

Shimanami Kaido

Opened in 1999, the Shimanami Kaido is the expressway linking the islands of the Seto Inland Sea to the main islands of Honshu and Shikoku. The route consists of seven bridges that span almost 70 kilometers from Onomichi, in Hiroshima Prefecture to Imabari, in Ehime Prefecture. What makes the Shimanami Kaido unique is that the expressway is designed not only for cars, but for cyclists and pedestrians as well. The journey along the Shimanami Kaido also includes the islands of Mukaishima, Ikuchi, Omishima, Hakata, and Oshima.

With so many bridge crossings, the Shimanami Kaido has unparalleled views of the Seto Inland Sea and its islands. Each bridge delivers different scenery and an original perspective as travelers move from one island to the next. Although the bridges of the Shimanami Kaido are varied, each one has pathways suitable for cyclists and pedestrians. In fact, the Shimanami Kaido is one of the most popular routes for long-distance cycling in Japan.

The bridges on the Shimanami Kaido are also an impressive sight in their own right. The Kurushima-Kaikyo Bridge, between Oshima and Imabari, is actually a unique set of three linked suspension bridges, making it the longest suspension bridge structure in the world.