

Splendors of Japan



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- Start Location
- Plane
- Cruise
- Over night

- Visited Location
- End Location
- Train
- Ferry

Day 1 | Konnichiwa Tokyo



Your in-depth exploration of Japan begins in Tokyo. On arrival at Narita or Haneda Airport, take a shuttle bus transfer to your centrally located hotel, where you'll join your Travel Director and fellow guests for a Welcome drink and local appetizers.

Hotel: New Otani Garden Tower

Day 2 | Explore Vibrant Tokyo



We launch our city tour in the old-time entertainment center of Asakusa, where we'll encounter the Sensoji Buddhist Temple. One of Tokyo's most colorful and popular temples, Sensoji has been rebuilt countless times since it was founded in 628, making it Tokyo's oldest temple site. Strolling down Nakamise next, we immerse ourselves in the sights and sounds of shitamachi (downtown Tokyo), admiring the wooden dolls, colorful chiyogami (origami paper) and traditional Japanese sweets. We'll ascend Tokyo Skytree, the world's highest free-standing broadcasting tower for panoramic views of the city.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: New Otani Garden Tower

Day 3 | Off to the Five Lakes District



Our first stop today is the Imperial Palace Plaza from where the two bridges that form the entrance to the inner grounds of the Imperial Palace can be viewed. We'll have the opportunity to explore the leafy Imperial Palace East Gardens before continuing our city tour. At the Tokyo National Museum browse collections of Japanese art, then continue to the Ginza district where we'll learn how to make sushi with a professional sushi chef. We venture to the Five Lakes District next, keeping a keen eye out for the UNESCO listed Mt. Fuji which dominates the landscape.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Fuji Marriott Yamanakako

Day 4 | Majestic Mt. Fuji and Timeless Takayama



Visit Oshino Hakkai, a small rural village in the Fuji Five Lakes district, renowned for eight natural spring water ponds that are fed by melted snow from Mt. Fuji. Admire the reflections of the sky and landscapes in its clear waters, then ascend Mt. Fuji by road to 2,300 meters at the 5th station. Ride up Mt. Tenjo on the Kachikachiyama Ropeway next, for jaw-dropping views (weather permitting) of Mt. Fuji and Lake Kawaguchiko. Then, journey through the Japanese Alps to the beautiful hillside town of Takayama, before enjoying dinner at the hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel: Associa Takayama Resort

Day 5 | Experience Gokayama and on to Kanazawa



Immerse yourself in tradition as you walk through the Edo-style streets of Takayama's Old Town. Indulge a lunch of Japanese Hida-gyu – beef from a black-haired Japanese cattle breed, renowned as one of the finest quality varieties of beef. Journey back in time this afternoon during a visit to the peaceful UNESCO-listed Gokayama, a mountain village set amidst five valleys. Admire the unique construction of the local Gassho-zukuri wooden houses that have been built without the use of nails with steeply sloped thatched roofs to prevent snow from building up on them. Meet with a local family in one of these houses. Observe local artisans making washi paper and try your hand at making your own. Make a difference to the sustainability of this small business during MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experience. Stay overnight in Kanazawa.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel: Kanazawa Tokyu

Day 6 | Traditional Kanazawa



Join a Local Specialist this morning to learn the secrets of painting gold leaf, a delicate craft the Japanese have been perfecting since the 16th century. Continue to the tranquil gardens of Kenrokuen, which took shape over a hundred years to emerge as one of Japan's most beautiful gardens. Connecting with your exquisite natural surrounds, you'll stroll through ornate landscapes and past ponds and temples. Take a short walk through the Omicho market next to see the local fish catch and enjoy an insider's view of everyday life in a busy coastal town. Then, visit the Nagamachi District with its beautifully preserved samurai houses that line the traditional stone streets. Here you will gain first-hand insights into samurai life during a visit to the Nomura house, an elegant samurai mansion.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Kanazawa Tokyu

OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Shabu Shabu Dinner with Unlimited Drinks - Tonight you will enjoy typical washoku Japanese buffet meal with unlimited drinks. Dine on shabu shabu hot pot, a dish of thinly sliced meat and vegetables boiled in water and served with dipping sauces. This particular way of eating hot-pot dining originated in Osaka during the 1950s but has since spread all across Japan and even to other countries. The menu also includes sushi, tempuras, soba and Japanese typical appetizers which are a must to try! Vegetarian options are available. The price shown is in Japanese Yen. Adult: 6500.00 JPY

Day 7 | Onwards to Kyoto



We board an Express train this morning to Kyoto. We'll Connect With Locals at a traditional ryokan and enjoy a Be My Guest lunch, learning about local Japanese customs from our hosts. After lunch, we visit the UNESCO-listed Kinkakuji Temple with its famous Kinkaku (Golden Pavilion), the proud symbol of Kyoto and a Zen temple, which has its origins as a 14th-century villa.

Meals: Breakfast, Be My Guest

Hotel: The Hotel Higashiyama

Day 8 | Discover Enchanting Kyoto



The blazing orange torii gates of Fushimi Inari Shrine guide our path through the forest, up into the mountains and to a sacred site that has heard prayers for prosperity and happiness since the 8th century. We continue to Sanjusangen-do Hall and admire the minute detail of each of its 1,001 "thousand-handed" goddesses of mercy statues, then enjoy a walking tour of the Gion area. This evening, we indulge in a Farewell Dinner with your Travel Director and fellow guests.

Meals: Breakfast, Farewell Dinner

Hotel: The Hotel Higashiyama

OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Japanese Tea Ceremony Experience - Experience the ambience of a traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony with a professional Tea Master who will have spent many years leaning his craft which is often presented in a ceremony influenced by Zen Buddhism. Learn about the history and culture of tea making in Japan and observe how the powdered green tea (matcha) is prepared by adding boiling water and mixing it with a bamboo whisk. There will also be an explanation on the Japanese way of making and drinking tea. Take the opportunity to try some Japanese sweets and afterwards, having observed the skill involved in making the tea, have a go at making your own! The price shown is in Japanese Yen. Adult: 4500.00 JPY

Day 9 | Sayonara Japan



Our encounter with Japan's age-old traditions and modern cityscapes at its end, we take a transfer by airport shuttle service to Kansai International Airport or Osaka Itami Airport for our onward flight. Alternatively, continue to Hiroshima by choosing the 13 day Splendors of Japan with Hiroshima itinerary.

Meals: Breakfast