



*Educational
Tours*

Japan: Kyoto, Hiroshima and Kyushu



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Japan



Program Fee includes:

- Round-trip airfare
- 9 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms (12 with extension)
- Breakfast and dinner daily
- Full-time bilingual EF Tour Director
- 3 sightseeing tours led by licensed local guides: Kyoto • Hiroshima • Nagasaki
- 3 sightseeing tours led by your tour director: Miyajima Park • Mount Aso • Dazaifu
- 9 visits to special attractions: Inari Taisha Shrine • Kiyomizu Temple • Gold Pavilion Istukushima Shrine • Peace Memorial Museum Mount Inasa • Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum Tenmangu Shrine • Komyozenji Temple

OPTIONAL:

Nara

WITH EXTENSION: All of the above PLUS:

- 1 sightseeing tour led by a licensed local guide: Tokyo
- 3 visits to special attractions: Meiji Shinto Shrine • Sumida River cruise Asakusa Kannon Temple
- Optional: Nikko



The floating torii at Miyajima Park guards the entrance to the Istukushima Shrine, dedicated to the god who protects against sea disasters and war.

Day 1 Flight

Overnight flight to Japan • Relax as you fly to Japan, the Land of the Rising Sun.

Day 2 Osaka

Arrive in Osaka • Touch down at Kansai International Airport. The third-largest city in the country, modernized Osaka is the industrial and commercial center of western Japan, and its air and seaports make it a major transportation hub for Pacific Asia. Skyscrapers dot the landscape, none more distinctive than the Umeda Sky Building, whose all-glass composition reflects the bustle of the modern city all around. As with all the progressive Japanese cities, Osaka is certainly not without ties to the past—it is the birthplace of *bunraku*, the traditional form of puppet drama, and is still considered the best place in the world to take in a performance.

Day 3 Osaka • Kyoto

Transfer to Kyoto • Drive to Kyoto, one-time hub of Japanese civilization and national capital for more than a thousand years. Beginning at the onset of the Heian Period in A.D. 794, the Imperial family resided here until the capital was changed to Tokyo in 1868. Kyoto is a city rich in history—pagodas can be seen alongside Shinto shrines, old imperial villas

and Buddhist temples. Time-honored crafts such as silk weaving, ceramics and lacquer ware have been made here for generations.

Guided sightseeing of Kyoto • Discover the majestic nature of Kyoto, an intricate blend of the ancient and the modern. Today's guided sightseeing begins at the Fushimi Inari Taisha Shrine, arguably the most impressive of the country's shrines to the Shinto god of rice, sake and fertility. Thousands of bright reddish-orange *torii* (gateways marking the entrance to a shrine) cover the hill on which the shrine is located. You may also notice an abundance of fox statues; the fox was thought to be the messenger of the god. Continue to the stunning Kiyomizu Temple, dating back from 798, though its present buildings were constructed in 1633. *Kiyo mizu* means "pure water" and



Number of overnight stays in parentheses.



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was aptly named for the waterfall within the complex. You will also marvel at another temple, Kinkaku-ji (or Golden Pavilion). Gold leaf covers the second and third stories of this much-photographed Chinese Zen-influenced temple that boasts beautiful gardens.

Day 4 Kyoto

Optional half-day excursion to Nara • Today, opt to join an excursion to Nara, another of Japan's ancient capitals. See *Daibutsu*, the world's largest bronze statue of a Buddha. Then walk through the wooded Nara Park, whose informal nickname, "Deer Park," stems from its sizable deer population. Just outside the park, you will visit Kasuga Shrine, one of the most famous Shinto shrines in the country. Twice a year, some 3,000 lanterns are lit simultaneously at the shrine in celebration of the Lantern Festival.

Free time in Kyoto • The rest of the day is free for you to discover Kyoto on your own. Perhaps you'll choose to explore the Kyoto National Museum, which features traditional Japanese art objects and treasures. Or simply wander the canal-lined streets and let the wooden homes, bonsai trees and occasional kimono-clad geisha in traditional makeup take you back to years past.

Day 5 Kyoto • Hiroshima

Bullet train to Hiroshima • Faster than a speeding bullet, Japan's Shinkansen, or bullet trains, travel about 170 miles per hour. Before you know it, you will arrive in Hiroshima, the largest city in the Chugoku region of western Honshu, the biggest of Japan's islands.

Excursion to Miyajima Park • Become awestruck as you explore the breathtaking Miyajima, or the Sacred Island. It is most famous for its "floating" *torii*, the gate that guards the entrance to the Itsukushima Shrine, dedicated to the god who protects against sea disasters and war. This floating gate was built as a pier for the sacred island and commoners were not allowed to touch the ground; visitors would have to enter by boat. There are no cemeteries here—because of the extreme sanctity of the island, in ancient times, no one was permitted to be born or die here. People who were ill or pregnant were ferried off to the mainland. The park is also home to hundreds of tame deer, a five-story pagoda dating from 1407 and multiple Shinto temples.

Guided sightseeing of Hiroshima • An expert local guide introduces you to Hiroshima, where the world's first atomic bomb was dropped on August 6, 1945, killing thousands both from the immediate blast and from radiation sickness in the months following. First visit

Peace Memorial Park, a UNESCO Heritage Site that contains the Atomic Bomb Dome. The dome is what remains of the Industrial Promotion Hall after receiving a near-direct hit by the atomic bomb and now serves as a reminder of the tragedy. The Peace Memorial Museum here focuses on the devastation of the nuclear attack and its toll on the community, both on that fateful day and in the months and years to come. The park is host to several memorials, including the Memorial Cenotaph, which contains the names of all of the known bomb victims, and the Children's Peace Monument, inspired by the story of a leukemia patient, Sadako. Upon learning of her cancer at age 10 (nearly nine years after being exposed to the atomic bomb), the little girl set out to fold 1,000 paper cranes, symbol of longevity in Japan, convinced that if she could complete her goal she would survive. She died after folding 644 cranes, but the children at her school completed the remaining ones for her, and launched a nationwide bout of crane-folding. Today, the memorial is perpetually filled with paper cranes sent from schools across the country.

Day 6 Fukuoka

Transfer via the Brocade Sash Bridge • En route to Fukuoka, you will see the Kintai-kyo, also known as the Brocade Sash Bridge, in Iwakuni. Originally built in 1673, the bridge

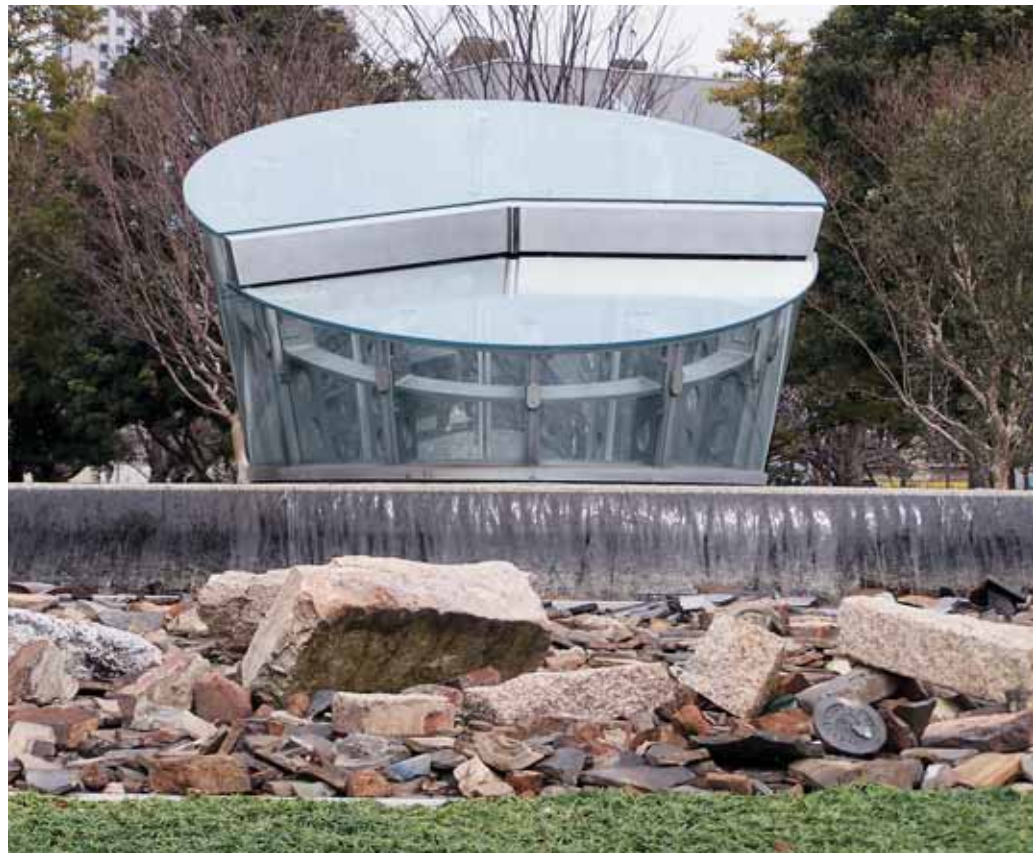
was flooded by a typhoon in 1950 but has been faithfully reconstructed. The five distinct arches are said by some to resemble the sash on a kimono.

Arrival in Fukuoka • Crossing the bridge over Kanmon Strait, arrive on the island of Kyushu—a region of rugged green mountains, volcanoes and hot springs. Its largest city, Fukuoka, was until recently simply a place to stock up on provisions as quickly as possible en route to Kyushu's more picturesque regions. However, over the past few years, it has established itself as western Japan's major cultural center and an important international gateway. Fukuoka also claims the country's biggest hotel, longest bar, largest cinema complex and most advanced baseball stadium.

Day 7 Fukuoka

Full-day excursion to Mount Aso • Today, explore the composite active Mount Aso, featuring the world's largest caldera, stretching 11 miles east to west and 15 miles north to south. The caldera holds five volcanic peaks, one of which (Aso) is still active. Perhaps most interesting are the 50,000 people who live among the grassy, cow-inhabited towns and villages inside the caldera. Hop aboard a cable car that will take you to the rim of the Aso's gigantic, bubbling crater. Please note: Access to the crater may be prohibited due to volcanic activity.

The Ground Zero monument in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park marks the epicenter of the city's attack by the atomic bomb.



Day 8 Nagasaki

Transfer via tour director-led sightseeing of

Dazaifu • En route to Nagasaki, your tour director shows you Dazaifu, best known for its Tenmangu Shrine, dedicated to the 9th-century scholar Suguwara No Michizane, the god of learning. The city is also a draw for its cherry blossoms, which draw in crowds especially in late February and early March, the onset of spring.

Visit to Mount Inasa • Nicknamed the “Ten Million Dollar Night View,” Mount Inasa’s summit offers a spectacular way to marvel at Nagasaki—from 1,092 feet above sea level!

Arrival in Nagasaki • Continue to Nagasaki.

Day 9 Nagasaki

Guided sightseeing of Nagasaki • A local guide introduces you to Nagasaki, the second city to fall victim to the atomic bomb, shattering the lives of hundreds of thousands on August 9, 1945. Originally, Kokura was the target, but due to cloud coverage over the city and a low fuel tank, the decision was made to go with the secondary target of Nagasaki. Visit the Peace Park, created with donations from all over the world. Explore the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, created in memory of the bomb’s victims, with nearly 900 artifacts that serve to educate future generations about the horrors that were suffered here. Then make your way to Glover Garden, named for Scotsman Thomas Glover, who at the age of 21 set up permanent residence in Japan and contributed to the modernization of Japan, notably in the shipbuilding and coal-mining industries. In the late 1800s, when the city was opened to foreign trade, successful merchants built impressive colonial-style homes here. The Glover House, also called the Madame Butterfly House, is the oldest surviving house of this kind in Japan.

Day 10 Fukuoka

Transfer to Fukuoka • Return to Fukuoka for the night.

Free time in Fukuoka • The rest of the day is yours to explore Fukuoka. Maybe you will head to Canal City for shopping and people-watching among the dozens of stores, restaurants, cafés—and, of course, the running canal through the middle of the complex. For something a little more upscale, try the boutiques and “fashion buildings” of Tenjin, the city’s main shopping and dining district. Or head in a different direction—farther west to the ruins

of the 17th-century Fukuoka Castle and the nearby Ohori Park, created in part by using what were once the castle’s moats.

Overnight in traditional Japanese-style accommodations • Experience true Japanese hospitality when you spend your last night here in traditional ryokan accommodations—sleep on a futon in the simple surroundings of a Japanese inn with tatami-matted floors and a traditional Japanese bath. Remember to remove your shoes as you enter the ryokan!

Day 11 Osaka • Home

Depart for home • Transfer to the airport for your flight to Osaka, where you will board your return flight to the United States.

EXTENSION

Day 11 Tokyo

Flight to Tokyo • Alternatively, continue on to Tokyo. The modern-day capital of Japan, Tokyo is the national center of government, education and finance, and home to 12 million residents.

Day 12 Tokyo

Sightseeing in Tokyo • The sights, sounds and smells of the largest city in Japan come at you from all directions, but your licensed local guide will put it all in perspective. Begin with a visit to the Meiji Shinto Shrine and its elaborate wooded Inner Garden. Pass through Harajaku, the trendy district popular among the younger Tokyoites, and continue through the Shopping District. Then visit the Imperial Palace, residence of the Imperial family, with its gigantic stone walls, a spacious plaza and a large garden open to the public. Afterwards, finish your tour with a cruise on the Sumida River to Asakusa, Tokyo’s amusement center. The 7th-century Asakusa Kannon Temple, dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy, is a five-story pagoda surrounded by shops, restaurants, theaters and cinemas.

Day 13 Tokyo

Visit to a fish market • The fishing industry is one of Japan’s most important—an early visit to a fish market will confirm its significance. Starting well before dawn, fishing ships from all over the world pull into port bearing the harvest of their work out at sea. Among the seemingly endless surge of sea life the fishermen unload, tuna is the most well-represented. Eventually, the catch of the day will end up in

the hands of restaurateurs and retailers. You will have a chance to witness the first step of its journey from the sea to your plate.

Optional excursion to Nikko • Those with an appreciation for natural beauty will want to take advantage of this optional excursion to Nikko, a national park of rivers, lakes and wooded highlands. Park visitors engage in a wide range of recreational activities, from mountain climbing to skating. You will visit the five-story pagoda of Toshugo Shrine—be sure to “Hear no evil, speak no evil and see no evil” beneath the three monkeys whose poses represent the age-old admonition. Then witness the awesome power of Mother Nature at the 300-foot Kegon Waterfall, and trace your way to the falls’ origin—the deep blue waters of Lake Chuzenji. Stop at the Bonsai Garden before returning to Tokyo.

Included Tempura Dinner • Tempura, one of the better-known Japanese culinary delights, consists of fresh seafood and vegetables dipped in batter and cooked in vegetable and sesame oil. Tonight, you will enjoy this regional delicacy at an included tempura dinner. Try many different kinds—tempura can be anything from shrimp or squid to eggplant or sweet potato—and don’t be afraid to experiment. Tempura connoisseurs have one more piece of advice: Get it while it’s hot!

Day 14 Tokyo • Home

Free time in Tokyo • Enjoy free time to absorb the one-of-a-kind atmosphere of this ultra-modern urban setting. While you could fill a morning simply meandering the streets and feeling the rush of the city around you, there is no shortage of cultural and historical sights to anchor your explorations. Perhaps visit Sensoji Temple, the city’s oldest and most popular temple. According to legend, it was constructed to honor the Buddhist goddess of mercy and happiness. Alternatively, survey the wide-ranging collection of Japanese art at the massive Tokyo National Museum. If you’re looking for peace and quiet, you might seek out one of the tranquil Japanese gardens.

Return home • Your tour director assists with the transfer to the airport, where you’ll check in for your return flight home.

For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions.

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