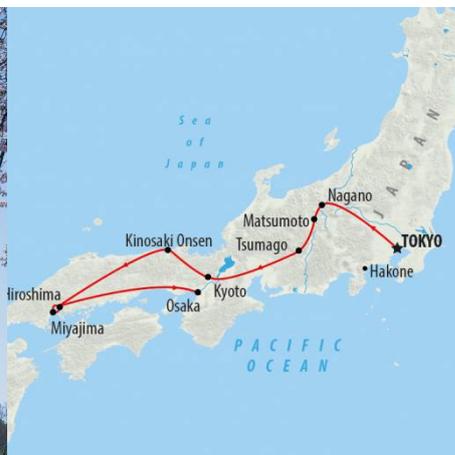


Konnichiwa Japan

14 days | Tokyo to Osaka



PRIVATE TOUR: After fully exploring Tokyo head to Nagano and Matsumoto before arriving in famous Kyoto. Carrying on, take a journey to Hiroshima and end in Osaka. Meet local people, experience efficient public transport and see the wonders that Japan has to offer!

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Tokyo - Choose from exploring the historic district of Asakusa, cruising the Sumida River, strolling through Hamarikyu Gardens, discovering the fashion hub of Harajuku and taking in the bright lights of the Business District of Shinjuku
- Kyoto - Choose from visiting the Golden Pavillion Zen Temple of Kinakakuji, Kiyomizu Dera Temple, Higashiyama historic district, Fushimi Inari Shrine and Gion Geisha District
- Cooking Class - Learn how to prepare authentic Japanese cuisine with our hands on cooking class
- Nagano - Visit the famous Zenko-ji Temple, meet the snow monkeys of Yudanaka Onsen and discover Olympic buildings from the 1998 Winter Games

- Osaka - Choose from visiting the city aquarium, riding one of the big ferris wheels, exploring Osaka Castle or sampling the city's nightlife
- Matsumoto - Explore Matsumoto Castle, visit sake breweries, charming museums and try the local speciality, soba noodles
- Tsumago - Step back in time in this quaint post town and follow the old samurai trail
- Hiroshima - Choose from visiting the Peace Park and Museum, Hiroshima Castle, the baseball stadium, the Hiroshima Prefectural Museum of Art or the Shukkei-en Garden
- Miyajima Island - Enjoy the relaxed pace of life on this Japanese isle, take a cable car ride from Mount Misen, explore the island's many temples and shrines and do some shopping
- Kinosaki Onsen - Stay in a traditional Japanese inn, try local cuisine and visit the bathhouses and hot springs, for which it is famous for

What's Included

- Breakfast daily and 3 dinners
- 13 nights STANDARD hotels and ryokan. SUPERIOR and DELUXE hotel options are also available upon request. Accommodation rating – See Trip Notes for details
- Arrival transfer via shared public shuttle bus from Tokyo Airport

- Departure transfer via shared shuttle bus to Osaka Airport
- Full day of guided sightseeing in Tokyo
- Cooking class in Tokyo
- Full day of guided sightseeing in Kyoto
- 14 day Japan Rail Pass
- Train from Tokyo to Nagano
- Train from Nagano to Matsumoto
- Train from Matsumoto to Nakatsugawa
- Train from Nagiso to Kyoto
- Train from Kyoto to Kinosaki Onsen
- Train from Kinosaki Onsen to Hiroshima
- Train from Hiroshima to Osaka

What's Not Included

- Entrance Fees: USD\$50-65pp, paid locally in local currency
- International flights and visa
- Tipping - An entirely personal gesture

ITINERARY

Day 1 : Welcome to Japan!

Welcome to Tokyo! You will be met upon arrival at Tokyo Narita Airport and escorted by shuttle bus to your hotel in the city. Look out for some great views as you ride the elevated highways into town, and spend the rest of the day exploring the city at your own leisure.

Overnight - Tokyo

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Konnichiwa Japan

Day 2 : Sightseeing in Tokyo



Enjoy a full day of guided sightseeing in Tokyo led by a local guide, offering a perfect introduction to the city. Travelling by public transport, as Tokyoites do, you will get a real feel for city life and your guide will help you discover aspects of Tokyo that you would not be able to find on your own. Rather than a fixed itinerary, you can enjoy the flexibility of seeing and doing exactly what you want.

You could start the day by visiting Asakusa, Tokyo's historic district. Here you can browse the bustling market place of Nakamise Dori, visit the famous Senso-ji Temple and explore the backstreets lined with Kabuki theatres, rustic bars and restaurants. From Asakusa you can take a river cruise on the Sumida River to the Hamarikyu Gardens, a peaceful oasis of greenery and exquisite Japanese aesthetics in the heart of a bustling city.

A short train journey from here can take you to Harajuku, the focal point for Tokyo's teen culture where you will find teenagers hanging out wearing quirky and extreme fashions. Nearby you can visit Meiji Jingu, one of the most famous and important shrines in Tokyo. Then why not end the day surrounded by the bright lights of Shinjuku, Tokyo's main business and entertainment district. Spend the rest of the evening discovering the city on your own.

Overnight - Tokyo (B)

Day 3 : Japanese Cooking Class

Today, try your hand at preparing Japanese cuisine with the help of a local. Together with your host you'll head out to the local market to shop for fresh ingredients before going to the kitchen, set up in the local cultural centre

of the Yanaka District of Tokyo, known for its artisans and craftspeople. Here, you'll be shown how to prepare a traditional Japanese meal including classic dishes such as sushi, tempura or teriyaki chicken, which of course you can then enjoy for lunch. **Overnight - Tokyo (B)**

Day 4 : Tokyo to Nagano



Tokyo - Nagano. Today you will leave Tokyo behind and journey by rail to Nagano in the Japan Alps. Nagano has a history stretching back to the Kamakura period (1185-1333) when it was a temple town centred around Zenko-ji Temple. The temple is still Nagano's main attraction with more than 4 million visitors a year. Recently, the city has gained international fame as the host of the 1998 Winter Olympics. As well as a fair amount of debt, the games left a legacy of improved transport, great English tourist information, some wonderful Olympic buildings and a cosmopolitan atmosphere. Nagano Station was rebuilt for the Olympics and has two sides: East and Zenko-ji. Take the latter for the city centre and Zenko-ji Temple. Nagano makes a great base for day trips to Matsumoto Castle, as well as visiting the famous snow monkeys in Yudanaka Onsen. **Overnight - Nagano (B, D)**

Day 5 : Nagano to Matsumoto



Nagano - Matsumoto. Today journey southwest of Nagano to the alpine city

of Matsumoto, surrounded by the towering peaks of the Japan Alps. The city is most famous for its original castle which is only a short distance from the station. This is one of the only original castles in Japan and really gives you a sense of ancient Japan and how the samurai used to live and fight. The city also boasts a number of sake breweries, hidden in the backstreets amongst the traditional buildings, a good museum of Ukiyoe woodblock prints, and is the home of soba noodles, the local speciality which is particularly delicious.

You could also try some of the city's other local delicacy - raw horse! The city has a really relaxed atmosphere and a cosmopolitan feel befitting of a city renowned for its musicians and authors. The famous violin teacher, Suzuki (of the Suzuki method) originated from Matsumoto and you will find a commemorative statue on the street opposite the station.

Overnight - Matsumoto (B)

Day 6 : Matsumoto to Tsumago

Matsumoto - Nakatsugawa - Magome - Tsumago. Today make your way to Tsumago, the jewel of the Kiso Valley, which was once a post town on the old Nakasendo Highway linking the ancient capital of Kyoto with Matsumoto. Today, Tsumago is loved for the residents' efforts to preserve the town's Edo period ambiance. Power lines are hidden away and cars banned from the main roads during the daytime so that the beautiful, traditional buildings and flag-stone streets can be seen in their true glory. A stay in Tsumago is to step back in time to experience old Japan; a world away from the robots, gadgets and gizmos that many associate with modern Japanese cities. The walk along the old samurai trail from the neighbouring village of Magome through Tsumago and on to Nagiso is highly recommended.

Note: A number of different transports will be utilized today between towns including a 8km walk, please see our Trip Notes for further details.

Overnight - Tsumago (B, D)

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Day 7 : Tsumago to Kyoto



Tsumago - Kyoto. This morning you will travel by train to Kyoto, Japan's ancient capital and the cultural centre of the nation. One of the most culturally rich cities in Asia, Kyoto is home to 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, over 1,600 Buddhist temples and 400 Shinto shrines, this ancient city showcases the heart and soul of traditional Japan. Spend the rest of the day at your own leisure exploring the city. **Overnight - Kyoto (B)**

Days 8-9 : Sightseeing in Kyoto

On day 8, enjoy a full day of sightseeing in Kyoto, travelling by public transport with a private guide. With no fixed itinerary and a knowledgeable local at your side, you will be set for a great day in this amazing city and are sure to discover things you might otherwise miss.

You may want to start your day at Kinkakuji - Kyoto's famous Golden Pavilion Zen Temple which is decorated with gold leaf and stands over a tranquil pond. From Kinkakuji in the north of the city you can then head to Kiyomizu Dera Temple in the east. This impressive wooden structure is perched on a hillside surrounded by woodland and looks out across the city.

The afternoon could be spent at Fushimi Inari Shrine in the south of the city. This shrine's appeal is the thousands of red torii gates which creates a network of pathways through the wooded forests of Mt Inari, linking the various buildings of the shrine together. You may want your guide to finish the day of sightseeing by taking you to the Gion Geisha District where, if you are lucky you will be able to see a Geisha shuffling through the streets

between appointments. Spend day 9 at your own leisure in Kyoto.

Overnight - Kyoto (B:2)

Day 10 : Kyoto to Kinosaki Onsen



Kyoto - Kinosaki Onsen. This morning take the train to Kinosaki Onsen, renowned for its hot springs. The town boasts seven bathhouses which sits amongst pretty streets of traditional wooden buildings and narrow bridges. Visitors to Kinosaki Onsen enjoy a stay in a Japanese inn where sumptuous cuisine is served at low tables in tatami rooms. Afterwards guests dress in provided 'yukata' and 'geta', light kimonos and wooden sandals, and take to the streets for a pleasant evening stroll around town.

Men and women separate and enter the bathhouses for several dips in the different hot springs. For the Japanese, onsen bathing has always been a spiritual experience, as cleanliness and purity are linked to Shintoism. There is certainly something magical about Kinosaki Onsen and the town has inspired Japanese poets and artists for centuries.

Overnight - Kinosaki Onsen (B, D)

Day 11 : Kinosaki Onsen to Hiroshima

Kyoto - Hiroshima. Today you will take the train to Hiroshima, a city that needs little introduction. It is of course infamous for being the site of one of two atomic bombs dropped on Japan at the end of the Second World War. The Peace Park and Museum are a poignant reminder of the reason for Hiroshima's fame and everyone should spend an afternoon in this part of town. Other attractions in Hiroshima include Hiroshima Castle and the baseball stadium. Shukkei-en Garden is well

worth an afternoon stroll with a number of tea houses dotted about the grounds, and the Hiroshima Prefectural Museum of Art contains some wonderful paintings by both Japanese and Western artists. **Overnight - Hiroshima (B)**

Day 12 : Day trip to Miyajima Island



Enjoy a day trip to Miyajima Island from Hiroshima. The island is perhaps best known for the red torii gate of Itsukushima Shrine which appears to be floating in the sea. In the evening, this gate and the shrine behind it (as well as other traditional buildings in the area) are floodlit and the atmosphere is magical. A cable car takes you to see fantastic views across the Inland Sea from Mount Misen, the highest point of the island. There are many pleasant walks on Miyajima among the temples and along the bustling shopping street in the island's small village.

You may also see some of the island's native fauna, the sacred deer are easy to spot as they roam freely, but you'll have to work a little harder to spot any of the resident monkey population - keep your eyes peeled! Miyajima is a wonderful place to slow down, unwind and relax, so take your time and let the magic of this island enchant you!

Note: From June 2019 the floating Torii Gate is undergoing renovations – please see the Trip Notes for further details.

Overnight - Hiroshima (B)

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Day 13 : Hiroshima To Osaka



Hiroshima - Osaka. This morning you will leave Hiroshima behind and travel to Osaka, Japan's second largest urban area and an extremely vibrant and lively place to stay. The city aquarium is world class and you cannot stay in Osaka without taking a ride on one of the city's several giant big wheels, perhaps the most dramatic of which is perched on top of the Hep 5 Department Store in the Umeda district of the city - just don't look down if you are afraid of heights! Osaka Castle is well worth a visit despite being a reconstruction as the original was burnt down during the firebombing at the end of World War II and you will find a variety of very interesting museums scattered throughout the city.

After dark, Osaka really comes alive and a walk through the bright lights of the Nanba District is a great way to take in the atmosphere, with some great people-watching opportunities. With literally thousands of restaurants, bars and entertainment spots to choose from, Osaka is perfect for a big night out, some hearty local food and the chance to let your hair down.

Overnight - Osaka (B)

Day 14 : Goodbye Japan!

Today your adventure in Japan comes to an end. A departure transfer by shuttle bus will take you to Kansai Airport for your onward travels.

Consider spending some extra time exploring more of Japan's amazing history and UNESCO Listed Sites. Extend your stay by a day, a week or even two! We offer a variety of properties for you to choose from. Browse our best places to visit, best time to visit, top 10 Japan experiences pages for suggestions

on what to see and do on your holiday. If you can't find what you're looking for, please let us know so we can accommodate your request.

For information about visas, top travel tips and much more, take a look through our travel guide.

Overnight - Osaka (B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Sunroute Plaza Shinjuku

Renovated in 2007, the chic Sunroute Plaza Shinjuku offers contemporary accommodation in Japan's capital. Guest rooms are tastefully furnished in a modern style with comfortable amenities. The hotel also offers a number of excellent dining options including the Villazza trattoria style restaurant and the Bar Ku Kon Shinjuku dining experience! Why not sip on a delicious cocktail by the crackling fire - a great way to spend the evening! Located in the west of the city - a short walk from Shinjuku train station.



Zenkoji Fuchinobo

Located within the premises of Zenkoji Temple, Fuchinobo is a temple lodging which has a long history and tradition. Staying here offers an insight into the workings of a Buddhist temple - pilgrims have stayed in these lodgings for centuries and Fuchinobo guards the oldest Buddhist statue in Japan dating back almost 1,400 years. Guest rooms at the temple lodgings are simple Japanese-style - tatami mat flooring and futon mattresses. Rooms are

not en-suite but there are communal baths (men and women separately). Breakfast and dinner are 'shojin ryori' - that's strictly vegetarian Buddhist cuisine that uses seasonal locally harvested ingredients. In the early morning (5.30am in summer, 7am in winter) guests are invited to join the temple's morning meditation service. There's then a tour of the temple before breakfast.



Richmond Hotel Matsumoto

A short walk from the train station, Richmond Hotel Matsumoto is a modern hotel with excellent facilities. Guest rooms are well furnished with high speed internet, complimentary Wi-Fi, comfortable beds and beautiful en suites. The property also boasts a restaurant serving an interesting breakfast menu and vending machines on the 2nd, 3rd and 7th floors. Located close to the Watch Museum and the River.



Minshuku Daikichi

Hotel Vista Premio

Nestled in the heart of Kyoto just a short walk from the Gion District, the Hotel Vista Premio offers travellers a wonderful combination of comfort and convenience. Guest rooms are contemporary in style with a few traditional aesthetic Japanese touches and all feature ensuite facilities with deep soaking bathtubs. The hotel benefits from two restaurants serving both local and international cuisine and complimentary WiFi is available in public areas.

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Yamamotoya Ryokan

Situated just a short walk away from Kinosaki Onsen Station, Yamamotoya offers travellers authentic Japanese-style accommodation in a central locale. Guest rooms consist of traditional tatami-mat flooring with futon bedding and free WiFi, while bathroom facilities are shared. The property benefits from its very own brewery and a hot-spring bath where guests can unwind after a day of sightseeing. There's also the opportunity for guests to try on Yukata robes and experience a Japanese tea ceremony.



Sunroute Hotel

In the heart of Hiroshima, the Sunroute Hotel is a modern hotel. Guest rooms are well furnished and some offer excellent views over the city. The onsite restaurants serve a variety of dishes including traditional Japanese as well as tasty Italian. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout. Perfectly located across from the famous Peace Park and Atomic Bomb Museum.



Cross Hotel

The Cross Hotel is a smart hotel located on Dotombori, one of the most famous and lively streets in all of Japan never mind just Osaka. The hotel has been recently refurbished in a sleek, modern design, giving it something of a boutique feel. Rooms

are well designed and generously sized. The hotel is well located near a plethora of restaurants and bars in the surrounding streets.



PRICES / DATES INFO

Prices shown are 'per person', based on a travelling party of at least 2 adults. The single supplement price needs to be added to the 'per person' price if single rooms are required. If travelling solo, an additional '1-person' supplement will apply. Prices are indicative and will vary depending on your chosen hotels, room availability as well as time of travel. Please bear this in mind if comparing prices as we always aim to deliver exceptional value.

PRICES / DATES 2020

Date	Twin Share	Single
22 Sep	USD 4,435	USD 5,905

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