

JAPAN OFF THE BEATEN PATH

SMALL GROUP PRIVATE TAILOR-MADE TOUR

JAPAN - 07 October 2025 – 23 October 2025



Join a Private Small Group Tour for a journey to some of Japan's top destinations, with quality hotels and transportation, plus rare immersive experiences unlike those you'll find on other tours.

If you have never visited Japan or have had the opportunity to visit and have a thirst to see more off the beaten path scenery and villages then this Small Group 17-day trip is not to be missed. This in depth off the beaten path tour of Japan promises an immersive journey from Tokyo to Osaka, blending modernity with ancient traditions and stunning natural beauty.

This tour offers a balanced mix of Japan's modern attractions, historical sites, cultural experiences, and natural beauty, making it an ideal choice for those looking to explore both well-known and off-the-beaten-path destinations.

Here are the highlights of the itinerary:

Tokyo to Kyoto

- **Tokyo:** Begin in the bustling metropolis, known for its skyscrapers, shopping, and vibrant culture.
- **Kamakura:** Visit the Great Buddha and stroll through the serene bamboo forests.
- **Hakone Izu National Park:** Witness the majestic Mt. Fuji and enjoy the park's natural beauty.
- **Kyoto:** Explore historical temples, shrines, and the picturesque Geisha District.
- **The Shinkansen**, commonly known as the "bullet train," is Japan's high-speed rail system renowned for its speed, efficiency, and punctuality

Historic Trails and Villages

- **Kumano Kodo Trail:** Experience a short walk on this ancient pilgrimage route, known for its spiritual significance and beautiful landscapes.
- **Osatsu-kamado Ama Hut and Mikimoto Pearl Island:** Learn about the ama divers, women who have harvested oysters and seafood for centuries.
- **Shirakawa-gō Village:** Discover this UNESCO World Heritage Site, famous for its 'Gassho-style' houses with steeply pitched thatched roofs.
- **Nakasendo Way:** Take a short hike on this historic route, one of the five main roads during the Edo period, connecting Edo (Tokyo) to Kyoto.
- **Shinkansen**, commonly known as the "bullet train,"

Cultural Experiences

- **Koyasan:** Stay in temple lodging, sleep on traditional futon bedding, and enjoy vegetarian meals while experiencing the history and traditions of temple life.
- **Tea Ceremony:** Participate in a traditional tea ceremony, dressed in a kimono, and learn the art of preparing matcha.
- **Kyoto:** Conclude the trip with a three-night stay in this vibrant city known for its modern architecture, nightlife, and delicious street food.



Day to Day Itinerary

Tues, October 7, 25	Day 1	Tokyo Arrival	Met and transferred to your Hotel
Wed, October 8, 25	Day 2	Tokyo - city tour (BL,)	Asakusa district, Sensō-ji Temple, Nakamise Shopping Street, Sumo show experience with lunch, Meiji Jingu,
Thur, Oct 9, 25	Day 3	Tokyo – Yokohama – Fuji (BD)	Transfer to Yokohama (1 hour by coach) Visit Yamashita Park, Cup Noodles Museum, Ramen Museum, Red Brick Warehouse Then transfer 1.5hours to Mount FUJI.

Frid, Oct 10, 25	Day 4	Fuji – Hakone – Fuji (BD)	Transfer 1 hour to Hakone Visit Hakone Open Air Museum Hakone, short 1-1/2 hour optional hike of a nature trail, Ropeway Owakudani Valley a boat ride on Lake Ashinoko
Sat, Oct 11, 25	Day 5	Fuji (BD)	Visit the picturesque village of Oshino Hakki and Arakura Sengen Shrine take a short nature trail walk.
Sun, Oct 12, 25	Day 6	Fuji - Nagoya – Takayama (BD)	Transfer to Shinkansen train station MISHIMA station. The Shinkansen, commonly known as the "bullet train," is Japan's high-speed rail system renowned for its speed, efficiency, and punctuality We will experience riding the Shinkansen to Nagoya, where we will transfer to a train heading to Takayama. A guide will accompany us throughout the journey. *Shinkansen time: Mishima 10:55 - Nagoya 12:37, Nagoya 12:48 - Takayama 15:12 *Please prepare 1-2 days' worth of carry-on luggage. Your larger luggage will be delivered to your hotel in Takayama and will arrive the next day at the earliest. *After arriving Takayama station, walk about 5-7min to hotel.
Mon, Oct 13	Day 7	Takayama - (BD)	Morning market. Takayama Jinya, YaTai Kaikan museum & Takayama's Old Town During your visit, you'll have the opportunity to taste local sake
Tues, Oct 14, 25	Day 8	Takayama – Shirakawa & Kanazawa- Takayama (BD)	Kenrouku en (garden) and Higashi Chaya District
Wed, Oct 15, 25	Day 9	Takayama - Nakasendo – Nagoya (B)	Nakasendo Way (short hike 4 hours max)
Thur, Oct 16, 25	Day 10	Nagoya – Ise (BLD)	Ise Jingu, Okage Yokocho, Osatsu-kamado Ama Hut, Mikimoto Pearl Island
Frid, Oct 17, 25	Day 11	Ise - Kumano(Nachikatsuura (BD)	Kumano Kodo trail and complete a Short Walk to Kumano Nachi Taisha, a Shinto shrine located halfway up Nachi Mountain, about 350 meters above sea level and Nachi

			Waterfall.
Sat 18, Oct 17, 25	Day 12	Kumano(Nachikatsuura) (BD)	Morning easy walk or option to continue for a full day hike
Sun,Oct 19 25	Day 13	Kumano (Nachikatsuura)-Koyasan (BD)	Morning transfer to Koyasan, afternoon visit Koyasan temples of Okunoin, Kongobu-ji and Garan
Mon, Oct 20,25	Day 14	Koyasan - Kyoto (B)	Early this morning, we will be invited to participate in morning religious services and Goma prayers. transfer to Kyoto Fushimi Inari Shrine Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum Tea ceremony
Tues, Oct 21, 25	Day 15	Kyoto (B, L)	Arashiyama, Bamboo forest, Kinkaku-ji Temple, Gion
Wed, Oct 22 30, 25	Day 16	Kyoto (B)	Free day Dress in Kimono Sushi cooking class
Thurs, Oct 23, 25	Day 17	Kansai Departure (B)	Transfer to Airport

PROPOSED ITINERARY

Day 1 -Tokyo

Upon arrival in Tokyo you will be transferred to your hotel. Most flights arriving in the evening so you may wish to consider adding a pre night stay which can be arranged.

Take the evening to relax after your flight and prepare for your first full day of touring tomorrow.

Day 2 -Tokyo

This morning, you will begin your full-day coach tour of Japan's ultramodern capital - Tokyo! Ensure you allow enough time to enjoy your breakfast and to meet your Tour Leader in the lobby at 8:15am. Visit Asakusa district, Sensō-ji Temple, Nakamise Shopping Street. Visit Imperial Palace Grounds,

Sumo show experience with lunch, Japan's most beloved sport, enjoy a briefing about sumo and the wrestler's daily life followed by some demonstrations by retired sumo champions.

After lunch, visit Shibuya, Shibuya Scramble Square. **Breakfast Lunch**

Day 3 Tokyo - Yokohama -

After breakfast we will transfer by coach to Yokohama (1 hour by coach)

Visit Yamashita Park, The first seaside park in Japan located right in front of Yokohama Port, stretching almost 700 meters from the east side of Osanbashi to Yamashita Pier. It was opened in 1930 by land filling with the rubbles from the Great Kanto Earthquake. The park includes a grass field, a rose garden, the "Little Girl With Red Shoes On" statue, the "Guardian of Water" statue which is a gift from San Diego, a sister city of Yokohama, and the "Kamome no Suihei-san (Seagull Sailor)" song monument, water stairs and a stage.

Shin-Yokohama Ramen Museum Founded on March 6th, 1994, the world's first ramen food park offers a unique and immersive experience. Delve into the rich history of ramen, create original cup noodles using photos from your smartphone, or try your hand at traditional noodle making! Step back in time with a meticulously created retro townscape from 1958, complete with renowned ramen restaurants, retro cafes, and candy stores reminiscent of the Showa era. Indulge in the finest ramen and savor the nostalgic flavors of old Japan. Why not enjoy noodles for lunch.



After lunch we will visit the Red Brick Warehouse. The chilled vibe of the Red Brick Warehouse starts with its unique architecture. It's a massive building complex made of - surprise - red bricks, which are quite unusual in Japan. This is a good place for souvenir shopping, as quite a few shops offer items bearing the name or image of the Red Brick Warehouse, and of other local Yokohama products. You will have time to purchase wonderful products made in Japan. Later transfer 1.5 hours to Mount Fuji and your hotel. **(Breakfast/Dinner)**



Day4 Mount FUJI - Hakone - Mount FUJI

After breakfast we will transfer by coach 1 hour to Hakone Open Air Museum. Afterwards take an optional nature trail hike - Kawaguchi Asama Shrine→The torii gate→Haha no Shirataki waterfall → back to Kawaguchi Asama Shrine Approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes

Approximately 4.5 km

Kawaguchi Asama Shrine is the first place where pilgrims heading for Mt. Fuji who have crossed Misaka Pass put their hands together. The shrine enshrines Konohanasakuyahime, the deity of Mt. Fuji, and is a component part of the Mt. Fuji World Heritage Site. The route starts from the forest on the shrine grounds, where the sacred Seven Cedars stand tall, to Haha no Shirataki, where the clear sound of water can be heard in the mountains behind. The waterfall, dedicated to Kakuha Chichihime, was a sacred place where people would perform misogi (a purification ritual) before climbing Mt. Fuji. Even today, the area is enveloped in pure air, cleansing both body and mind. In mid-winter, the shrine becomes covered in ice, adding to its majesty. The path leads further up the waterfall to Chichi no Shirataki and the Mitsutoge hiking trail. After Then take a scenic boat trip on the lake afterwards hop on the Ropeway

(Breakfast/Dinner)

Museum Description: This was a time when sculpture was beginning to move outdoors, both in and outside of Japan. Sculpture with an open feel was made from a variety of different materials, replacing traditional sculpture focusing on weighty solidity. Sculpture expanded spatially as it became larger and larger in size, and the term “environmental sculpture” emerged.

The use of a specific outdoor site as an exhibition space for sculpture was also in keeping with the times. This spot in Hakone offers hills, streams, and ponds, with views of the mountains on both sides and the sea in the distance at the horizon. From the outset, the site met several of the prerequisites for a Japanese Garden.



Mt. Fuji

Registered by the World Cultural Heritage, Japan's tallest mountain Mt. Fuji is a foremost tourist site in Japan. On a clear, fine day, the grand, beautiful mountain can be seen from Owakudani and the Hakone Ropeway over the infamous Owakudani Valley. The observation platform offers breathtaking views of 'Owakudani', Hakone's most famous tourist spot. Desolate mountainside covered by plumes of smoke produce a distinct scene so fitting the area's former name of Hell Valley. Passengers can see the bottom of the valley below, and, when on route to Togendai, you can enjoy views of Mt. Fuji and Lake Ashi.

Day 5 Mount FUJI

Today we will visit **Arakura Sengen Shrine** a red five-story pagoda, the scenic park located on the mountainside of Mt. Arakura and in front of Mt. Fuji, offers a panoramic view of the city. Many Japanese people visit the park in spring and autumn to hike. Later we will also visit the **village of Oshino Hakki** this village is located at the foot of Mount Fuji, Oshino Hakkai is a small village very popular with Japanese people. Developed to highlight local crafts, this thatched village is the 6th lake in the region! The reconstructed traditional village with its **thatched-roof houses**, tall grass and **watermill**, Oshino Hakkai stands out from the other villages that surround Japan's highest mountain. **Listed as a World Heritage Site since 2013 for its unique architecture**, this small town is now mainly **dedicated to local crafts**.

Although the village is still home to **9,200 inhabitants**, it is its centre laid out in the Edo era that attracts all eyes. And every day, **many visitors** come to stroll through its shopping streets where **Japanese pastries** and traditional **restaurants** mingle with **souvenir**. **Later return to our hotel** (Breakfast/dinner)



Day 6 Mount FUJI - Nagoya - Takayama

This is one of the highlights of your tour riding on the Shinkansen train..

The **Shinkansen**, commonly known as the "bullet train," is Japan's high-speed rail system renowned for its speed, efficiency, and punctuality

We will experience riding the Shinkansen to Nagoya, where we will transfer to a train heading to Takayama. A guide will accompany us throughout the journey.

*Shinkansen time: Mishima 10:55 - Nagoya 12:37, Nagoya 12:48 - Takayama 15:12

***Please prepare 1-2 days' worth of carry-on luggage.** Your larger luggage will be delivered to your hotel in Takayama and will arrive the next day at the earliest. After arrive Takayama station, walk about 5-7min to hotel. **(Breakfast/Dinner)**



Day 7 Takayama

In Takayama this morning we'll visit Takayama morning market.

Then visit Takayama Jinya, YaTai Kaikan museum & Takayama's Old Town

During your visit, you'll have the opportunity to taste local sake, made using pure mountain water and traditional brewing techniques. Many breweries offer guided tastings, where you can learn about the sake-making process and the unique flavors of the region. **(Breakfast/Dinner)**

Day 8 Takayama - Shirakawa& Kanazawa-Takayama

Today we'll travel to Shirakawa-gō Village, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that has more than 100 'Gassho-style' houses, which feature steeply pitched roofs. Built many hundreds of years ago, these historic houses stand together in a beautiful natural setting. Enjoy exploring this unique village with its thatched-roof houses sitting among gorgeous mountain scenery.

Then we will take a brief tour to visit Kenrouku en (garden) and Higashi Chaya District, a beautifully preserved and picturesque historical area of Kanazawa.

(Breakfast/Dinner)

Day 9 Takayama - Nagoya

Today we will do a short hike on the famous Nakasendo Way (4 hours max) The Nakasendō, also called the Kisokaidō, was one of the five routes of the Edo period, and one of the two that connected Edo to Kyoto in Japan. There were 69 stations between Edo and Kyoto, crossing through Musashi, Kōzuke, Shinano, Mino and Ōmi provinces.**(Breakfast)**



Day 10 Nagoya - Ise

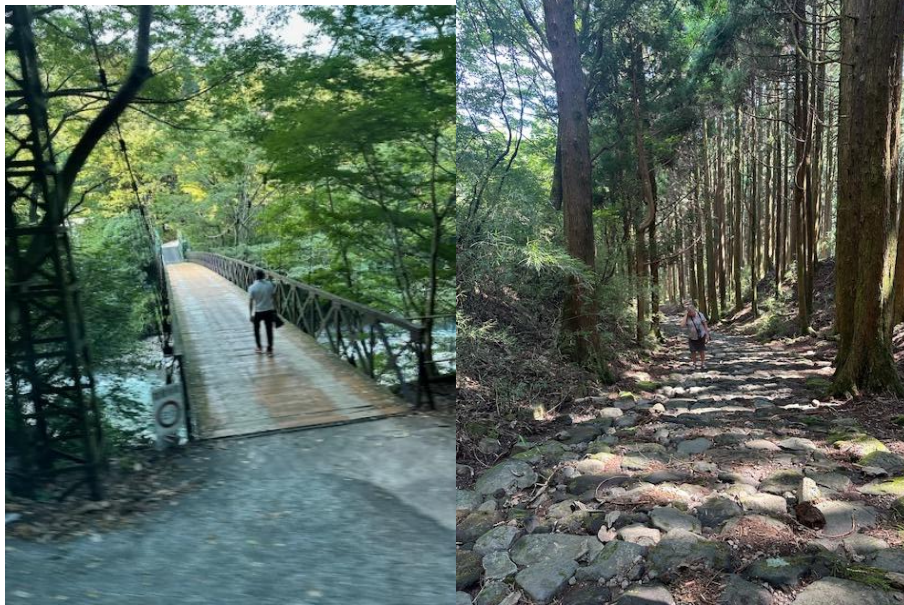
Transfer 2.5 - 3hours to Ise, visit Ise Jingu, Okage Yokocho, Osatsu-kamado Ama Hut, Mikimoto Pearl Island Today we will visit Ise Jingu (Ise Shrine), the Shinto shrine that the Japanese adore as "Soul of Japan", and Okage Yokocho, which is in the middle of Oharai-machi, a town that developed near the gate of Ise Jingu Shrine's Naiku. There are many little stalls to explore.

We will then visit Osatsu-kamado Ama Hut and Mikimoto Pearl Island to learn about the female divers, known as ama (lit. "sea women"), who have traditionally been planting and harvesting oysters and other seafood. **(Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner)**

Day 11 Ise -Kumano (Nachikatsuura)

Today we will visit the Kumano Kodo trail and complete a Short Walk to Kumano Nachi Taisha, a Shinto shrine located halfway up Nachi Mountain, about 350 meters above sea level and Nachi Waterfall.

With an awe-inspiring 133m drop, Nachi Falls is Japan's largest waterfall with a vertical drop waterfall. After lunch for those who are feeling fit you can continue the hike for approx. 3 hours. Otherwise the vehicle will transfer the rest of the group directly to the hotel. **(Breakfast/dinner)**



Day 12 Kumano – (Nachikatsuura)

Today we will do another short section of the trail and visit Kumano Hongu Taisha, one of the Kumano region's three famous shrines and the great gate of Oyunohara. As well as enshrining its own deity, Hongu Taisha also enshrines the deities of the other two Kumano shrines, Hayatama Taisha and Nachi Taisha, and the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. It serves as the head shrine of over 3000 Kumano shrines across Japan. Breakfast//Dinner

Day 13 – Kumano (Nachikatsuura) - Koyasan – Morning transfer to Koyasan, afternoon sightseeing Koyasan.

Tonight, we will stay in Temple lodging in the sacred Koyasan and experience the history and traditions of temple life including sleeping on traditional futon bedding on tatami mats and vegetarian meals. (Breakfast/ Dinner)



Day 14 Koyasan - Kyoto

Early this morning, we will be invited to participate in morning religious services and Goma prayers. After a delicious vegetarian breakfast, we will visit the temples of Okunoin, Kongobu-ji and Garan

before transferring to Kyoto. Fushimi Inari Shrine
Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum) **(Breakfast)**

Day 15 Kyoto

This morning, we tour Kyoto. Visit Arashiyama, a stunning area known for its thick bamboo forest, which is also designated by the Japanese government as a Place of Scenic Beauty, Kiyomizu Dera temple and Kinkaku-ji Temple, otherwise known as the Golden Pavilion. This is a Zen temple and a UNESCO World Heritage Site with two floors covered entirely in thin layers of pure gold. The site is set within a beautiful classical Zen Garden. The detailed architecture of Kinkaku-ji incorporates three distinct architectural styles – Shinden, Samurai, and Zen. **We will visit Gion is a district of Kyoto, Japan, famous for its geisha culture and traditional architecture. Learn about its history, divisions, entertainment, events, and appearances in popular culture.** ..For lunch we will dive into Sushi Making! Take a closer look at the fascinating world of sushi, extending from the ocean to your plate. Learn the art of sushi- making from a sushi master, then enjoy your creations afterwards.
(Breakfast/lunch)



Day 16 Kyoto Today we'll take part in a Tea ceremony with the opportunity to dress in a Kimono. Kimonos are a traditional Japanese garment that were first introduced in Japan in the Heian period. Also called Chado, "the way of tea" is the traditional and ceremonial preparation and presentation of Matcha. You will be shown how to prepare the tea and be able to experience preparing it as well. Free afternoon to explore more of Kyoto. **(Breakfast)**

Day 17 Kyoto - Kansai Airport

Today marks the end of your incredible tour through Japan. Transfer to Airport for your flight home.

Inclusions

16 nights standard 3-4-star twin share accommodation, rooms are all 20 sq

1 night temple stay

Breakfast daily, 3 Lunches, 10 Dinners

Japanese Professional tour guide and experienced local guides

The Shinkansen, commonly known as the "bullet train," is Japan's high-speed rail system renowned for its speed, efficiency, and punctuality

Dedicated air-conditioned coach transportation

In-depth sightseeing as per the itinerary

All monument entrance fees as per the itinerary

Return airport transfers

Accompanied by a Tour Leader

Exclusions

Travel insurance (Compulsory)

Personal expenditure and anything not stated

Proposed Hotels or Similar

Day 1 Tokyo - Mitsui Garden hotel
Ginza <https://www.gardenhotels.co.jp/ginza-gochome/eng/>
Day 2 Tokyo - Mitsui Garden hotel
Ginza <https://www.gardenhotels.co.jp/ginza-gochome/eng/>
Day 3 Mount FUJI - Mount Fuji
hotel <https://www.mtfuji-hotel.com/>
Day 4 Mount FUJI - Mount Fuji
hotel <https://www.mtfuji-hotel.com/>
Day 5 Mount FUJI - Mount Fuji
hotel <https://www.mtfuji-hotel.com/>
Day 6 Takayama - Hotel around Takayama Day
7 Takayama -Hotel: TAKAYAMA GREEN
HOTEL <https://www.takayama-gh.com/en/> Hotel
around Takayama
Day 8 Takayama - Hotel: TAKAYAMA GREEN
HOTEL <https://www.takayama-gh.com/en/>
Day 9 Nagoya - Hotel Vessel
Nagoya <https://www.vessel-hotel.jp/campana/nagoya/>
Day 10 Ise - Tdaya <https://www.todaya.co.jp/>
Day 11 Nachikatsuura - Namenoi hotel
Nachikatsuura <https://kamenoi-hotels.com/en/nachikatsuura/>
Day 12 Nachikatsuura - Namenoi hotel
Nachikatsuura <https://kamenoi-hotels.com/en/nachikatsuura/>
Day 13 koyasan - Sekisho-
in https://www.sekishoin.jp/lg_en/
Day 14 Kyoto - Karasuma THE HOTEL HIGASHIYAMA
by Kyoto Tokyu
Hotel <https://www.tokyuhotels.co.jp/en/higashiyama-h/index.html>
Day 15 Kyoto – THE HOTEL HIGASHIYAMA by Kyoto
Tokyu <https://www.tokyuhotels.co.jp/en/higashiyama-h/index.html>

Day 16 Kyoto - THE HOTEL HIGASHIYAMA by Kyoto
Tokyu
Hotel <https://www.tokyuhotels.co.jp/en/higashiyama-h/index.html>

Private Tea Ceremony- This experience includes conversations with a tea ceremony instructor, demonstration of the tea preparation, and the chance to make your own matcha, allowing you to immerse yourself in the rich culture of tea ceremony.

Kimino Dressing. Choose freely from over 300 kimonos, belts, and bags. Enjoy seeing the sights in Kyoto in an outfit you created yourself. Price per person based on the group returning kimono at the shop by the end of the day. * Customers under 150 cm in height (small), ^[11]_[SEP]over 170 cm (tall), and heavy-set customers (wide) must choose from the special size plan

Sushi chef experience

■Time: 1.5 hours

■Summary

You will be provided with a paper Japanese hat, apron, and gloves, so you can feel like a sushi chef. You will also be making at least eight pieces of sushi in one experience class, so you will learn the weight of the rice with your hands and experience making sushi using the same steps as a real sushi chef. Eat it on the spot and a certificate of completion for each sushi-making course to those who complete the experience class.

Option to arrive early in Tokyo

Option: Stay on and visit Osaka Hiroshima

If you would like to arrive a day earlier and depart later, please advise us on booking your tour so that we can arrange your accommodations



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