



Classic Japan

CLASSIC

13 Nights

Tokyo > Hakone > Osaka > Kyoto > Takayama > Japan Alps > Tokyo

Explore Kyoto, the 'city of a thousand temples'

Meet a trainee geisha in Kyoto's Gion district

Stroll in the peace of Tokyo's Hamarikyu Gardens

Visit Kamikochi, one of Japan's most beautiful regions

Get an introduction to feudal history at the magnificent Osaka Castle

Stay in ryokan inns and immerse yourself in hot spring baths

Wander among traditional thatched roof houses at the Hida-Takayama Folk Village

Tour Overview

Imagine basking in a hot spring bath at the foot of Mount Fuji, drinking sake with an apprentice geisha in Kyoto or exploring tranquil gardens in the heart of the Tokyo metropolis. This tour collects the best of Japan's classic cultural and natural locations.

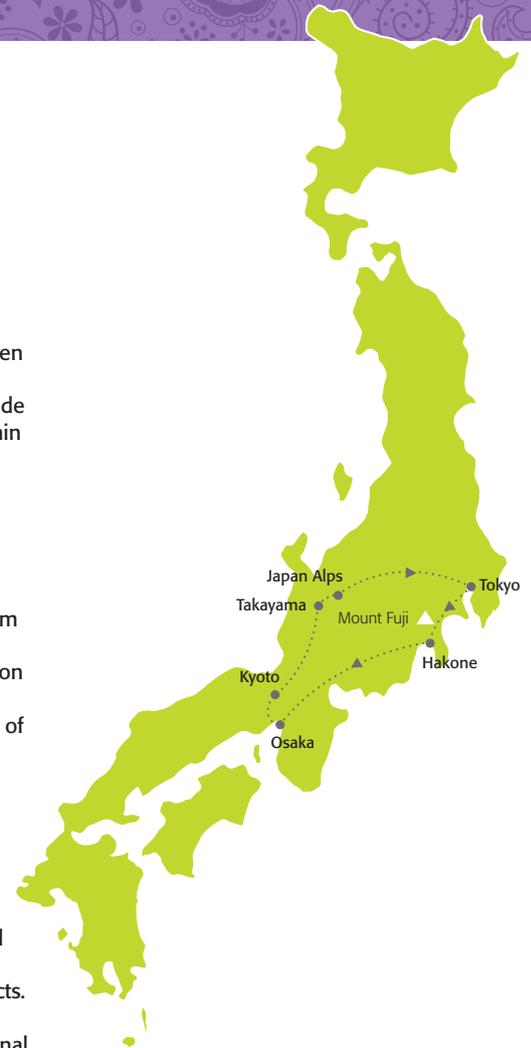
Discover some of the locations that have given Japan its reputation as a land of mysterious spirituality and exquisite aesthetics, as you ride cross-country on the world-famous bullet train and stay in some lovely traditional accommodation.

Your journey will be gastronomic too - sample local specialities from melt-in-the-mouth Hida beef in the alpine regions to super-fresh sushi in Tokyo, quick bites from street vendors in Osaka and multi-course *kaiseki* feasts in Takayama. In each destination you'll enjoy an expertly planned range of experiences, from learning about the history of the magnificent Osaka Castle, to wandering through the thatched farmhouses of Takayama's Hida no Sato Folk Village.

In Kyoto, we will be joined by a local expert guide for a tour of the city and enjoy an exclusive audience with a trainee geisha. In Tokyo, we will stroll through the calm and beautiful Hamarikyu Gardens, hidden in the heart of one of the capital's skyscraper districts.

Along the way you'll visit two stunning national parks: Chubu-Sangaku and Fuji-Hakone-Izu. The former is home to Japan's most magnificent mountain scenery and a thriving population of Japanese macaques, whilst the latter offers a pirate ship ride across Lake Ashi and the chance to try boiled eggs in volcanic hot springs.

Accompanying you throughout will be your tour leader, who will introduce history and culture, guide you on excursions, demystify the local etiquette and generally make sure you get the best from your Classic Japan tour.



IJT CLASSIC TOURS

Mid-range tours that cover Japan's classic sights or interest-specific itineraries (e.g. hiking, cultural activities, specific regions)

Style Facts

- 3/4 star accommodation
- En suite rooms in all locations (except at some unique traditional accommodation)
- Airport meet-and-greet and transfers
- Breakfast every day plus some lunches & dinners
- Selected entrance fees included
- Selected luggage forwarding included
- Solo travellers: a single room is available throughout on payment of a mandatory supplement

Day by day

Many of our customers choose to arrive a day or two early to get over jet-lag and get the most out of the tour. Whatever the case, we will be happy to make arrangements to suit your needs

Day 1 Tokyo (D)

On arrival in Tokyo, you will be met by your driver, and travel by shared shuttle bus to your hotel in the Asakusa district. Your tour leader will be waiting in the lobby to meet you and help you to settle in.

Our hotel is situated in the Asakusa area, the historic downtown and entertainment district of old Edo (as Tokyo was formerly known). This friendly area still maintains a traditional atmosphere and is home to Senso-ji, the city's oldest temple.

What's included

- ✔ Your comprehensive InsideJapan Info-Pack
- ✔ Arrival and departure transfers by shared shuttle bus
- ✔ IC transport card with 5000 yen credit for city transport
- ✔ Hakone Free Pass for local transport in Hakone
- ✔ Full time services of your expert InsideJapan tour leader
- ✔ 13 nights' accommodation including traditional Japanese-style stays
- ✔ Breakfast every day and eight evening meals
- ✔ Selected entrance fees & local transport at most destinations
- ✔ Entrance to Osaka Castle
- ✔ Audience with an apprentice geisha at a Kyoto teahouse
- ✔ Full day private guide in Kyoto with private bus
- ✔ Entrance to Takayama Hida Folk Village
- ✔ Entrance to the Hakone Open-Air Museum
- ✔ Shared portable Wi-Fi access throughout the trip
- ✔ Luggage forwarding from Tokyo to Osaka and from Takayama to Tokyo

NOT Included

- ✘ International flights
- ✘ Any local transport (subways, taxis, buses) unless covered by the included transport passes
- ✘ Any entrances fees (including those for museums, temples & shrines) unless otherwise specified
- ✘ Baggage handling and luggage forwarding unless otherwise specified - you will be expected to carry your own luggage

Sample Accommodation

Please note that accommodation is subject to change. Final details of the accommodation will be included in your Info-Pack, which will be sent out approximately four weeks before departure. If you'd like to know more, please speak to your travel consultant.

The Gracery Asakusa, Tokyo

The Gracery Asakusa is a great location for sightseeing, based just a few minutes' walk from the main attractions in the area; Kaminarimon Gate, Senso-ji temple, Kappabashi Kitchenware Street as well as many restaurants. The Ginza and Asakusa subway lines are also just a short walk away, allowing for easy access to the rest of Tokyo.

The hotel has modern ensuite rooms and a convenient coin operated laundry room. The breakfast is buffet style with Western dishes.

Laforet Club Hakone Gora Yunosumika, Hakone

We're sure your stay at Laforet will be one of the highlights of your trip. This Japanese-style hotel is in one of the best locations in Hakone, close to Gora station which has links by cable car and mountain railway to the rest of the area.

The rooms here are very generously sized with modern comforts like low beds, but with lovely Japanese design throughout. After a day of sightseeing, there's no better way to relax than by taking a soak in the communal hot spring baths with indoor and outdoor pools.

We've included breakfast and dinner on both nights. Meals feature local seasonal ingredients and are served in the dining room with views out over the mountains of Hakone.

Cross Hotel, Osaka

The Cross Hotel is a smart hotel located in Dotonbori, one of the liveliest and most famous streets in all of Japan.

The hotel has recently been refurbished and boasts sleek, modern design both inside and out, giving it something of a boutique feel. Rooms are stylishly decorated and surprisingly generously sized for a city-centre hotel, and each bathroom offers a deep soaking tub, separate shower and a small "powder room" The Cross has its own restaurant and bar, but its great location also means that there are a plethora of establishments to choose from.

Mitsui Garden Shinmachi Bettei, Kyoto

The Mitsui Garden Shinmachi Bettei is a small-scale hotel located on a pretty backstreet a few minutes' walk from Shijo station on the Karasuma subway line. The hotel's wooden facade complete with noren curtains gives the illusion of a traditional Kyoto townhouse.

Inside, paper lanterns and screens at the windows are complimented by light, natural colours and local Nishijin kimono fabrics, reflecting the site's history as a former weaving museum. The half-buffet style breakfast is a highlight of a stay here, featuring a mix of Japanese and Japanese-accented western dishes that change daily. After a busy day of sightseeing, you may also wish to take advantage of the hotel's gender segregated soothing public baths, available to staying guests at no extra cost.

Tanabe Ryokan, Takayama

A short walk or even shorter taxi ride from Takayama Station, this is a high-quality traditional inn located in the old town area of the city. During your stay here you'll be conveniently close to the morning markets and within easy walking distance of both temple area and town museum - a great location for sightseeing. As is usual at traditional **ryokan** accommodation, you will be sleeping on thick futon placed directly on the *tamami*-matted floors. The rooms all have attached bathroom facilities, but the inn also boasts really nice, large communal baths, which are a great way to relax after a day of sightseeing. Meals here are traditional Japanese, with coffee freely available in the lobby lounge. The owners, Mr and Mrs Tanabe, are gracious hosts and will do their very best to ensure you have a fabulous stay.

Hirayukan, Japan Alps

Located in the small onsen town of Hirayu Onsen, Hirayukan offers large en suite Japanese style rooms (with western beds) and the chance to take a dip in one (or all!) of its large indoor and outdoor hot spring baths. The hotel has a small shop in the lobby area selling drinks and snacks, and even has table tennis and karaoke facilities available for an extra fee. The hotel's restaurant, Yumeguri Yokocho serves a wide variety of local dishes for breakfast and dinner. A short hike from the accommodation leads to the scenic Hirayu Otaki waterfall.

Millennium Mitsui Garden Hotel, Tokyo

The Millennium Mitsui Garden Hotel is a stylish, contemporary hotel in the heart of Ginza, one of Tokyo's most vibrant shopping and entertainment districts. Just a short walk from Ginza and Higashi-Ginza subway stations, the hotel offers excellent access to the rest of the city. Rooms are modern and well-designed, featuring large windows, comfortable beds, and sleek bathrooms.

Important Tour Information

Fitness

Even when not using public transport, sightseeing in Japan often involves walking between sights, climbing up steps in temples and being 'on the go' for much of the day. To enjoy any of our Small Group Tours you should be of moderate fitness, able to walk and climb stairs without difficulty and able to maintain a pace that is comfortable for the majority of the group.

Dietary Requirements

There are a number of meals included on all our tours. Please let us know in advance if you have any special dietary requirements and we will try to ensure that included meals meet these needs.

In addition, please note that dietary requirements (such as vegetarianism, gluten-free diets and even some allergies) are very uncommon in Japan so meals for those with specific requirements may be simpler and less varied.

On this tour you'll stay at a number of Japanese style accommodation, you will be served a traditional dinner, as well as a Japanese breakfast in the morning.

En suite / shared facilities

Culturally, communal bathing is common practice in Japan. Please note that in some traditional accommodations fully private en suite facilities may not be available. We will do our best to secure rooms on tour with private toilet and sink however some accommodations are not able to offer private bathing facilities. Shared facilities (when included) will always be separated by gender.

Policy on single rooms

Single rooms are guaranteed at all night stops on this tour through payment of a mandatory single supplement.

Double rooms

Please note that in Japan, twin rooms are very much the norm, and there are far fewer double rooms available. Please understand that we will not be able to offer a double at any of the locations.

Your tour leader

Our tours are led on the ground by a fluent English speaker, now a resident of Japan and able to speak Japanese. They are there to ensure that you get the most out of your trip and that the whole adventure goes smoothly. The tour leader travels with the group and stays at the same hotels and *ryokan*, so please feel free to ask for help or advice at any time.

Your tour leader is not a guide so may not know every historical detail of every shrine, temple or palace, yet they are available pretty much all day every day and will even be happy to accompany tour members out at night on occasion!

Please note that the tour leader reserves the right to deny participation in an activity if they feel that it is in the safety or best interest of you and/or any other members of the group. Similarly, dangerous weather conditions may lead to cancellation of such an activity.

Luggage

We highly recommend that to make your stay more enjoyable you pack reasonably light. Large suitcases will be an inconvenience to you as you will have to carry your bags for short distances at times and some stations do not have escalators or elevators/lifts.

For ease of transit, we will be forwarding your luggage on two occasions and you will be without your main baggage for **2 nights in Hakone and 2 nights in the Japan Alps**.

You will need a small overnight bag (e.g. backpack) for use when we forward our main bags to the next location.

Transport on tour

Please note that most transfers are by public transport making use of Japan's first-rate transport network. This tour uses a mixture of trains, taxis, public buses, boats, as well as private coaches for some transfers and sightseeing.

International Flights

This tour starts and finishes in Tokyo for arrivals and departures at Tokyo, Narita or Haneda. Please note that the included meet-and-greet and airport transfer to the first hotel is **ONLY** available from these two airports.

Check-in

Upon arrival you will probably be tired after a long international flight. Please note that rooms at the Tokyo hotel are only available **from 2pm**.

Hotels in Japan operate strict check-in policies. If you have an early arrival you can either book an extra night for any time check-in, or the hotel will be happy to securely store your luggage for you whilst you go for a drink or explore the local area.

