

Japan Vacation Specialists

**AJT**  
All Japan Tours

# The Golden Route Japan Tour Spring (Reverse)

7 days 6 nights

**US\$2398.00**

**Tour Start Dates: 2017 – 4/16, 5/1**



**TOUR COST INCLUDES:**

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

***Meals***

Breakfast everyday  
4 lunches and 2 dinners

***Admission fees and activities***

All entry fees to sites, activities listed in the itinerary

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  
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# ITINERARY

## **Day 01: Osaka Kansai Airport**

Welcome to Osaka! An AJT representative will meet you at the arrival gate and direct you to the hotel.

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

**Overnight: Hotel: Hotel Elserene Osaka or similar class (NOTE 1 & 2)**

**NOTE 1: If you wish to stay in the center of Osaka for the first night instead of Hotel Nikko Kansai Airport, we can arrange for you to stay at Hotel Elserene Osaka (or similar class). 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 Itami Airport (ITM) instead of Kansai International Airport (KIX), we can arrange for you to stay in the center of Osaka (Hotel Elserene Osaka or similar class) instead of Hotel Nikko Kansai Airport. In this case, airport transfer and meet- and-greet are not included, but we will provide with full instructions to get to the hotel in advance.**

**NOTE 3: The meet and greet is ONLY available for flights arriving in Terminal 1 after 11:00 AM. For guests arriving in Terminal 2, airport pickup is not included, but and we will provide you with directions to get to your hotel in advance.**

**NOTE 4: If you wish to stay extra nights before the tour starts, please contact us to book hotel accommodations.**

## **Day 02: Nara (Todai-ji Temple / Nara Deer Park), Uji (Green Tea Ceremony), Kyoto (Gekkeikan Sake Museum / Fushimi Inari Shrine)**

In the morning you will travel to Nara, the oldest capital city of Japan, by private coach. 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. We will continue our tour to Uji where you can experience a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. Then, visit a sake museum in the scenic and historic Fushimi district, which is home to more than twenty breweries and is considered one of the brewing capitals in Japan. At the Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum, you will be introduced to the fascinating history of sake brewing with its nostalgic buildings, tasting experience, and valuable collection of traditional brewing tools. Then 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. We will stay two nights in Kyoto.

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

**Meals: Breakfast & Lunch**

## **Day 03: Kyoto (Arashiyama - Tenryu-ji Temple Zen Garden - Sagano Bamboo Forest - Togetsukyo Bridge / Golden Pavilion / Nishijin Kimono Show / Kiyomizu Temple / Gion Geisha District)**

Today we will start our tour of Kyoto, once the capital of Japan and still considered its cultural center. First 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 forest, past several small shrines, tea shops and private houses before arriving at the Togetsukyo Bridge over Hozu River. Continue on to the Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) covered with 18 carat gold leaves. This three-story structure was originally built by the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu in 1397. At the Nishijin Textile Center, you can view displays of kimonos and even watch a kimono fashion show. 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 a beautiful scene of Kyoto City in the distance. Lastly, we will tour Gion, the old Geisha Quarters, and Pontocho, whose cobblestone alleys vibrate with night life.

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

**Meals: Breakfast & Dinner**

### **Day 04: Koka (Miho Museum / Koka Ninja Mansion), Hikone (Hikone Castle), Bullet Train Ride**

This morning we will visit the famous Miho Museum. The Miho Museum has stunning architecture that accentuates the surrounding nature while exhibiting a variety of items from different ancient civilizations. It was designed by the renowned architect, I. M. Pei, and is named after Koyama Mihoko, one of the richest women in Japan and the founder of the museum. This museum is also listed as one of the "1000 Places to See Before You Die". From there, visit Koka Ninja Mansion. This mansion used to be resided in by ninja, equipped with many ingenious traps and devices, designed to prevent intruders and to provide a means of escape in times of need. We will then continue to Hikone to visit Hikone Castle. Hikone Castle is an original castle, i.e. it survived the post feudal era without undergoing destruction and reconstruction, considered one of the four most beautiful castles in Japan with its three-layered chalk tower. Hikone Castle has a backdrop of Lake Biwa and Konki-zan Hill, and is regarded as one of four national heritage castles, along with Inuyama Castle in Aichi, Himeji Castle in Hyogo, and Matsumoto Castle in Nagano. Next, our group will experience a Shinkansen bullet train ride, which can reach speeds of up to 300 km/hr. We will stay at the Onsen Hotel at Hamanako Kanzaiji Onsen, where you can soak in the therapeutic waters of a spa bath and feast on a traditional Japanese Kaiseki banquet dinner.

**Overnight: Hamanako Royal Hotel or similar class**

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner**

### **Day 05: Hakone (Hakone Ropeway / Owakudani), Mt Fuji, Tokyo (Shibuya - Shibuya Crossing - Hachiko Statue**

After enjoying Japanese breakfast at the hotel, we will travel to Hakone and take a 20 minute ropeway from Togendai to Owakudani. Much of the area here is considered an active volcanic zone since its creation from the eruption of Mount Hakone some 3,000 years ago. There, you can experience hot springs and hot rivers, where sulfurous fumes still linger. Owakudani also has splendid views of Mount Fuji in good weather. From Hakone we will proceed to Mt. Fuji on our private coach. Along the way, enjoy the changing scenery, from thick vegetation to lowlands and rolling clouds. We will stop at Mt. Fuji 5th station (depending on weather) to admire the world famous peak. In the afternoon we will travel to Tokyo. Our last visit for this day is Shibuya. We will be able to see the famed Shibuya Crossing in action and cross the street with the crowd. We will then take photos with the Hachiko Statue at the crossing, which is a monument dedicated to a loyal dog that waited even after his master passed away.

**Overnight: Tobu Hotel Levant Tokyo or similar class**

**Meals: Breakfast & Lunch**

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## **Day 06: 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 vehicles and items which were used in the past are placed on display for museum goers. 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 the Rainbow Bridge.

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

**Overnight: Tobu Hotel Levant Tokyo or similar class (NOTE 5 & 6)**

*NOTE 5: If you wish to stay in the center of Tokyo for the last night instead of Narita Excel Hotel Tokyu, we can arrange for you to stay at Tobu Hotel Levant Tokyo (or similar class). In this case, airport transfer is not included, but we will provide full instructions for you to get to the airport in advance.*

*NOTE 6: If you will be flying out from Haneda Airport (HND) instead of Narita Airport (NRT), we can arrange for you to stay at Tobu Hotel Levant Tokyo (or similar class) instead of Narita Excel Hotel Tokyu. In this case, airport transfer is not included but we will provide full instructions for you to get to the airport in advance.*

**Meals: Breakfast & Lunch**

## **Day 07: Tour End**

After breakfast, our tour officially ends. Checkout time is 11 am and Narita Airport can be reached by hotel shuttle bus.

*NOTE 7: If you would like to stay longer in Japan, please contact us to book hotel accommodations.*

**Meals: Breakfast**

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