

HIGHLIGHTS
OF JAPAN
SMALL GROUP TOUR



TOUR DOSSIER 2017/2018

Highlights of Japan

10 Days - SMALL GROUP TOUR

Our ten-day Highlights of Japan Tour is designed to help travellers with limited time get the absolute most out of their visit to Japan. Our tour incorporates key elements that will provide you with a concrete grounding in Japan's fascinating fusion of tradition & modernity. After three nights in the capital we venture on to the refreshing lake at the foot of Mt Fuji at Kawaguchiko. Next, we explore the ancient capital of Kyoto and its rich cultural legacy. You will have 3 nights stay in Osaka while visiting Kansai Region. Osaka is the 2nd biggest city in Japan and has a very unique culture and cuisine, quite different to Tokyo. Continue on to Hiroshima to take in the beautiful floating *tori* gate at Itsukushima Shrine, and the



impactful and moving sight of the A-Bomb Dome & Peace Memorial Park before returning to Tokyo for some end of trip fun.

ROUTE

STARTS IN TOKYO /
ENDS IN TOKYO

Tokyo
[3 nights]

Kawaguchiko
[1 night]

Osaka&Kyoto
[3 nights]

**Hiroshima
(Miyajima Island)**
[1 night]

Tokyo
[1 night]

GROUP SIZE: Min 6 / Max 16 **Duration:** 9 Nights / 10 days

ESCORTED: Tour Leader throughout with local guides in places

SLEEP:

STANDARD

Central, clean, and comfortable 3* Western Hotels (8 nights) & Superior Ryokan (1 night) including hot springs & traditional meals

PAY (per person):

Double/Triple	EUR2,850	GBP2,390	USD3,140	AUD4,260
Single	EUR3,280	GBP2,750	USD3,595	AUD4,900

TOUR DATES:

2017

- Jan 29 – Feb 07
- Feb 18 – Feb 27
- Mar 09 – Mar 18
- Jul 07 – Jul 16
- Aug 18 – Aug 27
- Dec 24 – Jan 02

2018

- Jan 29 – Feb 07
- Feb 18 – Feb 27
- Mar 30 – Apr 08
- Jul 07 – Jul 16
- Aug 18 – Aug 27
- Dec 24 – Jan 02



Itinerary Summary

DAILY SCHEDULE

SLEEP

DAY 1 (Tokyo)

Arrive into one of Tokyo's International Airports (Narita or Haneda). Met on arrival and transferred to your hotel in Tokyo. Meet your group and tour leader in hotel lobby at 6pm. Enjoy an evening together in Tokyo with dinner at one of the city's countless delicious restaurants (pay locally).

Shiba Park
Hotel
(or similar)

3 Nights

DAY 2 (Tokyo)

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel before meeting your tour leader in the hotel lobby at 9am. Together you will embark on a full day of sightseeing around this incredible city. Take in the sights and sounds of Tsukiji Fish Market, Hamrikyu Garden, ride the ferry across to Asakusa and visit one of Tokyo's finest, Sensouji Temple, before enjoying lunch at a local restaurant. The Tokyo Edo Museum awaits and will provide a great insight into the history of this fascinating country. Return to your hotel in the evening and venture out into the bright lights of the city to a restaurant of your own choosing.

DAY 3 (Tokyo Free)

Today will be a free day in Tokyo. Rest assured we will provide you with lots of suggestions in advance. You can continue to explore Tokyo on your own, take a trip out to Kamakura/Yokohama or have a day out at Amusement park such as Tokyo Disney Resort, Studio Ghibli, etc. (tickets available upon request). So be sure to inform us in advance if you have something particular you would like to see or do. Your tour leader will be ready to assist you in making this plan.

DAY 4 (Mt. Fuji)

Meet your tour leader in the hotel lobby after you finish breakfast and travel to Lake Kawaguchi at the foothills of Mount Fuji. You will have one of the best views of this majestic mountain from your ryokan or from a sightseeing boat Lake Kawaguchi. Check into your traditional Japanese ryokan where you will spend the night in the beautiful surroundings of the Lake and Mt Fuji. Enjoy a fabulous multi-course kaiseki dinner at your ryokan before soaking in the amazing natural hot spring waters (onsen).

Kukuna Ryokan
[Japanese
Style]
(or similar)

1 Night



DAY 5
(Osaka)

Enjoy a traditional Japanese breakfast before you take a transfer to the nearest shinkansen train station. From here you will ride the bullet train to Osaka. This evening we will plan an exciting gourmet evening in the heart of the city. Take part in your very own cooking class, preparing Osaka's famous street food for dinner. Enjoy an evening stroll through the neon city after the class!

Hearton Hotel
Shinsaibashi

(or similar)

3 Nights

DAY 6
(Kyoto)

Be sure to eat a good breakfast before meeting your tour leader in the hotel lobby at 9am. Today you will enjoy a full day of sightseeing in Kyoto, Japan's ancient capital. You will see Nijo Castle, Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion), Kiyomizu Temple (or Heian Shrine), and the Gion district. Also included today will be an authentic tea ceremony at a local Kyoto tea house.

DAY 7
(Nara or Free)

Today you will have a free day. Your options include sightseeing in Osaka with your tour leader, or a day trip to the oldest capital of Japan – Nara to meet the great Bronzed Buddha and Nara Deer Park, or if you prefer to see more of Kyoto, you can use your rail pass to get here easily - a short 20 minute train ride from Osaka city.

DAY 8
(Hiroshima & Miyajima)

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel before you travel on to Hiroshima by bullet train. Arrive in Hiroshima in the morning and continue on to Miyajima Island, one of Japan's famous Unesco World Heritage highlights. Visit, the spectacular Itsukushima Shrine with free time allowed for strolling along the main shopping street. You will return to Hiroshima after lunch where you can capture an emotional visit to the Peace Memorial Park & Museum.

Hotel New Hiroden
(or similar)

1 Night

DAY 9
(Tokyo)

Meet your tour leader in the hotel lobby after you finish breakfast and travel back to Tokyo by bullet train for one final night in Tokyo. Your final night in Tokyo will include a farewell dinner (pay locally), karaoke bar, and taking in the bright lights of the cities nightscape views.

Shinagawa Prince
Main/East/or Annex
(or similar)

1 Night

DAY 10
(Tour Ends)

Sadly your tour ends today. If time allows, we recommend an extra one or two nights in the capital as a post-tour extension (ask your travel consultant to arrange). Alternatively, be sure to give us your flight details in advance in order to arrange an airport transfer for your departing journey home.

Post Tour Hotel Nights
Available on Request



Tour Locations

TOKYO

One quarter of all Japanese live in Tokyo or the near vicinity and with a population of over 12 million inhabitants, Tokyo is one of the largest cities in the world. With its huge skyscrapers, underpasses, overpasses and crowds of pedestrians, Tokyo may not seem the most attractive city on the surface, but the city has a vibrant charm all of its own. The street level detail is what makes Tokyo such an incredibly interesting place to explore and at every turn you will be met with an array of sights, sounds and smells to enliven the senses. The city has many major sights to visit such as Senso-ji Temple in the old downtown area of Asakusa or the fashion hub of Shibuya from where all new trends are said to emanate. All in all a stay in Tokyo is to experience one of the world's most vibrant and interesting cities; a capital hurtling headlong into the future whilst maintaining its links with the traditions of ancient Japan.



KAWAGUCHIKO (Mt Fuji)

Lake Kawaguchi is the most easily accessible of the Fuji Five Lakes. It is located in Kawaguchiko Town, a hot spring resort named after the lake, and well connected with central Tokyo by trains and direct buses. The main draw to this area are the amazing views of Mount Fuji. From Kawaguchiko you can sit back and relax in one of the many hot spring baths gazing up at its near symmetrical form or if you want to get even closer then there are regular buses up to the fifth station. In the summer months this is the ideal base for climbing Mount Fuji and the start of the traditional pilgrimage route.



OSAKA

Osaka is Japan's second city and an extremely vibrant and lively place to stay. There may not be any real 'tourist' sights but it is just the life on the streets that makes Osaka such a fascinating city to visit. Osaka people work hard and play hard and it really shows with the vast number of restaurants, bars and all round entertainment available. The city aquarium is world class and you cannot stay in Osaka without taking a ride on one of the city's several giant big wheels, perhaps the most dramatic of which is perched on top of the Hep 5 department store in the Umeda district of the city - just don't look down if you are afraid of heights! Osaka Castle is well worth a visit despite being a reconstruction as the original was burnt down during the firebombing at the end of World War Two. You will also find a variety of very interesting museums scattered throughout the city. After dark Osaka really comes alive, and a walk through the bright lights of the Namba district is a great way to soak up the atmosphere, and with literally thousands of entertainment spots to perfect for a big night food and the chance Osaka really is one of cities and a stay here is experience what life in Japan is really like.



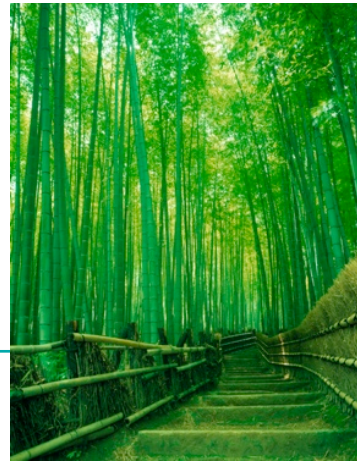
restaurants, bars and choose from, the city is out, some hearty local to let your hair down. Japan's truly all action a chance to modern day urban

OSAKA Street Food Cook & Eat!

Osaka is famous for many things, including baseball, comedy and of course food. One of the things we love most about this town though, are the amazing festivals, and especially all the great food you can find there! You will learn festival food in the class. You will start from special home made yakitori sauce, and then as the skewers of chicken and onion gently cook, you will make the traditional (and very surprising!) method for making udon noodles from scratch. The udon are served "Osaka style", with fried tofu in a delicious soup. Then another festival favourite, chopstick okonomiyaki. This Osakan pancake is famous all over the country and comes filled with vegetables and herbs and topped with cheese, bonito flakes and a special okonomi bbq sauce! surprising!) method for making udon noodles from scratch. The udon are served "Osaka style", with fried tofu in a delicious soup. Then another festival favourite, chopstick okonomiyaki. This Osakan pancake is famous all over the country and comes filled with vegetables and herbs and topped with cheese, bonito flakes and a special okonomi bbq sauce!

KYOTO

Oozing with tradition, Kyoto is the ultimate destination for anybody who wants to soak up time-honoured Japanese culture. Home to many UNESCO World Heritage sites, over 1,600 Buddhist temples and 400 Shinto shrines, this ancient city showcases the heart and soul of traditional Japan. Kyoto boasts an array of world-class gardens, majestic festivals and delicate cuisine, all of which make much of the rhythms of nature and the changing of the seasons. On first glance however, visitors will see that like any large Japanese city, grid-like Kyoto has its fair share of neon and concrete. But the discerning eye will soon pick out Kyoto's treasures: sacred shrines tucked in among shopping arcades, time-honoured teahouses nestling among modern businesses and mysterious geisha scuttling down backstreets among the tourists and souvenirs. Kyoto's charm lies in these details and whether you're here for three days or three years, the closer you look, the more you'll discover.



OPTIONAL TOUR

'Dinner with Kyoto Geisha'

Get up, close, and personal at a local restaurant with one or two of Kyoto's most elegant ladies in kimono, Geisha. We offer this truly unique chance to sit, talk, and ask the questions you might have to help understand what their role in Kyoto is about. This is a private dinner for our group, making it a very intimate and memorable night out. If you have *any slight* interest in getting to know more about geisha in Japan then this evening will satisfy your curiosity. It is fun, seriously interesting, and a traditional culture unique to Kyoto.

- **Duration:** 2 - 2.5 hours
- **Price:** ¥35,000 per person (minimum 2 persons)
- **Included:** Kaiseki Traditional Japanese Dinner, 30 minute guest appearance with Geisha, Transport to/from Kyoto Station, and your tour leader acting as an interpreter

Advance booking is essential (ask your travel consultant). Geisha cannot be cancelled so once you book, it is non-refundable. Price will be determined at time of booking (based on currency exchange rates).

HIROSHIMA

Hiroshima is a city that needs little introduction. It is of course infamous for being the site of one of two atomic bombs dropped on Japan at the end of the Second World War. Despite its tragic past, Hiroshima is now a bustling and vibrant city which has risen phoenix-like from the ashes. The Peace Park and Museum are a poignant reminder of the reason for Hiroshima's fame and everyone should spend an afternoon in this part of town. Other attractions in Hiroshima include Hiroshima Castle and the baseball stadium. The Shukkei-en garden is well worth an afternoon stroll with a number of tea-houses dotted about the grounds. The Hiroshima Prefectural Museum of Art contains some wonderful paintings by both Japanese and Western artists. There is also the Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art which has many pieces inspired by the 1945 bombing. There are also some great views of the city from here. The local food is okonomiyaki, a kind of Japanese savoury pancake. You choose the ingredients and then cook the pancake yourself at your table.



MIYAJIMA ISLAND

Miyajima Island, located just off the coast of Hiroshima, is one of Japan's most loved places with a charming rural atmosphere to match the beautiful surroundings. The island is perhaps best known for the red torii gate of Itsukushima Shrine which appears to be floating in the sea. In the evening this gate and the shrine behind it (as well as other traditional buildings in the area) are floodlit and the atmosphere is magical. A cable car takes you to fantastic views across the Inland Sea from Mount Misen, the highest point of the island. There are many pleasant walks on Miyajima among the temples and along the bustling shopping street in the island's small village. You may also see some of the island's native fauna; the sacred deer are easy to spot as they roam freely, but you'll have to work a little harder to spot any of the resident monkey population; keep your eyes peeled! Miyajima is a wonderful place to slow down, unwind and relax, so take your time and let the magic of this island enchant you!





What's included?

Date	Service
Accommodation	8 nights western (3 star) hotels with 1 night at a traditional Japanese style Ryokan including onsen (hot springs) & Kaiseki dinner (total 9 nights)
English Speaking tour leader	English/Japanese speaking assistant throughout your journey
Airport Transfers	Arrival & departure airport transfers included from Tokyo hotel
Private Tour Guides	Local English speaking tour guides in Tokyo & Kyoto
Entrance Fees	Included Into all sights listed on itinerary
Cultural Experiences	Tokyo Fish Market & city highlights, Mt. Fuji view, cruise, and ryokan stay, Onsen (hot spring bath), Osaka Street Food Cooking Class, Authentic Tea Ceremony (Kyoto), World Heritage Temples and Shrines in Kyoto, Bullet train journeys, Japanese Gardens
Meals	Breakfast daily and 2 evening meals

Other Inclusions:

- Comprehensive Travel Pack
- Local Emergency Contact
- All Taxes & Accommodation Surcharges
- Fixed Price Policy
- Minimum 6 / maximum 16 people
- No hidden Costs!!

This package does not include:

- International Flights [Arrange own flights into and out of Tokyo's Haneda or Narita Airports]
- Meals other than those specified in itinerary
- Beverages consumed at any meal (Water served freely)
- Baggage Handling (You are requested to carry your own bags so be careful when packing! Your tour leader will help you arrange luggage forwarding on some journeys by the reliable 'Takkyubin Service')
- Tour Leader Or Driver Gratuity – can be arranged among your group (Optional)



How to Book

Contact one of our Japan Travel Experts
[Ref. HOJ Small Group Tour]
to get set up with your own online travel portal:

[BOOK ONLINE](#)

Email: tours@uniquejapantours.com

Call IRL: +353 1 6787008 / **Call UK:** +44 20 3239 2519