DAZAIIFU
City of Ancient Culture

Today’s Dazaifu City owns its name to an office called Dazaifu or “Government-General Headquarters,” which was established here approximately 1,300 years ago and which ruled all of Kyushu for a period of some 500 years. Within the city, are many historical sites which serve as reminders of its past, including the ruins of the Dazaifu itself, the Mizuki (Water Fortresses), Kusonori Temple, Chikuzen Kokubunji Temple, and Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine.

1 Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine
Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine is sacred to the memory of Michtanbe Sugawara, also known as “the god of learning.” In 901 A.D., Michtanbe was suddenly taken from his position as Minister of the Right and sent to work at the Dazaifu, where he died two years later. Tenmangu Shrine was built on the site of his grave. The main hall, as it stands today, was constructed in 1891 A.D. and is registered as an Important Cultural Property. Within the Shrine precincts are many plum trees, cherry trees, and iris, which provide natural beauty in every season of the year. Tenmangu’s history is detailed by such events as the New Year’s Festival (O-kōchi), the Spring Water Festival (Takayama-ko-e), and the Annual Cool-Procession Festival (Ukigaki-shiki) which takes place in the Fall.

2 Komyozenji Temple
Komyozenji Temple was built in the Kamakura period in connection with the “Tenno-Crossing-Over-To-Other-Worlds” legend. There was a temple in the Middle Ages that the “Tenno” only used to go to Kyushu to study Zen. The temple is famous for its two gardens; one represents an artificial pond and sea using moss and white pebbles, and the other has several stone statues arranged in the shape of Chinese characters “O” or “Ku,” which refers to the halls of the Buddha. Many people visit this Buddhist temple, especially in the early Summer to enjoy the rhododendron flowers, or in the Fall to view the Autumn colors.

3 Site of Dazaifu Government Office (National Historical Site)
The site of the Dazaifu government office is known as “Tofuku.” During the Nara and Heian periods, the Dazaifu was responsible for supervising Japan’s maritime frontier, as well as for administering the nine provinces and two islands of the Sakata district (modern Kyushu). In three years, a great edifice with vermilion-dotted columns and a tiled roof stood at the foot of Mt. Ozora, but today all that remains is a park containing the huge foundation stones of the original building.

4 Kanzeonji Temple (National Historical Site)
The name of Kanzeonji Temple appears in Man’yō poetry and in “The Tale of Great,” a famous novel written by a court lady of the Heian period. Kanzeonji was built in memory of the late Empress Saiteri by her son, Emperor Tenji. After its completion in 746 A.D., it became the most important Buddhist establishment in Kyushu, exerting a great influence on all other temples in the region. Now, only a bronze Buddha bell, which is the oldest one in Japan, and a number of Buddhist statues survive to tell us of its history.

Welcome to DAZAIIFU

5 Site of Chikuzen Kokubunji Temple (National Historical Site)
Chikuzen Kokubunji Temple (which is located in the northwest part of the city) is the oldest of the national temples constructed in each province in accordance with Emperor Shomu’s imperial decree of 744 A.D. It was a large temple with many buildings, all of which remain today. The foundation stones from the pagoda and kumo-hall and the statue of sitting Yakushi Buddha, or “Dainikyō”, which was the temple’s principal image. When Chikuzen Kokubunji Temple was built, construction was started, its ruins are said to lay about 30 meters west of the temple.

6 Ruins of Mizuki (National Historical Site)

Ruins of Ono Fortress (National Historical Site)
To the east of the city, there is a tall, 12-meter-tall bell called “Mizuki.” This bell is made of bronze and weighs 3,300 kilograms. It was cast in 1774, and the bell was used to announce the time to the people of Dazaifu and to warn of any dangers that might be approaching. The bell is now on display in the Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine.

7 Kaidan-in (Ordination Hall)

8 Dazaifu Exhibition Hall
The Exhibition Hall contains an ancient drainage ditch discovered during excavations in Dazaifu. This is displayed in situ, together with many other materials and objects illustrating Dazaifu’s history. It is open on Mondays.

9 Dazaifu Hall

You can gather information on sightseeing for Dazaifu and you can enjoy the experience of being a nuns in the Dazaifu. There is also a bell with a single ring for 200 people and as well as moon stones. It is also open on Wednesdays.

10 Kyushu National Museum
It’s the 5th national museum following Tokyo, Kyoto and Nara. Based on the concept “Understanding ancient culture through the public of Asian View,” it is located on Manderi.

Souvenirs
Many shops along the approach to Tenmangu Shrine sell souvenirs such as unique craft works and carved wooden figures, which are thought to bring good luck.

Events
January 7: Inokashira Baseball Festival, annual tournament of baseball teams from 17 municipalities of Dazaifu
February 21: Inokashira Baseball Festival, annual tournament of baseball teams from 17 municipalities of Dazaifu
March 18 to 20: Inokashira Baseball Festival, annual tournament of baseball teams from 17 municipalities of Dazaifu
April 16: Inokashira Baseball Festival, annual tournament of baseball teams from 17 municipalities of Dazaifu
May 16: Inokashira Baseball Festival, annual tournament of baseball teams from 17 municipalities of Dazaifu

Production: Dazaifu-shi sightseeing section 092(9)2121

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