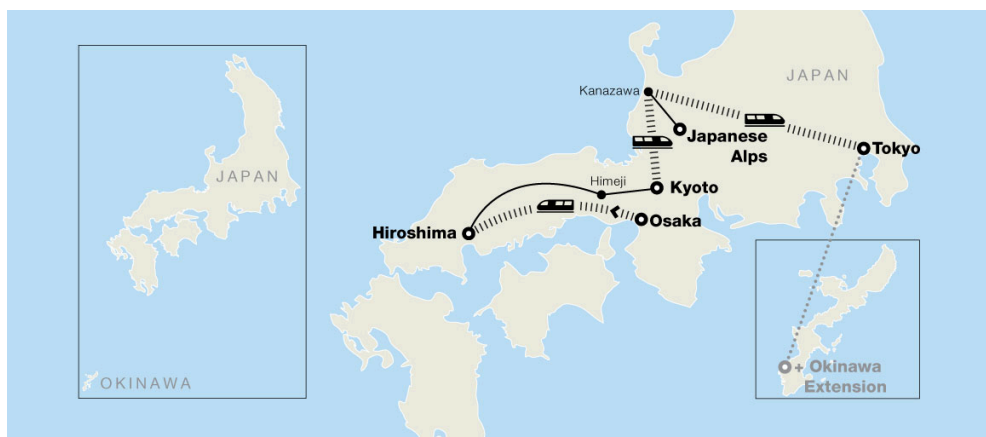




Japan: Kyoto, the Japanese Alps & Tokyo

14 days | 18 days with Okinawa & Tokyo extension

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 a guided meditation and tea 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. Each day, you'll find a new reason to love the Land of the Rising Sun on this small group Adventure Tour.



Your tour package includes

- 12 nights in handpicked hotels
- 12 breakfasts
- 5 dinners with beer or wine
- 3 tastings
- 1 liquor tasting
- 1 cooking class
- 12 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 3 train rides

Included highlights

- Kuromon Ichiba Market
- Peace Memorial Park and Museum
- Hiroshima legacy successor talk
- Himeji Castle
- Golden Pavilion
- Fushimi Inari shrine
- Japanese Alps
- Kaiseki dinner
- Meiji Shrine

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 3 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

12-22

Japan: Kyoto, the Japanese Alps & Tokyo

14 days | 18 days with Okinawa & Tokyo extension

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, tasting, welcome dinner

Join a local guide 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
- Learn about the country's culinary traditions and try takoyaki, a fried octopus ball
- Walk to Dōtonbori, one of the most colorful areas in the city and a haven for food culture

This evening, sit down for a Yakiniku, family-style welcome dinner with your Tour Director and fellow travelers. You'll enjoy grilled meats and veggies prepared at your table.

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 alongside your Tour Director.

- Visit Peace Memorial Park to see the ruined Atomic Bomb Dome, marking the exact location where the atomic bomb detonated during World War II

- Meet a legacy successor, a local trained to pass on the stories of the Hiroshima bombing survivors
- Hear their story and ask them questions about their work preserving the city's history
- Learn about the aftermath of the Hiroshima bombing and the mission to create a world without nuclear weapons, during a visit to the Peace Memorial Museum
- Take a short boat ride to Miyajima Island to view the 12th-century, UNESCO-listed Itsukushima Shrine

Please note: The order of the activities may change depending on the timing of the legacy successor talk.

Kyoto → 3 nights

Day 5: Kyoto via Himeji

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Make your way to Kyoto, stopping in the city of Himeji along the way.

- Enjoy free time for lunch
- Enter Himeji Castle, a UNESCO-listed wooden masterpiece comprised of over 80 buildings
- Snap photos of the Otemon 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 pleasing all four seasons

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

Day 6: Zen meditation class & sightseeing tour of Kyoto

Included meals: breakfast, tasting

This morning, visit a local Buddhist temple and immerse yourself in the spiritual traditions of Japan.

- Tour the temple and tap in to your unconscious mind during a guided Zen meditation session
- Sip matcha green tea alongside a traditional Japanese sweet

Then, 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.

- See one of Japan's most famous temples, the glittering Golden Pavilion
- See the country's finest Zen gardens at Ryōan-ji Temple

Please note: The guided Zen meditation session may take place in the afternoon and the Arashiyama District & Okochi Sanso Garden excursion may take place in the morning.

Spend a free afternoon in Kyoto or add an excursion.

+ Arashiyama District & Okochi Sanso Garden

Day 7: Walking tour of Fushimi Inari Shrine

Included meals: breakfast

Discover some of Kyoto's sacred spots and traditional flavors alongside your Tour Director today.

- Enter Fushimi Inari, a Shinto shrine famous for its thousands of red Torii gates
- Walk up steps and follow the pathway of gates up the mountain to the Yotsutsuji intersection, and take in the panoramic views of Kyoto

Please note: The walk through Fushimi Inari Shrine is one-way. You must complete the walk once you enter.

Spend a free afternoon in Kyoto or add an excursion.

+ Nara: Traditions of Japan

Japanese Alps → 2 nights

Day 8: Japanese Alps via Kanazawa

Included meals: breakfast

Board a high-speed bullet train and travel to Kanazawa, a city bordered by the Sea of Japan to the west and the Japanese Alps to the east. You'll take a guided tour of Kenroku-en, one of the Three Great Gardens of Japan. Enjoy free time to stroll through the park before continuing on to the Japanese Alps. Enjoy a free evening to relax or explore the area.

Day 9: Sightseeing tour of Takayama & the Alps

Included meals: breakfast, dinner, liquor tasting

Spend the day uncovering the beauty of Takayama and the Japanese Alps.

- Travel to the city of Takayama and stroll through the Old Town with your Tour Director
- Walk through the Sanmachi Historic District, a neighborhood of preserved Edo-style homes dating back to the 17th century

Next, drive through the scenic mountain landscape to Chubu-Sangaku National Park to visit Kamikōchi, one of the most beautiful areas in the Alps.

- Hike along Taisho Pond, a picturesque mountain lake formed by a volcanic eruption
- Enjoy views of the surrounding mountain landscape as you hike to Tashiro Pond
- Cross Kappabashi, a suspension bridge with spectacular Alpine views
- Enjoy free time to visit the Kamikochi Visitor Center

Please note: Kamikochi is closed from mid-November to mid-April. A sightseeing of the Shirakawa-go region, Ogimachi village, and Gassho-zukuri Minkaen open-air museum will be included during these months.

This evening, sit down with your group for a traditional Kaiseki dinner paired with a sake tasting. This multi-course meal showcases a chef's refined skills and talent through elegantly prepared, seasonal dishes.

Tokyo → 4 nights

Day 10: Train to Tokyo & tea ceremony
Included meals: breakfast, tasting

Return to Kanazawa this morning and board a high-speed bullet train to Tokyo. This afternoon, sit down for a Japanese tea ceremony.

- Join a tea master to learn about the customs of a traditional ceremony and why each utensil is essential to this ancient practice
- Discover the meaning of the symbolic gestures you'll make as you try matcha
- Sip some tea and snack on wagashi, Japanese sweets often made from red beans, which balance the bitterness of the matcha

Day 11: Sightseeing tour of Tokyo & cooking class
Included meals: breakfast, tasting, dinner

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

- Walk through Tsukiji fish market and learn about Japan's seafood heritage
- Visit a vendor's stall to sample fresh sushi (vegetarian option available)

- View 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
- 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
 - Try your hand at crafting your own authentic meal
 - Sit down to enjoy the cuisine for dinner

Day 12: Free day in Tokyo
Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free day in Tokyo or add an excursion. + Mount Fuji & Aokigahara Forest

Day 13: Sightseeing tour of Tokyo
Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

Set out with your Tour Director to see more of Tokyo's iconic pagodas, temples, shrines, and markets.

- See the pagodas and shrines in Ueno Park, as you hear the history and stories behind them
- Walk to Ameya market and enjoy free time to visit many of the shops and open-air stalls
- Peruse Kappabashi Street, or Kitchen Town, home to more than 170 shops specializing in high-quality kitchenware, such as chopsticks and knives
- Enter Senso-ji, the oldest temple in Japan

Celebrate your trip during a farewell dinner this evening.

Flight Home

Day 14: Departure
Included meals: breakfast

Transfer to the airport for your flight home, or extend your stay in Naha, Okinawa.

+ 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 tropical island, where local experts will show you the

highlights.

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, built in 1799 to entertain envoys of Chinese Emperors
- Head north for a tour of the Hacksaw Ridge Battlefield, where one of the fiercest and bloodiest battles took place during the Pacific War
- Walk up the escarpment to the top of Hacksaw Ridge

Spend a free afternoon in Naha or add an excursion.
+ Okinawa Blue Zone: Culinary Traditions & Dinner

Day 16: Free day in Naha
Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free day in Naha or add an excursion.
+ Awamori Underground Caves & Distillery Tour

Tokyo → 1 night

Day 17: Flight to Tokyo
Included meals: breakfast

Fly back to Tokyo this morning and spend a free night in the city.

Flight Home

Day 18: Departure
Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the 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.com/JAG | 1-800-597-0350

Day 6: Arashiyama District & Okochi Sanso Garden \$119/\$129* (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: Traditions of Japan

\$89/\$99* (5.5 hours, departs in the afternoon, lunch included)

Join a local guide in Japan's former capital, Nara. Enjoy an included lunch, then set off on a walking tour to visit some of the city's UNESCO-listed monuments. Tour the Todaiji Temple, home to the world's largest bronze Buddha statue. Then, walk to Nara's Nakataniidou district for a chance to watch a master candy maker pound and pull mochi into its candy form. You'll also sample the rice-based sweet. Your walking tour continues with a visit to Kasuga-taisha. This Shinto shrine is famous for the thousands of bronze and stone lanterns that decorate the pathways on the grounds. 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 12: Mount Fuji & Aokigahara Forest

\$95 (8 hours, departs in the morning)

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, stop in Aokigahara Forest, which boasts such lush foliage that it's earned the nickname the Sea of Trees. Take a two-hour hiking tour of the Fugaku Wine Cave and Narusawa Ice Cave with a local guide. Lava flows from Mount Fuji formed both caves, and the cool temperatures in the caves helped preserve

silkworm cocoons used to make the traditional textile. You'll learn about the flora and fauna as you walk along the Tokai Nature Walking Path between the two caves. Then, head to the Fuji Subaru Line 5th Station, 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. Please note: Wearing warm layers is recommended as temperatures at the mountain will be much lower than in Tokyo. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

Extension excursion options

Day 15: Okinawa Blue Zone: Culinary Traditions & Dinner

\$109 (2 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

Okinawa is one of the world's five Blue Zones. These areas are home to the highest percentage of centenarians, or people living to at least 100 years old. Today, you'll learn how the island became a Blue Zone. Meet up with a local guide at a restaurant serving traditional Okinawan cuisine. As you enjoy a meal of local specialties, your guide will describe why this particular diet is key to the islanders' healthy lifestyles. The dishes will feature bitter melon, seaweed, and raw fish—so be sure to come with an appetite for adventurous eating. You'll also learn about the local attitude toward life and how having a circle of supportive friends and a strong sense of purpose help Okinawans live a long life. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

Day 16: Awamori Underground Caves & Distillery Tour

\$139/\$149* (5 hours, departs in the morning, includes lunch)

Travel to the town of Kin for a deep dive into awamori—Japan's oldest distilled alcoholic beverage—and the traditions behind it. After arriving in town, join your local guide and visit the awamori distillery to learn how this traditional Okinawan liquor is made. Then, head underground, into the awamori cellar caves, where you'll find 10,000 bottles of the liquor slowly aging to perfection. After making your way out of the caves, enjoy a taste of tofuyo, a traditional Okinawan dish made from tofu that's fermented in awamori and aged in the very same caves. (Many say it bears a striking resemblance to a fine cheese, thanks to its richness and nutty flavor.) Afterwards, sit down for an included lunch of local specialties, and take a small, souvenir bottle of awamori. Please note: Travelers must descend a very steep staircase in order to enter the Awamori aging cellar.

*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.com/terms