

**TRAIN :** Shinkansen

**JOURNEY :** Kyushu Shinkansen : Fukuoka - Kagoshima

**Journey Duration :** Scenic Day Trips

### Day to Day Itinerary

The Kyushu Shinkansen is a shinkansen line, which connects Fukuoka (Hakata Station) in the north with Kagoshima (Kagoshima-Chuo Station) in the south of Kyushu. The southern half was opened in 2004 and the northern half in 2011. A branch line to Nagasaki, the Nishi Kyushu Shinkansen, partially opened in September 2022.

Most trains along the Kyushu Shinkansen provide through service with the Sanyo Shinkansen to/from Osaka or provide a quick and easy transfer to/from a Nozomi train at Hakata Station. Trains along the Kyushu Shinkansen are operated by the Kyushu Railway Company, commonly known as JR Kyushu.

Three train categories operate on the Kyushu Shinkansen:

The **Mizuho** is the fastest train category, stopping only at Hakata, Kumamoto and Kagoshima-Chuo. It provides through service to the Sanyo Shinkansen to/from Osaka. There are only a few round trips per day, mainly in the mornings, late afternoons and evenings. The Mizuho is one of the few JR trains that require a supplement fee for Japan Rail Pass holders. However, the Mizuho is fully covered by the Kyushu Rail Pass (between Hakata and Kagoshima-Chuo).

The **Sakura** is the second fastest train category along the Kyushu Shinkansen, serving a few more stations than the Mizuho. There is usually one departure per hour, with some providing through service to the Sanyo Shinkansen to/from Osaka.

Two types of train sets are used as Sakura trains. The 8-car sets have Green Car seats in only half of car number 6, while reserved seating comes in rows of 2x2 seats (which are almost as comfortable as the Green Car seats) and non-reserved seating with rows of 3x2 seats. The 6-car sets have no Green Car, but all seating comes in rows of 2x2 seats.

The **Tsubame** is the slowest train category along the Kyushu Shinkansen, stopping at all stations along the way. Most trains operate only between Hakata and Kumamoto, and only a few as far as Kagoshima. The Tsubame uses 6-car train sets that do not have a Green Car, but come with seats in rows of 2x2 seats, which are almost as comfortable as Green Car seats.