

JAPAN

TOKYO, HAKONE, TAKAYAMA, KYOTO, HIROSHIMA, NAOSHIMA, OSAKA

14 DAYS/13 NIGHTS

DAY	DESTINATION
DAY 1	Depart Lebanon
DAY 2	Tokyo Arrival
DAY 3	Tokyo
DAY 4	Tokyo – Nikko – Tokyo
DAY 5	Tokyo
DAY 6	Tokyo – Kamakura – Hakone
DAY 7	Hakone – Matsumoto – Takayama
DAY 8	Takayama – Kyoto
DAY 9	Kyoto
DAY 10	Kyoto – Nara -Kyoto
DAY 11	Kyoto
DAY 12	Kyoto – Himeji – Miyajima
DAY 13	Miyajima – Naoshima
DAY 14	Naoshima – Osaka
DAY 15	Osaka Departure

PROGRAM

◆ **DAY 1: DEPART LEBANON**

Flying to Japan.

◆ **DAY 2: TOKYO ARRIVAL**

Arrival at Narita/Haneda flight. Meeting with your guide in the arrival hall and transfer to your hotel by private coach. (90/60 minutes). Welcome dinner at hotel. Overnight in Tokyo.

SERVICE INCLUDES

Meals: Dinner

Guiding: English speaking guide

Transfers: Private coach



DAY 3: TOKYO

After breakfast at hotel, meet with your guide in the hotel lobby for a departure to **Meiji shrine** by private coach. Begin your exploration of Tokyo with a visit to Meiji Shrine, a shrine dedicated to the deified spirit of Emperor Meiji and a popular place for traditional Japanese weddings. After visiting the shrine walk with your guide down the adjacent **Omotesando** shopping street, a broad tree lined avenue home to the flagship stores of the world's top fashion brands. The street that runs parallel is the **Takeshita Dori**, located in the Harajuku district which is considered the center of Japan's colorful youth culture and teenage fashion with its many unique boutiques and café's. Next, your guide will take you to the Roppongi ward by private coach where we will visit the **Roppongi Hills Observation Deck**. The 238 meters tall **Mori Tower** is the centerpiece of the Roppongi Hills complex in Tokyo's Roppongi district. The tower houses the entrance to the excellent Mori Art Museum and the Tokyo City View observation deck. On a clear day you can see Tokyo Tower, Tokyo Skytree and even as far as Mt. Fuji! Lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch head across town to **Asakusa**, Tokyo's old town where you can soak up the atmosphere of what Tokyo must have been like hundreds of years ago. Visit Sensoji, also known as **Asakusa Kannon** and Tokyo's oldest temple. The Broadway leading up to the Temple is called Nakamise and this shopping street has been providing temple visitors with a variety of traditional, local snacks and souvenirs for centuries. Dinner at a local restaurant. A private coach will take you back to your hotel. End at hotel. Overnight in Tokyo.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Guiding: English speaking guide

Transfers: Private coach

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters



DAY 4: TOKYO – NIKKO – TOKYO

After breakfast at hotel meet with your guide in the hotel lobby for a departure to the town of Nikko by private coach. Nikko has been the center of Shinto and Buddhist worship for many centuries and the general mountain area is now a protected national park.

Begin your exploration of Nikko with a visit to the Toshugu Shrine complex. Built as a mausoleum for **Tokugawa Ieyasu**, founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate that ruled Japan for over 250 years, this lavishly decorated shrine complex consists of more than a dozen Shinto as well as Buddhist buildings in a beautiful forest setting and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Lunch at a local restaurant. Next, we will visit the **Old Imperial Villa**, a National Cultural Treasure, featuring

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architecture that spans three different periods; Edo, Meiji, and Taisho and is surrounded by a beautiful garden. After visiting the imperial villa, a private coach will take you to **Kirifuri Falls**, one of Nikko's most famous waterfalls. This waterfall is over 75-meter-tall and the name Kirifuri translates as falling mist, derived from the way the waterfall splits as it hits the rocks on the way down. Dinner at a local restaurant. A private coach will take you back to the hotel. End at Hotel. Overnight in Tokyo

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Guiding: English speaking guide

Transfers: Private coach

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters



DAY 5: TOKYO

Breakfast at Hotel. Free time at leisure. Overnight in Tokyo.



DAY 6: TOKYO – KAMAKURA – HAKONE

Breakfast at hotel. Meet with your guide at the hotel for a departure to Kamakura by private coach. You will visit **Kotokuin Temple**, home to the **Daibutsu**, a giant bronze Buddha that stands (or rather, sits) 13.35m high. **Hasedera Temple** is a temple of the Jodo sect, which is most famous for its statue of Kannon, the goddess of mercy. The statue shows Kannon with eleven heads, each representing a characteristic of the goddess. The 9.18-meter-tall, gilded wooden statue is regarded as one of the largest wooden sculptures in Japan. After visiting Hasedera, you will head to Hakone. Lunch at a local restaurant. You will board a **Pirate Boat** from Hakonemachi to Togendai. Both are ports on the shores of Lake Ashi, which is in fact an enormous volcanic crater created by an eruption 3,000 years ago. After arriving in Togendai we will continue our journey via **Rope Way** heading towards Owakudani. The first thing you will notice when arriving in Owakudani is the smell of sulfur coming from this active volcano. There are walking trails around **Owakudani** that lead to steam vents and bubbling pools. The eggs they sell in Owakudani are boiled in the volcano's natural hot springs and are said to prolong life by seven years! A private coach will take you to the hotel and check in. Dinner at hotel. Overnight in Hakone.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals; Lunch, Dinner
Guiding: English speaking guide
Transfers: Private coach
Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters



—◆ **DAY 7: HAKONE – TAKAYAMA**

Breakfast at hotel and check-out. Meeting with your guide and depart for Gotemba to make a brief stop at **Chureito Pagoda**. Then you will head to Matsumoto and visit Matsumoto, home to Japan's oldest five tier **Matsumoto Castle**. Lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch, you will drive to Takayama (2 hours). Arrive at Takayama and the rest of your day, free at leisure. Dinner at hotel. Overnight in Takayama.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner
Transfers: Private coach
Guiding: English speaking guide
Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters



—◆ **DAY 8: TAKAYAMA – KYOTO**

Breakfast at hotel. Your luggage will be transferred to Kyoto separately.
After breakfast meet with your guide at the hotel for a departure to the Miyagawa morning market by private coach. The **Miyagawa morning market** is one of Japan's biggest morning markets with stalls selling various local crafts and produce. This is a great opportunity to try some of the region's delicious fruit and vegetables as the only people allowed to set up a stall are independent farmers and craftsmen. Then head over to **Takayama Jinya**, also known as the Historical Government House. For almost two centuries this building served as a local government office and it is the only surviving government office building from Edo period. Takayama Jinya now serves as a museum where you will find well-preserved conference and interrogation rooms with old tatami floors and some century-old artefacts. Last stop in Takayama is sake brewery and you will enjoy a tasting on Japan's national tipple. Takayama's sake is renowned nation-wide, thanks to the clear water of the surroundings. Then you will head to Takayama Station and take a limited express train to Nagoya and change onto a bullet train to Kyoto. Lunch on board. (3.5 hours) Upon

arrival at Kyoto, you will be transferred to the hotel and check in. Dinner at hotel. Overnight in Kyoto.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Guiding: English speaking guide

Transfers: Private coach

Limited Express Train + Bullet Train (Takayama – Nagoya- Kyoto/Ordinary Class)

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters Other: Luggage Takayama - Kyoto



DAY 9: KYOTO

After breakfast at hotel, meet with your guide at the hotel for a departure to **Nijo Castle** by private coach. Nijo Castle was built by the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate as the Kyoto residence of the Shogun and is surrounded by stunning gardens. The ornamental building was completed in 1603 and is well-known for its Momoyama architecture, decorated sliding doors, and 'chirping' nightingale floors. From Nijo castle a private coach will take you to Kinkakuji **Kinkakuji**, also known as the **Golden Pavilion**, was originally built as a retirement villa for the Shogun. After the death of Shogun Yoshimitsu it became a Buddhist Temple at his request, and is now one of Kyoto's most famous temples, with its top two floors completely covered in gold-leaf. Lunch at a local restaurant. This afternoon you will have the opportunity to learn two of Japan's Traditional Arts. You will have a lesson in shodo, **Japanese calligraphy**. You will learn how, when writing kanji (Japanese pictographs), each stroke has a proper way to begin and end and there is a correct order and path to follow. The slightest lapse in concentration will show in one's work. Then you will get **dressed in a Japanese festive kimono**. You will learn about the different kinds of kimono, and which kimono should be worn on each different occasion. Please tell us your height and size at the time of booking so the instructor can prepare the right kimono for. Dinner at a local restaurant. A private coach will take you back to your hotel. End at hotel. Overnight in Kyoto

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Guiding: English speaking guide

Transfers: Private coach

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters



—◆ **DAY 10: KYOTO**

After breakfast at hotel, meet with your guide in the hotel lobby for a departure to Sanjusangendo by private coach. **Sanjusangendo**, a temple which is Japan's longest wooden structure (120m). It is famous for its 1001 statues of Kannon, the goddess of mercy. In the center of the main hall sits a large, wooden statue of a 1000-armed Kannon that is flanked on each side by 500 statues of human sized 1000-armed Kannon standing in ten rows. Together they make for an awesome sight. From Nara a private coach will take you to the Fushimi ward in Kyoto, where we will visit the Fushimi Inari Shrine. Featured in the movie "Memoirs of a Geisha", this shrine is known for its thousands of red torii gates leading up and through the sacred forest of Mount Inari and has been voted number one must see spot in Kyoto by visitors.

Then you will head to Fushimi Ward and visit **Fushimi Inari Shrine**, which was used in the movie "Memoirs of a Geisha". It is home to over 10,000 red torii gates, which form a path up the mountain behind the temple. After visiting Fushimi Inari Shrine, you will head to Nara by private coach (45-60 minutes). Lunch at local restaurant. You will visit **Todaiji temple**, the world's largest wooden structure and home to Japan's largest Buddha. The park surrounding the temple is called **Nara Park**, but is referred to by many as "Deer Park" due to the large population of more than one thousand tame deer who freely roam the streets and will bow their heads in exchange for a treat. Next stop is Nara's most celebrated shrine, **Kasuga Taisha**. Established in 768 AD the shrine is dedicated to the deity tasked with the protection of the city and is famous for its hundreds of bronze and stone lanterns which have been donated by worshipers over the years. Dinner at a local restaurant. A private coach will take you back to hotel. End at hotel. Overnight in Kyoto.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Guiding: English speaking guide

Transfers: Private coach

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters



—◆ **DAY 11: KYOTO**

After breakfast at hotel, meet with you guide at the hotel for a departure to Kiyomizu Temple by private coach. The **Kiyomizu temple**, which translates as pure water temple, derives its name from the waters that spring from the east mountains and stream to the site. The falls are split up into three streams each said to possess a different benefit and visitors are invited to drink the water, however drinking from all three streams is considered greedy. The 13-meter-high veranda

of the Temple's Main Hall offers an amazing view of Kyoto and was built without using a single nail. Next you will have **Tea Ceremony** at a small temple in Higashiyama area. Your Tea Master will give you a full explanation of Japanese tea as well as the tea ceremony itself, its long history and relationship with Zen Buddhism. The Master will also tell you the meaning behind each movement involved in the making and serving of the tea, as well as the equipment involved. Lunch at a local restaurant. Then, you will stroll through the atmospheric **Higashiyama district**. The walking route will take you through one of Kyoto's best-preserved historic districts. Selling various types of souvenirs including Kiyomizu-yaki pottery, sweets and pickles. Higashiyama is a great place to experience the old Kyoto as many of its traditional tea houses and shops have been there for centuries. A private coach will take you back to your hotel. Depart for dinner. Tonight, you will enjoy a sumptuous dinner in the private room of a traditional restaurant with free flow drinks. Enjoy dinner and drinks with an hour of private maiko or geisha entertainment consisting of conversation and dancing accompanied by the shamisen (Japanese stringed instrument). You will also have a chance to ask questions about the geisha and their world (translated into English by guide), as well as play traditional drinking games. This is a special night of food, drink, traditional entertainment, and great photo opportunities. A private coach will take you back to the hotel. End at hotel. Overnight in Kyoto

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Maiko Dinner

Guiding: English speaking guide

Transfers: Private coach

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters

Activity: Tea Ceremony



◆ **DAY 12: KYOTO – HIROSHIMA – MIYAJIMA**

Breakfast and check out at hotel. Your luggage will be transferred to the hotel in Osaka, so please prepare an overnight bag for staying in Hiroshima & Naoshima. After check out, meet with your guide at the hotel for a departure to Kyoto station by private coach. You will take a bullet train from Kyoto to Himeji (55 minutes). After arriving at Himeji station, a private coach will be waiting to take you to Himeji castle. Construction for **Himeji Castle** began during the 14th century and it is one of Japan's biggest and most beautiful castles. It is listed as a national treasure and a UNESCO world heritage site as it is one of the few castles in Japan that has not been destroyed by earthquakes, war or fire. Lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch, you will travel back to Himeji Station and take a bullet train to Hiroshima. Upon arrival at Hiroshima, you will visit **Peace Memorial Park**. The area where the park now lies was ground zero for the Atomic Bomb on 6th August 1945. After the bombing the Memorial Park was created and dedicated to those who lost their lives in the attack. You will stroll through the park and discover the many memorials, monuments and statues in the park before heading into the Museum itself. After visiting Peace Memorial Park, you will head to Miyajima by private coach and ferry. Arrive at Miyajima and hotel check in. Dinner at hotel. Overnight in Miyajima.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Transfers: Private Coach Bullet train (Kyoto-Hiroshima/Ordinary Class) Ferry (Miyajimaguchi -> Miyajima)

Guiding: English speaking guide

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters

Luggage: Kyoto – Osaka



◆ **DAY 13: MIYAJIMA – NAOSHIMA**

Breakfast and check out at hotel. After check out, you will meet a guide and depart for the town of Miyajima. **Miyajima** is small sacred island located in the Inland Sea, it has been a holy place of Shintoism since the earliest times. Here you will find perhaps the most photographed site in Japan - **The Floating Torii Gate of Itsukushima Shrine**. Designated as one of Japan's '3 Most Beautiful Views', the shrine it belongs to dates back to the 6th century with the present structure dating back to the 12th century. The harmoniously arranged buildings reveal great artistic and technical skill, and have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Mere 'commoners' were not allowed to set foot on this holy place, and even now it is forbidden to give birth or die on the island! Lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch, you will head back to Hiroshima station. You will take a bullet train from Hiroshima to Okayama (30 minutes) Upon arrival at Okayama, a private coach that will take you to Uno port, where you will ride the ferry to Naoshima. You will be transferred to the hotel and check in. Dinner at hotel. Overnight in Naoshima.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Transfers: Private Coach Ferry (Miyajima -> Miyajima) Bullet train (Hiroshima Okayama/Ordinary Class) Ferry (Uno-Naoshima)

Guiding: English speaking guide

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters



◆ **DAY 14: NAOSHIMA – OSAKA**

Breakfast at hotel. You will meet with you guide and depart for exploring Naoshima by private coach. Honmura, a small port town on Naoshima's eastern coast, is home to the **Art House Project**, a collection of abandoned houses, workshops, a temple and a shrine that have been converted into art installations and venues for contemporary art by artists and architects from Japan and abroad. The art houses are scattered throughout town, and most of them are

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unassuming from the street, blending into the surrounding traditional Japanese neighborhood. The interior of each, however, has been given over to artists to convert into whatever suits their artistic vision. **The Chichu Art Museum** is a unique modern art museum built into a hillside overlooking the southern coast of Naoshima. The museum building, designed by Ando Tadao and itself a work of art, is mostly located underground and solely utilizes natural light to illuminate the artwork. This creates a viewing experience that is heavily influenced by the surrounding natural environment. Lunch at a local restaurant. After exploring Naoshima, you will head back to Okayama by ferry and private coach. You will take a bullet train from Okayama to Shin Osaka (50 minutes) A private coach will take you to the hotel and check in. Farewell dinner at hotel or local restaurant within walking distance of hotel. End at hotel.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Transfers: Private Coach Ferry (Naoshima – Uno) Bullet Train (Okayama – Shin Osaka/Ordinary Class)

Guiding: English speaking guide



DAY 15: OSAKA DEPARTURE

Breakfast at hotel and check-out. Meeting with English speaking guide and depart for Osaka City tour by private coach. Start your day visiting the magnificent **Osaka Castle**. The castle is one of Japan's most famous, and played a major role in the unification of Japan during the sixteenth century. It has been completely rebuilt, faithful to the original appearance, after its destruction during World War II; the inside is modern and functional and serves as a museum of Osaka history. Lunch at a local restaurant. Next stop is the **Floating Garden Observatory**. Built on top of the highest building in Osaka, it's an open-air observatory from which you can enjoy stunning views of the city and the bay. The last stop is the hustling district of **Dotonbori**, a former pleasure district turned restaurant mecca. A private coach will take you to Kansai International Airport (60 minutes) Arrive at Kansai Airport and flight check in. Depart Kansai.

SERVICE INCLUDE:

Meals: Lunch

Transfers: Private coach

Guiding: English speaking guide

Entrances: Mentioned in bold letters

END OF SERVICES

PRICE UPON REQUEST

WEATHER GUIDE

the months from March to May and from September to November are generally considered the best times to visit the country.