



Highlights of Japan

10 Nights/9 Days

Tokyo – Hakone –Takayama – Kyoto

Experience the world of sumo as you join sumo wrestlers for a delectable 'chanko' sumo lunch, while learning about their unique traditions. Step into the shoes of a sumo wrestler by trying on a sumo suit and testing your skills against a professional. Explore the enchanting bamboo groves of Arashiyama, near Kyoto, as you wander along meandering paths amidst towering bamboo stalks. Indulge in a traditional kaiseki meal in Kyoto, accompanied by the captivating entertainment of a Maiko. Seize the opportunity to gain insider knowledge about the intriguing life of an apprentice Geisha, adding an extra layer of fascination to your journey.

Day 1 Tokyo

On arrival in Tokyo, transfer to your hotel and enjoy free time until your tour briefing. Stay the next two nights at Akasaka Excel Hotel Tokyo (or similar).

Day 2 Tokyo

Explore Tokyo on foot and the underground rail network. Visit serene Meiji Jingu, Tokyos most famous Shinto shrine with a 12 metre high torii gate at the entrance. Continue to the Imperial Palace to see Nijubashi, a metal bridge built in 1888. Travel by train to Asakusa, one of Tokyos liveliest districts, and home to some of the citys best street food, and old izakaya and yakitori restaurants. Learn about the world of sumo as you enjoy a 'chanko sumo lunch with some sumo wrestlers. After lunch, try on a sumo suit and test your skills against a professional. Spend time exploring Asakusa before returning to your hotel. (BL)

Day 3 Tokyo to Hakone

Take the train from Tokyo to Hakone, best known for its views of the mountains, natural beauty and hot springs. Travel on the ropeway for beautiful views of Lake Ashi and on a clear day, see iconic Mt Fuji.

Sail across the waters of Lake Ashi on a pirate ship before returning to your accommodation. Stay in a ryokan, a traditional Japanese guesthouse and enjoy a delicious dinner, soak in the onsen and sleep on a futon mattress in an immaculate tatami-floored room. Overnight at Hakone Pax Yoshino (or similar) (BD)

Day 4 Hakone to Takayama

From Hakone, travel by train to ancient Takayama, famous for its well preserved old town district and traditional atmosphere. On the way, enjoy a bento box for lunch. Visit Takayama Jinya, a former government building which offers insights into Japans history. Stroll along Kami Sannomachi Street to see the immaculatelypreserved traditional wooden houses. View the elaborate festival floats at the Takayama Matsuri Yatai Kaikan and enjoy free time before walking back to the hotel. Stay the next two nights at Best Western Hotel Takayama (or similar) (BL)

Day 5 Takayama

Spend the day at leisure exploring Takayama and its surrounds at your own pace. You may choose to visit Shirakawago, a World Heritage Listed protected village famous for its stunning natural beauty and steeply

pitched thatched roofs designed to withstand the heavy winter snowfall. Discover the shrines and temples of the Teramachi district or travel a short distance to Hida-Furukawa to admire the preserved buildings. (B)

Day 6 Takayama to Kyoto

Travel by train to Kyoto, Japans cultural capital, a hub for Geisha and the home of royal cuisine. On arrival, enjoy some free time. Late afternoon, join a walking tour along Ponto-cho and Hanami-koji Lane in the Gion district where you may see a Geisha walking between appointments. Stay the next four nights at Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyoto Shijo (or similar) (B)

Day 7 Kyoto

Spend the day walking and travelling by public transport to discover Kyotos highlights. Take the train to Arashiyama Bamboo Forest and marvel at the towering stalks of bamboo before continuing to Tenryuji Temple. See Katsura River from Togetsukyo Bridge and take the iconic purple Randen Train to Ryoanji Temple, the site of the most famous rock garden in Japan. Visit the Golden Pavilion (Kinkaku-ji), an elegant, gilded 14th century building which is one of Japans most cherished sites. (B)

Day 8 Kyoto

Discover Kyoto and its surrounds with a free day to explore independently. Take the train to the historic city of Hiroshima, venture to Osaka to see Osaka Castle, meet Naras deer population or visit Himeji Castle - the choice is yours. (B)

Day 9 Kyoto

Spend a free day exploring Kyoto at your own pace. This evening, enjoy a special kaiseki farewell dinner while being entertained by a Maiko (an apprentice Geisha). (BD)

Day 10 Kyoto

Transfer by private taxi to Kyoto Station for your onward journey. (B)

Includes:

- 7 Day Rail Pass
- 8 nights hotel accommodation
- 1 night Ryokan accommodation
- High-speed trains
- Transport in air-conditioned vehicles
- Small group touring
- Entrance fees
- Luggage transport
- English-speaking Tour Leader
- Tipping (Tour Leader/drivers)

- Return transfers (conditions apply)
- Meals as indicated (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner)



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