

Okinawa is the Happiest Prefecture of Japan

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. In a row (Phrase) /ɪn ə ˈrəʊ/ happening one after another
Example: She's had the highest sales in the office for three months in a row.
2. Calculate (Verb) /ˈkælkjəˌleɪt/ to use mathematics to find a value
Example: She carefully calculated her expenses for the week.
3. Scenery (Noun) /ˈsiːnəriː/ natural features of an area that are beautiful to look at
Example: The scenery in northern Norway is some of the most beautiful I've ever seen.
4. coral reef (Noun) /ˈkɔːrəl riːf/ a long line of coral near the surface of the sea
Example: Fiji is a great place to go snorkeling if you want to see coral reefs.
5. Subtropical (Adjective) /ˌsʌbˈtrɒːpɪkl/ relating to or typical of areas that are farther from the equator than the tropics
Example: Mauritius is a subtropical island nation in the Indian Ocean known for its beaches and natural beauty.
6. Developed (Adjective) dɪˈveləpt having productive industries and a lot of business activity
Example: The US is one of the few developed countries that does not offer universal public healthcare.



A survey has revealed that Japan's happiest prefecture is Okinawa for the second year in a row. In late May, the Brand Research Institute's 2022 Regional Sustainability Survey asked people aged 15 and up living in Japan's 47 prefectures how happy they were. Around 500

residents were surveyed in each prefecture, for a total of about 23,000 participants in the country. Their answers were used to calculate a "happiness score" for each prefecture.

Okinawa had the highest happiness score. Out of the participants surveyed there, around 42% said they were "very happy" and 36% said they were "a little happy." Fewer than 3% said they were "not happy at all." Okinawa Prefecture is made up of more than 160 islands, and is known for its beautiful scenery, coral reefs and subtropical climate. According to Nikkei Asia, the prefecture welcomed over 10 million visitors in 2019, the same number as Hawaii in the same year.

The second happiest prefecture was found to be Kagoshima, while Miyazaki was third. Both of these prefectures are in the warmer southern part of Japan close to Okinawa. The least happy places were found to be closer to the capital. Tokyo was 46th on the list, while its neighbors Kanagawa and Chiba were 45th and 44th. However, the least happy prefecture in 2022 was Akita, in the north of Japan, at 47th.

The March 2022 World Happiness Report found that Japan was 54th out of 146 countries on its list of the happiest nations — making Japan one of the lowest among the world's developed countries.

DISCUSSION

1. Have you lived in many different towns or cities? Which did you like best?
2. Are there any parts of your country that you could never see yourself living in?
3. What do you imagine are the happiest countries in the world? Why?
4. Who would you say are the happiest people you know?
5. What is happiness for you?