



Hike the Sacred Trail

Our hiking itinerary allows you to venture off the beaten track and explore the beauty of Japan's flora and fauna. Perfect for all hiking enthusiasts, you will have the opportunity to visit some of Japan's lesser known, more beautiful locations. Start off in Kyoto – the cultural heartland of Japan. Discover scenic areas such as the lush Sagano Bamboo Grove, the breath-taking Kyoto Botanical Gardens and the serene Fushimi Inari Shrine. Venture to the south of Wakayama Prefecture to embark on your very own pilgrimage on the Kumano Kodo trail, much like the Imperial Family did over 900 years ago. Visit the majestic three Grand Shrines to pay respect to the gods thought to dwell there. Next head to Hiroshima and enjoy its peaceful and historical atmosphere. A short trip away is the former feudal domain of Iwakuni. You will then sail to “Rabbit Island”, a National Park Resort that is now a haven for friendly rabbits. Finally head to Osaka and discover hidden green spaces in Japan's second city.



Kyoto

Kyoto is where you will find the Japan of silent temples nestling in bamboo groves, gardens of finely raked sand and bewitching geisha. This city is home to over 2,000 temples and shrines, exquisite crafts and some of the best cuisine in the country. In short, Kyoto is the heartbeat of traditional Japan. Not to be missed are Kinkaku-ji, Ginkaku-ji and Kiyomizu temples, although be aware that these do become crowded. For a more peaceful, intimate temple experience we recommend the temple complex of Daitoku-ji, in particular Daisen-in sub-temple, and the Arashiyama area to the west of the city.

Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Trail

For over a millennium, the sacred trails of the Kii Peninsula have been traversed by pilgrims, as legend has it that this mountainous region is the home of Japan's nature spirits. Everyone from samurai and emperors to monks and peasants have visited the shrines hidden deep within the area's forests. In 2004, the Old Roads of Kumano became one of only two walking routes recognised as a World Heritage Site.



Hiroshima

Hiroshima is an attractive, cosmopolitan city which has risen from the ashes of the world's first atomic bomb attack on 6 August 1945. The hypocentre of the explosion is now the Peace Memorial Park, a beautiful expanse of greenery housing monuments to the tragedy. The park is flanked by the A-Bomb Dome and the Peace Memorial Museum.

Iwakuni

During the Edo Period, Iwakuni used to be one the feudal domains of Japan. Best known for its structurally unique Kintaikyo Bridge, this area is particularly attractive during the cherry blossom season in early April. Its former mountain-top castle was reconstructed in the 1960s and overlooks the city 200 metres below.



Okunoshima ("Rabbit Island")

A small island located just offshore from the coast of Hiroshima Prefecture is home to over 1,000 rabbits. Many tourists visit to seek good fortune for their family's fertility and blessing of safe childbirth. The island is currently part of a national park and offers a wide variety of things to enjoy such as hot springs, fishing and sampling local delicacies.

Osaka

Known as the "kitchen of Japan", Osaka is renowned for its warm-hearted, lively locals. Osaka Castle dominates the city as the old mixes with the very modern skyline, and the aquarium is not to be missed. The city comes alive at night with endless opportunities to wine, dine and party.



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The Itinerary

Day 1 – Arrival in Japan

Welcome to Japan! Our friendly Meet & Greet service representative will be waiting in the Arrivals lobby and holding a sign with your name on. The Meet & Greet will direct you to the Limousine Bus to Kyoto. Check in to your hotel in Kyoto for 4 nights on a bed & breakfast basis.

Day 2 – Kyoto

Start your day by visiting picturesque Arashiyama. Walk through the lush Sagano Bamboo Grove and enjoy watching monkeys play at nearby Monkey Park Iwatayama. Another option is to ride on the Sagano Scenic Railway through the forested ravine and return via a refreshing river cruise.

Optional guided excursion:

Join a morning guided walking tour. Visits include Tenryuji Temple, the Sagano Bamboo Grove, Jojakkoji Temple and the Togetsukyo Bridge, and concludes with a Japanese-style lunch in a Yakatabune boat.

Day 3 – Kyoto

This morning embark on a Hidden Kyoto Bike Tour. Learn about Japanese history and culture of Kyoto as you cycle to sights off the beaten track. After lunch, we recommend you visit the beautiful Kyoto Botanical Gardens, peaceful Daitokuji Temple and the grounds of Kotoin Temple. We can also offer several cultural classes to experience such as flower arranging or calligraphy.

Day 4 – Kyoto

After breakfast, why not stroll southwards along the Philosopher's Walk in the footsteps of one of Japan's most famous philosophers Nishida Kitaro. Next we suggest you make the ascent up to Fushimi Inari Shrine and walk through its



thousands of torii gates. Alternatively go for a warm-up hike up Mount Hiei for an amazing view of Kyoto, and end your day riding down the Hieizan Ropeway.

Day 5 – Kyoto to Takahara (Kumano Kodo pilgrimage trail)

Over the next 4 days, experience the unique cultural landscape of Kumano's spiritual countryside. Worship at the three Grand Shrines and search for heaven on earth. After arriving at the coastal town of Tanabe, today's hike takes you

through Takijiri-oji to Takahara (known as the "village in the mist"). Stay one night in your first minshuku (family inn) with dinner included tonight.

Day 6 – Takahara to Tsugizakura-oji (Kumano Kodo)

Today marks the longest but most rewarding hike. After collecting your homemade bento (lunch), walk on paved paths and mountain trails through Chikatsuyu village to Tsugizakura-oji. Many walkers opt to eat their lunch en route to





appreciate the tranquil surroundings. Travel on to your second minshuku and relax with a delicious dinner.

Day 7 – Tsugizakura-oji to Kawayu Onsen (Kumano Kodo)

Your hosts will provide you with a delicious homemade bento before you go. Learn about the interesting history and culture of the area from your English-speaking Guide today as you hike towards the first Grand Shrine. Soak in either an indoor bath or the river hot springs tonight for a well-earned rest at your third Kumano minshuku. A seasonal dinner will be prepared for you.

Day 8 – Kawayu Onsen to Shingu/ Nachikatsuura to Nachi Falls (Kumano Kodo)

Your last pilgrimage day will start off by sailing down the Kumanogawa River to the coastal town of Shingu. Offer your prayers at the second and third Grand

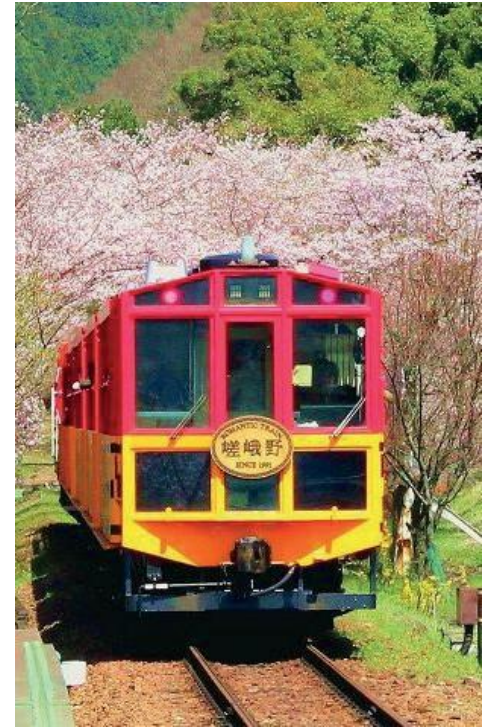
Shrine. A short bus ride or walk away is Nachi Waterfall, where a picturesque scene of an orange pagoda in front of Japan's tallest waterfall awaits you, a perfect place to eat your homemade bento. Stay in a lovely minshuku with beautiful views of the waterfall for one night.

Day 9 – Nachi Falls to Hiroshima

Transfer by Bullet train to Hiroshima and check into your hotel for 3 nights. Explore the moving Peace Memorial Museum located inside the Peace Memorial Park. Tonight sample Hiroshima's local delicacy – okonomiyaki.

Day 10 – Hiroshima/Iwakuni

Travel to former feudal domain Iwakuni, best known for its most distinguished landmark the 5 arched Kintaikyo Bridge. Stroll around Kikko Park, featuring former samurai residences. Take the ropeway to the amazing view from the lookout before coming across the striking 4-story Iwakuni Castle.



Day 11 – Day Trip to Rabbit Island (Okunoshima)

Take the ferry to Rabbit Island for an unforgettable day trip. Home to over 1,000 rabbits, visit these friendly critters at this National Park Resort and experience a cuteness overload. Learn about Okunoshima itself at the island's museum and end your day travelling to the summit for a 360-degree panoramic view.

Day 12 – Hiroshima to Osaka

Head to Osaka for your final day and night in Japan where you will stay for one night in a hotel. Wander around Tennoji Park or visit the Minoh Waterfall – both lovely spots for photos. Osaka Castle is also well worth a visit. Tonight splash out on a farewell dinner in one of Osaka's famous restaurants.

Day 13 – Depart Japan

Sadly, it's time to leave Japan. Transfer to Kansai International Airport and return to the UK, arriving the same day.





Price Includes:

- 8 nights' accommodation in a Twin/Double room at 3* or 4* hotels in Kyoto, Hiroshima and Osaka on a bed & breakfast basis
- 3 nights' accommodation in friendly Japanese minshuku along the Kumano Kodo trail on a dinner, bed & breakfast and packed lunch basis
- 1 night's accommodation in a friendly Japanese minshuku along the Kumano Kodo trail on a dinner, bed & breakfast basis
- 1-Day Kansai Area Pass allowing you unlimited travel on Special Rapid, Rapid and Local trains on designated JR West lines
- 5-Day Kansai Hiroshima Area Pass allowing you unlimited travel on Special Rapid, Rapid and Local trains on designated JR West lines including Shinkansen (Bullet Train) services
- Morning/Afternoon Escorted Kyoto Bike Tour on Day 3
- Full Day Guided Hike on the Kumano Kodo on Day 7
- Transfer from Kansai International Airport (Osaka) by Airport Limousine Bus
- Meet & Greet services on arrival at Kansai International Airport (Osaka)
- Detailed Japan Journeys Information Pack including detailed train schedules, maps, & brochures.
- Personalised Japan Journeys App to help manage your documents
- All Japanese sales taxes and service charge
- Full financial protection via Japan Journeys' membership of the Travel Trust Association through which your monies are held in a Trust Account until you return home (under Membership No. U3078)

Not Included In Price:

- Optional excursions (see below)
- Meals and drinks (other than those mentioned above)
- International airfare
- Insurance
- Baggage transfer

3* ACCOMMODATION	4* ACCOMMODATION	5* ACCOMMODATION
Hotels/Temple lodging per person. <i>from £2,675.00</i>	Hotels/Temple lodging per person. <i>from £3,295.00</i>	On Request
<i>from £670.00 Single Supplement</i>	<i>from £600.00 Single Supplement</i>	

Optional Guided Excursions:

Kyoto: £135.00 per person morning tour, including lunch

To make a booking, a deposit of 10% of the total price or £250.00 per person (whichever is greater) is required. The balance of the price of the trip must be made 12 weeks prior to departure.

HOW OUR INDEPENDENT TOURS WORK

Enjoy independent travel but not the hassle of planning? One of our Independent Tours could be just the ticket. Carefully put together by our team of specialists, our excellent collection of sample itineraries are designed to inform and inspire your next Japan adventure. Every one of our Independent Tours is fully tailor made for you, ensuring your trip is everything you want it to be.

It's quite straight forward to travel independently in Japan. We will provide just the right amount of support and logistical planning to make you feel comfortable in a very foreign land. These itineraries are available for any departure date (with a few exclusions which coinciding with Japanese National Holidays and some weekends). We'll do all the work for you and provide you with an information pack to make your trip run smoothly. You can also add guided tours as indicated and if you do want your own personal guide, we can arrange this too.

WHAT NEXT?

If you're interested in this itinerary, please let us know the following and we will get back to you with a quote:

- Your proposed dates of travel
- Your preferred grade of accommodation (e.g., 3*, 4*, or 5*)
- Your preferred room type (e.g., Double, Twin or Singles)
- How many adults and children this is for (and the age of the children at the time of travel)

NOT FROM THE UK?

Don't worry! We deal with countless passengers from outside of the UK. You just need to let us know the information above (and you can arrange your own flights to Japan).

To find out more, call one of our specialists now on 0208 064 2771



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