

Japan Discovery

Cherry Blossoms | 28 March - 12 April 2025



Days **16** From **\$11,795** per person twin share

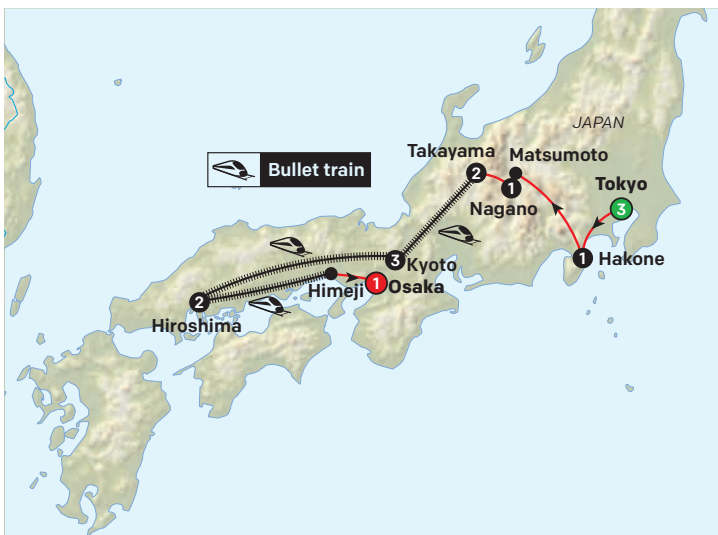


Airfares included

Gippsland Departure

BunnikTours

Modern Japan retains much of its traditional charm, where ancient customs infuse daily life. Explore the true highlights of Japan on this fascinating adventure. Discover Tokyo, where ornate temples and glass skyscrapers reside effortlessly alongside each other. Be amazed at the beauty of Mt Fuji, experience an authentic ryokan guesthouse in Hakone, ride the bullet train to cultural Kyoto, and pay tribute in moving Hiroshima.



Sightseeing

- See the iconic Mt Fuji while riding the Hakone Ropeway
- Visit the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum and be moved by this harrowing moment in history.
- Spend a night in a traditional ryokan guesthouse

Special Experiences

- ★ Experience a sumo wrestling demonstration before savouring a traditional Chanko-Nabe (a sumo hotpot-style stew) lunch at a local restaurant
- ★ Take part in a soba noodle making class
- ★ Enjoy a tasting experience at a local sake brewery in Kyoto and learn how Japan's drink of choice is made
- ★ Delve into the stunning art form of Japanese black ink calligraphy and try your hand at perfecting this ancient art
- ★ Learn the way of the warriors of pre-modern Japan, the Samurai, during an interactive lesson

Day 1. Depart Australia

Day 2. Arrive Tokyo

Welcome to Tokyo, Japan's buzzing capital city. We'll get acquainted with the city on our own this afternoon, before meeting our fellow travellers and tour guide this evening.

Day 3. Tokyo ✂ BLD

Today is an exciting and fascinating day, dedicated to exploring Tokyo. We begin with a visit to the scenic and spacious Imperial Palace East Garden, which provides a calm oasis amid the bustle of Tokyo.

★ *Experience a sumo wrestling demonstration before savouring a traditional Chanko-Nabe (a sumo hotpot-style stew) lunch at a local restaurant.*

This afternoon we'll stroll through the shopping district of Ginza on our way to dinner. We'll also experience the hustle and bustle of Shibuya, including the famous Shibuya crossing - one of the busiest in the world! We take to Tokyo Bay and admire the city lights on a dinner cruise this evening in a typical Japanese-style houseboat.

Day 4. Tokyo ✂ BL

Tokyo's downtown Shitamachi district is home to an array of sights, culture and a great mix of old and new. Today we'll explore the district's Asakusa Sensō-ji Temple. This Buddhist temple is one of Tokyo's most colourful and popular. We'll also stroll Nakamise-dori shopping street, one of the best places in Tokyo to purchase souvenirs. We'll then learn the age-old culinary art of making sushi and enjoy the results for lunch. The rest of the day is free for you to enjoy at leisure.

Day 5. Tokyo - Hakone ✂ BD

This morning we'll visit a former farming village, Iyashi-no-Sato Nenba. We'll then arrive in the mountainous town of Hakone, where we'll enjoy a cable car ride on the Hakone Ropeway and see views of the iconic Mt Fuji (weather permitting). We will stop along the Hakone Ropeway and see the magnificent Owakudani Valley, created about 3,000 years ago when the Hakone Volcano last erupted. Tonight, we'll be staying in an authentic ryokan guesthouse. We'll also have the chance to bathe in a natural onsen (hot springs) and enjoy a traditional Japanese dinner.

Day 6. Hakone - Matsumoto - Nagano ✂ B

We'll make our way to Nagano today via the mountain city of Matsumoto. The city is home to one of Japan's premier historic castles, Matsumoto Castle. We'll visit the castle which was built in the 16th century, admiring its architecture and learning about its rich history.

★ *Take part in a soba noodle making class, used in a variety of Japanese dishes.*

Day 7. Nagano - Takayama ✂ B

This morning, we'll visit Zenkoji Temple, one of Japan's oldest and most important Buddhist temples. Upon arrival in Takayama, we'll explore the narrow streets of the Old Town on foot. We'll see Takayama Jinya, a traditional Japanese building dating back to 1816, before making our way to the Sanmachi Suji District. The quaint streets of the district are lined with old-style merchant houses that date back to the Edo and Meiji periods.

Day 8. Takayama - Shirakawago - Gokayama - Takayama ✂ BL

This morning we'll visit one of the biggest morning markets in Japan, the Miyagawa Open Air Market. We then make our way to the UNESCO World Heritage-listed site of Shirakawa-go, famous for its gasshō-zukuri, thatched roofs. We'll then observe the traditional art of Japanese Washi papermaking in Gokayama. Rice paper, or Washi as it is known, is commonly used in the traditional paper-folding art of Origami, practiced since the early 1600s.

Day 9. Takayama - Kyoto ✂ B

All aboard Japan's famous bullet train system for our journey to Kyoto. Upon arrival we'll delve into the unique craft of sake brewing.

★ *Enjoy a tasting experience at a local sake brewery in Kyoto and learn how Japan's drink of choice is made.*

Later today we'll explore the incredible tunnel of orange Torii Gates that make up Kyoto's famous Fushimi Inari shrine.

Day 10. Kyoto ✂ B

This morning we'll walk along Philosopher's Path, a tranquil start to our day of exploring Kyoto. The path is an enchanting and peaceful place in the city.

★ *Delve into the stunning art form of Japanese black ink calligraphy and try your hand at perfecting this ancient art.*

Afterwards, we'll experience a traditional tea ceremony in Kyoto. The remainder of our day is free to enjoy at leisure.

Day 11. Kyoto ✂ B

Today is at leisure to relax or discover more of Kyoto at your own pace. Why not visit the Gion district? Gion used to serve as the entertainment region and is best known as the home of Geisha and Maiko.

Day 12. Kyoto - Hiroshima ✂ BL

Our first stop this morning is the stunning Kinkaku-ji Temple (Golden Pavilion), an exemplar of traditional Japanese architecture. We'll then enjoy a typical Buddhist lunch before touring the beautiful UNESCO World Heritage-listed Tenryu-ji Temple. Later we'll walk through the Arashiyama Bamboo Forest for a moment of peace and tranquillity. Our final stop is a visit to the Togetsukyo Bridge, or 'Moon Crossing Bridge'. This afternoon, we travel to Hiroshima by bullet train.

Day 13. Hiroshima - Miyajima - Hiroshima ✂ B

The island of Miyajima lies just off the coast from Hiroshima and is renowned for its solitude, magnificent views and the Shrine of Itsukushima, built on wooden piers over the water. We'll take the ferry to the island this morning and have some time to ourselves to enjoy this UNESCO World Heritage-listed site. This afternoon we'll visit some of Hiroshima's important sites, including the Peace Memorial Park, the Atomic Bomb Dome, and the very moving Peace Memorial Museum, commemorating the dropping of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima.

Day 14. Hiroshima - Himeji - Osaka ✂ BD

Our day begins with a bullet train ride to Himeji Castle, Japan's largest and most-visited castle. It is regarded as the finest surviving example of Japanese castle architecture. We'll enjoy time at the castle and in the nearby beautiful Kokoen Gardens, a short walk from the castle's main gate.

★ *Learn the way of the warriors of pre-modern Japan, the Samurai, during an interactive lesson.*

Many Samurai lived by the concepts of loyalty to one's master, self-discipline and ethical behaviour. They were also adept with the bow and sword. Tonight, we'll enjoy a Japanese-style group farewell dinner.

Day 15. Depart Osaka ✂ B

Today marks the end of our incredible journey across Japan. We hope you leave with fantastic memories!

Day 16. Arrive Australia

Inclusions



Small Groups

Our maximum group size is 20



Travel

- Return economy-class flights from Australia to Japan. Taxes included
- Airport transfers on the first and last day of tour
- All touring in air-conditioned vehicles
- Bullet trains from Nagoya-Kyoto, Kyoto-Osaka, Himeji-Hiroshima, and Hiroshima-Fukuoka
- Limited Express train from Takayama - Nagoya



Transportation

Bullet train, cable car, coach, ferry, local train & Yakatabune cruise



Accommodation

- 13 nights in 3-4 star hotels
- 2 nights in a traditional ryokan guesthouse, Hakone



Meals

15 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 4 dinners, including group welcome and farewell dinners



Tour Guides

English-speaking locally based national guide throughout



Tips

Tipping is not part of the Japanese culture, so tips are not expected



Himeji Castle, Japan



Shibuya Crossing, Japan