

The Golden Triangle of Japan (Reverse): Takayama Autumn Festival Tour 2017 - 10/6

The must see sights of Tokyo & Kyoto...plus Takayama Autumn Festival

Tour Code: GTG0385617

Tour Information

Land cost: from USD \$2798

Single supplement: USD \$560

Tour duration: 8 days 7 nights

Destination:

Osaka / Nara / Uji / Kyoto / Kanazawa / Shirakawa-go / Takayama / Mt Fuji / Hakone / Tokyo

Tour cost includes:

- 5 nights Western style and 2 nights 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 3 dinners

Admission fees and activities

- All entry fees to sites, activities listed in the itinerary
- All entry fees to sites, activities listed in the itinerary

Dates & Price

2017

Start Date	End Date	Twin / Triple	Start City	End City	Style	Status
Fri. Oct 6, 2017	Fri. Oct 13, 2017	USD \$2798.00	Osaka	Tokyo	Deluxe	View Tour

Itinerary

Tour Code: GTG0385617

Day 1 Osaka Kansai Airport

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

Hotel:

Hotel Nikko Kansai Airport or similar class

Hotel Elserine 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 Elserine 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 Elserine 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 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.

Itinerary

Tour Code: GTG0385617

Day 2 Osaka (Osaka Castle), Nara (Todaiji Temple / Deer Park), Uji (Greentea Ceremony), Kyoto (Fushimi Inari Shrine)

In the morning we will travel to Osaka Castle by private coach. The construction of the castle began in 1583 on the ruins of the Ishiyama Honganji Temple. It was the largest castle of its time. From Osaka, our coach departs to Nara, the oldest capital city of Japan. We will visit Todaiji Temple, the largest wooden building in Japan. This 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. Then, we proceed to Uji where we will experience a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. From Uji, our coach departs to Kyoto, a historical city that was spared from air raids and atomic bomb for its cultural and historical value during World War II. We will 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.

Meals:

Breakfast / Lunch

Hotel:

Grand Prince Hotel Kyoto or similar class

Itinerary

Tour Code: GTG0385617

Day 3 Kyoto (Kiyomizu Temple / Nishijin Kimono Show / Golden Pavilion / Arashiyama - Tenryuji Temple Zen Garden - Bamboo Grove - Togetsukyo Bridge / Gion Geisha District)

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 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. 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.

Meals:

Breakfast / Dinner

Hotel:

Grand Prince Hotel Kyoto or similar class

Day 4 Shinkansen Bullet Train Ride, Kanazawa (Kenrokuen Garden), Shirakawa-go, Takayama (Takayama Night Festival)

After breakfast, take a Shinkansen bullet train ride for experience, which can reach speeds of up to 300 km/hr. Then transfer to Kanazawa to visit Kenrokuen Garden, one of three most beautiful strolling gardens of Japan. The name Kenrokuen literally means a garden combining the 6 attributes of a perfect landscape: spaciousness, seclusion, artifice, antiquity, water features, and panoramas. Here, you'll find the oldest fountain in Japan and Kotoji-toro, the two-legged stone lantern that is the icon of Kenrokuen and Kanazawa. From Kanazawa we cross the mountains by coach to the rural area of Shirakawa-go (listed as a World Heritage site). In this very photogenic village, we will walk past thatch roof farm houses, through cultivated fields and see unspoiled Edo period wooden buildings. Then, we continue on to Takayama, where a festival that dates back to the 15th century will be heating up. This city is located amongst the Japan Alps and is known as "Little Kyoto" for its preserved historical structures and environment. Due to its remote position in the mountains, it was cut off from the rest of Japan for most of its history and thus has maintained a very unique and traditional atmosphere. This festival is also known as the Hachiman Festival because it is centered on Sakurayama Hachiman Shrine. It is held on the 9th and 10th of October to give thanks for a good harvest. The highlight of the festival is in the evening when colorful dashi (floats) are led through the streets amid cheers and drums. These ornate floats are decorated with intricate wood carvings and beautiful metal work that look even more amazing against the backdrop of fiery reds and oranges of vibrant autumn leaves.

Meals:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Hotel:

Okada Ryokan or similar class

Day 5 Takayama (Morning Market / Takayama Jinya / Old Town / Takayama Festival)

After breakfast we will continue sightseeing in Takayama, which includes the Morning Market, Takayama Jinya and Old Town. You can browse the market stalls for local crafts and fresh farm products. Takayama's Old Town has been beautifully preserved, with many buildings and whole streets of houses dating from the Edo Period (1600- 1868). On some streets, like Sannomachi Street, you can find many old homes, shops, coffee houses and sake breweries, some of which have been in business for centuries. In the afternoon, we will continue to enjoy the festive atmosphere of the Takayama Autumn Festival and watch floats as they parade through Old Town. Tonight, we will stay at the Yatsugatake Onsen Ryokan, where you can soak in the therapeutic waters of a spa bath and feast on a traditional Japanese Kaiseki banquet dinner.

Meals:

Breakfast / Dinner

Hotel:

Yatsugatake Royal Hotel or similar class

Day 6 Mt Fuji, Hakone (Hakone Ropeway / Owakudani)

After enjoying a Japanese breakfast at the ryokan, we will travel to Mt. Fuji on our private luxury coach. Along the way, enjoy the changing scenery, from thick vegetation to lowlands to rolling clouds. We will stop at Mt. Fuji 5th station (depending on weather) to admire the world famous peak. Next, we head 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 view hot springs and hot rivers, where sulfurous fumes still linger. Owakudani also has splendid views of Mount Fuji in good weather. Then, proceed to Tokyo.

Meals:

Breakfast / Lunch

Hotel:

Tobu Hotel Levant Tokyo or similar class

Day 7 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.

Meals:

Breakfast / Lunch

Hotel:

Narita Excel Hotel Tokyu or similar class

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.

Itinerary

Tour Code: GTG0385617

Day 8 Tour End

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

Meals:
Breakfast

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