



A Week in Japan Dossier Classic Tour | 9 Days | Moderate

Tokyo – Hakone – Kyoto - Osaka

Stand amongst the neon lights and skyscrapers of Tokyo, explore the regal grandeur of Kyoto, and admire the perfect symmetry of Mt Fuji. This whirlwind tour delves into Japan's most important cities and the natural beauty of Hakone.

Tour Highlights:

- Travel on the super-fast bullet train
- Stroll through vibrant Tokyo
- Experience Osaka's foodie scene
- Ascend beautiful Mt Fuji



A Week in Japan tour inclusions

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals (From dinner on day two to breakfast on the last day)
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English-speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more travellers) or Local Guides

Personal expenditures e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary are at your own expense.

Classic Tours

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Japan on an excellent value group tour travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully-inclusive basis so you will travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escort and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

Moderate

'A Week in Japan' is a **moderate** tour. Tours that require a higher level of fitness and may include standard activities and longer periods of sightseeing. Easy walking, high altitude and overnight train journeys may feature.

- On several days there will be sightseeing on foot for extended periods of time, often involving steps or uneven ground.

Anyone with a good level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course, our National Escort/Local Guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. Please refer to your Travel Guide for more information.

Country Profile: Japan

Japan is a fascinating country situated in northeast Asia. It is comprised of more than 4,000 islands - the main four being Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku. The Japanese name for Japan is 'Nippon' or 'Nihon' meaning 'sun origin' and is often translated as 'Land of the Rising Sun'. It is a country of contrasts; engaging a combination of futuristic cities, ancient culture and diverse scenery. Japan is famous for its relatively short Cherry Blossom season.

Joining Your Tour

The tour is nine days in duration including international flights.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only, the price includes your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations.

Join the tour on Day two in Tokyo and end the tour on Day eight in Osaka. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Important Information Regarding Itinerary Changes and Flight Delays

Due to unforeseen circumstances, flights can be delayed, and therefore connecting flights may be missed. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact our Japan office on **+81 03 6895 8377 (24 hours)** to urgently advise your arrival details have changed. Please ensure you have your trip number, tour name (both included in your final documentation) and new arrival details (flight number and arrival time) handy to pass on to our local office in Japan. This will ensure your National Escort/Local Guide can be informed of your most up to date information and ensure someone is at the airport to meet you on arrival.

If we are not advised of late changes and missed connections, Wendy Wu Tours cannot guarantee someone will be able to meet you upon arrival in Japan as our local office will have no way of knowing which flight you will be arriving on. Wendy Wu Tours will not be responsible for providing reimbursement of transportation costs from the airport to your hotel in the event that our local office was not advised of changes to arrival time.

A Week in Japan Itinerary

DAYS 1-2: FLY TO TOKYO

Fly overnight to Tokyo, the capital of Japan, and on arrival, transfer approximately one and a half hours to your hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to explore the city until an informal welcome dinner tonight. Group members arriving late in the evening may miss dinner.

Please note: Early check in is not included. If your flight arrives in the morning and you wish to arrange this, please speak to your reservations consultant. Transfers will differ depending on group size, but you may share a coach with other travellers who are not part of a Wendy Wu Tour. Meals will be at your own discretion until dinner tonight.

Destination Information

Tokyo – One of the world's most cutting-edge capital cities, Tokyo is a city of contrasts, famous for its neon-lit landscape, towering skyscrapers, peaceful shrines and lovingly tended gardens. Although long the political and cultural centre of Japan, Tokyo became the official capital when the Meiji Emperor moved it to Tokyo in 1867.

DAY 3: EXPLORE TOKYO

Tokyo is the ultimate 24-hour city, but look behind its frantic, high-tech frontage and you'll find plenty of tranquil backstreets and old temples to explore; today take a tour by coach of this fascinating city. Head to the first observatory of the Tokyo Skytree for panoramic views over the city before taking a wander through the district of Asakusa for an opportunity to pick up some souvenirs on Nakamise Shopping street and visit Sensoji Temple.

Explore the Imperial Palace Plaza Garden (you will not enter the palace itself) and tranquil Hamarikyu Gardens. You will be on your feet for four to five hours during your touring in Tokyo. Return to your hotel where your guide will let you know what time to meet for this evening's dinner cruise.

Transfer from the hotel to your boat and take a leisurely one-hour dinner cruise on Tokyo Bay for some excellent city vistas. You will need to get on and off your boat this evening without assistance.

Please note the Imperial Palace East Garden is closed on Mondays and Fridays, should your visits fall on these days touring will be re-arranged in Tokyo so these sights are not missed.

Destination Information

Tokyo Skytree – Is the tallest structure in Japan and the tallest tower in the world. Tokyo Skytree is predominantly a television and radio broadcast tower and is earthquake resistant.

Sensoji Temple – An ancient Buddhist Temple and the oldest in Tokyo. The temple was originally founded in the seventh century. The temple adorns an image of the Buddhist Goddess Kannon, who was said to have been rescued by two fishermen from the Sumida River in Tokyo.

Imperial Palace Plaza – Is the main residence of the Emperor of Japan. Built on the original site of Edo Castle, the Plaza is made up of a palace, museum and large park.

Hamarikyu Gardens – Are a beautiful example of Japanese garden style which sits at the mouth of the Sumida River.

DAY 4: TOKYO – MOUNT FUJI – HAKONE

Journey two hours through the foothills of the iconic Mount Fuji to the mountain's base. The region is spectacular with the calm waters of the five lakes, formed by past volcanic eruptions, reflecting Fuji's picture-perfect cone. Head up Fuji's fifth Station for spectacular mountain vistas, please note it is only possible to reach the fifth station if weather permits. If the fifth Station is closed, the Fuji San World Heritage Centre (formerly Fuji Visitor Centre) will be visited instead. Continue to tranquil Lake Ashi. Take a cruise across the lake before taking the Komagatake cable car for spectacular views of Mount Fuji and the lake below. Transfer to Hakone where you will stay overnight.

Please note: You will need to pack a smaller overnight bag for tonight as your main luggage will be transferred this morning directly to your hotel in Kyoto.

Destination Information

Mount Fuji - At 3,776m, Mount Fuji is the highest of Japan's mountains and an iconic symbol of the country. Mount Fuji is notoriously shy and is often enveloped by clouds.

Hakone – Situated next to picturesque Lake Ashi, Hakone is a pleasant town, popular with weary Tokyoites looking for a break from the city and a great overnight stop after visiting Mount Fuji.

DAY 5: BULLET TRAIN TO KYOTO

This morning, transfer to Odawara Station, a journey of approximately one hour, to board your two-hour Hikari bullet train to Kyoto. An enchanting city, Kyoto was capital for a thousand years; today, it is the legacy of ancient Japan, full of tranquil temples, silk-clad geisha and sublime gardens.

After lunch at a local restaurant, visit the famous Fushimi Inari Shrine with its thousands of vermilion torii gates. Check in to your hotel and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

Destination Information

Kyoto - Was the ancient capital of Japan for approximately 1,000 years until 1867 when it was moved to Tokyo. Many national treasures can be found in Kyoto and in nearby Nara, including old shrines and temples, screen paintings, beautiful gardens, and statues of Buddha.

Fushimi Inari Shrine (Taisha) – An important Shinto shrine in southern Kyoto, Fushimi Inari is most famous for its thousands of vermilion torii gates which form a network of tunnels around the main shrine buildings. The shrine itself is dedicated to Inari, the Shinto god of rice. There are many fox statues in the grounds of the shrine as foxes are thought to be Inari's messengers.

DAY 6: EXPLORE KYOTO

Today involves a full day of sightseeing, with a lot of time spent on foot at busy temples and in public areas.

Begin your explorations of Kyoto with a visit to the Ryoanji Temple before heading to the Kinkakuji Temple, also known as the Golden Pavilion, due to its gold-plated exterior. After lunch at a local restaurant, learn the traditional Japanese handicraft of origami and enjoy the art of a tea ceremony. Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant within walking distance of your hotel.

Destination Information

Ryoanji Temple – A Zen temple which is renowned for its garden which features a dry, sand landscape with large rocks and smooth pebbles.

Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) – A Buddhist temple and is an excellent example of Japanese garden design. The structure is a brilliant golden hue colour and is very minimalistic.

Origami – The traditional Japanese craft of paper folding without glue or cutting. This colourful tradition is regarded a skilled art form in Japan and can be good fun to try.

DAY 7: EXPLORE NARA & OSAKA

Transfer by coach to Japan's former imperial capital Nara, a journey of approximately one hour. Visit Todaiji Temple, the world's largest wooden structure and home to Japan's largest Buddha. Also visit Isui-en Gardens, known for its natural ponds – sightseeing here will be about three hours on foot. Continue to Osaka by coach, approximately an hour's drive. On arrival, enjoy lunch in the vibrant Dotonburi District, a restaurant mecca, where you can sample delicious local delicacies. This afternoon, visit Osaka Castle before enjoying your final dinner in Japan.

Destination Information

Nara – Home to eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Nara is a rewarding destination and a great spot for Japanese culture.

Todaiji Temple – A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Todaiji Temple is one the Seven Great Temples of Japan and is home to the world's largest bronze statue, Daibutsu.

Osaka – Japan's third largest city. What Osaka lacks in sightseeing locations, it makes up for with its flamboyance, fun loving people and amazing food.

Osaka Castle – One of Japan's most famous castles known for sweeping views of the city from its hilltop perch. Construction began in 1583 by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who intended that the castle to become the centre of a new, unified Japan under his rule.

DAYS 8-9: FLY OSAKA TO AUSTRALIA

This morning is free at leisure before you transfer to Osaka airport for your return flight home.

Please note: Only breakfast is included today. Late check-out is not included in our A Week in Japan tour. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in Osaka, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

A Week in Japan Travel Information

Visas

Passports must be valid for six months beyond the length of stay. Visas are not required for Australian passport holders for entry into Japan for stays of up to 90 days.

Insurance

We strongly encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the originals.

Eating in Japan

Japanese cuisine is delicious, colourful and healthy. Meals are usually served with a bowl of rice and a bowl of miso soup and consist usually of fish, pickled vegetables and meat. Japan's other main staple is noodles, most famous being Udon and Soba. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout Japan. Food is an important element of Japanese culture. It is a time for families and friends to come together and much of family life revolves around the dinner table. Most food is eaten with chopsticks so best get practicing as cutlery is not always available at restaurants.

Breakfast will be buffet style. Lunches are mostly pre-set options as is custom in many local restaurants. Dinner is usually buffet-style, featuring a wide selection of high quality Japanese and Western dishes. We usually find this style of dining suits the wide and varied tastes of our customers on tour. These are also pre-booked in advance prior to your arrival by your guides. This will provide greater flexibility and allow you to sample a broad range of local cuisines and dishes. All beverages will be at your own expense and are readily available.

On some days where many sights are covered, dinner times may be early and your tour group may head directly to the restaurant after sightseeing without stopping at your hotel to freshen up.

Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. In the Fuji Five Lakes area, hotels tend to be more traditional in style and culture. In this area, you may be asked to take your shoes off at the door and store them in a secure locker – this is very traditional Japanese culture.

Hotels are generally rated as local three to four star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Australia and Japan. Please note that in Japan hotel rooms are renowned for being small and rooms booked for single use are usually smaller than a standard double or twin room, contain one small double bed (or one single bed), and are designed for one person to use. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Hotels in Japan often do not have porters and you will be required to carry your own luggage. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/local guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. Please note double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty please speak to your National Escort. Tea and coffee facilities are not always available in hotels in Japan, so bring your own supply of coffee and tea bags.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Roads in Japan are extremely well maintained and are comparatively smooth with the rest of Asia.

Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in Japan and therefore the local people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason, some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort/Local Guides.

Trains: Japan's transport system is well known for being efficient, clean and convenient. We like to make sure that you get the opportunity to travel with the locals, making use of the city's world-renowned bullet trains that will whizz you from city to city in no time. When taking the bullet train (Shinkansen) your main luggage will be transported separately due to limited space on the train. We recommend you pack a small overnight bag to take with you on the bullet train, which includes a change of clothes and other necessary items including any medication that is required.

Air: Pre-flight seat allocation is not available on international and internal flight sectors

Developments in Japan

Japan is a developed country and as such matches the west in modernity and technological advances. Japan is an extremely safe country and takes great responsibility in maintaining high safety standards.

Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a National Escort. There will usually be no more than 29 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of eight travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

Tipping Policy

Although tipping in Japan is not customary, if you feel you have received an excellent service, please feel free to tip your guide at your discretion.

Packing List and Climate

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on www.weather.com.

Luggage

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

Exchanging Cash

It is highly recommended that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money when travelling to cities outside of Tokyo. US Dollars and Australian Dollars can be exchanged at Narita Airport and in some hotels, provided the Australian currency is new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be very limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AUD\$250 per person, per week should be sufficient; however for those that cannot resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defence against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

Cultural Differences

Japanese society and culture is built on intricate social etiquette and customs. As foreigners, we are not expected to be knowledgeable about all etiquette, but it will make your time in Japan more enjoyable if you are respectful of local customs. Some examples of scenarios you may encounter include removing your shoes and hats when entering a temple or house (some restaurants as well). You may be supplied with slippers at some places, but please come prepared with plenty of spare socks, and shoes that are easy to take off for the fairly regular occasions when they must be removed. Your National Escort will advise you of some of these other customs at the beginning of your tour.

Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au.

Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

After your booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice with deposit documentation via email. This includes important information and links to access the visa application form and instructions sheet online (if applicable). Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately four weeks prior to departure.

Updated: 27th September 2017