



Some interesting geographic notes:

- The **Japanese Archipelago extends over 1800 miles** from Hokkaido to the Sakishima Islands just off of Taiwan. Counting the Kurils (occupied by Russia in 1945 and still claimed by Japan to this day) the archipelago extends over 2300 miles. Juxtaposed to the USA it would extend from Maine to Florida.
- The **Korea Strait** that we will traverse on our way to Busan, South Korea, is 120 mi/200 km wide. It connects the Sea of Japan (called the East Sea by Koreans) to the Yellow Sea north of Jeju Island and to the East China Sea south of Jeju. Tsushima Island sits in the middle of the Strait and was the site of Japan's decisive naval victory over Russia in 1905 which ended the Russo-Japanese War.

(continued)

- The **Kanmon Strait** (aka Shimonoseki Strait) between Honshu and Kyushu that we will pass through on our way from Hiroshima to Busan is just 0.6 mi/1 km at its narrowest point.
- The **Tsugaru Strait** between Honshu and Hokkaido that we will traverse when we sail from Aomori to Hakodate is just 10 miles wide at its narrowest point.
- The **Seto Inland Sea** separating **Honshu, Shikoku** (smallest and least populated of the 4 main islands) and **Kyushu** (southernmost of the 4 main islands) is 280 mi/450 km long from east to west. We will enter it en route to Hiroshima, and then exit it via the Kanmon Strait on its west end.
- **Honshu**, the largest of Japan's islands, is the 7th largest island in the world and the 2nd most populous island in the world with 102M population (after Java, with 153M).
- **Hokkaido**, Japan's 2nd largest island, was a remote frontier inhabited primarily by the indigenous Ainu people until it was formally annexed in 1869.
- **80% of Japan's 123M population** lives within 100 miles of the coast.
- The **Tokyo metropolitan area** (including Yokohama) is the largest metro area in the world, with 38 million population (followed by Jakarta 34M and Delhi 32M). Tokyo became Japan's unofficial capital in 1603 with the ascent of the Tokugawa Shogunate which based itself there and called it Edo (which means Bay in Japanese). The official imperial capital remained at Kyoto until 1868 when Edo was renamed Tokyo (which means Eastern Capital) and became the official capital of Japan.

