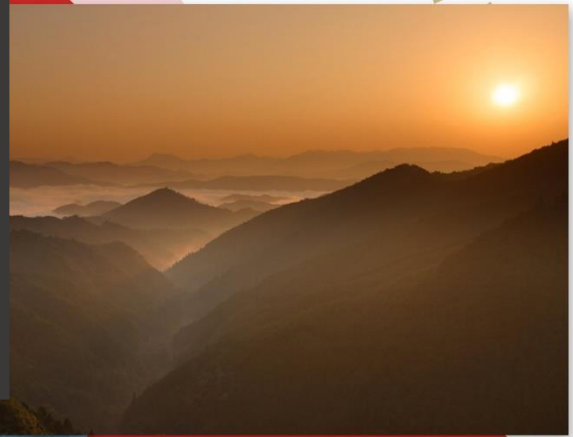


# ANCIENT TRAILS OF JAPAN



Tour Dossier



# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan



*“Welcome to the start of your Unique Japan Journey!”*



*Our team are really looking forward to planning your trip to Japan.  
If you have any questions, at any time, feel free to get in touch”.*

**Please quote the following reference when contacting us:**

### **Ancient Trails of Japan**

**We can be reached on any of these numbers:**



**IRL:** +353 (0)1 6787008 (9am – 5.30pm)

**UK:** +44 (0)20-3239-2519 (9am – 5.30pm)

**USA:** +1 347-688-3952 (8am – 3pm)

**Email:** [info@uniquejapantours.com](mailto:info@uniquejapantours.com)

As a result of the **Covid-19 Pandemic**, changes in accordance with WHO guidelines and advice will be implemented on all of our tours. Full updates will be sent to you in advance and can be viewed online: [uniquejapantours.com](http://uniquejapantours.com)

#### **Unique Japan Tours**

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# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan



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# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan

14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour



## 1. Why Choose Unique Japan Tours?

### 1. FULLY BONDED – FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Unique Japan Tours is a member of Total Payment Protection who fully guarantee and protect financial transactions between you and Unique Japan Tours. 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. Small Groups with NO MINIMUM NUMBER POLICY

Our groups have always been intimate in size. We prefer quality over quantity. For that reason, our average group size averages at 8-12 people (maximum 16 guaranteed). Since our tours started in 2007, and unlike many other operators out there, we have never cancelled a tour because of insufficient numbers. If we get less than the minimum number to run a tour (currently set at 6 people), don't worry. We have years of experience designing a semi-escorted version of the same tour. The only difference to you will be instead of having a full-time tour leader throughout, you will be met on arrival at each destination by local guides and assistants - almost like your own private tour!! [See Inclusions on Page 14]

### 3. Local Team with 24/7 Emergency Helpline

Our local company UJT Services G.K. [also owned by Unique Japan Tours], will oversee all operations of your trip from start to finish. Our team in Tokyo are busy working behind the scenes ensuring each tour runs smoothly, in real time! So, rest assured, no matter what your problem may be, we will be with you all the way. While on our small group tours, your tour leader &/or local guides will be your key contacts for any emergencies.



### 4. 22 Years Experience in Japan

Our founder, Darina Slattery, first visited Japan in 1998, where she studied at Tokyo's Meiji Gakuin University. Today, she leads a team of Japan travel experts, working with hundreds of local suppliers in Japan directly, and selling tours to Japan globally. This **invaluable knowledge and vast network of connections** has resulted us being able to create the most amazing itineraries for people. All our tours are tried and tested ensuring our clients gain time, memories, & savings while on your trip.



### 5. OUR CREW – JAPAN TRAVEL EXPERTS

Our work ethic is **family & customer focused**. We are a team of 15 Japan travel experts located in Tokyo, London & Dublin. Our clients come from all over the world so you can expect diversity in the group which always adds a bit of colour!

Let's *Zoom/Skype/Chat* our way to finding you the best tour that suits you and your travel partners. We find speaking to you in person will save everyone time while ensuring you get the best tour suitable for you.



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# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan



14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour

## 2. Tour Route & Departure Dates

*"The perfect choice for an adventure in search of stunning scenery, mystical trails, hot springs and culinary delights"*

**Start: Tokyo - Finish Tokyo**

|                                       |                           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Duration: 13 Nights / 14 Days         | Ryokan/Minshuku: 6 Nights |
| Theme: Hiking, Mountains, Photography | Code: CP219               |
| Group Size: Min 6, Max 16             | Ages: All Ages            |
| Style: Standard                       | Tour Level: ●●●●●         |

**ROUTE:** Tokyo (2) → Mt Fuji (1) → Kyoto (3) → Kii Peninsula (Kumano Kodo) (3) → Nagoya (1) → Tsumago/Magome (2) → Tokyo (1)

Japan is blessed with some of the most spectacular natural scenery in the world, most of which is found deep in the valleys and high in the mountains, miles away from the big cities that most people know. The mountain trails chosen for this tour have been passed for centuries by thousands of pilgrims from all walks of life including retired emperors and samurai leaders. Some particular favourites include; the UNESCO recognized 'Sacred Mountains of the Kii Peninsula', Mt Fuji, and the preserved Nakasendo Trail that once linked Tokyo to Kyoto: Tsumago to Magome. The perfect balance, suitable to all levels of fitness.

## TOUR DATES:

### 2021 :

- April 07 - 20 (Cherry Blossom)
- July 09 - 22 (Mt Fuji Climb Option & Tokyo Olympics)
- Aug 06 - 19 (Mt Fuji Climb Option & Tokyo Olympics)
- Nov 26 - Dec 09 (Kawayu Hotspring River Bathing & Autumn Leaves)
- Dec 24 - Jan 06 (Kumano New Year & Kawayu Hotspring River Bathing)

### 2022 :

- April 08 - 21 (Cherry Blossom)
- July 08 - 21 (Mt Fuji Climb Option & Tokyo Olympics)
- Nov 25 - Dec 08 (Kawayu Hotspring River Bathing & Autumn Leaves)
- Dec 24 - Jan 06 (Kumano New Year & Kawayu Hotspring River Bathing)

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# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan

14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour



### 3. Tour Itinerary

| Itinerary in Brief                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Accommodation                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DAY 1</b><br>Tokyo                                | <p>Arrive in Tokyo Narita or Haneda Airport</p> <p>Met on arrival by your driver / Transfer to Tokyo hotel</p> <p>Meet your group in hotel lobby at 6pm</p> <p>Welcome dinner at local restaurant (included)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><b>Shibuya Tokyu Excel Hotel</b></p> <p>(or similar (4*) for 2 nights)</p> <p><i>Breakfast daily</i></p>                            |
| <b>DAY 2</b><br>Tokyo                                | <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>★ TOKYO CITY SIGHTSEEING ★<br/>WITH LOCAL GUIDE 09.00 – 17:00</p> <p>Our popular Tokyo day tour includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tsukiji Outer Fish Market</li> <li>• Hamarikyu Garden</li> <li>• Tokyo River Cruise to Asakusa area</li> <li>• Asakusa Kannon Temple &amp; Shopping Street</li> <li>• Edo Museum or Skytree (if museum is closed)</li> </ul> <p>Evening free time / Your tour leader will give you guidance on where to go after dark!</p>                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>DAY 3</b><br>Tokyo<br>↓↓<br>Kawaguchiko / Mt Fuji | <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Transfer to Kawaguchiko (one of Mt Fuji Five Lakes)</p> <p>Lunch at a local restaurant on arrival (Please pay locally)</p> <p>Enjoy a leisurely day around Mt Fuji with your tour leader/local assistant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oishi Park</li> <li>• Kawaguchiko Sightseeing Boat</li> <li>• Mt Fuji 5th Station</li> </ul> <p>♥ Dinner &amp; Hot Springs (onsen) at your ryokan</p> <p>*Tonight, you will sleep on a futon mattress on tatami flooring. If you have any issues or prefer to request a bed, be sure to tell us as early as possible! Most ryokans have only a few rooms with western style beds in them (if any at all)</p> | <p><b>Kasuitei Oya</b><br/>(1 nights)</p> <p><i>[Japanese Ryokan]</i></p> <p>(Mountain hut for Climbers in July &amp; August tour)</p> |

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# Ancient Trails of Japan

14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour

|                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                       | <p><b>OPTIONAL HIGHLIGHT</b><br/><b>for July &amp; August Tours</b></p> <p>Begin ascent with small group (Takes approx. 3-5 hours to ascend. Appropriate clothing/equipment needed but rental can be arranged locally if preferred)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start the ascent with your guide from the 5<sup>th</sup> station (2,300m) at 3am approx.</li> <li>Dinner &amp; rest at your mountain hut between 6<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> station</li> </ul> <p>Arrive to summit by sunrise (see next day for more)</p>                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                |
| <p><b>DAY 4</b></p> <p>Kawaguchiko<br/>/ Mt Fuji<br/>↓↓<br/>Kyoto</p> | <p><u><b>Mt Fuji Climbers (July &amp; August Only):</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrive at summit 3,880m on time for sunrise.</li> <li>Walk around Mt Fuji crater.</li> <li>Packed breakfast picnic on the summit</li> <li>Descend in your own time</li> <li>Soak in hot spring bath / Eat something</li> </ul> <p>Transfer to Kyoto by bullet train (arrive evening)</p> <p><u><b>Mt Fuji NON-Climbers:</b></u></p> <p>Breakfast at your ryokan</p> <p>Today you will move to Kyoto by the famous bullet train</p> <p>Free time in Kyoto</p> <p>Your tour leader will show you around the area and give you guidance on where to visit while on your own.</p> | <p><b>Daiwa Roynet<br/>Hotel Grande<br/>Kyoto</b></p> <p><i>(3 nights)</i></p> |
| <p><b>DAY 5</b></p> <p>Kyoto</p>                                      | <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p><b>★ KYOTO City Sightseeing ★</b><br/><b>WITH LOCAL GUIDE 09.00 – 17:00</b></p> <p>Visit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nijo Castle</li> <li>Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)</li> <li>Lunch at local restaurant</li> <li>Arashiyama Bamboo Forest</li> <li>Fushimi Inari Shrine</li> </ul> <p><b>Afternoon Tea with local Kyoto Geisha</b><br/>in one of Gion's original/authentic tea houses</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                |



# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan

14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour



|                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>DAY 6</b></p> <p>Kyoto</p>                        | <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Free day in Kyoto</p> <div style="background-color: #a6c9ec; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>OPTIONAL TOURS</b><br/>(Pre-Booking Recommended)</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ancient <b>Nara</b> &amp; Modern <b>Osaka</b></li> <li>- Historical <b>Hiroshima</b> and Magical <b>Miyajima Island</b></li> <li>- Kyoto <b>Cultural Experience</b>, e.g. Kimono Workshop, Ikebana Workshop, Cookery Class, etc.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                    |
| <p><b>DAY 7</b></p> <p>Kyoto<br/>↓↓<br/>Kumano-Kodo</p> | <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Transfer to Kii-Tanabe by train</p> <div style="background-color: #a6c9ec; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>★ <b>KUMANO KODO Sightseeing</b> ★<br/>WITH LOCAL GUIDE FOR 3 DAYS</p> </div> <p>Lunch at local restaurant (Pay locally)</p> <p>Enjoy a <b>2 Hour Walk</b> today with your guide (If you are not able to walk, your guide will advise you on what to do in the local area)</p> <p>Transfer to Kawayu Onsen with your guide</p> <p>Dinner &amp; onsen (hot springs) at your minshuku</p> <div style="background-color: #d9534f; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Seasonal Highlights:</b></p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>April</b> : Stunning Cherry Blossom walks &amp; photographic opportunities around Kawayu Onsen area</li> <li>• <b>July &amp; August</b> : Magical clean and fresh water for swimming in from the banks of Kawayu River (outside your minshuku)</li> <li>• <b>November &amp; December</b>: Soak in the naturally hot river onsen (walking distance from your minshuku)</li> </ul> | <p><b>Kawayu Onsen</b><br/>(2 Nights)</p> <p>local riverside<br/>minshuku<br/>[Japanese style]</p> |





# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan

14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour



|                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>DAY 8</b></p> <p>Kumano-Kodo</p>                    | <p>Breakfast at your minshuku</p> <p><b>Walkers:</b><br/>Enjoy a leisurely <b>13km hiking trail</b> around Kumano Hongu Taisha with your guide<br/>[Picnic Lunch Provided]</p> <p><b>Non-Walkers Option:</b><br/>Take a bus to Kumano Hongu &amp; some of the local villages. Your guide will give you orientation on where to go and how to go there in the morning (self guided, details provided)</p> <p><b>All Group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dinner &amp; onsen at your minshuku</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                               |
| <p><b>DAY 9</b></p> <p>Kumano-Kodo</p>                    | <p>Breakfast at your minshuku</p> <p>Continue on the Ancient Kumano Trail with your guide. Today is suitable for both walkers &amp; non-walkers. Travel will be using chartered vehicle or public transfer (depending on group size).</p> <p>Move from Kawayu Onsen towards Kii Katsuura stopping off at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shingu, Kumano Hayatama Taisha Shrine</li> </ul> <p>Continue to Kii Katsuura to visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kumano Nachi Taisha &amp; Seiganto-ji</li> <li>Nachi Waterfall</li> </ul> <p>Hill walk required to reach Pagoda for best view of waterfall</p> <p>Return to the local village</p> <p><b>December Seasonal Highlight:</b><br/>Japanese people usually celebrate the end of the year at their local temple. You will experience this first-hand by wishing your new year in at Kumano Hayatama Shrine and Nachi Taisha. A very special and unique experience found only in Japan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dinner with tour leader at local restaurant (Pay Locally / Optional)</li> </ul> | <p><b>Ryokan Katsuura Gyoen</b><br/>(or similar)</p> <p><i>Japanese Style for 1 night</i></p> |
| <p><b>DAY 10</b></p> <p>Kumano-Kodo<br/>↓↓<br/>Nagoya</p> | <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p>Transfer to Nagoya by bullet train</p> <p>Free time in Nagoya to explore and enjoy the city atmosphere</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p><b>The Royal Park Canvas Nagoya</b><br/>(1 night)</p>                                      |

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# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan

14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour



|                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DAY 11</b><br><br>Nagoya<br>↓↓<br><b>Kiso Valley</b> | <p>Breakfast at your hotel</p> <p><b>Walkers:</b> Enjoy a leisurely 8km walk along the Samurai postal road that once linked Tsumago and Magome. Look out for plenty of bear bells around -be sure to ring them! This area is known for having wild bears.</p> <p><b>Non-Walkers:</b> Take local bus along the Samurai postal road.</p> <p>Meet group for tea before making your way to your ryokan.</p> <p>Dinner and onsen at your ryokan</p>                                                                                                                     | <b>Hotel Hanasarasa</b><br><br>[Japanese style]<br><br>(for 2 nights)                                                                                                                              |
| <b>DAY 12</b><br><br>Kiso Valley                        | <p>Breakfast at your ryokan</p> <p>Today you have a few days. If feeling energetic, why not try the Nakasendo trail in the opposite direction. Or, just relax at your ryokan and enjoy country life in this magnificent Kiso valley.</p> <p>Farewell Dinner &amp; Onsen at your ryokan.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>DAY 13</b><br><br>Kiso Valley<br>↓↓<br>Tokyo         | <p>Breakfast at your ryokan</p> <p>Transfer to Tokyo by train.</p> <p>Free time in Tokyo. Your tour leader/guide will explain where to go and how to spend your time here.</p> <p>If you prefer to fly out of Japan from a different airport, we can choose a different city hotel for you tonight. Consult with your travel consultant. Your choice of airports would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Centrair Airport (Nagoya)</li> <li>- Kansai Airport (Osaka)</li> <li>- Haneda Airport (Tokyo)</li> <li>- Narita Airport (Tokyo)</li> </ul> | <b>Shibuya Excel Hotel</b><br>(or similar)<br><br>1 night with post-tour options available<br><br>→ (July/August 2021 Tokyo Hotels will vary depending on group size due to Olympics taking place) |
| <b>Day 14</b>                                           | <p>Breakfast at your hotel.</p> <p>Transfer to your chosen airport. Don't forget to give us your flight details. Your transfer will pick you up at your hotel.</p> <p>Depart Japan on your selected flight.</p> <p>If you prefer to add post-tour nights to your trip, enquire with your travel consultant.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Tour Ends</b><br><br><i>(Post-Tour Nights Available on Request)</i>                                                                                                                             |



# TOUR DOSSIER

## Ancient Trails of Japan



14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour

### 4. Destination Highlights

#### Tokyo (3 nights)

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 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 (1 night)

Today you take a bus from Shinjuku to Kawaguchiko where you will marvel at one of the most iconic sights in Japan, Mt Fuji. Those who wish to climb this sleeping giant will start from Kawaguchiko 5th station. Meet our experienced Mt Fuji climb guide and begin this challenging ascent. Make your way up to the 8th station for a rest and some food. Wake in the early hours and continue your hike all the way to Mt Fuji's summit where you will wait for Fuji's spectacular sunrise.

Many people prefer the views of Mt Fuji from its surrounding lakes. For those who would rather not tackle the hike you will enjoy lunch at a local Kawaguchiko restaurant before visiting nearby Oishi Park which is famous for its stunning views of Mt Fuji over Lake Kawaguchi and the surrounding natural landscape. Voyage out across the lake on the Kawaguchiko Sightseeing Boat before settling in for dinner & onsen at your Japanese style hotel.





# Ancient Trails of Japan

14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour

## Kyoto (3 nights)

Brimming 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. While on first glance visitors may find themselves struck more by the ubiquitous grid-like structure of modern metropolitan Japan, a great part of the magic of Kyoto is in picking out its treasures: sacred shrines tucked in among shopping arcades, time-honoured teahouses nestling among modern businesses and the geisha of legend sweeping 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.



## Afternoon Tea with Geisha

You will have the rare chance to sit and have tea with one of Kyoto's beautiful young Maiko in their mama-san's teahouse. 'Maiko' are better known as a young 'Geisha'. Training to become Geisha usually starts at a young age (some start at 13/14). Trained in various Japanese traditional arts such as Kimono wearing, flower arranging, traditional dance, shamisen (string instrument), and so on, they spend many years perfecting how to walk, talk, and breath like a Geisha. If successful in their progression, they then move to be a Geisha, usually by the age of twenty or so. Such an interesting experience that you will only find in Kyoto. This experience is not sold on the high street. This really is a special occasion on our tour that we have been proud to offer for many years. So be sure to bring your camera and be prepared to ask questions. Our Maiko are very open and love sharing and listening to your stories too.





# Ancient Trails of Japan

14 Days / 13 Night Small Group Tour



**Nara** lies just 40 minutes by local train from Kyoto and is renowned for the wealth of its Buddhist and Shinto heritage. Nara was formerly the end of the Silk Road and was for this reason the area which first saw Buddhist teaching making the transition across the ocean from China. The daibutsu or big Buddha is hugely impressive as is the huge wooden structure which houses it, to this day the world's largest wooden building despite the current structure being a third smaller than the original. The myriad of shrines and temples are all set against the backdrop of the low lying mountains and in the midst of Nara Park, which is famously home to a vast population of pesky deer. Given half a chance they'll happily munch on your guide books, umbrellas, scarves, and about anything else they can get their noses into! You can also buy official deer cookies to feed them with but do so at your own peril.

## **Kumano-Kodo** *(Total 3 nights)*

For over 1000 years people from all over Japan, regardless of social class, including retired emperors and aristocrats, have made the pilgrimage to Kumano. These pilgrims used a network of routes, now called the Kumano Kodo, which stretched across the mountainous Kii Peninsula. The walk itself was an integral part of the pilgrimage process as they undertook rigorous religious rites of worship and purification. Walking the ancient Kumano Kodo is a fantastic way to experience the unique cultural landscape of Kumano's spiritual countryside.







# Ancient Trails of Japan

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## Kawayu Onsen (2 nights)

Kawayu Onsen is a geological thermal wonder located on the Oto River, a tributary of the Kumano-gawa River. "Kawa" means "river" and "yu" means "hot water". In Kawayu Onsen hot spring water bubbles to the surface of the crystal clear river. The defining feature of Kawayu Onsen is the river. On the north side is a collection of places to stay including a diversity of ryokans, minshukus, and hotels. On the south side of the river is a green forested mountainside. The world heritage Kumano Hongu Taisha and Kumano Kodo pilgrimage routes are close by. One of the best ways to enjoy Kawayu Onsen is to soak in the soft evening light while watching the warm mist from the river rise slowly into the clean mountain air. You can dig your own bath or bathe in a prepared one. Kawayu Onsen is perfect for a visit all year round. If you come in the winter months, don't miss the giant Sennin-buro bath. Summer is perfect for cooling down with a swim. Spring and fall colours are best viewed relaxing from water level. If one digs a hole in the gravel river bed, hot thermal water percolates in, creating an onsen bath! You can regulate the temperature by diverting cold water from the river into the mix. Many of the accommodations in Kawayu have shovels for guests use. If you don't have the energy to dig your own, just use one of the pre-dug basins. From December to February, nature's forces are adapted to create a giant bath in the river called Sennin-buro. "Sennin" means "one thousand people", implying that it is so large that one thousand people can bathe at the same time. "Sennin" also means "mountain man", or "immortal mountain hermit", a mysterious character that lives far in the mountains. "Buro" means bath. Sennin-buro is approximately 40 meters by 15 meters in size, and a depth of 60 centimetres. The hot spring water is 73 degrees Celsius, but is cooled down by the river water to ~40 degrees Celsius. Temperature of the water can change often, so try out different spots to find the right temperature for you. On special days the bath is lit with lamps.





# Ancient Trails of Japan

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## Kii-Katsuura (1 night)

**Katsuura Onsen** is located on the southeast coast of the Kii Peninsula. It is in essence a fishing port turned hot spring resort. Both sides of the village can be easily experience with a short stroll through town. There are multiple hot spring baths located throughout the village and are almost entirely located in hotels, ryokan, etc. Most of these baths are also available for day use. A complete list of Onsen baths and footbaths is available at the Information Center located in the JR Kii-Katsuura Station. During your stay at Katsuura Onsen town, you will use this as a base to visit Kumano Nachi Taisha, a Shinto shrine located halfway up Nachi Mountain, about 350 meters above sea level. It has its religious origin in the ancient nature worship of Nachi-no-Otaki. This grand shrine is part of the Kumano Sanzan and major pilgrimage destination. Located within viewing distance of the Shrine is the Nachi-no-Otaki, a 133 meters high and 13 meters wide waterfall, known as the tallest waterfall in Japan and can be seen from far out on the Pacific Ocean. Nachi-no-Otaki's water source is the surrounding broad-leaf evergreen primeval forest. It is a sanctuary of Kumano Nachi Taisha and thus has been protected since ancient times and is used for ascetic training by mountain monks who practice Shugendo, a mixed religion of foreign and indigenous beliefs. While staying in Katsuura you will get to sample the freshest of tuna and other fish.







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## Nagoya (1 night)

Nagoya is not on most visitors to Japan's list of destinations but is a real Japanese city. There are very few Western tourists around so you can get a real feel for everyday urban life. There are also some great museums (including the fantastic Toyota museum which charts the development of Toyota Corporation from its origins in weaving to the automobile giant of modern times and the fascinating Tokugawa museum which tells the story of the Tokugawa shogunate which ruled over Japan for some 260 years), the huge Asahi beer factory and one of Japan's finest castles (located at Inuyama) to visit. You may also be interested in a tour of one of Toyota motor corporation's high-tech car plants. The tours are free, conducted in English, and give a real insight into one of Japan's most successful companies. Nagoya also has great shops and a lively night life if you fancy hitting the clubs for a night out!



## Tsumago & Magome (2 nights)

Travel back in time to the Edo period at the old samurai villages of Tsumago & Magome. Tsumago was once a post town on the old Nakasendo highway linking the ancient capital of Kyoto with Matsumoto. Today, Tsumago is loved for the residents' efforts to preserve the town's Edo Period ambiance. Power lines are hidden away and cars banned from the main roads during the daytime so that the beautiful, traditional buildings and flag-stone streets can be seen in their true glory. A stay in Tsumago is to step back in time and experience old Japan; a world away from the robots, gadgets and gizmos that many associate with modern Japanese cities. Tsumago is situated in the picturesque Kiso Valley and the hike between Tsumago and Magome along the old post route is highly recommended. This trek will take anything from 2.5 hours to 4 hours, depending on your level of fitness (8km long). Magome is also preserved to its original character and has a rich history, displaying an untarnished view of a more traditional Japan.





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## 5. Tour Prices & Inclusions

### Prices:

|                                |        |  |        |  |           |  |           |
|--------------------------------|--------|--|--------|--|-----------|--|-----------|
| <b>Twin/Double Sharing:</b>    | €4,400 |  | £3,950 |  | US\$5,200 |  | AU\$7,250 |
| <b>Single Room Throughout:</b> | €5,350 |  | £4,800 |  | US\$6,260 |  | AU\$8,850 |
| <b>Triple Room:</b>            | €4,050 |  | £3,750 |  | US\$4,870 |  | AU\$6,775 |

Prices are per person. All prices are subject to change in line with exchange rate fluctuations. Check website [www.uniquejapantours.com](http://www.uniquejapantours.com) for up-to-date guaranteed prices.

Once deposit is paid, your tour price is fixed. [Book Now.](#)

### Inclusions:

|                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Hotels &amp; Ryokans (13 nights)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 7 nights in carefully chosen 3 &amp; 4 * western style hotels</li> <li>✓ 6 nights in Japanese style* ryokan or guesthouse.</li> </ul> <p>*You will be sleeping on futon in tatami matted rooms – a uniquely authentic Japanese experience. If you require a bed for health reasons, let us know early.</p>                                                 |
| <b>Fully Escorted (6 – 16):</b>         | You will be escorted by our friendly English- speaking tour leader who will travel with you from Day 1 to 14.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Semi Escorted (1 - 5):</b>           | You will met in each area by our local assistants and guides on days you don't have private guides.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Meals:</b>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Welcome Dinner at local izakaya on Day 1</li> <li>✓ Breakfast daily</li> <li>✓ 5 Japanese evening meals while staying at traditional minshiku/ryokans (taste the seasonal local produce from each region where you stay)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Private Tour Guides:</b>             | Private Guides in Tokyo, Kyoto, Kawayu Onsen, Kii Katsuura, Tsumago/Magome (Total 5 days)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Getting Around:</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reserved Seats on all long-distance trains including bullet train seats.</li> <li>✓ Luggage transfer when using shinkansen (one bag allowed per person)</li> <li>✓ Chartered vehicles, local taxis/minivans/coaches on private city tours</li> <li>✓ Arrival &amp; Departure Airport transfers to &amp; from Tokyo hotel (door to door service)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Entrance Fees:</b>                   | Included into all sights listed on itinerary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |



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### Cultural Experiences:

- ✓ Tokyo Sights by Day & Night including **karaoke**, **izakaya** night out, Sumida **River Cruise**, urban Japanese garden, and local markets/museums etc.
- ✓ Up-close-and-personal with **Mt Fuji!** Opt-in to climb on our July/August tours.
- ✓ Overnight in **rural ryokans** experiencing unique **Japanese hospitality and onsen** (hot spring baths) & incredible R&R time!
- ✓ Unesco World Heritage **Kyoto**: glorious sites, traditional back-streets, stunning shrines, manicured gardens, **gorgeous geisha**, and authentic tea ceremony just some of the highlights!
- ✓ **Afternoon tea** with young Geisha
- ✓ High speed **bullet train** journeys throughout
- ✓ **Scenic mountain drives** taking in the magical landscape that makes up c.75% of Japan's terrain
- ✓ **Kumano Kodo** nestled in the **Unesco World Heritage Kii Peninsula** (Visit all three major sites along the Kumano Kodo trail)
- ✓ **Nakasendo Walking Trail** experiencing a time warp in the old Samurai days

## 6. What about our luggage?

When using bullet trains on our small group tours, we will send your large suitcases on to the next hotel (usually skipping one night). Your itinerary will clearly highlight when this will be required. On these days, you will need a small overnight bag to bring with you (similar to a carry-on bag for flights). Although this service is reliable & efficient, Unique Japan Tours cannot take any responsibility for guests' baggage. Each passenger will be required to carry your own bags at all times. Tour leaders will not be responsible for bags. Some hotels will have porter service but not all.





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### 7. Complimentary Services

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

- ✓ Unique Japan Tours Travel Consultant
- ✓ Comprehensive tailor-made travel pack
- ✓ Local Emergency Contact
- ✓ All taxes and service charges
- ✓ Financial Protection

#### **Not Included:**

- Meals & Beverages (not listed on itinerary)
- International Flights (request quote)
- Tour Guide / Driver Gratuity (optional)

*"At UJT, our aim is to be open and honest with all of our travellers. We hate hidden costs so will tell you where and when you will need cash while on the go!"*

*Darina Slattery, UJT Owner/Manger*

#### 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 including hotel names (in both English and Japanese – good to have for taxi drivers) and daily suggested itineraries with clear details on how to make this happen!
- ✓ Customised access maps with bi-lingual train times and full instructions for every journey you will be making in Japan.
- ✓ Destination guides giving you up to date information on each place you visit.
- ✓ Local Area Maps, Vouchers, and Emergency contact details.

Any other information you have specifically requested from us.

### 8. Ready to BOOK!

To secure your place on **Ancient Trails of Japan Tour** we require a booking deposit of

€250 / USD300 / GBP200 / AUD350 per person.

Click here to view our Covid-19 flexible terms and conditions [\[Clause 9\]](#).

Pay Deposit Online: <https://www.uniquejapantours.com/book-a-tour/>

**Tour Reference:** Booking Deposit

**Tour Name:** Ancient Trails of Japan



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### 9. Small Group Tours Checklist

| When?                                                     | What to do:                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Tick when complete:   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Before paying deposit:                                    | Read and agree our full <a href="#">Terms &amp; Conditions</a>                                                                                                                                                       | <input type="radio"/> |
| When ready to book:                                       | Pay <b>Booking Deposit</b> ( <a href="#">Payment Link</a> )                                                                                                                                                          | <input type="radio"/> |
| After paying deposit up to 7 days:                        | Receive pro-forma invoice outlining schedule of payments. Check it. Complete <b>Booking Form</b> and send (with copy of passport) to your travel consultant                                                          | <input type="radio"/> |
| After paying deposit (up to 8 weeks prior to start date): | Book your flights as soon as you have your tour secured with us (or before if you find a good deal)<br><br><b>Send E-Ticket</b> to your UJT Travel Consultant                                                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| After paying deposit (up to 8 weeks prior):               | Take out personal/medical <b>Travel Insurance</b> . Send your policy name and details to your travel consultant                                                                                                      | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8 weeks prior                                             | <b>Tour Balance</b> is due 8 weeks prior to the tour starting date. Pay online or by bank transfer. Details will be on your Pro-forma invoice.                                                                       | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2-3 weeks prior                                           | Wait for your <b>Travel Pack</b> including full pre-departure details.<br><br>We will send to the postal address you provide us with. Your travel consultant will be in touch before this time to confirm address.   | <input type="radio"/> |
| Pre-Departure                                             | Final check you've sent all <b>Essential Documents</b> to your travel consultant:<br><br>Flight E-Tickets, Dietary Requirements (if any), Insurance Policy Name/Number, Passport Copy, Emergency Contact Name/Number | <input type="radio"/> |