Beat: Travel

A SPECTACULAR CULTURAL LEGACY, IN UNITY WITH NATURE

DISCOVER THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF JAPAN

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USPA NEWS - In February, the Agency for Cultural Affairs, in cooperation with the Japan National Tourism Organization, revealed additional special content featuring exclusive destinations for its Japan Heritage website. The content helps provide a more relaxed travel experience; soaking in the local atmosphere and taking a deep dive into Japan Heritage's unique combination of historic traditions and bold innovation.

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The additional pages prominently feature photos by a famous Japanese photographer and exquisite high-definition videos, giving a sense of being virtually transported to Japan. As with all Japan Heritage content, there is a strong emphasis on sustainability and preserving the country's cultural legacy.

- Japan Heritage Official Website: Special Content

The newly-added special content page highlights the harmony between culture and the natural landscape in a place where land meets sea. Hidden on the fringes of the Kii peninsula, the Ise-Shima area is riven with coastal bays and inlets, intrusions of the Pacific into the land. The blue waters of Ago Bay aren't just a scenic backdrop, though; they are home to some of Japan's most delicious seafood, such as the spiny Ise ebi lobster. Experience the centuries-old tradition of the ama divers, fearless women who venture into the ocean's depths to harvest the region's bountiful shellfish and seaweed. Though mountainous and remote, this rugged coastline can be visited in comfort, however, as Ise-Shima boasts some of the most luxurious and secluded resorts in Japan.

- Special content #3: Where land meets sea, discover the heritage of ama divers

Once found across Japan, Ise-Shima hosts many of the country's remaining ama divers. The ama live in close harmony with nature – plunging into the inky depths without any modern diving equipment, they rely instead on their expert knowledge of the sea and weather conditions to make their dives successfully. A typical catch includes abalone shells, turban shells, and seaweed, although the ama are careful never to take too much and disturb the delicate marine ecosystem – a form of sustainable fishing dating back to at least the 8th century, when ama divers were mentioned in the Man'yoshu poetry compilation. Today, you can join ama divers underwater as they practice their craft or sit with them in their amagoya huts where they rest after dives, grilling the fresh shellfish and imparting unique tales of ama life.

The observation deck atop Mount Yokoyama offers expansive views of Ago Bay and its many islands.

Special content (English version): https://www.japan.travel/japan-heritage/luxuryTravel

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmNmAsBgK20

Japan Heritage Official Website: Japan Heritage is a project focusing on various historic cultural properties across Japan, from those famous across the world to hidden gems known only to the select few. The website features deep-dive reports, stunning virtual reality and video content, descriptions of the historical backgrounds of cultural properties, and much more. Links are provided to download many of these content free of charge.

Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) Japan Heritage Site (English version): https://www.japan.travel/japan-heritage/

Source: Agency for Cultural Affairs

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