

CONTRIBUTED BY DIANA MIDDLETON



My MIL, my two kids (ages 4 & 6), and I went on a tour of Shurijo Castle and everyone loved it. We left first thing in the morning so that we arrived as soon as they opened. You can learn about its history on [this Wikipedia entry](#).

Aside from being a beautiful restoration of a castle from way back in the day, Shuri Castle has a lot of added bonuses to make the trip special. For one, kids can collect stamps at each location. My kids took turns at each station and other kids

were doing their own sheet. They looked forward to each station which made the trip a little more exciting for their age group. Also, while you are in the main castle section, you can pay to have tea served. It was a nice break from the walk. We also saw some traditional Ryukyuan dances (check their web site, these do not happen every day), which was absolutely beautiful! We finished up our tour at around lunch time and had a nice meal in one of their restaurants. There are lots of souvenir shops, so my kids picked out cool t-shirts and some note cards. The history in itself is worth it for the walking you do!

If you've got a stroller (or you're traveling with a wheelchair-bound companion), you need to take the handicapped path up to the castle (avoiding the stairs) and you can't take the strollers/wheelchairs into the buildings at the top, so bring slings or whatever you need to carry the little ones. You'll have to take your shoes off and carry them with you in the plastic bags provided.

Website: <http://www.shurijo.com/english/>

Important Notes:

Wheelchairs are available for in-park use for free, and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

No pets allowed; only official service animals will be admitted on park grounds.

Admission (info current as of 2014): [Visit this webpage for updated admissions times and prices](#)

Adults: 800 yen; high school students 600 yen; elementary & junior high students 300 yen; children 6 and under are free

If you plan to make several visits to Shuri Castle in a single calendar year, you may want to consider buying an annual passport; it'll pay for itself in the second visit.

Payment is in Yen, but you can exchange US \$ (and several other foreign currencies) at the information center. An ATM is also on the premises where you can withdraw Yen.

The park is open every day of the year, with the exception of the first Wednesday and Thursday of July.

Open at 8:30am daily; closing times are dependent on the season.

Directions:

From all points north of Naha coming on 58: Drive south into the Naha area on 58. Look for signs for 29 and Shuri Jo Castle Site. Turn left on 29. Drive on 29 for quite a ways (past 330). You will see signs for Shuri along the way. At 50 you can veer right. This will take you to the well marked parking area. If you miss that turn, you can also turn right at 49.

From all points north of Naha coming on the expressway: Exit the expressway at the Naha City exit. (Number 1) Turn right along route 82. From there you will see many signs directing you. Take a left on 29 and another left on 49. This will take you to the parking area.

Parking is available on the premises. As of 2014, the parking rates are 940 yen for large vehicles, and 310 for small vehicles. You can see [maps and get more information on their webpage](#).