

Epic Journeys, LLC presents...

Cultural Treasures of Japan

March 16 – 29, 2025



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\$200
Per Person



For more information contact
Cynthia Watters
Epic Journeys, LLC
(814) 266-5070
admin@epicjourneystours.com



14 Days • 18 Meals: 12 Breakfasts, 6 Dinners

HIGHLIGHTS... Tokyo, Asakusa Sensoji Shrine, Tea Ceremony, Ginza, Hakone, Lake Ashi Cruise, Matsumoto Castle, Takayama, Sake Tasting and Hida Beef Dinner, Shirakawa-go, Kanazawa, Kyoto, Bullet Train, Hiroshima, *Kaiseki* Dinner & Maiko Show

ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

Day 1	Overnight Flight
Days 2 – 4	Grand Nikko Tokyo Daiba, Tokyo
Day 5	The Prince Hakone Lake Ashinoko, Hakone
Days 6, 7	Takayama Green Hotel, Takayama
Days 8, 9	Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel, Kanazawa
Days 10 – 13	Nikko Princess Hotel Kyoto, Kyoto

On some dates alternate hotels may be used.

Day 1: Sunday, March 16, 2025 Overnight Flight Explore ancient and modern Japanese culture firsthand. Discover peaceful temples and technological marvels set against unimaginable natural beauty.

Day 2: Monday, March 17, 2025 Tokyo, Japan - Tour Begins Welcome to Japan, the “Land of the Rising Sun.” Begin in the electrifying city of Tokyo, where pop culture is turned all the way up and traditions are rich and long-kept.

Day 3: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 Tokyo Begin the day exploring Asakusa, Tokyo’s oldest Geisha district. Visit the famous Buddhist temple, Senso-ji, the colorful temple famous for the red chochin (lantern) hanging at the entrance gate. Experience the long standing tradition of the Japanese tea ceremony, dating back to the 15th century. During your free time, explore the Nakamise Shopping Arcade and feel the energy of the oldest shopping street in Japan. Then, head to Tokyo National Museum to learn about the fascinating history and culture of Tokyo. The museum displays artwork and antiques from Japan and the surrounding area. Tonight, join your fellow travelers at a welcome dinner. (B, D)

Day 4: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 Tokyo Amid a lush forest outside of Tokyo, visit the Meiji Shrine, dedicated to Emperor Meiji and his wife, Empress Shoken. Feel the excitement start to build as you pass by the grounds of the Imperial Palace and see the Niju Bridge, the well-known symbol of the Imperial Palace. Later, walk through Ginza, one of the most elegant and luxurious streets in the world, where modern landscape meets rich history. Enjoy shopping at some of the most renowned “department stores” in Japan. (B)

Day 5: Thursday, March 20, 2025 Tokyo - Hakone Journey to the lakeside resort of Hakone, renowned for its hot springs. In the shadow of Mt. Fuji (UNESCO), this scenic town hugs the shorelines of Lake Ashi. Make a stop at Owakudani, located in an active volcanic zone. The Owakudani crater was created some 3,000 years ago, when Mt. Hakone erupted. Climb aboard the Hakone Ropeway, an aerial cable car descending from Owakudani for a breathtaking view* of Mt. Fuji. Next, take to the deep-blue waters of Lake Ashi on a cruise where you’ll see epic views of the local mountains before stopping in the charming town of Moto-Hakone. Tonight, experience a traditional *kaiseki* dinner. (B, D)

Day 6: Friday, March 21, 2025 Hakone - Matsumoto - Takayama This breathtaking day begins in Matsumoto at Matsumoto Castle, known as the “Crow Castle” because of its striking black exterior. Later, you’ll step back in time in the rural Edo-period town of Takayama, nestled in the Japanese Alps. Well known to the locals for its connection to *sake*, this is the perfect place to gather for a visit to one of Japan’s 200-year-old sake breweries. Afterward, experience a true Japanese epicurean treat – traditional rice wine paired with a special Hida beef dinner. (B, D)

Day 7: Saturday, March 22, 2025 Takayama The ancient cultures of Takayama come alive this morning in the town’s historic district. Take a walk through the past and glimpse the 19th-century Jinya government building. Stroll through the morning market, a 600-year-old open air market with locally grown and produced products, located along the Miyagawa River. Circuit the winding streets, where the town’s traditional charms are preserved in the inns and houses. This afternoon, relish some free time to continue your exploration of Takayama on your own before enjoying a traditional multi-course ‘*kaiseki*’ dinner. (B, D)

Day 8: Sunday, March 23, 2025 Takayama - Shirakawa-go - Kanazawa Today, embrace the unique charms of Shirakawa-go (UNESCO). Hidden away in the mountain, this harmonious village is famous for its *gassho-zukuri*-style houses – thatched-rooftops designed to resemble two hands joined in prayer. Journey to Kanazawa, the origin of gold-leaf making since the 16th century. Visit the Geisha quarters of Kanazawa, the Higashi Tea district, and



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For bookings made after Aug 17, 2024 call for rates.

Included in Price: Round Trip Air from Washington, Air Taxes and Fees/Surcharges, Hotel Transfers

***Please call for rates from other gateways**

Not included in price: Cancellation Waiver and Insurance of \$449 per person

*** All Rates are Per Person and are subject to change, based on air inclusive package from WAS**

IMPORTANT CONDITIONS: Your price is subject to increase prior to the time you make full payment. Your price is not subject to increase after you make full payment, except for charges resulting from increases in government-imposed taxes or fees. Once deposited, you have 7 days to send us written consumer consent or withdraw consent and receive a full refund. (See registration form for consent.)

then family, onto the beauty of Japan's most stunning gardens, where more than 25 acres of absolute beauty awaits you at *Kenroku-En* – Garden of Six Qualities. (B)

Day 9: Monday, March 24, 2025 Kanazawa Visit the Samurai district where we will enter the former home of the Nomuras, a wealthy samurai family who served the ruling Maeda family. Dive into the ancient craft of gold leaf making during a hands-on lesson in decorating your own lacquer box! In the center of town, take in the action of the Omicho fish market before venturing out on your own to really immerse yourself in Kanazawa's dynamic culture. (B)

Day 10: Tuesday, March 25, 2025 Kanazawa - Kyoto Explore Fushimi Inari Taisha for a tour of the most revered shrine of Inari. Follow the spectacular rows of orange torii (made famous in the movie *Memoirs of a Geisha*) that weave through the forest, leading you to the inner shrine. Then Kyoto awaits! The former Imperial capital of Japan is now one of the nation's top cosmopolitan cities. At the same time, Kyoto's connection with its past is strong; you won't need to look far to see one of its 2,000 temples and shrines. Later, visit the Women's Association of Kyoto in a traditional Kyoto town house. Here, delve into a wide array of enlightening Japanese

activities, guided by your knowledgeable hostess. Sip different sakes, try your hand at making sushi, fold intricate origami shapes, and speak to your hostess about Japan, its culture, and women's roles in this complex society. (B, D)

Day 11: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 Kyoto - Bullet Train - Hiroshima - Kyoto All aboard the Shinkansen bullet train to Hiroshima. Upon arrival, board a ferry for the short trip to Miyajima Island, or "Shrine Island" (UNESCO). Afterwards, head into Hiroshima city to visit the Peace Memorial Park, and pause to see the ruined Atomic Dome (UNESCO). Reflect at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. As this long and moving day comes to a close, return to Kyoto by the Shinkansen bullet train. (B)

Day 12: Thursday, March 27, 2025 Kyoto This morning, visit Kinkakuji (UNESCO), the Golden Pavilion, a Zen temple whose top two floors are completely covered in gold leaf. Enjoy the remainder of your day at leisure. (B)

Day 13: Friday, March 28, 2025 Kyoto Today, visit the home of the first Shogun, Nijo Castle (UNESCO), and see intricate woodcarvings, wall paintings, and the Ninomaru Garden, designed by Kobori Enshu, a landscape architect and tea master. Next, learn about the ancient

Experience It! Maiko Performance in Kyoto

Step back in time when you witness an important aspect of Japan's culture during a Maiko Show in Kyoto. Literally meaning "dancing child," the maiko is an apprentice geisha, typically under 20 years old. They live in Okiya, under the supervision of seasoned geiko (or "geisha"). They are considered the successors of beauty throughout all of Japan, entertaining guests with traditional Japanese dances, shamisen plays, short songs called "kouta" and in Kyoto they master its unique dialect as well. These young performers work hard to preserve Japan's traditions and customs, creating a dream-like world that feels detached from the daily grind for visitors. This tradition is unique to Kyoto, though it showcases a fascinating history that is traced throughout all of Japan. Be a part of Japan's rich traditions, history and hospitality during this truly unforgettable experience.

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craft of stenciling during a hands-on lesson. This afternoon, spend some time relaxing or set out to explore Kyoto on your own. Fully immerse yourself in Japanese culture tonight during a special farewell dinner and maiko show. (B, D)

Day 14: Saturday, March 29, 2025 Kyoto - Tour Ends Your tour comes to a close in this fascinating land. As you depart, reflect on its beauty and all you have learned about its rich history and culture. (B)

PLEASE NOTE:

Book Now rates valid until Aug 17, 2024, valid on air inclusive packages only. The overall activity level of this tour is a level 3. This means you're an on-the-go traveler. You don't want to miss a thing, so walking and standing for longer periods of time (2-3 hours) isn't a big deal. A moderately paced two-and-a-half-hour walking tour, covering several miles, hills, and uneven surfaces, is no problem for you. Walking four miles over the course of a day is very doable, as is climbing into and out of various modes of transportation (tuk-tuk, cable car, zodiac, etc.). You can climb three flights of stairs easily and handle altitudes between 6,000 and 9,000 feet. Expect some longer days with early mornings or late nights balanced with free time to recharge or set out on your own adventure. This level is not a fit for travelers who require mobility assistance devices.

If you require any special assistance while on tour, please make us aware at time of reservation so the necessary request form can be sent to your attention.

Museum visits and shopping may be affected by the observance of religious or local holidays.

To complete your tour, we include roundtrip airport-to-hotel transfers when purchasing our airfare with your tour. If you have arranged for your own air, we are pleased to provide you the option of purchasing these transfers. Please note that all transfers will leave at pre-scheduled times.

This tour provides authentic dining experiences. Vegan, vegetarian, and even gluten-free diets are uncommon in Japan and not widely catered to. If you have any dietary restrictions, please notify us at time of booking so we can accommodate you as best as possible.

For air-inclusive reservations, the name provided at time of booking must match your government-issued ID that will be used during travel. Name changes are subject to penalties.

Please be advised many airlines do not provide advance seat assignments until check-in at the airport. Advance seating will be subject to the airline's terms and conditions.

Flights arrive into Tokyo and depart from Osaka.

Our air passengers will be departing from Kansai Airport or Itami Airport (depending upon your flight schedule). All transfers will depart from the Kyoto hotel for either Kansai Airport or Itami Airport.

Return flights should not be booked from Kansai Airport or Itami Airport prior to 9:00 a.m.

IDENTIFICATION

Passports are required for this tour at your expense. Certain countries require that your passport be valid at least 6 months beyond the dates of your travel. You are strongly urged to contact the appropriate consulate for details. Visit www.travel.state.gov for the U.S. State Department for the latest details about passports and visa requirements.

IMPORTANT: We recommend that travelers take a photocopy of their passport and applicable visas. It should be packed separately from your actual passport and visa. We also recommend leaving a copy at home with your emergency contact.

Each traveler is responsible for proper documentation and inoculations that may be required and/or recommended to participate on this tour. Please contact your local travel clinic or personal physician for specific details on the destinations you are traveling to and from.



Please be aware that if your flight schedule is via Dubai and if you are stopping over in Dubai and are carrying narcotic drugs, controlled or semi-controlled drugs, then you will be required to complete an electronic form prior to entering the country, to obtain approval to carry medication. Please use the link <https://mohap.gov.ae/en/services/issue-of-permit-to-import-medicines-for-personal-use> to view the guidelines. A user's guide is available to explain the application and the supporting documents required.

The days and order of sightseeing may change to best utilize your time on tour.

Single accommodations are limited and are available on a first come, first served basis.

Triple and child accommodations are not available.

Some venues, such as temples and shrines, require guests to remove their shoes in order to enter. We recommend wearing footwear that is easily removed for sightseeing on these days.

*The view of Mt. Fuji from the Hakone Ropeway is weather dependent.

Economy air rate and schedule are applicable for groups of 10 or more traveling on the same flights and dates.

A deposit of \$698 per person is due upon reservation. Reservations are made on a first come, first served basis. Reservations made after the deposit due date of August 10, 2024 are based upon availability. Final payment due by January 15, 2025. Deposits are refundable up until August 17, 2024.

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For important reservation information visit
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You can also find this information on your tour documents.