



Tea fields of Yame



The white-walled old town of Yame-Fukushima after dark

60,608

Population, 2020
census

42,366

Projected population
in 2040

482

km². Second largest
city area in Fukuoka

6

Districts: Yame, Joyo,
Kurogi, Tachibana,
Yabe, Hoshino

One city, six districts

Yame took in Joyo Town in 2006, then Kurogi, Tachibana, Yabe and Hoshino in 2010. From the old merchant town of Yame-Fukushima on the plain to the source of the Yabe River in the mountains, altitude, work and daily life all change. Many people feel pride in their own district first.

More than a tea town

Next to Yame tea (first in Japan for gyokuro by production value), the town makes Yame lanterns (first in Japan by volume), Yame-Fukushima Buddhist altars, Yame washi paper, stone lanterns, cedar timber, Onokoyaki pottery, sake and fruit. From outside, people often see only "Yame = tea".

The matcha crisis: three structural problems

1. **The gains do not reach farmers.** Wholesalers sit in between, so many tea farmers sell at the old price while world prices rise.
2. **Gyokuro or matcha.** Moving to matcha makes economic sense, but the gyokuro tradition could be lost.
3. **Matcha no longer means Japan.** Chinese production leads the world market, and matcha lattes of unknown quality sell for more than coffee.

Yame 2040 Vision

Yame City is drafting a vision for 2040 together with its residents, through dialogue sessions that began in July 2026. Residents have named what they want to keep. The next question is how to keep it.

Sources: Yame City Population Vision (revised March 2021), Yame City census page, Yame 2040 Vision website. The 2040 figure is a projection from 2021. Night photo: Crossroad Fukuoka.



44 KM

South of Hakata Station in a straight line. Yame sits at the edge of the Chikugo plain, where the hills begin.

ABOUT 1 HOUR

By car on the Kyushu Expressway, which runs past Dazaifu, Tosu and Kurume to Yame IC.

9:00 → 11:00

Day 1: our bus leaves Fukuoka city at 9:00. The orientation in Yame starts at 11:00.

13:00

Day 4: the bus leaves Yame for Fukuoka. Drop-off points are confirmed on Day 3.

City and countryside, one hour apart

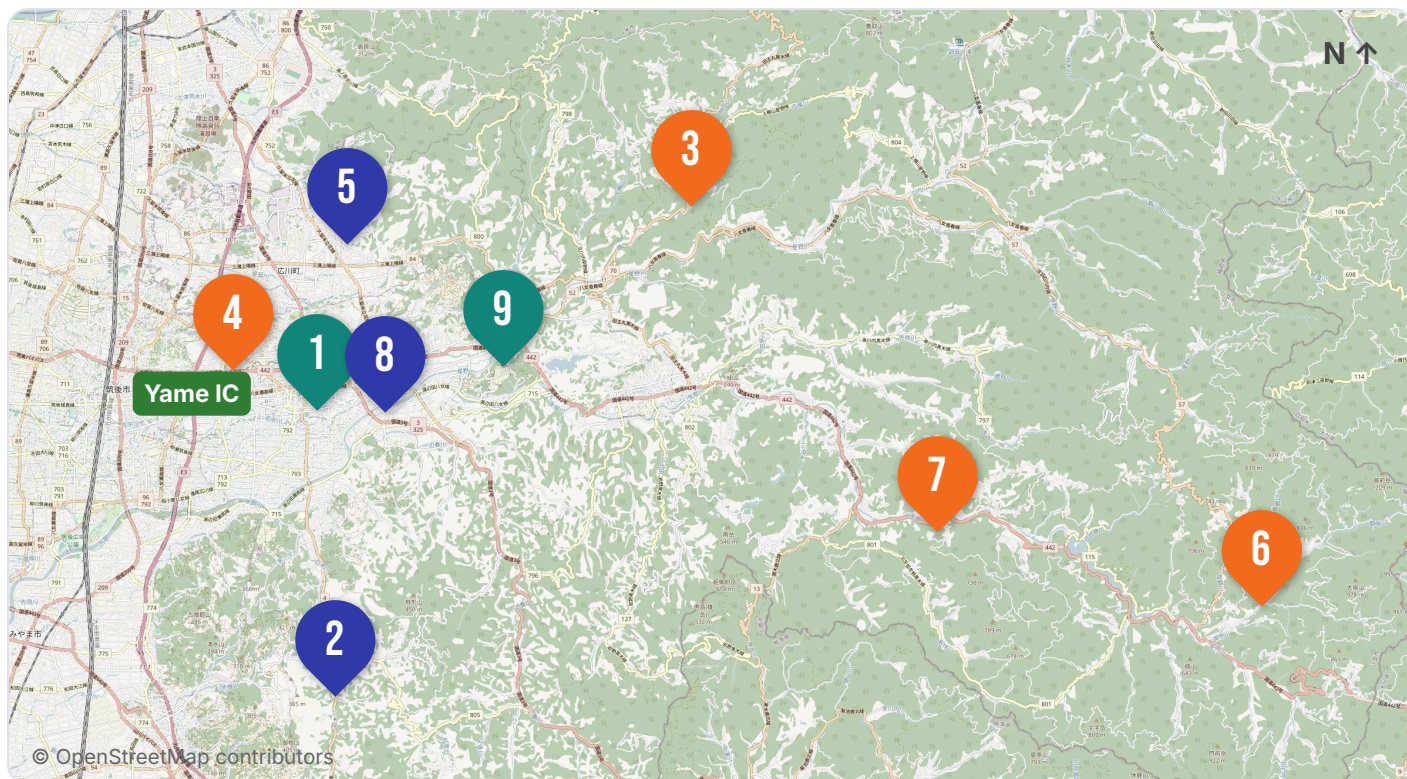
Fukuoka is one of the fastest growing cities in Japan. One hour south, Yame is a city of 60,000 spread over mountains, tea fields and an old merchant town. Moving between the two is part of what we want you to feel: how close the city is, and how different daily life becomes.



Yame-Fukushima old town by day

Before you board on Day 1

- Bring everything for four nights. Your luggage stays on the bus until check-in at 17:00.
- Charge your phone. You need it for SuzuPay and the Day 4 survey.
- Mountain sites are cooler than Fukuoka. Bring a light jacket.



- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 Yame-Fukushima old town
Hotel, orientation, town walk,
Takahashi Shoten | 2 Former Ouchi Residence / Odotani no Sato
Option 1 · Tachibana | 3 Baba Suishaba
Option 2 · Joyo |
| 4 Matsunobu Kogei
Option 2 | 5 Aizome Kasuri Kobo
Option 3 · Hirokawa | 6 Chiyonoen tea fields
Option 4 · Yabe |
| 7 Chiyonoen tea house
Option 4 · Kurogi | 8 Shimogawa Orimono
Option 5 · Tsue | 9 Former Kawasaki Elementary School
Day 3 afternoon · Yamauchi |

Travel times from the old town

2	Former Ouchi Residence, Tachibana	About 15 min by bus
3	Baba Suishaba, into the hills	About 30 min
5	Aizome Kasuri Kobo, Hirokawa	About 30 min
6	Chiyonoen tea fields, Yabe	About 60 min
8	Shimogawa Orimono, Tsue	About 10 min
1	Takahashi Shoten, in the old town	10 min on foot

Reading the map

Yame spreads from the flat Chikugo plain in the west into steep mountains in the east. Our base, Yame-Fukushima, sits where the plain meets the hills. Route 442 follows the Yabe River up the valley toward the tea villages; Route 3 runs south through Tachibana. Each option day takes one group into the mountains and keeps the other closer to town.

MISSION

Learn with the people of Yame, and offer an outside view they can use to decide what to keep and how.

How we work here

- We are not here as tourists. This program, an official pilot of the Japan Tourism Agency, exists to bring new economic and social possibilities to the region.
- No product is expected. What matters is dialogue with the people of Yame and the ideas that come out of it.
- Ask about the problems people live with, not only the craft. Listen before you suggest.
- Leave relationships and ideas that continue after Oct 14.

How the four days work

Immerse

Day 1 to 2
Walk the sites

Listen

Day 1 to 3
Hear the makers

Ideate

Day 3,
14:00
Reflection workshop

Share

Day 3,
16:00
Share-back to Yame

What we aim for together

#	Goal	Your part
1	Understand what Yame's makers are proud of and what they struggle with	Ask, listen, take notes
2	Connect what the two groups saw into one picture of Yame	Swap notes over dinner and in free time
3	Turn three days of notes into ideas Yame can use	Join the Day 3 reflection workshop
4	Share those ideas with the people who hosted us, and talk them through	Present and listen at the share-back
5	Leave a real trace in the local economy	Use your SuzuPay points at local shops
6	Help improve this pilot for future visitors	Complete the survey on Day 4 (about 15 min)

Why we see six worlds

Each day the group splits in two and goes to different places. Food, forest and water, color, tea, thread and fermentation, seen side by side, show how these trades grow from the same mountains and the same water.

THE BIG QUESTION

Yame's tea, wood, indigo, cloth, food and sake come from the same mountains and the same water. What could they become if we saw them as one system?

05 SCHEDULE

Four days at a glance



Everyone together Choose one option each morning or afternoon. Staff will confirm groups on the bus.

DAY 1

Sun, Oct 11

Arrive and get grounded

EVERYONE

9:00 Bus departs Fukuoka city for Yame

11:00 **Orientation** at Yokomachi Machiya Koryukan: open dialogue with Yame Mayor Minohara (60 min), briefing on meals and options (15 min), introduction to the venue (15 min). Food map handed out.

12:30 **Pick your afternoon** (Option 1 or 2). Luggage stays on the bus until 17:00.

CHOOSE ONE

OPTION 1

MAX 6 · LUNCH INCLUDED

Satoyama Living: Everyday Lessons

Mountain food and handmade konnyaku in Tachibana

13:00 Bus to the Former Ouchi Residence

13:15 Satoyama lunch and a look around the house

14:30 Short ride to Odotani no Sato

14:45 Make konnyaku by hand

16:15 Back to Yame-Fukushima (16:30)

OR

OPTION 2

TEAM LUNCH PROVIDED

Baba Suishaba + Matsunobu Kogei

A working waterwheel incense mill and a wooden tub maker

13:00 Team lunch in Yame-Fukushima

14:00 Bus to Baba Suishaba (30 min)

14:30 Waterwheel mill

15:30 Matsunobu Kogei, wooden tubs (16:00)

16:45 Back to Yame-Fukushima (17:00)

EVERYONE

17:00 **Check in** at Yame Green Hotel

18:00 **Dinner** at Nongyo, next to the hotel. Order and pay for your own dishes.

After **Optional second round:** a local karaoke bar in town

DAY 2

Mon, Oct 12

Indigo or tea, then the old town

CHOOSE ONE

OPTION 3

MAX 10

Aizome Kasuri Kobo

Kurume Kasuri indigo workshop: tour and dyeing demonstration

9:30 Depart from the hotel

10:00 Workshop visit (90 min)

12:00 Back in Yame-Fukushima, lunch on your own

OR

OPTION 4

MAX 10

Chiyonoen Organic Tea Farm

Mountain tea fields and factory in Yabe

8:45 Depart from the hotel (60 min ride)

10:00 Tea fields, then the tea factory

11:30 Lunch at the tea house (self-paid)

13:30 Back in Yame-Fukushima

EVERYONE · YAME-FUKUSHIMA WALK

13:30 **Meet** at Unagi no Nedoko, former Terasaki residence (shop for souvenirs here)

14:00 Ogata Butsudan, Buddhist altar workshop

14:30 Ito Gonjiro Shoten, Yame lantern maker

15:00 **Chakabuki tea tasting and matcha** with Imamura-san, Yokomachi Machiya Koryukan

16:30 Former Yame District Office and Asahiya Saketen: talk with Re:crafted

17:00 Konomi Honke, a tea merchant house founded in the early 1700s

17:15 Free evening

DAY 3

Tue, Oct 13

Thread, sake and the share-back

CHOOSE ONE

OPTION 5

ABOUT 7

Shimogawa Orimono

Open factory at the last Kurume Kasuri weaver in Yame City

9:15 Bus from the hotel (10 min)

9:30 Factory tour and talk with the weaver

11:45 Back to Yame-Fukushima

OR

OPTION 6

ABOUT 7

Takahashi Shoten

Shigemasu sake brewery, founded 1717: tour and tasting

9:15 Walk from the hotel (10 min)

9:30 Brewery tour, tasting and talk

11:30 Walk back to Yame-Fukushima

EVERYONE

12:00 Lunch together in Yame-Fukushima

13:00 Bus to the former Kawasaki Elementary School

13:30 Introduction to the school and its Local Venture School by Oki-san

14:00 **Reflection workshop**, Builders only, led by Jacquie

16:00 **Share-back to Yame:** City Hall staff and the local hosts

17:00 Dialogue with local businesses over tea and sweets

18:30 Bus back to Yame-Fukushima. Free evening

DAY 4

Wed, Oct 14

Back to Fukuoka

EVERYONE

10:00 **Check out**, then the Japan Tourism Agency survey (about 15 min, phone needed). Free time in Yame-Fukushima.

13:00 **Bus departs for Fukuoka.** Drop-off points will be confirmed on Day 3.

Times may change on the day. Please follow the staff.

Meals

	Meal	Details
D1	Lunch, Option 1	Satoyama lunch included (has meat dishes)
D1	Lunch, Option 2	Team lunch provided by the program
D1	Dinner	Nongyo, next to the hotel. Order and pay your own
D1	After dinner	Optional second round at a local karaoke bar
D2	Lunch	Option 3: on your own in town. Option 4: Chiyonoen tea house, self-paid
D2	Dinner	Free evening, on your own
D3	Lunch	Together in Yame-Fukushima

Vegetarian, pescatarian or allergies? Please tell the staff as early as you can so the hosts can prepare.

Paying in Yame

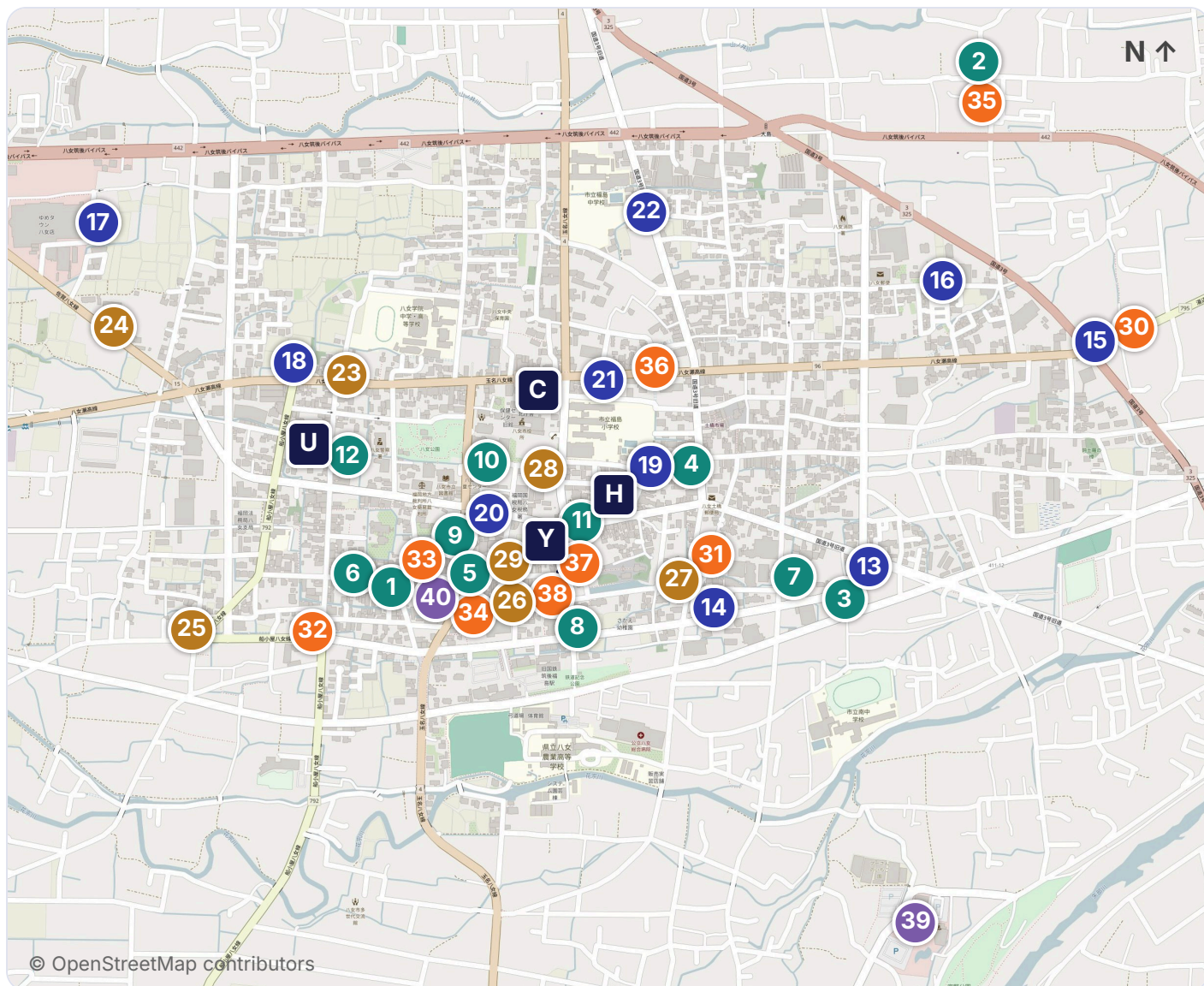
- SuzuPay points work at Chiyonoen, Shimogawa Orimono, Takahashi Shoten and Konomi Honke. See the SuzuPay pages.
- SuzuPay does not work at Unagi no Nedoko.
- Unagi no Nedoko is closed on Oct 13 and 14. The Day 2 walk starts there at 13:30, so shop for souvenirs then.

Before you go

- "Fukushima" on this schedule means Yame-Fukushima, the historic merchant district where we stay. Not Fukushima Prefecture.
- Wear flat shoes. At the indigo workshop you crouch at the vats.
- Bring clothes you do not mind getting dye or konnyaku on.
- Mills, dye houses and weaving floors are working places. Ask before touching tools or machines.
- Programs run in light rain. Only typhoons or severe weather warnings change plans.
- Take notes for two. Your notes are the other group's only view of where you went.

People you will meet

•	Yutaro Minohara	Mayor of Yame (orientation, Day 1)
•	Yuji Kiriake (dialogue)	Local coordinator, check-in and evenings
•	Rei Watanabe (UNA Laboratories)	Guide and interpreter
•	Hirai-san (UNA Laboratories)	Guide for Option 4 and the town walk
•	FM Yame team	Local radio, joining the programs
•	Oki-san	Former Kawasaki Elementary School



- Cafés, coffee and bread ● Japanese, sushi and seafood
- Udon, soba and noodles ● Meat and world food ● Also on the list
- H** Yame Green Hotel **U** Unagi no Nedoko **Y** Yokomachi Machiya Koryukan
- C** City Hall

A list from people who live here

These 40 places come from a Google Maps list made by Yuji Kiriake, our local coordinator. Most are within a 15 minute walk of the hotel. Numbers match the list on the next page.

Small places close on set weekdays and between lunch and dinner. Check the hours on Google Maps before you walk over.



Open the list in Google Maps

Cafés, coffee and bread

- 1 **Café MITOTE**
Café · cafe MITOTE ★4.4 · 104
- 2 **Rail Coffee Roasters**
Coffee · レイル コーヒー ロースター (RAIL COFFEE ROASTERS) ★3.4 · 46
- 3 **Collector**
Café · コレクター ★4.5 · 46
- 4 **Yame Saheho**
Café · 八女サヘホ ★4.1 · 37
- 5 **168kupukupu**
Café and goods · cafe&zakka 168kupukupu ★4.5 · 35
- 6 **Machiya Brot**
Bakery · 町家ブロート ★4.5 · 32
- 7 **Atelier & Café Kajitsu**
Café · アトリエ&カフェ 果実 ★4.3 · 29
- 8 **Kissa Kanon**
Café · 喫茶華暖(かのん) ★4.5 · 15
- 9 **Kyo no Kotowari**
Coffee · きょうのことわり ★4.9 · 14
- 10 **Glee and Day's**
Café · Glee and Day's グリーアンドデイズ ★4.7 · 14
- 11 **Machiya Café Shioya**
Café · 町家CAFE しおや ★4.2
- 12 **Adachi Coffee**
Coffee · あだち珈琲八女店 一期一杯 ★4.3

Japanese, sushi and seafood

- 13 **Sushi Tachibana**
Sushi · 寿し割烹 立花 ★4.2 · 237
- 14 **Kuboyama**
Kaiseki · くぼやま ★4.5 · 207
- 15 **Okuno**
Seafood · 海鮮料理茶家 おくの ★3.9 · 84
- 16 **Wa Dining Umeya**
Japanese · 和Diningうめや ★4.6 · 84
- 17 **Kahoritsugu**
Japanese · お料理かほり継 ★4.4 · 82
- 18 **Ginnoka**
Japanese and sake · 酒邸 吟乃香 ★4.0 · 82
- 19 **Kappo Nakamura**
Japanese · 旬彩割烹なかむら ★4.2 · 75
- 20 **Kamogawa**
Eel · 加茂川 ★3.8 · 18
- 21 **Salmon-tei**
Japanese · サーモン亭 ★4.2 · 9
- 22 **Suzume**
Sushi · すずめ ★4.0

Udon, soba and noodles

- 23 **Tsuruya, main shop**
Udon · うどん つるや 本店 ★4.1 · 411
- 24 **Shige**
Udon · しげ ★4.2 · 347
- 25 **Ashiya**
Champon noodles · ちゃんぽん専門店 あしや ★3.9 · 258
- 26 **Hanamurasaki**
Udon · 花むらさき ★4.2 · 129
- 27 **Mensho**
Udon · 麵庄うどん ★3.2 · 15
- 28 **Tsuruya, City Hall**
Udon · つるや 市役所前店 ★4.0
- 29 **史蔵**
Soba · 史蔵 ★4.2

Meat and world food

- 30 **Kandon**
Korean rice bowls · 韓丼 八女店 ★3.9 · 380
- 31 **Kuma to Taiyo**
Restaurant · クマと太陽 ★3.9 · 257
- 32 **Kazue**
Meat dishes · 肉料理 かずえ ★4.1 · 233
- 33 **Yoshioka**
Tonkatsu and wagyu · とんかつ · 黒毛和牛専門店 吉岡 ★4.6 · 177
- 34 **Umeno Shoten**
Curry, café and bar · ウメノ商店 ★4.3 · 166
- 35 **NONOKA Restaurant**
French · NONOKA RESTAURANT ★4.6 · 78
- 36 **Bar & Kitchen SoL**
Spanish · パル&キッチン SoL (ソル) ★4.4 · 78
- 37 **Tobikataya**
Ham and sausages · 飛形家TOBIKATAYA ★4.5 · 43
- 38 **kumu**
Taiwanese · 八女里山の台湾飯店 kumu ★4.0 · 31

Also on the list

- 39 **Bengara-mura**
Hot spring with restaurant · 八女市健康増進施設 べんがら村 ★3.8 · 914
- 40 **Sakaiya**
Historic merchant house · 堺屋(旧木下家住宅) ★4.4 · 53

★ Google rating and number of reviews, checked on Oct 10, 2026. Within each group, places with more reviews come first.

SuzuPay

SuzuPay is a QR payment service you use in your phone browser, with no app to install. Points are in yen: **1 pt = ¥1**. In this program it is how we leave a real trace in the local economy.

1

Create an account

Open main.suzupay.com/login and sign up as "Customer" with your email and a password.

2

Verify your email

Open the link in the email, then enter a display name and phone number.

3

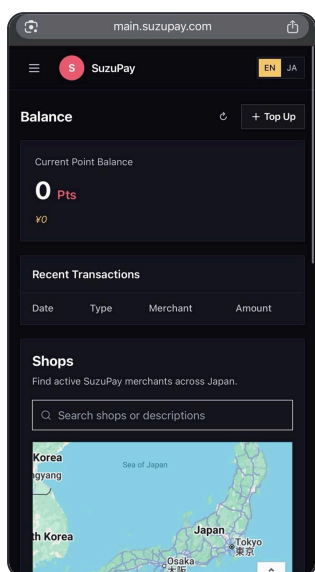
Enter your coupon

Staff will give you a code that starts with SZP-. It adds 5,000 pts after your email is verified. You can enter it at sign-up or later in Settings.

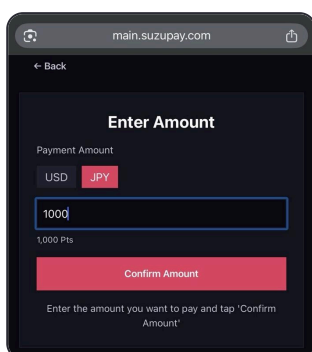
4

Pay by QR

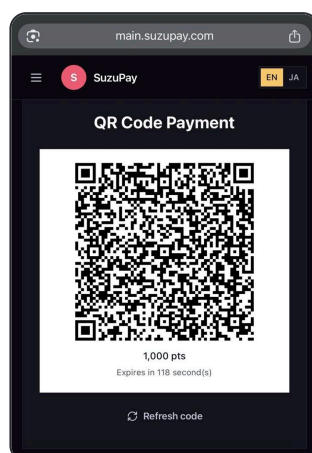
Open "QR Payment", enter the amount and show your QR to the staff. Or scan the shop's QR and confirm the shop name.



Home: balance and shops



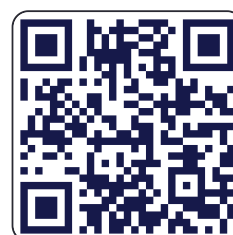
Enter the amount



Show your QR

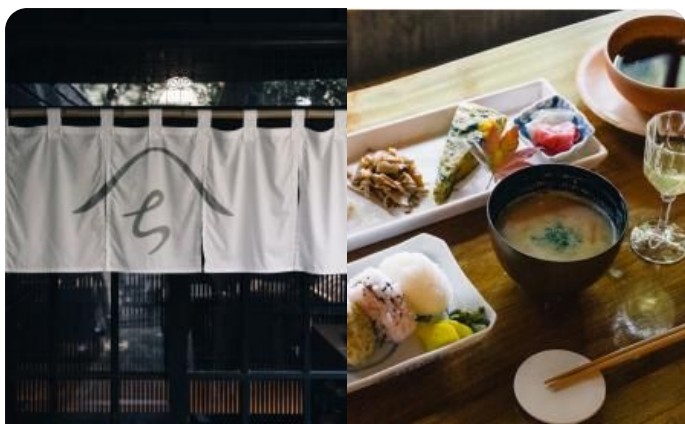
Good to know

- Your QR expires after about 2 minutes. Tap "Refresh code" for a new one.
- Points are valid for 6 months.
- No refunds after payment. Check the amount first.
- Switch between English and Japanese at the top right of the screen.
- SuzuPay does not work at Unagi no Nedoko.



main.suzupay.com/login

Four registered shops in Yame are on our own route, so you can spend your points where you visit. Shop staff will show their QR, or ask for yours.



OPTION 4

Chiyonoen Tea Farm

A café with mountain dishes made from wild vegetables, tea sweets and tea grown on the farm.

6342 Kitaobuchi, Kurogi-machi



OPTION 5

Shimogawa Orimono

Kurume Kasuri fabric, happi coats for the Hakata Gion Yamakasa festival, bags, shirts and samue workwear.

1111-2 Tsue



OPTION 6

Takahashi Shoten

Sake brewery founded in 1717. Its signature sake is Shigemasu.

2-22-1 Honmachi



DAY 2 TOWN WALK

Konomi Honke

Kyushu's oldest tea merchant, in a late Edo period town house. Seven of its buildings are Tangible Cultural Properties of Yame City.

126 Honmachi

Shop information and photos: SuzuPay. Questions about SuzuPay: GustoDevelopment Inc.,
info@gustodevelopment.com

DAY 1 · OPTION 1

Satoyama Living: Everyday Lessons

Former Ouchi Residence / Odotani no Sato · Tachibana



When
Oct 11, 13:00 to 16:30
Capacity
Max 6
Getting there
Bus
Meal
Satoyama lunch included (has meat dishes)

About the place

A half day in the hills of Tachibana: a satoyama lunch cooked by local mothers, then konnyaku made the old way with wood ash. Lunch is at the Former Ouchi Residence, birthplace of Ouchi Chozo, a politician who worked for friendship between Japan and China from the Meiji to the early Showa era. A local preservation group restored the house and reopened it in April 2023.

What to see

- A satoyama lunch made from local seasonal food
- Making konnyaku with Nakashima-san of Odotani no Sato, set with wood ash
- The Former Ouchi Residence and the story of saving it

Why it matters

Know-how around pickles, konnyaku, bamboo craft and mountain work is not reaching the next generation. Here, cooking for guests is a way to keep that culture alive.

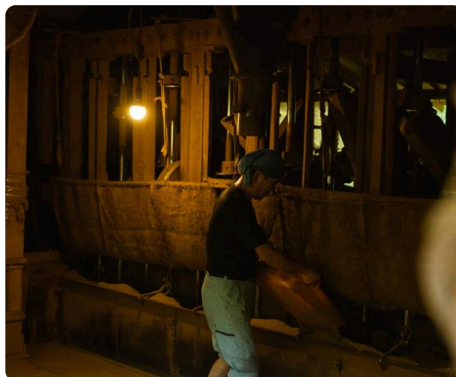
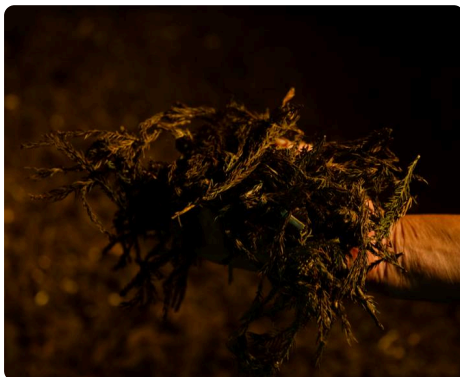
QUESTION TO CARRY

How can a skill that is only used for guests come back into daily life?

DAY 1 · OPTION 2

Baba Suishaba

Waterwheel incense mill · Joyo



When
Oct 11, leave 14:00, visit 14:30 to 15:30
Getting there
Yame City microbus (about 30 min)
Meal
13:00 team lunch in town

About the place

A working waterwheel mill that makes incense only from Yame cedar leaves and tabu leaves. A 5.5 m waterwheel drives 15 pestles that grind dried cedar leaves into powder over about 23 hours. Built in 1918 with money from 21 locals, bought by the Baba family in 1961, and rebuilt in 2008 by a father and son team of waterwheel carpenters from Kurume.

What to see

- Pestles moved only by water, and cedar leaves turning to powder
- Cedar incense with no added scent or color
- Baba-san calls himself "the forest's cleaner"

Why it matters

About 60% of Yame is forest. At its peak the area had over 40 incense waterwheels, cut down by imports, electric power and a lack of successors.

QUESTION TO CARRY

What would a business look like if it started from what the forest leaves behind?

DAY 1 · OPTION 2

Matsunobu Kogei Wooden tub maker


When

Oct 11, 16:00 to 16:45

Getting there

30 min from the mill, 10 min back to town

About the place

A tub maker founded in 1959 and now in its third generation. Rice tubs, sushi tubs, bath pails and pickling barrels, all made by hand from wood and bamboo. The Chikugo area once had around 60 tub makers; only a few remain in Kyushu today.

What to see

- Hoops woven from Yame bamboo instead of metal
- Boards of different widths matched by feel (about ten years to learn)
- Ongoing demand from breweries, temples and taiko drum makers

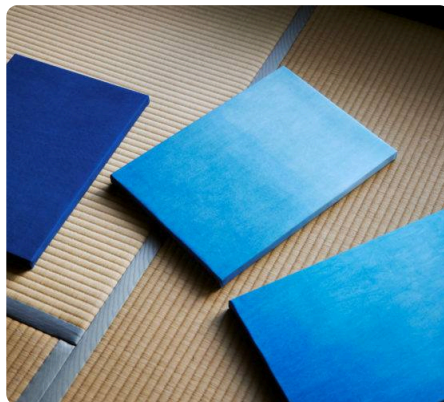
Why it matters

Yame grows both cedar and bamboo, so the craft kept local work circulating. Some sake breweries are going back to wooden tubs.

QUESTION TO CARRY

How could being close to your raw materials become a strength again?

DAY 2 · OPTION 3

Aizome Kasuri Kobo Kurume Kasuri indigo workshop · Hirokawa


When

Oct 12, leave 9:30, visit 10:00 to 11:30

Capacity

Max 10

Lunch

12:00 in town, on your own

About the place

A Kurume Kasuri workshop founded in 1891. It keeps the traditional way of preparing indigo and dyes yarn more than 50 times to build its shades of blue. The fifth generation, Kensuke Yamamura, dyes; the fourth generation weaves.

What to see

- Indigo made ready by fermentation, called aideate
- Lye from local oak ash, wheat bran and shell lime from the Ariake Sea
- Cloth coming out of the vat brown and turning blue in the air

Why it matters

Indigo is alive and needs care every day. Many trades in Yame depend on this kind of upkeep that visitors never see.

QUESTION TO CARRY

What else in Yame relies on daily care that visitors never see?

DAY 2 · OPTION 4

Chiyonoen Organic tea farm · Yabe



When

Oct 12, leave 8:45 (about 60 min),
back 13:30

Capacity

Max 10

Lunch

Chiyonoen tea house, self-paid

About the place

An organic tea farm at 400 to 600 m in Yabe Village. Snow covers the fields in winter and new buds come late; the farm calls this "late-budding tea from the snowy mountain". It makes green tea, Japanese black tea and oolong, with JAS organic certification since 2015.

What to see

- Mountain tea fields and the tea factory
- Lunch at the tea house
- Fukuoka Design Award grand prize (2024); platinum at the Japanese Tea Award for its oolong (2023)

Why it matters

A chance to hear the matcha crisis from a grower. Yabe residents say they want to grow from 800 people to 2,000.

QUESTION TO CARRY

How do you tell a story about "late" and "small" in a matcha market that rewards fast and big?

DAY 2 · EVERYONE

Yame-Fukushima craft walk Old town makers and merchant houses



When

Oct 12, meet 13:30, until 17:15

Meeting point

Unagi no Nedoko, former Terasaki residence (327 Honmachi)

Guides

Rei Watanabe and Hirai-san

About the place

A walk through the white-walled old town. **Ogata Butsudan** does the final stage of Yame-Fukushima altars, lacquering, gilding and assembling. **Ito Gonjiro Shoten** makes Yame lanterns, first in Japan by volume. The **Former Yame District Office** was built in the Meiji era and restored by an NPO; part of it is **Asahiya Saketen**. **Konomi Honke** is Kyushu's oldest tea wholesaler, founded in the early 1700s, and gave "Yame tea" its name.

What to see

- 13:30 Souvenir shopping at Unagi no Nedoko
- 15:00 Chakabuki (a tea tasting game) and matcha with Imamura-san
- 16:30 Re:crafted: a showcase of Yame crafts
- 17:00 Konomi Honke, a late Edo town house and its tea roasting room

Why it matters

The white-walled streets and craft skills are what residents most want to keep. Here we meet the people who keep the town working.

QUESTION TO CARRY

What would it take to turn the old streets from a place to look at back into a place to work?

DAY 3 · OPTION 5

Shimogawa Orimono

Kurume Kasuri weaver · open factory · Tsue



When

Oct 13, leave 9:15, visit 9:30 to 11:30

Capacity

About 7

Getting there

Yame City microbus (about 10 min)

About the place

Founded in 1948, the last Kurume Kasuri weaver in Yame City. Third generation Kyozo Shimogawa took over at 22 after university, and his son has now joined. The workshop often works with artists from Finland, Sweden and other countries.

What to see

- 20 looms driven by belts from one motor in the ceiling
- A talk by Kyozo-san on the future of Kurume Kasuri
- The gallery, with fabric sold by the meter

Why it matters

He keeps the old way while trying new sales channels and overseas projects. He also plans to join the Day 3 share-back.

QUESTION TO CARRY

Could opening a factory to visitors work for other makers in Yame?

DAY 3 · OPTION 6

Takahashi Shoten (Shigemasu)

Sake brewery · in the old town



When

Oct 13, leave 9:15 on foot, visit 9:30 to 11:30

Capacity

About 7

Program

Tour, tasting and talk

About the place

A sake brewery founded in Yame in 1717, now led by its 19th generation and known for the Shigemasu brand. It uses water from the underground flow of the Yabe River and Fukuoka rice, including Gin no Sato sake rice grown in Yame.

What to see

- The process from rice polishing to pressing
- Koji trays tracked with QR codes next to traditional methods
- JAS organic, a lens wind turbine, and sake brewed with wind and solar power

Why it matters

A 300 year old brewery that records its work digitally and runs on renewable energy, and a member of Yame City's council for exporting local products.

QUESTION TO CARRY

Where else in Yame could old craft and new tools meet?

Former Kawasaki Elementary School and the Yame Local Venture School



When

Oct 13, leave town 13:00, back 18:30

Getting there

Yame City microbus

Address

769 Yamauchi, Yame

The afternoon

13:30 Introduction by Oki-san

14:00 Reflection workshop (Builders only)

16:00 Share-back to Yame

17:00 Dialogue over tea and sweets

A closed school, reopened for business

The former Kawasaki Elementary School is being turned into a base for people who want to start businesses in Yame, with a shared office for entrepreneurs. It is our workspace for Day 3, and the place where we give our ideas back to Yame.

The Yame Local Venture School

Launched in June 2026, the school grows "seeds of business built on local resources, culture and tradition". Its idea is simple: Yame is rich in tea, food and crafts, but their value does not travel far enough. More people running real businesses, not volunteering, is how the town meets population decline.

- A business contest and venture school: 8 teams selected, with mentoring, lectures and a final pitch in February 2027
- Kickoff on Oct 17, 2026, a few days after our visit
- Judges include Mayor Yutaro Minohara and Takahiro Shiramizu, founder of Unagi no Nedoko
- Discounted desks in the school's shared office for selected teams

Six themes the school puts forward

Empty houses and renovation

Keep the old town and mountain homes in use

Tea

Yame is known for gyokuro, but there are few places to drink it and few who tell its story

Crafts and making

Raise the value of traditional crafts, factory tourism, new markets

Food culture

Update local dishes, research local ingredients

IT and work style

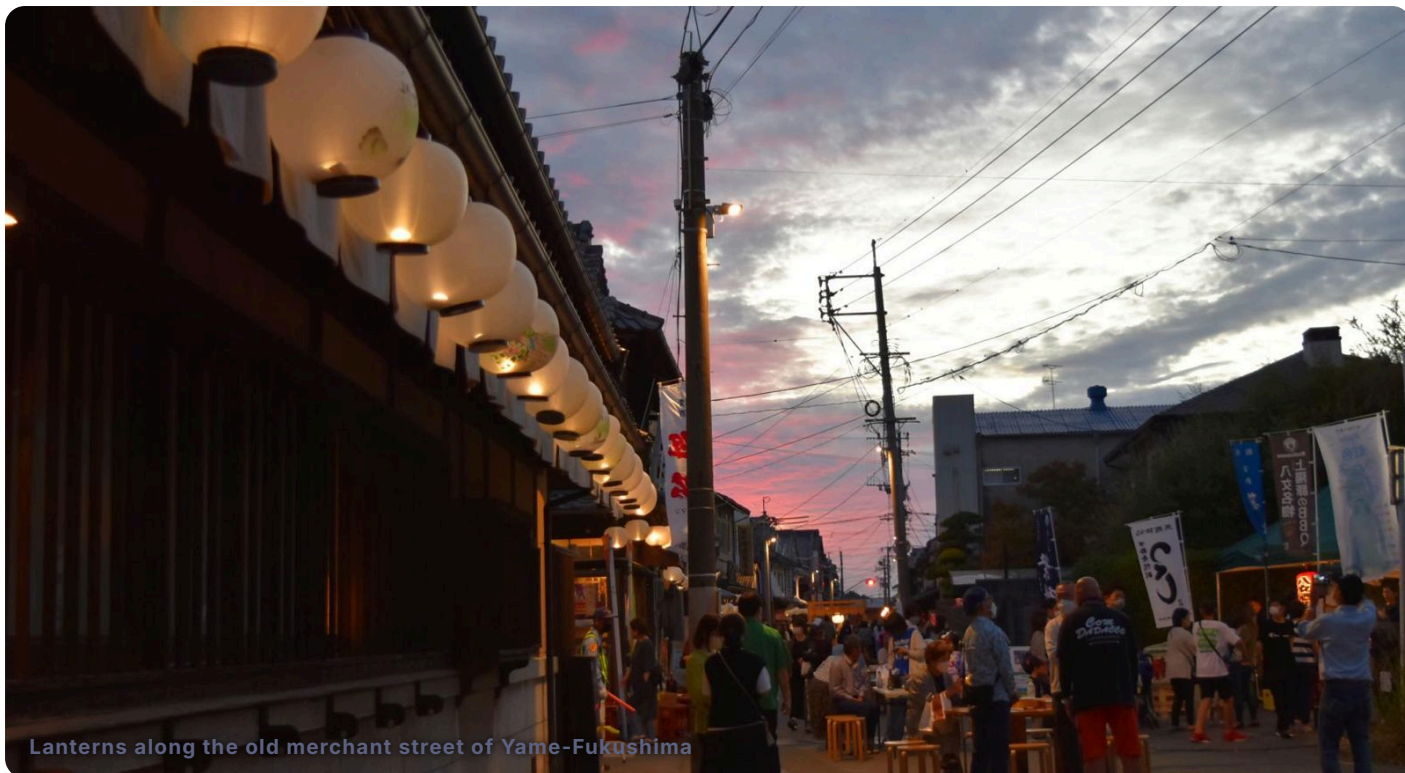
Software across industries, places to work, and welcoming long-stay digital nomads from abroad

Design

Open factories, select shops, in-town designers

QUESTION TO CARRY

The school lists "welcoming long-stay digital nomads" as one of its themes. What would make you come back to Yame and stay?



Lanterns along the old merchant street of Yame-Fukushima



Yame Green Hotel

In the middle of the old town. Simple single rooms, Wi-Fi and a hot spring bath. Konomi Honke tea house is right behind it.



Yokomachi Machiya Koryukan

A merchant house used as a community venue. Our orientation on Day 1 and the chakabuki tea program on Day 2 take place here.



Evenings in the old town

Day 1 dinner is at Nongyo, the izakaya next to the hotel (order and pay your own), with optional karaoke after. Days 2 and 3 are free. Ask Kiriake-san for local bars and places to meet people from Yame.

Make the most of the nights

Evenings are when the two groups swap what they saw. The ideas get sharper when the two halves meet. A short walk through the lit-up streets after dinner is one of the best ways to feel how the town lives.

QUESTION TO CARRY

What did the other group see today?