

Discover Kure where Suzu used to live.

The manga "In this Corner of the World", later made into an animated film, depicts Kure in the latter stage of WW2 and was written through the perspective of people living in Kure city. So, what is Kure like?

The History of the Modern Navy in Japan

First of all, we have to know about the history of the modern navy in Japan to understand Kure. In Japan, a more modern government was established after political change in the late 19th century, and it began to develop a navy modeled after the navy of the United Kingdom. The Japanese navy became the third largest in the world (after the UK and US) in the 1930s. However, Japan lost the war and the Japanese navy was decommissioned. The new constitution of Japan proclaims that Japanese people must renounce war forever, but in 1954 the Maritime Self Defense Forces (JMSDF), quite similar to the navy, were established and still exist to this day.

The Construction of Kure City

Kure used to be a small village made up of some rural areas. Kure is on the Seto Inland Sea and is surrounded on three sides by many hills. To go outside of the city, there were only a few narrow, steep roads. These geographical features prompted the Japanese Government to establish a naval base, and in 1890 a naval port was built. The navy also led the city planning of Kure. From the 17th to 19th century, land was reclaimed from Kure's bay and used as farmland. On this land, the navy constructed roads that formed a grid. Huge numbers of soldiers and factory workers moved to Kure and the population rapidly increased. Therefore, houses had to not only be built on flat land but also on the hill sides. During the war, the central part of the city was a very busy downtown hub. There were lots of buildings such as restaurants, theaters, shops and pool halls that were crowded with sailors. Also, civil infrastructure such as trams and waterworks were developed.

Naval Buildings in Kure

Before the modernization of Japan, there was no technology to build a large facility using bricks and iron. It was necessary to master the Western techniques. Kotaro Sakurai, a Japanese architect who studied abroad at the University of London, was an excellent student and became a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. He designed some wonderful naval buildings such as the Kure Naval District Headquarters **9** and the Former Official Residence of Commander-in-chief. **16**

The Flourishing and Decline of Kure

As the Japanese navy grew, the naval port in Kure was getting bigger and eventually it became the biggest naval port in the east. The navy dockyard was world-class in terms of its scale and technology and a lot of battleships and aircraft carriers were built here. The population of Kure increased to become one of the ten largest cities in Japan. However, this prosperity did not last long. During WW2 (1941-1945), many of the naval facilities were destroyed by US military air strikes. Indiscriminate bombings of heavily populated civilian areas occurred. After Japan's surrender in the Pacific War, the Australian, New Zealand, British, and the U.S. army was stationed in Kure for several years. The naval base was taken over by the Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and the navy dockyard was sold to private companies. Suzu, the main character, "In this Corner of the World", moved to Kure at the height of the war. She saw how the city of Kure had changed since the peak of its development.

Kure Today

Kure was seriously damaged during the war, however, thanks to the high level of shipbuilding expertise, the city has recovered to become the vibrant industrial city it is today. A few naval facilities and old houses still remain. Walk with this map and try to imagine for yourself the city of Kure that Suzu must have seen!

Food Culture of Kure

Kure doesn't have a long history like Kyoto, however, Kure has a unique port town food culture influenced by its naval traditions.

Curry and rice : Curry is a kind of stew and the recipe that the Japanese navy made is based on British curry. It has become one of the most popular dishes to eat at home today. You can eat an original navy curry at some restaurants in Kure. **A**

Nikujaga : Nikujaga is a dish made of simmered potatoes and beef in a sweet soy sauce. It is also a dish the Japanese navy made and became a popular family meal. Until the Meiji era (which began in 1868), Japanese people did not eat a lot of meat. Curry or Nikujaga was made for building up soldiers' health. There are restaurants today that sell original and authentic Nikujaga. **D**

Fried Cake : This is a doughnut filled with sweet bean paste. Just after the war ended, a shop named FUKUZUMI produced and sold them. They are sold even today. **E**

Mitsumanju : It is a manjyu, a baked bun, made with a sweet bean paste and dough mixed with honey. **F**

Onraimanto : Onraimanto is a manju, a kind of bun, filled with pineapple jam. They got the idea of using pineapple jam from Taiwanese sweets. **G**

Yatai (mobile restaurants) : Yatai appear every evening on Kuramoto-dori street. Many of them offer ramen, Chinese style noodles. Few owners of these restaurants can speak English but it is definitely worth trying. **C**

Figure 1

Kure in the 16th century

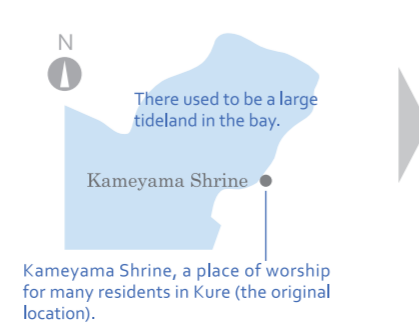


Figure 2

The area of Kure where the bay was reclaimed (during the mid-19th century).

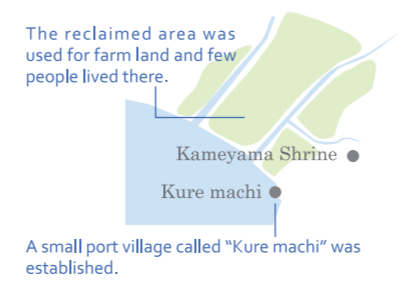


Figure 3

The construction of Kure City led by the Navy (in the late 19th and early 20th century).

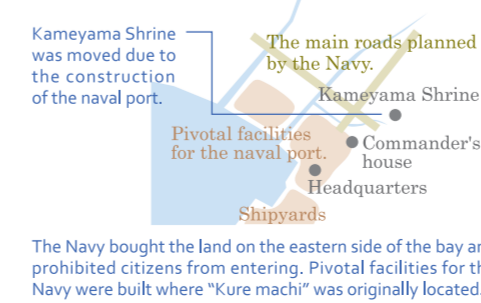
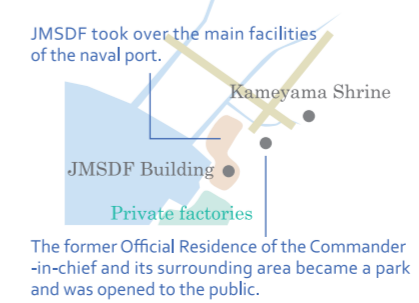


Figure 4

After WW2 (From the late 20th century to the present)

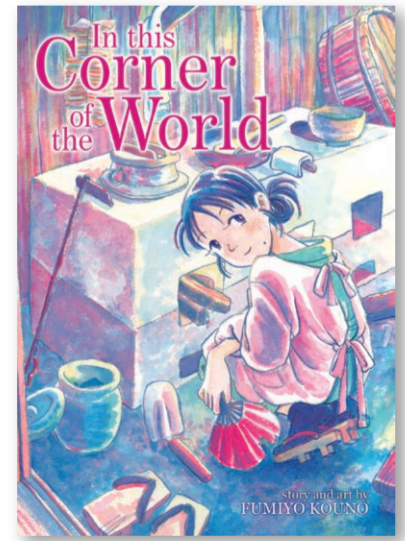


Pick up a map and take a stroll around modern day KURE.

You will find links to KURE's past.

About The Manga "In this Corner of the World"

This story was set in Hiroshima Prefecture, in the 1940s. Suzu, the main character, was born in Hiroshima and went to Kure to join Shusaku, her husband, and his family in the ship-building industry in Kure. Suzu slowly gets used to her new life in Kure. Despite being in a difficult situation and struggling against the war, she finds small happiness in everyday life. The story is highly rated for its detailed description of the lives of the local people and the unique psychology of the characters trying to survive the war in Kure. The manga was made into an animated film in 2016.



Disclaimer

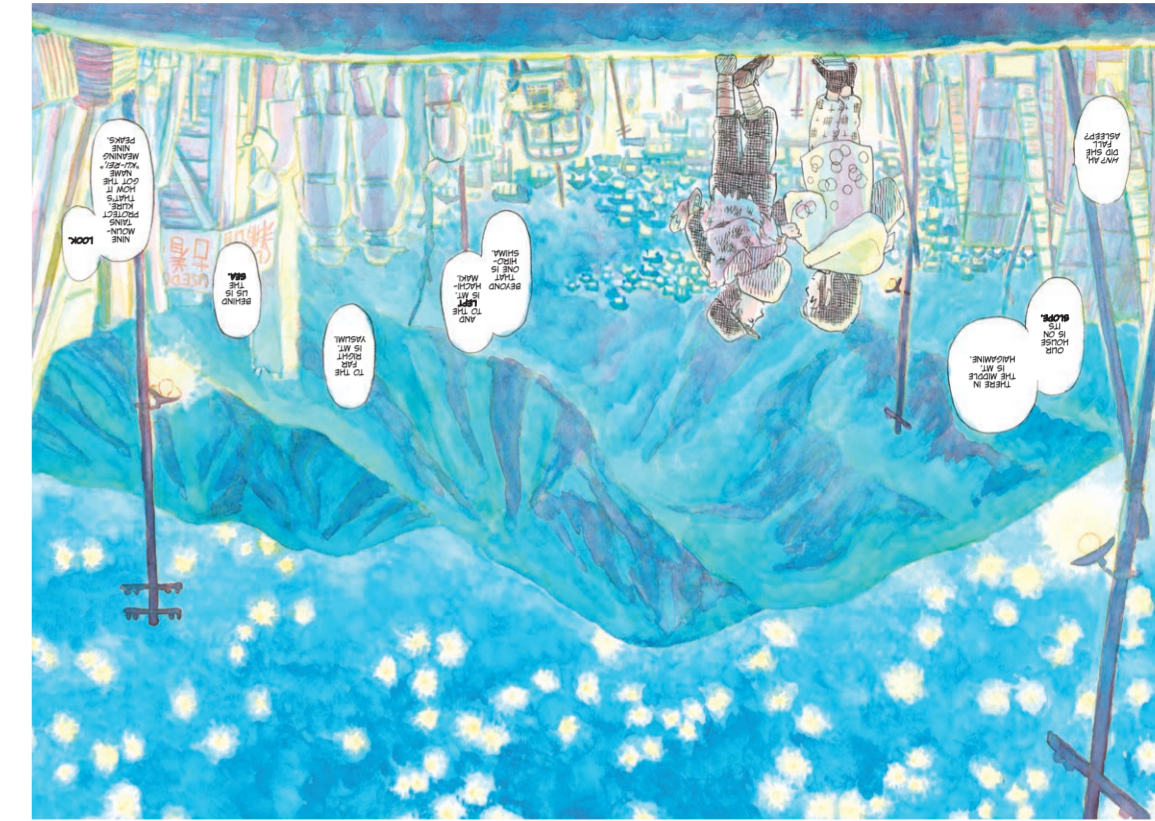
This map was originally produced by the Kure Tourism Association to introduce the places that appear in the manga, but the manga production is not directly involved in the production of this map.

Request for Visitors

The map "KURE where Suzu lived" has detailed some walking routes that pass through residential areas. These areas are not sightseeing spots in Kure, and therefore we ask that you refrain from disturbing local residents and do not trespass on any private properties without permission.

KURE where Suzu lived

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KURE where Suzu lived

THE WAY TO KURE FROM HIROSHIMA

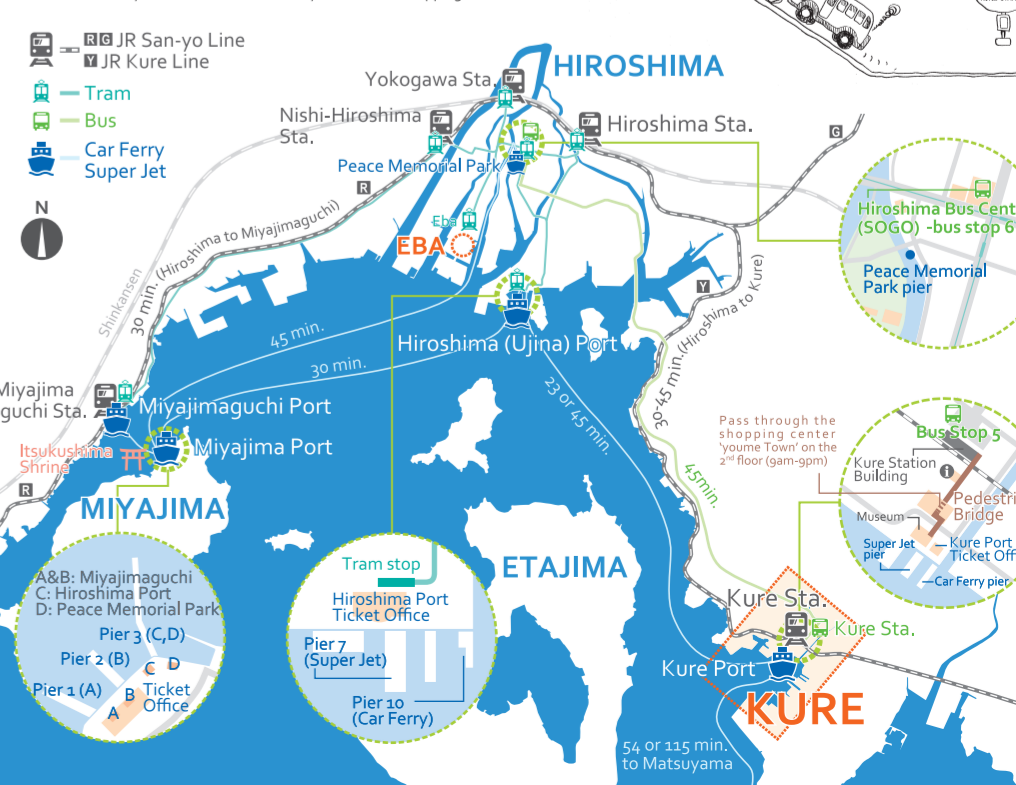
You feel like you're in the story, "In this Corner of the World". Come and visit Kure from Hiroshima as Suzu did. You can access Kure by JR rail, bus or ferry.

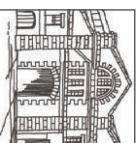
JR rail In the story, Suzu used the train to go to Kure. You can travel to Kure from JR Hiroshima station via the Kure line. The rapid train service departs every 30 to 60 minutes during the day and the journey takes around 30 minutes. The local trains operate every 30 minutes and the trip takes 45 minutes. The train fare is free upon presentation of your JAPAN RAIL PASS.

Bus From Hiroshima Bus Center inside the SOGO department store building, you can catch a Hiroden Bus or JR Bus to Kure. The buses depart from bus stop 6. The name of the bus line is Kure Line (クリアイン). These buses run regularly every 30 to 20 minutes and take roughly 45 minutes to reach Kure Station. When boarding the bus, please take a numbered ticket. There is a screen inside the bus which will tell you the fare you need to pay according to the number on your ticket. If you can, try to prepare change before you get on the bus. However, you are able to change a 1000 yen bill into smaller coins via the machine next to the driver.

Car Ferry / Super Jet The 'Super Jet' high-speed ferry running from Hiroshima (Ujina) Port to Kure Port operates every 1-2 hours and takes approximately 23 minutes. The fare is 2200 yen. The 'Car Ferry' also takes you to Kure but with a longer journey time of close to one hour. It will cost 930 yen. You can buy tickets at the port from the terminal window.

Note: Please make sure that the ferry will stop at Kure as some ferries travel directly from Hiroshima to Matsuyama without stopping at Kure.





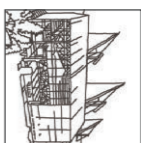
1 The former precision weapon factory
This is the most beautiful building that remains of the former Navy arsenal factories. Some traces of damage from air raiding are left on the outside wall. This is a restricted area.



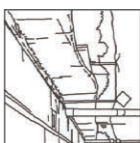
2 The former electric factories and warehouses for Kure Naval Arsenal
You can see a lot of facilities with naval history in this area. The inner areas are not open to the public.



3 Kushiyama Park
Ten minutes up the hill from Karasukiujima Alley, brings you to Kushiyama Park and a wonderful view of the sea. You can see ruins of a shrine and an intercept surveillance station here.



6 The former naval arsenal shipyard building
The construction of the Battleship Yamato was top secret. A roof was set up over the shipyard to hide it from public view. The shipyard building is still in use today.



7 The ruin of a gate to the naval arsenal
The navy built blindfold fences to sequester the construction of the Battleship Yamato. It separated the naval area from the city area. Only people with permission could enter the naval area.



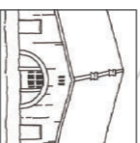
8 The road where Suzu walked with Harumi
The road has a slightly different appearance nowadays. Suzu and Harumi were in a shelter around this area during an air raid on the Kure naval arsenal.



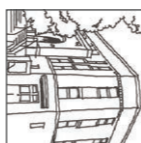
11 The stairs in front of the Old Naval Hospital
Hill Overlooking Historic Avenis 歴史の見える丘
This bus stop is for JR Kure station. The bus fare is 160 yen and you can pay when getting off.



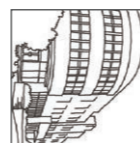
10 The former navy court
The former naval office where Shusaku worked.



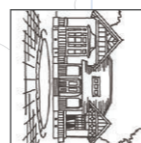
12 The former service reservoir for the Miyahara purification plant
The Miyahara purification plant was one of the oldest purification plants in Japan and was completed in 1890.



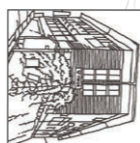
14 Oshokan
A facility for the navy with art deco style. Plays, concerts and other performances were held here during the war.



15 The former Naval Assembly Hall
Navy sailors who disembarked at Kure often spent their free time at this facility. The building used to have a beautiful tiled outside wall, but after the war it was painted red. The building is closed today.



16 The former Official Residence of the Commander-in-chief of the Kure Naval Station
The main feature of the residences that it is composed of two styles of housing. The western style room was used for meetings and welcoming Western guests. The Japanese style rooms were occupied by the Commander-in-chief and his family. The visiting hours are 9am to 4:30pm, but it is closed on Tuesdays.



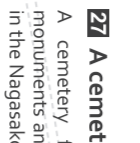
17 The YWCA of Kure
Used as a Navy Warplouse during WW2 and later as a chapel by the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) in 1948.



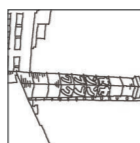
21 One of the post-WW2 black markets
In the story, Suzu was said to have enjoyed a porridge of rice with vegetables made from the leftovers of the BCOF. Suzu spoke about the delicious salty taste of the porridge, but realized she had never thought of the lack of seasonings available in Japan.



28 Suzu gets lost in ASAHi-Machi Yukuaku (Pleasure Quarters)
In the story, Suzu met a girl called Rin who worked at the Futaba-House. It and other parts of the district were buried down due to attacks on the urban areas of Kure in 1945 and now nothing remains.



27 A cemetery for the former Navy
A cemetery for Navy personnel. It has many memorial monuments and also includes individual graves of British sailors in the Nagasaki Park.



28 The chimney of Japanese sake brewery MIYAKEHONTEN
The long-standing chimney was made of bricks and required for the process of sake brewing.



29 Kure Goe-Touge Pass
Trams (Kure Electric Railway) once ran on the sloping road that connects the center of Kure with Hiro. The Hiroshima Prefectural Route 574 runs there now.



Do you know why Kure has many houses along the slope in the mountains?
Setting up a Naval base in Kure increased its population through providing industrial laborers many new jobs. Workers had to build their houses on the mountain slopes because the navy itself used a large quantity of the flat land to build their facilities. In addition, as the Kure Army did not have a good system in place to provide housing for workers, some people in Kure built houses and rented them to naval personnel and workers.



The typical traditional house of Kure
Here is an image of a typical style of house for the era (see the figure on the right). It is a point of interest that some houses in Kure had bricks wall built around them. Bricks were not often used in Japan and originally arrived through Western import. Many bricks were needed to build Western-style buildings so many brick production sites were established around Kure. These bricks were also used in the construction of private houses in Kure.

The early 19th century coastline



3 An old crane
A crane which was made in Britain and used to ship the torpedoes made in the facilities nearby (#3). It was relocated here after the war.

4 Masonry revetment
Very solid masonry revetment made by the navy as a barrier.

5 Japan Marine United Co. Kure Shipyard
ジャパニマリンユニテッド呉事業所

13 Kure Marine Corps
These buildings used to be the facilities where young men received basic training to become sailors. JMSDF still uses this facility today.

20 An old fuel oil line
This is an original bridge which survived Kure air raids during WW2.

21 An old railway bridge
The area around Nakaton Street had not changed much since the war and is still the main business and entertainment hub of Kure.

22 Sakai-Bashi Bridge
The area around Nakaton Street had not changed much since the war and is still the main business and entertainment hub of Kure.

25 Senba-Machi Town
This used to be a black market street where Suzu got 1 km (0.6 mi) of Suga. It was crowded all day long.

31 Mitsu-Kura Storehouse (belonging to the Sawahara household (#32))
These were traditional Japanese storehouses and the Mitsukura forms a uniquely shaped building. The storehouses were used to store Japanese-style and tataru mats (traditional straws mats). It was not burned by the air attacks during the war and remains the same as it was when it was built 220 years ago. This spot is one of the most popular scenes in the story.

32 The former Sawahara family home (An important cultural property in Kure)
The Sawahara family were local influential people (merchants, bankers and government officials) and they kindly contributed to the modernization of Kure. This residence showed the family's prosperity. The interior of this house has not been opened to the public and can only be viewed from the exterior.

33 Tatsukawa Bus Stop
This is the nearest bus stop to the Hyogo house where Suzu lived after marrying Shusaku. Like a scene from the story, this area is like a looking glass into the past.

34 Niko Park
Before the war, a festival was held here every April 2nd. It was customary for people to gather and enjoy the cherry blossom in Kure.

35 Koharu-Bashi Bridge
This scene shows Suzu and her husband, Shusaku, going on their first date. Despite being a married Japanese couple, they did not meet in person until their wedding day. This was normal in those days. This is one of the most popular scenes of the story, however the bridge can no longer be seen. A new bridge has been built in its place.

36 Niko-Hashi Bridge
This art deco style bridge has been around since 1932. This bridge still remains the same as it was during Suzu's time.

37 The Memorial Martyrdom, for the sinking of Submarine No. 6 of the Imperial Japanese Navy.
The anchor and the chain of the submarine, rest at the foot of the monument. Before the war, this shrine was one of the most popular tourist attractions and a memorial ceremony has been held here every year on April 15th at the Tanimiya Shrine since 1910.

38 Clayton Bay Hotel
"AIGUN Curry" (Navy Curry) and "All Curry" (JMSDF Curry) are served from 10 am to 5 pm at the restaurant "Core d'Azur & Joffret" on the 1st floor. This hotel has English-speaking staff.

39 Kure Hankyu Hotel
"All Curry" (JMSDF Curry) is served from 11:30 am to 08:30 pm at the restaurant "IL MAKE" on the 1st floor. The hotel has English-speaking staff.

40 ISEYA (いせ屋)
ISEYA is a popular restaurant in Kure. You can try "AIGUN NO NIKUYAGAE" and western foods uniquely adapted to Japanese tastes. It is closed on Thursdays.

41 FUKUZUMI (福住)
You can buy "Fried Cakes" here. This shop is closed on Tuesdays.

42 MITSUYA (三屋)
You can buy "MITSU MANJU" here. It is closed on Tuesdays.

43 TENMEIDO (天明堂)
Here you can buy "ONKIRI-MANJOU". There is a seating area for customers who wish to eat inside. It is closed on Sundays.

Scale 1/10,000
0m 5min 10min 15min 20min
500m 1km 1.5km 2km

Course 1
Exploring the former naval area

90 minutes on foot
In the story, "In this Corner of the World", Suzu and Harumi went to the naval hospital and encountered an air raid near the shipyard.
On Course 1, you can follow the route where they walked. Passing by the naval area, you'll reach the end of the course where you can see a panoramic view of the shipyards. You can take a bus back to JR Kure station from this point.

Course 2
Exploring the areas where Suzu spent her life

90 minutes on foot
This course takes you to the area where Suzu used to live, through Naka-dou street, the downtown hub in Kure, and Senba-machi town where the markets used to be. Though you may be tired from walking uphill, you can experience the everyday life of Suzu. Please respect the local residents when passing through residential areas. From the end point, you can take a bus back to JR Kure station.

Course 3
Exploring areas of Kure which are frozen in time from the war

90 minutes on foot
This course takes you to the west side of Kure to Kawarishi and Ryogo. Although these areas do not appear in the story, some buildings that survived air raids during the war still remain. When exploring these areas, you may feel like you are stepping into the past. We recommend climbing the 200 steps of Ryogo. JR Kawarishi station is near the end point of this course.

【CO-184】
KURE
where Suzu lived

Link to google map™
QR code



9 The Kure Naval District Headquarters Building
This elegant building with bricks and granite was constructed in 1907. JMSDF Headquarters for Kure District uses this building now. It is open to the public every Sunday. The visit requires prior reservation.

18 The Kure Maritime Museum (Yamato Museum)
Historically, the present-day Kure Pier could only be used by the Imperial Japanese Navy. Civilians were prohibited from entering. By visiting the Yamato museum, you can experience the history of Kure, the importance of peace, and the wonders of naval science and technology.

19 The Old Naval Pier
Historically, the present-day Kure Pier could only be used by the Imperial Japanese Navy. Civilians were prohibited from entering.

32 The Ryogo tunnels
There are two railway tunnels side by side in Ryogo. The older one is no longer in use.

38 An old air raid shelter
Many merchants who lived near the shoreline where the naval facilities were to be built, were relocated to Kawarishi. You can see some historical shops.

40 The Houses Along the Steps Of Ryogo
Most of Kure's limited flat land was used to open the Kure Naval District. Locals had to build their houses on the mountain slopes. Many of the higher-ranking naval personnel lived in Ryogo.

43 Props of blindfold fences in Kawarishi
The navy built blindfold fences along the Kure Line to conceal the construction of the Battleship Yamato.

44 Brick tunnels for pedestrians
There are two very narrow brick tunnels for pedestrians to cross under the Kure Line.

45 Shops along the coast
Civilians were prohibited from using the Kure pier (#45), so they used a pier in Kawarishi. Because of this, the area became a very busy shopping area. You can see some interesting buildings around here.

49 The 200 steps of Ryogo
A very narrow stone staircase on a steep hill. If you climb the 200 steps, you can enjoy a beautiful panoramic view of Kure.

50 'Machiya' (traditional merchants' houses), and western style houses
Many merchants who lived near the shoreline where the naval facilities were to be built, were relocated to Kawarishi. You can see some historical shops.

51 Food Stalls on Kuramoto-Dori Street
Yatai (food stalls) are dotted along the street from 7pm to 12am or later. One of stalls named "Dai-1 (KASA) is popular among fans of "In this Corner of the World" because it appears in the photo book with the voice actor "Nori (Suзу's voice in the film).

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