



# Grand Tour of Japan

14 days | 18 days with Okinawa & Tokyo extension

Few countries blend ancient customs with modern-day innovations as seamlessly as Japan. On this journey, find your Zen in the Japanese Alps and step inside shrines built by emperors in Kyoto. Savor dishes the Japanese have perfected—ramen and sushi, anyone?—and enjoy guided meditation, geisha sightings, and a sake tasting. Then, when you think things can't get any more astounding, look to the horizon in Tokyo, where skyscrapers and iconic Mount Fuji anchor the skyline.



## Your tour package includes

- 12 nights in handpicked hotels
- 12 breakfasts
- 1 lunch with beer or wine
- 3 dinners with beer or wine
- 1 sake tasting
- 6 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 3 train rides

## Included highlights

- Osaka Castle
- Itsukushima Shrine
- Himeji Castle
- Golden Pavilion
- High-speed bullet train rides
- Guided meditation session
- Kenrokuen
- Ogimachi Village
- Meiji Shrine
- Harajuku neighborhood

## Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 2.5 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including paved roads and gravel paths, with few hills. You may need to climb stairs when visiting temples.

## Group size

15–35

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# Grand Tour of Japan

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Osaka today.

## Osaka → 2 nights

### Day 2: Arrival in Osaka

Welcome to Japan! Get settled in to your hotel this evening.

### Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Osaka

*Included meals: breakfast, welcome lunch*

Join your Tour Director and set out to explore Osaka, the birthplace of many of Japan's well-known arts, such as Kabuki theater and the tea ceremony.

- Visit the massive Osaka Castle, which houses a museum dedicated to Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the legendary leader who built it
- Stroll through Kuromon Ichiba Market, famous for its selection of fresh fish, vegetables, fruit, and other Japanese specialties

This afternoon, gather with your Tour Director and fellow travelers for a welcome lunch in the city.

Spend a free evening in Osaka or add an excursion.

+ Osaka by Night: Cruise & Dinner

## Hiroshima → 1 night

### Day 4: Train ride to Hiroshima & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast*

Board a high-speed bullet train and travel to Hiroshima. Then, get to know this renowned "City of Peace" on today's guided sightseeing tour with your Tour Director.

- Visit Peace Memorial Park to see the Peace Memorial Museum and the Atomic Bomb Dome, which was the only structure to withstand the infamous atomic bombing of the city during World War II
- Take a short ferry ride to Miyajima Island to view the 12th-century, UNESCO-listed Itsukushima Shrine

## Kyoto → 3 nights

### Day 5: Kyoto via Himeji Castle & Kōko-en

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Make your way to Kyoto today, stopping along the way for a guided tour of the UNESCO-listed Himeji Castle and its surrounding garden, Kōko-en.

- Enjoy free time for lunch in the quaint city of Himeji before visiting Himeji Castle, a wooden masterpiece that's comprised of over 80 buildings
- Snap photos of the Otomon Gate as you enter and admire the castle's white facade, elegant pinnacles, and striking 17th-century architecture
- Round out your visit with free time to explore Kōko-en, a stunning garden that's designed to be aesthetically pleasing through all four seasons

Continue on to Kyoto, where you'll enjoy a traditional *shabu-shabu* (hot pot) dinner.

### Day 6: Sightseeing tour of Kyoto

*Included meals: breakfast*

A local guide leads a tour of Kyoto, the city that served as the capital of Japan for more than 1,000 years—and is still considered its spiritual capital.

- Tour the 17th-century Nijo Castle, which boasts intricate architecture and a unique alarm system: floors that sound like a nightingale when walked on
- See one of Japan's most famous temples, the glittering Golden Pavilion
- Travel on to Ryoanji Temple, which houses the country's finest Zen gardens

Spend a free afternoon in Kyoto or add an excursion.

+ Arashiyama District & Okochi Sanso Garden

### Day 7: Zen meditation class

*Included meals: breakfast*

This morning, learn about one of Japan's most important spiritual practices: Zen meditation.

- Tap in to your unconscious mind during a guided Zen meditation session
- Sit down to sip Matcha green tea alongside a traditional Japanese sweet

Spend a free afternoon in Kyoto or add an excursion.

+ Nara

## Kanazawa → 2 nights

### Day 8: Train ride to Kanazawa, sightseeing tour & sake tasting

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Board a high-speed bullet train and make your way to Japan's west coast to visit the historic city of Kanazawa, where you'll join an expert guide for a sightseeing tour.

- Stroll around the Higashi Chaya District, which is known for its teahouses and geisha performances
- Pay a visit to Kenrokuen, the country's most famous landscape garden, where you'll enjoy free time after your guided walk
- Make your way to Myouryuj, known as "the Ninja Temple" due to its secret defenses, doors, and traps

Tonight, learn about Kanazawa's over 400-year-old sake tradition. You'll taste local sake and then sit down for dinner with your fellow travelers.

### Day 9: Japanese Alps & Shirakawa-go region

*Included meals: breakfast*

Spend a full day uncovering the beauty of the Japanese Alps and the surrounding areas, including the famous Shirakawa-go region.

- Make your way to the city of Takayama to stroll through the Old Town with your Tour Director
- Continue on to the Shirakawa-go region to admire UNESCO-listed villages that are famous for their Gassho-style houses, which have unique thatched roofs
- Take in sweeping village views from the Shiroyama Viewpoint
- Stop in Ogimachi Village, where you'll visit an open-air museum to get an up-close look at the region's thatched-roof farmhouses

## Tokyo → 4 nights

### Day 10: Train ride to Tokyo & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast*

Board a high-speed bullet train to Tokyo this morning. Then, spend the afternoon exploring Japan's bustling capital with your Tour Director in the lead.

- View the Imperial Palace and its impressive grounds
- Pass through the Shinjuku District
- Head to the top of the Metropolitan Building to get a bird's-eye view of the city

**Day 11: Sightseeing tour of Tokyo**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Join a local guide and embark on another immersive tour of Tokyo.

- Pass the iconic Shibuya crossing as you drive through the central part of the city
- Set off on a short walk from Yoyogi Park to the Meiji Shrine, final resting place of Emperor Meiji
- Stroll through the colorful Harajuku neighborhood, where Tokyo's history and present-day pop culture intertwine
- Explore Tokyo's old town, including the ancient Asakusa Kannon Temple, Tokyo's oldest and most sacred temple
- Peruse a vibrant variety of handmade crafts and local fare at the centuries-old Nakamise Shopping Arcade

Spend a free evening in Tokyo or add an excursion.

+ Japanese Cooking Class & Dinner

**Day 12: Free day in Tokyo**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Spend a free day in Tokyo or add an excursion.

+ Kamakura

**Day 13: Free day in Tokyo**

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

Spend a free day in Tokyo or add an excursion. Tonight, celebrate your trip at a farewell dinner with your fellow travelers.

+ Mount Fuji

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**Flight Home**

**Day 14: Departure**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Transfer to the Tokyo airport for your flight home, or extend your stay in Japan to explore Okinawa.

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**+ Okinawa & Tokyo extension**

Okinawa's white-sand beaches and turquoise

water make it seem like a world away from mainland Japan—which makes it just the place to round out your trip. Leave mountains and skyscrapers behind as you fly to the island, where local experts will show you the highlights.

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**Okinawa → 3 nights**

**Day 14: Flight to Naha**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Transfer to the airport this morning and board your flight to the city of Naha on the island of Okinawa, located to the southwest in the East China Sea.

**Day 15: Sightseeing tour of Naha**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Join a local guide for a tour of Naha, Okinawa's capital city.

- Explore the UNESCO-listed Shikinaen Gardens, which were built to entertain envoys of the Chinese Emperors, in 1799
- Enjoy a self-guided audio tour inside the Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum, which brings centuries of Okinawan history to life

Spend a free afternoon in Naha or add an excursion.

+ Okinawa World War II History Tour

**Day 16: Free day in Naha**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Spend a free day in Naha or add an excursion.

+ Kerama Islands Sailing & Snorkeling

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**Tokyo → 1 night**

**Day 17: Flight to Tokyo**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Fly back to Tokyo this morning and enjoy a free afternoon.

This evening, enjoy a farewell drink as you celebrate your trip with your group.

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**Flight Home**

**Day 18: Departure**

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the Tokyo airport for your flight home.

# Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.\* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: [goaheadtours.ca/GTJ](https://goaheadtours.ca/GTJ) | 1-800-754-5066

## Day 3: Osaka by Night: Cruise & Dinner

\$165CAD/\$175CAD\* (5 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

Hop aboard a river cruise and admire the glittering skyline as you float along Osaka Bay. Then, get a taste of local life as you follow a guide on a walking tour of the dynamic Dotonbori Riverfront. Explore Namba, a bustling neighborhood along the water with some of Osaka's best shops, restaurants, and entertainment before heading to a local restaurant to enjoy an included dinner. End the night with a subway ride back to your hotel.

## Day 6: Arashiyama District & Okochi Sanso Garden

\$165CAD/\$175CAD\* (6 hours, departs in the morning)

Depart from Kyoto and enjoy a short transfer as you travel west to Arashiyama. This historic district boasts stunning natural beauty, and you'll take it all in on a guided sightseeing tour. Step inside the UNESCO-listed Tenryū-ji Temple, which was originally constructed in the 12th century and is considered one of Kyoto's most important sites. Meander through the striking Bamboo Grove, where soaring stalks flank a singular pathway. Finally, see the rolling, tree-covered hills that surround the Hozu River and the Togetsukyo Bridge. Spanning almost 170 feet, the beautiful wooden bridge sits against the backdrop of Arashiyama mountain. Afterwards, head to the beautiful Okochi Sanso Garden located in the foothills of Mt. Ogura and was the former home to Japanese period film star Okochi Denjiro until 1962. Upon arrival, you'll enter the Okochi villa's tea house to enjoy a matcha drink tasting followed by a leisurely stroll through the gardens. Wander along winding paths surrounded by lush greenery and amazing views of Kyoto, the Kozugaway river, and the Arashiyama mountains. Please note: The walk through the garden is roughly one mile. Travelers who wish to not participate in the garden walk may remain at the tea house or explore the gardens on their own.

## Day 7: Nara

\$129CAD/\$139CAD\* (5 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

Join your Tour Director and transfer to Japan's former capital, Nara. Enjoy an included lunch, then set off to visit some of the city's UNESCO-listed monuments. Tour the Todaiji Temple, site of the world's largest bronze Buddha statue, and the Shinto Kasuga Grand Shrine, famous for its thousands of lanterns. Finally, stroll through the nearby Nara Park, home to hundreds of sacred wild deer. Later, make your way back to Kyoto. Please note: While the deer at Nara Park are friendly, they are still wild animals, and should be treated with caution. If you have any allergies, please keep in mind that the deer live throughout the entire park.

## Day 11: Japanese Cooking Class & Dinner

\$175CAD (3 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

Tonight, join an experienced chef at a local restaurant for a cooking lesson and dinner. Grab your apron and watch as the chef demonstrates how to make traditional Japanese cuisine such as gyudon, miso soup, cucumber pickles, or a chicken teriyaki bento box. Then, try your hand at crafting your own authentic meal before sitting down to enjoy the cuisine for dinner. Please note: It may not be possible to accommodate requests related to food allergies. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

## Day 12: Kamakura

\$185CAD (8 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

Step aboard a local train in Tokyo and make your way to the seaside city of Kamakura, where you'll explore the countryside, temples, and shrines on a guided walking tour. Pay a visit to the city's famous Great Buddha and Hase Kannon Temples. Then, sit down for an included lunch and enjoy free time to peruse the arts and crafts for sale along Komachi Shopping Street before transferring back to Tokyo on the train. Please note: Travelers should expect to walk around 10,000 steps along even terrain. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

## Day 13: Mount Fuji

\$125CAD/\$135CAD\* (6 hours, departs in the afternoon, lunch included)

Join your Tour Director and make your way to one of Japan's most breathtaking natural icons: the 12,388-foot-high Mount Fuji. En route to this UNESCO World Heritage site, pass through the Aokigahara Forest, which boasts such lush foliage that it's earned the nickname "The Sea of Trees." Then, snap photos of the famous snow-capped peak as you enjoy free time to explore the Fuji Subaru Line 5th Station, which is a popular basecamp located on the mountain's northern slopes. Use your free time to visit the basecamp's shops and restaurants, step inside the Komitake Shrine, and admire stunning panoramic views of nearby villages and the picturesque Fuji Five Lakes region. Then, sit down at a local restaurant near Mount Fuji to enjoy an included lunch. Please note: Wearing warm layers is recommended as temperatures at the mountain will be much lower than in Tokyo.

## Extension excursion options

### Day 15: Okinawa World War II History Tour

\$99CAD/\$109CAD\* (4 hours, departs in the afternoon)

On today's excursion, you'll step back in time while visiting historic sites that played an important role for Japanese and American troops during World War II. First, transfer to the Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters, where thousands of Japanese sailors perished at the end of the Battle of

Okinawa. Join an expert local guide to explore the site's underground tunnels and officers' rooms, which tell a somber story about the events that took place there. Next, transfer north for a tour of Hacksaw Ridge, site of one of fiercest battles fought in the Pacific during World War II. After exploring the battlefields along the ridge, return to Naha.

### Day 16: Kerama Islands Sailing & Snorkeling

\$165CAD/\$175CAD\* (8 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

Board a boat and sail away from the buzz of mainland Okinawa on today's excursion. Enjoy stunning sea views as you cruise to the islands of the Kerama archipelago, which are part of Kerama Shoto National Park. The blue waters and coral reefs surrounding the Kerama Islands make the area a sanctuary for a variety of sea life, including sea turtles, humpback whales, and tropical fish. Try to spot wildlife as you snorkel in the crystal-clear water, and then enjoy an included lunch on one of the island's white-sand beaches before sailing back to Naha. Please note: This excursion is weather-dependent.

\*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.ca/terms](https://goaheadtours.ca/terms)