

11 Days Best of Japan Tour

(Tour code: JPN201601)

D 1 | TORONTO → TOKYO

Start your trip of a lifetime with the flight from Canada to TOKYO.

D 2 | ARRIVE IN TOKYO, JAPAN

Welcome to Japan's capital city. Hotel rooms are available for mid-afternoon check-in.

D 3 | TOKYO

Meet your Tour Director and traveling companions prior to morning sightseeing in Tokyo. Your tour takes you to the MEIJI SHRINE, a magnificent 20th-century Shinto monument set in a man-made forest, followed by a drive to see the Imperial Palace. Next, visit an artist's studio and learn to write like a local during a CALLIGRAPHY CLASS with a master calligrapher. Here, you'll also have the opportunity to try on a traditional KIMONO and partake in a TRADITIONAL TEA CEREMONY, a wonderfully choreographed ritual of preparing and serving Japanese green tea. Last stop is the ASAKUSA KANNON TEMPLE and the NAKAMISE SHOPPING ARCADE. The balance of the afternoon is at leisure. Tonight, join your traveling companions at a welcome dinner hosted by your Tour Director. After dinner, take a WALKING TOUR with your Tour Director among the dazzling neon lights of Shinjuku.

D 4 | TOKYO–KAMAKURA–MOUNT FUJI AREA

This morning, leave Tokyo and head south along the coast to Kamakura to see the 750-year-old Great Buddha. Continue on to the Mount Fuji area for a CRUISE on Lake Ashi, followed by a CABLE-CAR RIDE (weather permitting) for panoramic views of spectacular Mount Fuji, Japan's highest mountain.

D 5 | MOUNT FUJI AREA–MATSUMOTO–TAKAYAMA

Journey to Matsumoto, gateway to the Japanese Alps. Visit famous MATSUMOTO CASTLE, dating back to 1593, and discover the history at the MATSUMOTO CITY MUSEUM. Later, travel through the ruggedly beautiful Japanese Alps to Takayama. Tonight, enjoy a wonderful Japanese-style dinner at your hotel.

D 6 | TAKAYAMA

Today begins with a visit to the MORNING MARKET, where farmers display locally grown fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Then, visit TAKAYAMA JINYA, a former government office during the Edo Period from 1692-1868. This well-preserved building is a national historic site and the only remaining building of its kind in Japan. Continue on to the San-Machi Suji historic district—famous for lacquerware shops and sake breweries, and identified by the sugidama, balls made of cedar branches that hang over the entrances. Stop at one of the breweries for a SAKE TASTING. The balance of the day is at leisure, providing you time to explore the narrow streets where merchants buy and sell as they have for 300 years.

D 7 | TAKAYAMA–SHIRAKAWA–KANAZAWA

This morning, enjoy a drive through the mountainous Shokawa Valley to Shirakawa. This remote region of Japan is home to several UNESCO World Heritage Sites due to the unique GASSHO-ZUKURI-style (joined hands) thatched houses that can be found only here. Continue to the scenic town of Kanazawa, situated between the mountains and the Sea of Japan and once the country's richest region. Your Tour Director leads you on a tour of one of Japan's greatest gardens, KENROKU-EN, the "Garden of Six Qualities," dating from the 1670s. Afterward, partake in a GOLD LEAF CLASS, where you learn more about this ancient traditional craft and make your own bento box souvenir. Your included dinner tonight is at your choice of one of three restaurants at your hotel.

D 8 | KANAZAWA–KYOTO

This morning, board the THUNDERBIRD EXPRESS TRAIN for your journey to Kyoto. Upon arrival, stop at SANJUSANGENDO TEMPLE, famous for its 1,001 statues of Kannon, the Buddhist goddess of mercy. Flanking the main statue are 1,000 more life-sized statues, covered in gold leaf, with 40 arms said to have the power to save 25 worlds. After lunch in a local restaurant, visit the FUSHIMI INARI SHRINE, renowned for the thousands of brightly colored Torii Gates. Afterward, continue on to the Higashiyama District to visit KIYOMIZU TEMPLE, the "Pure Water Temple," with stunning views over Kyoto. Along the way, walk through the busy streets, where shops and restaurants have been catering to pilgrims for centuries. This evening, you may choose to stay in a traditional Japanese ryokan.

TRADITIONAL RYOKAN STAY

Immerse yourself in the Japanese culture and hospitality at a ryokan (Japanese inn). Your ryokan, Gion Hatanaka, features traditional touches—tatami mat floors, a thin sleeping mattress on the floor, and the chance to experience a Japanese-style bath—as well as the modern convenience of a private bathroom. Included: transfers to/from ryokan from/to hotel in Kyoto; traditional Japanese dinner and breakfast.

D 9 | KYOTO

This morning starts with a visit to stunning Kinkakuji, the TEMPLE OF THE GOLD PAVILION. Next, visit YUZEN HANDMADE CORNER to learn about the Yuzen dyeing technique used to decorate kimonos by painting dye directly on the cloth. You will be invited to participate in making your own souvenir using this traditional method. For lunch, participate in a special JAPANESE COOKING CLASS. Under the instruction of a local chef you will learn how to make miso soup, teriyaki chicken, and makizushi, more commonly known as a sushi roll. The afternoon is at your leisure to explore this fascinating city on your own.

D 10 | KYOTO. NARA EXCURSION

This morning, take an excursion to NARA, the oldest capital of Japan. Here, visit two separate UNESCO World Heritage Sites. First, at Nara Park, is TODAIJI TEMPLE, built in 752 AD and one of Japan's most famous significant temples. Rebuilt after a fire in 1692, the temple is only two-thirds its original size, yet remains the world's largest wooden building. The Daibutsu (Giant Buddha) inside the main hall is made of

copper and bronze, and is the largest in all of Japan, weighing in at 250 tons and standing some 49 feet tall! Nearby is KASUGA SHRINE, known for its 3,000 stone and bronze lanterns. Return to Kyoto for some leisure time. Tonight, your Tour Director hosts a farewell dinner to celebrate your discovery of Japan.

D 11 | OSAKA-TORONTO

Your tour ends with breakfast this morning. Homebound flights from Kansai International Airport in Osaka should not be booked prior to 11 am.

HOTELS

CITY	HOTEL NAME
TOKYO	HILTON TOKYO
MOUNT FUJI AREA	FUJI VIEW HOTEL
TAKAYAMA	HIDA HOTEL PLAZA
KANAZAWA	HOTEL NIKKO KANAZAWA
KYOTO	ANA CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL KYOTO

Departure Date:	Return Date:	Tour Fare	Single Supp
April 18, 2016	April 28, 2016	\$5483	\$1177
May 16, 2016	May 26, 2016	\$5483	
June 13, 2016	June 23, 2016	\$5983	
July 11, 2016	July 21, 2016	\$6483	
September 5, 2016	September 15, 2016	\$5483	
October 3, 2016	October 13, 2016	\$5483	

PRICE INCLUDING	PRICE NOT INCLUDING
International Round-trip Air ticket	Medical and Trip Cancellation Travel Insurance
Domestic Air tickets	Tips
All the Taxes and surcharge	Any personal expenses and Visa
Professional English Speaking tour guide0	Any conference room or meeting room rental, food and beverage and equipment rental in hotels
Accommodations(5 star hotel double occupancy)	
All Meals in the itinerary	
Entrance fees and bottled water	Any personal expenditure, such as phone bills, laundry, postage and etc.;
All Baggage handling	
All A/C Coach Transfers	Any other charges caused by the acts of God, natural disasters, fires, weather, governmental and local authority's orders, political change, strikes, war, riots, quarantine, custom regulations, damages or injury caused by the accident beyond the responsibilities of travel agents and incurred due to the tourist action violating the law