed by hiking trails. Pretty cool!

33.097941,131.255121

### **Kujuu Yume Outsuribashi (九重夢大吊り橋)**

This is the longest foot suspension bridge in Japan. Beautiful views.

<http://www.yumeooturibashi.com/>

33.173848,131.226754

### **Takachiho (高千穂) ☺**

This is an amazing gorge. You can rent rowboats and paddle around in it.

Nearby there is also a cave that has many stone statues in it. I believe that the Gods that created Japan are from this area. Pretty cool. There is also a temple in the area that is nice. During the summer they light up the gorge at night with colored lights.

<http://takachiho-kanko.info/>

32.701655,131.302328

### **Underwater caves[稲積水中鍾乳洞 (いなづみすいちゅうしょうにゅうど)] NO BUS?**

There are underwater caves. Pretty cool! There is also a nearby Showa Era town.

<http://www.inazumi.com/>

<http://www.inazumi.com/>

### **Unzen and Fugen dake Mountain / Volcano (雲仙)**

Unzen is a hot spring town that has a very European (German and Dutch) feel. There is nice hiking to be done around the Fugen Dake volcano.

<http://unzen.org/japanese/kokuritu/>

32.813806,131.122534

### **Harajiri no taki (原尻の滝)**

This waterfall is called the Niagara Falls of Japan.

<http://www.ajkj.jp/ajkj/oita/ogata/kanko/harajirinotaki/harajirinotaki.html>

32.964189,131.450794

### **Kirishima (霧島)**

This is a beautiful volcano rich region in Kagoshima. Nice views and great hiking. It's a very

famous place. It's also famous for its onsens.

<http://kirishimakankou.com/index.php>

31.929438,130.844421

### **Sogi no taki** (曾木の滝)

Really beautiful waterfall in Kagoshima.

<http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kagosima/hokusatu/soginotaki/soginotaki.htm>

32.01237,130.576372

### **Yakushima** (屋久島) ☺

A beautiful island south of Kagoshima, famous for its hiking and beautiful trees.

[http://www.yakushima-town.jp/?page\\_id=55](http://www.yakushima-town.jp/?page_id=55)

<http://yakushima.yamakei.co.jp/>

32.421486,130.032849

### **Crazy big tree** (寂心さんの大クス)

[http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumanaka/jyakusin\\_ookusu/jyakusin.htm](http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumanaka/jyakusin_ookusu/jyakusin.htm)

32.871676,130.684412

### **3333 steps!**

If you have ever wanted a physically demanding challenge, or have wondered what fiery jello legs would feel like, this is the hike for you. There is an amazing view from the top and a very old temple.

[http://www.yado.co.jp/yama/k\\_daigyouji/daigyouji.htm](http://www.yado.co.jp/yama/k_daigyouji/daigyouji.htm)

32.577123,130.82305

### **Bridges**

Check out this webpage for some awesome bridges.

<http://www.yado.co.jp/kankou/kumamoto/kumanaka/kumakindex.htm>

### JOGGING / BIKE RIDING

#### **Ezuko Park**

32.775801,130.740137

#### **KK Wing**

32.886507,131.082662

#### **Ninomaru Koen**

32.806574,130.701338

### **Yuuka Farming Road**

This is a bike trail that runs from Kumamoto city to Yamaga city.

<https://maps.google.co.jp/?q=http:%2F%2Fshare.abvio.com%2F9481%2F3e70%2F4e91%2F67%2FCyclemeter-Cycle-20111010-1231.kml&ll=32.947786,130.717907&spn=0.021068,0.038581&t=m&brcurrent=3,0x3540f414acf11b4f:0x1a51ced19bcf5c31,0&z=15&iwloc=0x3540f419d6bc3b43:0x81daef5d2c6c6482>

### **Along the Shirakawa River**

32.795793,130.707027

### **Motor assisted bicycle rentals**

[http://www.city.kumamoto.kumamoto.jp/content/web/asp/kiji\\_detail.asp?NW=1&ID=12360&LS=26](http://www.city.kumamoto.kumamoto.jp/content/web/asp/kiji_detail.asp?NW=1&ID=12360&LS=26)

[http://www.city.kumamoto.kumamoto.jp/Content/Web/Upload/file/Bun\\_76978\\_21HPpanfu0803.pdf](http://www.city.kumamoto.kumamoto.jp/Content/Web/Upload/file/Bun_76978_21HPpanfu0803.pdf)

### AUTUMN LEAVES VIEWING

#### **Kikuchi Gorge** ☺

#### **Kujuu Area** [九重] ☺

The tallest mountain on the island of Kyushu

33.08622,131.190834

#### **Kujuu Yume Outsuribashi**

Longest foot bridge in Japan.

<http://www.yumeooturibashi.com/>

33.173848,131.226754

#### **Itsukimura** [五木村] **NO BUS**

32.516421,130.938835

#### **Somanosato** 杣 (そま) の里溪流公園 **NO BUS**

This place is beautiful in the fall and spring.

<http://chanokuni.com/tourist/item/000104>

<http://www.city.yame.fukuoka.jp/kankou/yabe/somanosato.html>

33.178365,130.863622

### CHERRY BLOSSOM VIEWING

#### **Kikuchi Koen** [菊池公園] ☺

They light it up at night and its very very beautiful.

<http://sakura.yahoo.co.jp/spot/detail/50530.html>

<http://www.kikuchikanko.ne.jp/modules/page/index.php?lid=18>

32.985556,130.819445

**Takamori Senbonzakura**(高森千本桜)

<http://www.yado.co.jp/hana/kumamoto/takamoritouge/takamoritouge.htm>

32.816854,131.139679

**Minamata** (水俣)

<http://sakura.nihon-kankou.or.jp/detail/view.php?id=S4303>

32.20031,130.380249

**Hitoyoshi** [人吉] NO BUS

<http://hanami.walkerplus.com/detail/S4306.html>

32.324131,131.018314

ONSENS (hotsrpings)

In Kumamoto city:

**Batten no Yu** (ばってんの湯)

<http://www.battennoyu.com/>

32.775517,130.738206

**Suishun** [水春温泉] ☺

Yes yes and yes. This place is awesome. Great water, great atmosphere, and the ganbanyoku is amazing.

<http://suisyun.jp/kashima>

32.736606,130.748806

**Tsuru no Yu** (つるノ湯)

This onsen is right next to KK Wing, so if you spend a couple hours jogging there, you can hit up the onsen afterwards. Awesome!

<http://www.turunoyu-t8.com/>

32.842268,130.7811

**Ikkyu** (一休温泉)

<http://www.19-onsen.com/>

32.790319,130.776181

**Yu Rakkusu** (湯らっくす)

<http://www.genkysquare.com/onsen2/onsen.html>

32.785304,130.702415

**Shiro no yu (城の湯)**

<http://www.shironoyu.co.jp/>

32.810975,130.701642

This onsen is very close to the castle.

Onsens outside of the city:

**Kafutei Onsen (花富亭 温泉)**

This is my favorite onsen.

<http://www.kafutei.co.jp/>

33.024209,130.780946

**Green Pia Onsen [グリーンピア温泉] ☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺**

Best view from an onsen. It REALLY is breathtaking. It makes me smile to know places like this exist.

<http://hgp-minamiaso.com/index.html>

<http://hgp-minamiaso.com/fasilites/onsen.html>

32.801416,131.036976

**Akagawa [赤川 温泉]**

<http://www.akagawaonsen.com/index.php>

33.053637,131.229237

**Kikunan Spa Resort: Anganasse (菊南スパリゾートあんながなっせ温泉) ☺**

Most classy, make-you-feel-rich onsen in all of Kumamoto. Go there once to feel like a king. It does cost 1400 yen though.

<http://agannasse-spa.jp/>

32.860425,130.727809

**Tarutama Onsen (垂玉温泉)**

An amazing onsen with a traditional feel.

32.862565,131.035672

**Jikoku Onsen (地獄温泉) ☺**

This is a famous onsen. Famous for its mud. The main muddy baths are mixed, and ladies its ok to wear a towel in the water.

<http://jigoku-onsen.co.jp/>

32.860204,131.036155

**Hot sand bath (I don't know the name) ☺**

<http://www.ryuusenkaku.com/index.html>

<http://www.jalan.net/yad367018/>

32.956285,130.727175

### Onsen Towns

#### **Kurokawa** [黒川温泉] ☺

Possibly the nicest and most famous onsen town in Japan. People come from near and far to enjoy the wonderful atmosphere and onsens there.

<http://www.kurokawaonsen.or.jp/english/>

33.078139,131.142039

#### **Yufuin** [湯布院] ☺

This town has wonderful Autumn leaf viewing. Good to go here in the Fall for onsen and Autumn leaf viewing.

[http://yufuin.or.jp/global/index.php?easiestml\\_lang=en](http://yufuin.or.jp/global/index.php?easiestml_lang=en)

33.26607,131.368246

#### **Beppu** [別府]

<http://english.beppu-navi.jp/>

33.280028,131.507807

#### **Ibusuki** (指宿) ☺

This is a hot sand bath town. The sand along the beach is heated by volcanic activity below. You can get buried in the warm sand on the beach, cook, and enjoy the view of the beautiful mountain ranges across the sea.

<http://ibusuki.or.jp/>

31.223078,130.655422

### AMUESEMENT PARKS

#### **Green Land:**

This is an amusement park and water park.

<http://www.greenland.co.jp/index2.html>

32.988508,130.465822

#### **Spaceworld**

<http://www.spaceworld.co.jp/>

32.988508,130.465822



<http://event-watcher.com/area/a06/43/4302/430206/4336801/>

32.934181,130.443463

**Aso Fire festival** [阿蘇火の祭り] ☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺

There is nothing like this anywhere else in the world (or so I say). Swinging bales of burning hay - that's all I need to say.

<http://www.jalan.net/yad380004/blog/entry0001691571.html>

### **Drunken Horse Festival**

You can watch people parade drunk horses through the Shimotori.

<http://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E8%97%A4%E5%B4%8E%E5%85%AB%E6%97%9B%E5%AE%AE%E7%A7%8B%E5%AD%A3%E4%BE%8B%E5%A4%A7%E7%A5%AD>

### **Tsuetate Onsen: Koi Nobori**

Carp flags are hung across the river in this little onsen town. This is worth seeing.

4/1 – 5/6

<http://www.ajkj.jp/ajkj/kumamoto/oguni/kanko/tuetateonsen/tuetateonsen.html>

33.184111,131.031678

**Yamaga Lantern Festival** [山鹿灯籠まつり (やまがとうろうまつり)]

<http://www.y-kankoukyoukai.com/event/touroumatsuri.html>

### FIREFLY VIEWING

**Kyokushi Mura**(旧旭志村) ☺

In Kumamoto there are many places where people go to view fireflies. The best place I know of is in Kikuchi. Its is SO beautiful. They also set up festival style food stands there so you can grab some Japanese festival grub.

<http://www.e-kikuchi.jp/sightseeing/kyokusi/index.html>

<http://www.city.kikuchi.kumamoto.jp/var/rev0/0003/1710/2012516161234.doc>

32.941034,130.861266

### **Other firefly viewing places**

<http://www.kikutigawa.hinokuni-net.jp/hotaru/index.html>

Hiking, hiking, and more hiking info than I have ever seen. Ask a teacher to help you if you are interested in a place. Also, check out Lonely Planet's hiking Japan book.

[http://www.geocities.jp/aosora\\_nosita/index.html](http://www.geocities.jp/aosora_nosita/index.html)

### MUSIC VENUES:

**Slow Hand** (スローハンド)on Shimotori



