

# TOUR DOSSIER

JAPAN  
DISCOVERED  
SMALL GROUP TOUR



# Japan Discovered

Japan Discovered is an exciting adventure through the glittering cities, the mountainous terrains, the paddy field plains, the spiritual temples, and the deep culture of this ancient Asian nation. If this is your first time to Japan,

you will see everything one expects, and more! Often going places most would find difficult to do on their own. You will take part in various cultural activities such as an authentic tea ceremony in an authentic Kyoto tea house, soba noodle & washi paper making in the Unesco untouched Gokayama, remote ryokan stays, relaxation in therapeutic onsens (hot springs), Karaoke fun in Tokyo with the locals, and much much more!



**GROUP SIZE:** MIN 1/MAX 16 **DURATION:** 13 Nights/14 days

## Tour Fare:

Twin Sharing EUR4,565	GBP3,900	USD5,450	AUD7,150
Single Room* EUR5,480	GBP4,600	USD6,500	AUD8,500

*\*If you are willing to share a room with the same gender on this tour, we will do our best to match you with a travel partner. However, if we are unable to find a suitable room mate, single room price will apply.*

## ACCOMMODATION CATEGORY:

- 10 nights in city centre comfortable & convenient western hotels
- 3 nights in Japanese style minshuku's & ryokans with hot spring baths (onsen) in rural areas (Kumano Kodo, Mt Fuji & Tsumago)

## LOCAL GUIDES:

**Less than 6 People:** Local guides & assistants at each location

**More than 6 People:** English speaking Tour Leader throughout + local guides in places

## TOUR DATES & SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

**2018:** November 26 (**Seasonal Highlight:** Outdoor River Hot Spring & Autumn Colours)

### 2019

March 17 – 30  
April 11 – 24  
May 12 – 25  
Sept 01 – 14  
October 06 – 19  
Nov 25 – Dec 07

### 2020

March 25 – April 07  
April 10 – 23  
May 10 – 23  
Sept 06 – 19  
Oct 05 – 18  
Nov 25 – Dec 08

### Seasonal Highlights:

Takayama Festival  
Sumo  
Sumo  
Takayama Festival



# Itinerary

Itinerary in Brief		Accommodation
<b>DAY 1</b> [Tokyo]	Arrive in Tokyo Narita or Haneda Airport Transfer to Tokyo hotel  Meet your group in hotel lobby at 6pm Welcome dinner at local restaurant (Pay locally)  Visit Metropolitan building for panoramic night-view of the city  Breakfast at your hotel  Enjoy a full-day private guided tour of Tokyo City  Our popular Tokyo day tour includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tsukiji Fish Market</li> <li>• Hamrikyu Garden</li> <li>• Edo Museum</li> <li>• Sumo Stadium Museum</li> <li>• Asakusa Kannon Temple &amp; Shopping Street</li> <li>• Tokyo Sky Tree</li> </ul> Evening free time / Your tour leader will give you guidance on where to go after dark!	Standard Hotel in Shinjuku or Shibuya District
<b>DAY 3</b>	Breakfast at your hotel  Transfer to Matsumoto  Visit Matsumoto Castle  Transfer to your ryokan,  <b>Highlight:</b> Dinner & Hot Springs (onsen) at your hotel	Japanese style Ryokan
<b>DAY 4</b>	Breakfast at your hotel  Visit Snow Monkey Park (Jigokudani) where you can watch the wild monkeys bath in the natural hot spring bath out in the open  Transfer to Takayama through scenic route through the mountains and river	Best Western Takayama (or similar)
<b>DAY 5</b>	Breakfast at your hotel  Guided tour of Takayama including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takayama Morning Market</li> <li>• Kusakabe Folk Park</li> <li>• Takayama Yatai Kaikan (Festival Float Hall)</li> <li>• Takayama Jinya (preserved Government town hall)</li> </ul>	

<p><b>DAY 6</b></p> <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Gokayama Day Trip with local guide. Cultural activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Washi paper making (take home your work of art)</li> <li>• Visit to a 400 year old farm house village and enjoy a hot cup of roasted tea by the original open fire</li> <li>• Soba noodle making followed by lunch</li> </ul> <p>Transfer from Gokayama to Kanazawa</p>	<p>Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel (or similar)</p>
<p><b>DAY 7</b></p> <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Visit Kenrokuen Garden</p> <p>Transfer to Kyoto by express train</p> <p><b>Highlight:</b> Very special meet &amp; greet session with a local Kyoto Geisha in one of Gion's original/authentic tea houses.</p>	
<p><b>DAY 8</b></p> <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Enjoy a private guided tour of Kyoto City</p> <p>Our popular Kyoto day includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nijo Castle</li> <li>• Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)</li> <li>• Lunch at local restaurnat (Pay locally)</li> <li>• Arashiyama Bamboo Forest</li> <li>• Fushimi Inari Shrine</li> </ul>	<p>New Miyako Hotel, (or similar)</p>
<p><b>DAY 9</b></p> <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Free day in Kyoto</p> <p>Optional day-trips:</p> <p><b>Day-trip to Nara</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Todaiji Temple &amp; Great Buddha</li> <li>• Nigatsudo Hall</li> <li>• Kasuga Taisha Shrine</li> </ul> <p>You will carry the <b>Japan Rail Pass</b> on this tour so all travel on this day should be covered. No extra charges apply and information on how to get to these places will be given in your travel pack.</p>	
<p><b>DAY 10</b></p> <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Transfer to Hiroshima by bullet train</p> <p>Full day sightseeing in Hiroshima and Miyajima island including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Itsukushima Shrine</li> <li>• Atomic Bomb Dome</li> <li>• Peace Memorial Park &amp; Museum</li> </ul>	<p>Miyarikyu Ryokan (or similar)</p>

<b>DAY 11</b>	Breakfast at your ryokan	Hotel Okuyumoto (or similar) (Japanese style)
	Transfer by Bullet Train to Hakone	
	Enjoy dinner & onsen at your ryokan	
<b>DAY 12</b>	Breakfast at your ryokan	
	Explore Hakone by a scenic cable car ride and a refreshing cruise on Lake Ashi which will hopefully allow the perfect view of Mt Fuji	
	Transfer to Tokyo	
<b>DAY 13</b>	Breakfast at your hotel	Grand Prince Hotel New Takanawa (or similar)
	Free time in Tokyo	
	Recommended highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harajuku Takeshita-dori Street</li> <li>• Omotesando &amp; Oriental Bazaar</li> <li>• Shibuya Scramble Crossing</li> <li>• Roppongi Hills (Tokyo City View)</li> </ul>	
	Join our Farewell dinner	
	Breakfast at your hotel	
<b>DAY 14</b>	Transfer to Haneda or Narita Airport by our local transfer company	
	Post-Tour Options are available if you wish to see more of Tokyo or its surrounding areas. Enquire with your travel consultant.	

# Destination Highlights

## 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.





## Matsumoto

Matsumoto is an alpine city surrounded on all sides by the towering peaks of the Japan Alps and has an almost European feel to it. The city is most famous for its original castle which is only a short distance from the station. This is one of the only original castles in Japan and really gives you a sense of ancient Japan and how the samurai used to live and fight. The city also boasts a number of sake breweries, hidden in the backstreets amongst the traditional buildings, a good museum of Ukiyoe woodblock prints, and is the home of soba noodles, the local speciality which is particularly delicious. The city has a relaxed atmosphere and a cosmopolitan feel befitting of a city renowned for its musicians and authors. The famous violin teacher, Suzuki (of the Suzuki method) originated from Matsumoto and you will find a commemorative statue on the street opposite the station.



## Nagano

After the hustle and bustle of Tokyo, you will move onto a rural village less than one hour by train and bus from Nagano city to a tiny place called Kanbayashi or Yudanaka Onsen in Nagano prefecture. This is home to the famous 'Snow Monkeys' – the wild monkeys that live up in the mountains but come down in the cold to get warm (and get fed!) at a natural open-air hot spring bath. Here you will stay in a beautiful local ryokan.



## Takayama

Mountains in Japan were once believed to be the sacred dwelling places of divine spirits and the Hida, Kiso and Akaishi ranges of Mountains, known collectively as the Japan Alps rise majestically in northern Honshu. Takayama, in the heart of the Hida Mountains is a delightful town, established in the 16th century as the castle town of the Kanamori family and now famous throughout Japan for its old town area of narrow streets containing many well-preserved inns, tea houses, shops and merchants houses with the latticed windows and overhanging roofs characteristic of the Edo period. The town was also renowned throughout the Edo era (1603-1868) for the very high quality of its craftsmen and many of the temples in Kyoto were built by workers from Takayama. The town has many shrines and temples of its own giving rise to the title of 'Little Kyoto'. Just on the outskirts of the town is the fascinating Hida folk village where old farm houses from across the Hida region have been brought together and rebuilt (beam by beam) on a hillside overlooking the town. Takayama's morning market on the bank of the Miyagawa River is famous and well worth a visit to see the stands selling local farm produce, flowers and crafts. There are also some great micro sake breweries affording the chance to sample the wares of Takayama's most famous product! A stay in Takayama is a chance to get a feel for a way of life that really has all but disappeared from modern Japan.





## Gokayama

Nestled along the deep gorge of Sho River, 33 Gassho-zukuri houses have been preserved in the historic villages of Gokayama including Taira and Ainokura. Your day to Gokayama will enable you to experience a variety of deep cultural activities such as washi paper making and soba noodle making.



## Kanazawa

Kanazawa is a lovely small city close to the Japan sea coast. Until the turn of the century it was the 4th biggest city in Japan. However its wealth was built on rice production and traditional crafts such as weaving and gold leaf and with the full scale industrialisation of the country Kanazawa was somewhat left behind. Today the city is flourishing again and still maintains a lot of its old charms. There are several small geisha districts and one where you can go inside an old tea house and see where the clients were entertained and even take tea yourself (sadly no longer served by geisha!). There are also samurai house and the city's most famous sight, the beautiful Kenrokuen garden rated as one of the three best stroll gardens in the whole of Japan.



## Kyoto

Oozing with tradition, Kyoto is the ultimate destination for anybody who wants to soak up time-honoured Japanese culture. Home to 17 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.





## Hiroshima & Miyajima Island

**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**, 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. 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!



## Hakone

The resort town of Hakone is a popular place to seek refuge from the hustle and bustle of life in the world's most populous city. Renowned for its luxurious accommodation, stunning scenery, and well-renowned thermal waters, you will be rubbing shoulders with Tokyo's elite as they enjoy their retreat from the capital city!



## Tour Inclusions:

Service	Description
<b>13 Nights Accommodation*</b>	10 nights in western hotels and 3 nights in Japanese style ryokans or minshiku *We will do our best to accommodate special sleeping requests but please note that this tour has 6 nights in traditional guest houses and/or ryokans with no option for a western bed. You will be sleeping on futon in tatami matted rooms – a uniquely authentic Japanese experience)
<b>English speaking locals/assistants along the way</b>	When 6 or more are on the group you will be escorted by our English speaking tour leader. If your group is less than 6 people, you will be doing the tour on a semi-escorted basis (Met in each area by our local assistants and guides).
<b>Private Tour Guides</b>	Private Guides in Tokyo, Takayama, Gokayama, Kyoto, Hiroshima & Miyajima and Kumano Kodo (Total 6 Days))
<b>Airport Transfers</b>	Arrival and Departure Airport/Hotel transfers included
<b>Entrance Fees</b>	Included into all sights listed on itinerary
<b>Cultural Experiences</b>	Tokyo Sights by Day & Night, Meet & Greet with Kyoto Geisha, World Heritage Temples and Shrines in Kyoto, bullet train journeys, Japanese Gardens, Washi Paper Making, Soba noodle making in Gokayama, Takayama Festival (April & October tours only), Snow Monkey Park, Samurai Castle in Matsumoto, Hiroshima & Miyajima day trips (optional), old Samurai postal hiking route from Tsumago to Magome (wondering through preserved villages from samurai era)
<b>Meals</b>	Breakfast daily, packed lunch in Kumano Kodo & 5 Japanese Evening Meals

### UJT's Additional **Services:**

Standard on all of our trips to Japan are the following services:

- ✓ Comprehensive tailor-made travel pack
- ✓ Local Emergency Contact
- ✓ All taxes and service charges
- ✓ Financial Protection
- ✓ Installment Payment Plan (optional)

#### **Not Included:**

- Meals other than those detailed above
- International Flights
- Baggage Handling (Don't worry, we will advise on how and when to send)
- Tour Guide / Driver Gratuity (optional)
- Pre or Post Nights (available on all small group tours)

### UJT's Essential **Travel Pack**

At Unique Japan Tours we aim to make your adventures in Japan run as smoothly as possible. To facilitate this we will provide a detailed Travel Pack, tailor-made for your specific trip including:

- ✓ Tips, hints and information covering subjects as diverse as transport, food, language and bathing etiquette!
- ✓ Detailed step-by-step itinerary
- ✓ Destination guides giving you up to date information on each place you visit.
- ✓ Local Area Maps, Vouchers, and Emergency contact details.



# Why Choose Unique Japan Tours?

## 1. FULLY BONDED – FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Unique Japan Tours is a member of the The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited, so rest assured, your tour is fully protected no matter what country you are paying from. Full details of this will be clearly explained in our terms and conditions.



## 2. 20 YEARS EXPERIENCE WITH JAPAN

UJT's Founder, Darina Slattery MBS, BA (hons), began her research over 20 years ago at Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo. Today, she leads a team of Japan travel experts, working with hundreds of local suppliers in Japan directly, selling tours to Japan globally. This **invaluable knowledge & expert advice** will ensure you make the most out of your time and money spent in Japan.



## 3. A PERSONAL SERVICE & FAMILY FRIENDLY

Our work ethic is **family & customer focused**. Darina grew up in the hotel industry (family-run) where hospitality and service were key to its success. UJT prides itself on offering a professional **personal service** from start to finish. We also welcome face-to-face meetings in our city centre Dublin office (54 Dawson Street, Dublin 2).

## 4. FULLY FLEXIBLE & TAILOR-MADE

If this trip does not suit your needs, then why not ask for a Tailor Made Trip or have a look at any of our other small group tours. Our range of tours vary and cover the length and breath of Japan. And remember, our team of Japan Travel Experts are capable of just about anything when it comes to traveling in Japan.

## 5. JAPAN BASED

Our Japan based operation, **UJT Services G.K.** based in Tokyo is ready to help/assist you on the ground offering peace of mind throughout every step of your journey. You will be provided with an emergency and local phone number to contact at any time, if the need arises. Our team in Japan are a mix of Japanese and International staff, all of whom will know your tour inside out!





## Useful Information

Below you will find the process on how Unique Japan Tours booking process works. If, for any reason, we have to make any changes, we will inform you in advance.

- ✓ Read and agree our **Full [Terms & Conditions](#)**
- ✓ Pay your **non-refundable booking deposit** to secure your place
- ✓ Once secured, you are not required to do anything else until closer to the date. We will be in touch with you as necessary with updates on hotels and any other services
- ✓ Fill out your details on your own Unique Japan Tours **[Travel Portal](#)** (your travel consultant will send you this once deposit is received)
- ✓ Final Payment is due 8 weeks prior. Payments can be made online or by bank transfer. Stage payments may be requested depending on your tour. Payment dates will be clearly stated on your final invoice.
- ✓ Your **Travel Pack** is sent to your postal address **2 weeks prior** to your start date (if you need it sooner we can be flexible but advance notice is needed)



## How to Book

To secure your place on **Japan Discovered** Tour we require a (non-refundable) booking deposit of €250 / USD300 / GBP200 / AUD350 per person.

**Pay Deposit Online:** <https://www.uniquejapantours.com/online-payment/>

**Tour Reference:** Booking Deposit **Tour Name:** Japan Discovered