

Japan Vacation Specialists

**AJT**  
All Japan Tours

## Best of Japan Tour Autumn

10 days 9 nights

**US\$3298.00**

Tour Start Dates: 2015 - 9/6, 10/18

2016 - 9/5, 9/19, 10/16



### **TOUR COST INCLUDES:**

8 nights Western style and 1 night Japanese style accommodation  
Meet and greet upon arrival at Narita Airport  
Airport transfers on arrival and departure  
Private luxury coach transfers between destinations in Japan  
Comprehensive escorted with AJT professional English speaking tour guide  
Gratuities

### **Meals**

Breakfast everyday  
6 lunches and 4 dinners

### **Admission fees and activities**

Entry fees to sites, gardens, and museums listed in the itinerary  
Hakone Ropeway  
Bullet Train Ride  
Green Tea Ceremony  
Nishijin Kimono Show  
Sake Tasting  
Okonomiyaki Making  
Oboko Gorge Boat Ride  
Kobe Wagyu Beef Dinner

All prices are per person, based on double or triple occupancy. International flights are not included on our tours -this allows you the flexibility to choose your own departure and get the best value for your money! We can arrange international flights for US customers if needed, please ask for details.

### **All Japan Tours**

646 W. California St., Ontario, CA 91762, USA  
Toll Free (US/CANADA): 1-855-325-2726 <1-855-32JAPAN>  
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# ITINERARY

## **Day 01: Narita Airport**

Welcome to Tokyo! Our tour guide will greet you and escort you to the hotel.

***Overnight: Narita Excel Hotel Tokyu or similar class***

***Overnight: Hotel New Otani Tokyo or similar class (NOTE 1 & 2)***

NOTE 1: If you wish to stay in the center of Tokyo for the first night, we can arrange for you to stay at Hotel New Otani Tokyo instead of Narita Excel Hotel Tokyu for an additional \$50 per person. In this case, airport transfer is not included but we will provide you directions to get to your hotel in advance.

NOTE 2: If you will be flying into Haneda Airport (HND), we can arrange for you to stay at Hotel New Otani Tokyo instead of Narita Excel Hotel Tokyu for an additional \$50 per person. In this case, airport transfers and meet – and-greet are not included but we will provide full instructions to get to the hotel in advance.

NOTE 3: If you wish to stay extra nights before the tour starts, please contact us to book hotel accommodations.

## **Day 02: Tokyo (Asakusa Sensoji Temple / Tokyo Edo Museum / Imperial Palace / Tokyo Tower / Odaiba)**

In the morning you will be taken to Asakusa Kannon Temple, an active place of worship where you can see the largest paper lantern in Japan. Here, discover the difference between a Shinto Shrine and a Buddhist Temple, then explore Nakamise Market, which resembles a traditional style shopping street of a bygone era. Next is a visit to Edo Tokyo Museum, where you can learn the history of Tokyo from the time when it was a small village called Edo. The museum also offers many good picture taking opportunities, for example with vehicles and items which were used in the past. Then we will proceed to the Imperial Palace, the former site of Edo Castle. You can explore the park, surrounded by moats and stone fortifications, in the heart of the city. In the afternoon, we will visit the the world's tallest self supporting steel tower. At 333 meters high, Tokyo Tower is 13 meters taller than its model, the Eiffel Tower. We will go up 150 meters to the main observatory deck and get a bird's eye view of Tokyo. From there we will cross the Rainbow Bridge, and be treated to stunning views of Tokyo Bay. We will travel to the man made islands of Odaiba and see cutting edge architecture, as well as the night view of Tokyo Tower and Rainbow Bridge.

NOTE: When Tokyo Edo Museum is closed (Mondays and specific days), the tour will visit the Meiji Shrine instead.

***Overnight: Hotel New Otani Tokyo or similar class***

***Meals: Breakfast & Lunch***

## **Day 03: Mt Fuji, Hakone (Hakone Ropeway / Owakudani), Shinkansen Bullet Train Ride**

We will depart from Tokyo to Mt. Fuji on our private luxury coach. Along the way, enjoy the changing scenery, from thick vegetation to lowlands to rolling clouds. Stop at Mt. Fuji 5th station (depending on weather) to admire the world famous peak. We will take a tour of Hakone by taking a 20 minute ropeway from Togendai to Owakudani. Most of the area around Owakudani is considered an active volcanic zone since its creation from the eruption of Mount Hakone some 3,000 years ago. Now, you can experience hot springs and hot rivers there, where sulfurous fumes still linger. Owakudani also has splendid views of Mount Fuji in good weather. Next, experience a Shinkansen bullet train ride, which can reach speeds of up to 300 km/hr. We will stay at the Onsen Ryokan at Kanzaiji Onsen, where you can soak in the therapeutic waters of a spa bath and feast on a traditional Japanese Kaiseki banquet dinner.

***Overnight: Hotel Kikusuitei or similar class***

***Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner***

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### **Day 04: Toyota (Toyota Kaikan Museum), Kyoto (Kiyomizu Temple / Green Tea Ceremony)**

After breakfast our first stop is the Toyota Kaikan Museum, which has displays of Toyota's new car models and technologies. From Toyota, our coach departs to Kyoto, a historical city that it was spared from air raids and saved from the atomic bomb during World War II for its cultural and historical value. Then, we will visit the famous Kiyomizu Temple, best known for its wooden stage that juts out from its main hall, 13 meters above the hillside below. The stage affords visitors a nice view of the numerous cherry and maple trees below that erupt in a sea of color in spring and fall, as well as of the city of Kyoto in the distance. Next, we will experience a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. We will stay two nights in Kyoto.

**Overnight: Grand Prince Hotel Kyoto or similar class**

**Meals: Breakfast & Lunch**

### **Day 05: Kyoto (Nijo Castle / Nishijin Kimono Show / Golden Pavilion / Arashiyama - Tenryuji Temple Zen Garden - Bamboo Grove - Togetsukyo Bridge / Gion)**

Today we will continue our tour of Kyoto, once the capital of Japan and still considered its cultural center. First is a visit to the Nijo Castle, built in the early 17th century. Ninomaru-goten, renovated in 1626, is a building renowned as a priceless example of the architectural style of that period. At the Nishijin Textile Center, you can view displays of kimonos and even watch a kimono fashion show. Visit the Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) covered with 18 carat gold leaf. This three story structure was originally built by the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu in 1397. Next is a visit to Arashiyama to see Tenryuji Temple where you can have a glimpse of traditional Zen landscape garden design. Then proceed through a dense bamboo grove, past several small shrines, tea shops and private houses before arriving at the Togetsukyo Bridge over Hozu River. Lastly, we will tour Gion, the old Geisha Quarter, and Pontocho, whose cobblestone alleys vibrate with night life.

**Overnight: Grand Prince Hotel Kyoto or similar class**

**Meals: Breakfast & Dinner**

### **Day 06: Kyoto (Fushimi Inari Shrine / Gekkeikan Sake Museum), Nara (Todaiji Temple / Deer Park), Osaka (Dotonbori - Shinsaibashi)**

The day begins with a visit in the scenic and historic Fushimi district, which is also one of the brewing capitals of Japan. First is a visit to the stunning vermilion colored Fushimi Inari Shrine, whose 4km long tunnel of scarlet torii gates was featured in the film Memoirs of a Geisha. This complex wraps around a bamboo wilderness that includes mountains, streams, and ponds, the perfect backdrop for a scenic hike. At the Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum, you will learn the fascinating history of sake brewing with its nostalgic buildings, tasting experience, and valuable collection of traditional brewing tools. From there we continue to Nara, the oldest capital city of Japan. We will visit Todaiji Temple, the largest wooden building in Japan. The temple also houses the largest bronze statue of Buddha at 16.3 meters high, and the surrounding park is filled with over 1,000 Sika Deer. In the afternoon we will travel to Osaka by private coach. Our last visit for the day is Dotonbori, which runs parallel to the Dotonbori canal. A popular shopping, entertainment, and food district, Dotonbori is known for the hundreds of neon and mechanized signs that line the street, including the famous Glico Running Man and Kani Doraku Crab signs.

**Overnight: ANA Crown Plaza Hotel Osaka or similar class or similar class**

**Meals: Breakfast & Lunch**

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## **Day 07: Himeji (Himeji Castle), Kurashiki (Canal Area), Hiroshima**

Today we take a 2 hour ride on a luxury coach to Himeji to visit Himeji Castle. It is known as "White Egret Castle" and "White Heron Castle" because of its brilliant white exterior, resembling a bird taking flight. Himeji Castle is the largest and most visited castle in Japan, and is one of the few remaining original castles in Japan. This splendid example of traditional architecture was declared one of the first UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Japan. Next is a visit to Kurashiki. In merchant days, this scenic town thrived as a port for rice shipments. Several old rice granaries and examples of historic architecture still remain, in addition to the stone lined canal. Taste sake as you stroll along the streets of Kurashiki. In the afternoon, we will continue our journey to Hiroshima.

***Overnight: Hiroshima Grand Prince Hotel or similar class***

***Meals: Breakfast & Lunch***

## **Day 08: Hiroshima (Peace Memorial Park - A-Bomb Museum / Okonomiyaki Making / Miyajima Island - Itsukushima Shrine), Shimanamikaïdo**

Today we will visit the Peace Memorial Park and Atomic Bomb Museum. Next, we will try making a popular Japanese dish called Okonomiyaki. This dish is a mixture of batter, cabbage, and any of your favorite ingredients. The mixture is then cooked on a hot plate and flipped using a metal spatula. The dish can be made easily at home, so you can show off your new skills to your family. After lunch, we will take a short ferry ride to the island of Miyajima, considered sacred by many. At high tide, the famed vermilion torii gate of the Itsukushima Shrine looks like it's floating in the middle of the sea. The shrine complex is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Miyajima has been selected as one of Japan's three most scenic places (nihon sankei). In the afternoon, we will drive through the Shimanamikaïdo to Shikoku Island. The Shimanamikaïdo is a 60 kilometer long toll road that connects Japan's main island of Honshu to the island of Shikoku, passing over six small islands in the Seto Inland Sea. It is also known as the Nishiseto Expressway.

***Overnight: Imabari Kokusai Hotel or similar class***

***Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner***

## **Day 9: Oboke Gorge (Oboke Gorge Boat Ride), Kotohira (Kotohira-gu Shrine), Takamatsu (Ritsurin Park), Kobe (Wagyu Beef Dinner)**

After a Japanese style breakfast, we continue our journey to Oboke Gorge, one of three hidden mountain regions of Japan. Oboke is the valley located upstream of the Yoshino-gawa River. "Boke" means "dangerous to walk along," and Oboke (big boke) was named for its jagged V-shaped rocks and narrow path which, no matter how carefully or slowly you walk, makes walking dangerous. Enjoy a relaxing boat ride and take in the panoramic view of the valley. Then, climb the 1,368 stone steps to the Kotohira-gu Shrine, a Shinto shrine. In Takamatsu we will visit Ritsurin Park, a masterpiece of Japanese landscape 100 years in the making. This sprawling park features beautiful ponds and pavilions, with Mt. Shiun as the perfect backdrop. From there, our private coach takes us across Awaji Island through a series of spectacular bridges. In the evening we continue to Kobe, where we will savor the world famous Wagyu beef.

***Overnight: Hotel Nikko Kansai Airport or similar class***

***Overnight: ANA Crown Plaza Hotel Osaka or similar class or similar class (NOTE 4)***

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NOTE 4: If you wish to stay in the center of Osaka for the last night, we can arrange for you to stay at ANA Crown Plaza Hotel Osaka or similar class instead of Hotel Nikko Kansai Airport for an additional \$50 per person. In this case, airport transfer is not included but your tour guide will help you with directions to the airport.

**Meals: Breakfast & Dinner**

## **Day 10: Tour End**

After breakfast, our tour officially ends. Checkout time is 11 am and Osaka Kansai Airport can be reached in a three minute walk.

NOTE 5: If you would like to stay longer in Japan, please contact us to book hotel accommodations.

**Meals: Breakfast**

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