



Easy Tours Japan

Fully Escorted Travel for the Discerning Traveller
Japan Cultural Tour
18 – 31 October 2024

13 Nights

Twin Room per person: \$7400 / Single Room per person: \$7950

This tour includes a moderate amount of walking, and comfortable shoes are recommended. Transport will include private buses, Shinkansen, boat, and local public transport.

Your fully inclusive escorted tour includes:

Tour Escorts:

- Tour Escort, John, will accompany you on every day of the tour
- Private Limousine Bus, including Tour Escort, John, and English-speaking Japanese Guide for a tour of Nijo Castle, Ryoanji Temple and Rock Garden, and Kinkakuji Temple (The Golden Pavilion)
- Private Limousine Bus, including Tour Escort, John, and an English-speaking Japanese Guide for a full-day tour of Nara, including attractions such as Nara Park and Todai-ji Temple, The Hall of the Great Buddha and Isuien Garden
- Tour Escort, John, and English-speaking Japanese Guide for tour of Gion

Transport included in your tour:

- Return economy airfares Brisbane – Japan with Jetstar, including meals and entertainment
- Chartered coach on arrival at Kansai International Airport to transfer to your Kyoto hotel
- 5-day Kansai-Hiroshima Area Rail Pass
- Suica Card (Japanese Go Card) pre-loaded with Japanese Yen for local, fully escorted, rail travel
- Takkyubin large suitcase transfer from Kyoto to Osaka

Accommodation included in your tour:

- 8 nights accommodation in a 4 Star hotel, Kyoto, located next to the Kyoto train station
- 2 nights in a 4 Star hotel, on beautiful Hiroshima Bay
- 2 nights in a 4 Star hotel, Osaka

Meals included in your tour:

- Breakfast: x 12
- Lunch: x 2
- Dinner: x 9, including 2 traditional Japanese dinners and one dinner at a Japanese Fishing Restaurant.

Experiences included in the Tour:

- Traditional Kyoto Tea Ceremony
- Tour of Kyoto Tower, viewing the expanse of Kyoto and surrounds.
- Sekka Shibori scarf and silk handkerchief class
- Sushi making class
- Return Miyajima Ropeway tickets
- English-speaking guide at Kiyomizu-dera with coach return in the evening to hotel
- Private Bus and English-speaking guide to Nijo Castle, Ryoanji Rock Garden and Kinkaku-ji Temple
- Gion Evening Tour with English-speaking guide, followed by traditional Japanese dinner
- Private Limousine Bus and English-speaking guide for included full-day Nara tour
- Return boat transfer from Miyajima Island to Hiroshima
- Sagano Scenic Railway to Kameoka Station, with return to Arashiyama Station
- Kyoto Arashiyama Rickshaw Tour of the Bamboo Forest
- Tour of the Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum
- Dinner at the Zauo Fishing Restaurant
- Traditional dinner in Gion

Entrance Fees to the following Temples, Shrines, and Temples included in the Tour:

- Heian-jingu Shrine and Gardens
- Kiyomizu-dera
- Sanjusangendo Temple
- Ryoan-ji Rock Garden and Temple
- Nijo Castle
- Kinkaku-ji – The Golden Pavilion
- Himeji Castle
- Osaka Castle
- Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum

Included in your Tour with free entry:

- Nishiki Market tour
- Heian-Jingu Shrine Torii Gate
- Chionin Temple Gate and Temple
- Fushimi Inara-Taisha Shrine
- Arishiyama Kimono Forest
- Arishiyama Bamboo Grove
- Togetsukyo Bridge and Katsura River
- Gion historical and shopping district
- Arishiyama Iwatayama Monkey Park (Optional paid, 600jpy.)
- Hiroshima Peace Park and Hiroshima Atomic Dome
- Miyajima Island, including the giant floating Torii Gate, Gojunoto the Five-Storied Pagoda, the Omotesando Shopping Arcade and the world's largest rice paddle
- The Dotonbori precinct, including unique shopping as well as eye-catching signage and billboards, such as the giant pufferfish, octopus, and Kani Douraku crab, as well as the famous Running Man, Dotonbori Glico sign.

Your Flights – JETSTAR

18 Oct. 2024	Brisbane – Osaka, Kansai (Direct Flight) 11:40am
30 Oct. 2024	Depart Osaka, Kansai (Direct Flight) 09:00pm
31 Oct. 2024	Land- Brisbane 06:40am

Day 1. 18/10/2024

Konnichiwa and welcome to Japan.

On arrival at the bustling Kansai International Airport, you will be welcomed by your Tour Escort, John, and your private Limousine Bus; to take you directly to your hotel.

On arrival at your hotel you will enjoy a delicious sushi box and a comfortable bed. You will get a restful sleep after your flight, before you start your Japanese cultural tour.

Day 2. 19/10/2024

Ohayo Gozaimasu - Good Morning.

We start the day with an included delicious breakfast.

Your Tour Escort, John, will lead you the entire day.

Our day will start with a short taxi ride to the awe inspiring Kiyomizu-dera Temple. At Kiyomizu-dera Temple you will be guided by Tour Escort, John, and an English-speaking guide, who will share the amazing history of this beautiful Temple.

Following your tour of Kiyomizu-dera, we will walk down the beautiful Tea Pot Lane shopping street. Here you will find traditional shopping and your choice of delectable Japanese food from the market stalls and restaurants.

We will then walk to the imposing Chionin Temple Gate. If time permits, you may choose to venture up the stairs to see Chionin Temple, a traditional Japanese cemetery and the Chionin Temple Bell. The bell was cast in 1636, with a height of 3.3 metres, diameter of 2.7 metres and weight of 70 tons.

Following Chionin Temple, you will walk through the beautiful traditional streets to Heian-jingu Shrine and Gardens. You will pass under Japan's largest Torii Gate, the Heian-jingu Shrine Grand Torii Gate. On the way to the Shrine and Gardens, you will walk past a traditional Japanese antique store. Here you may find some Japanese treasures.

We will then travel back to our hotel at Kyoto Station, using your included transport card, via the Kyoto subway system. This will allow you to feel the true nature and pulse of Kyoto.

Dinner tonight is included in our hotel. After dinner, if you feel like further exploration, John will walk you through Kyoto Station to experience the Kyoto Viewing Deck, the Skywalk across the roof of the station and the beautifully illuminated staircase.



Day 3. 20/10/2024

Following your included breakfast, you will have an exciting day exploring Kyoto with John as your Tour Escort and guide.

We will leave the hotel via taxi and travel to Sanjusangendo (Rengeo-in) Temple. Here you will view the 1001 statues of Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy. This Shrine dates from 1164. This is an amazing shrine. You will be required to remove your shoes to enter the shrine. Photos are also not permitted in the shrine.

Following your visit to Sanjusangendo (Rengeo-in) Temple, we will take a taxi ride to experience a traditional Kyoto Tea Ceremony. During the ceremony you will be taught how to make traditional Matcha Tea. Assisting in the Tea Ceremony will be a Geiko. In Kyoto, a Geisha is known as a Geiko, whereas in Tokyo they are known as Geisha.

After we have been taught how to make Matcha Tea, we will walk to the subway and travel to Fushimi Inara-Taisha Shrine. Here you can walk through the hundreds of brightly coloured vermilion Torii Gates that straddle the network of trails behind the main Shrine. You may choose to do a short walk, and enjoy the market atmosphere of the surrounding area. For lunch, you may choose to enjoy some traditional Japanese street food, or eat at one of the many small restaurants surrounding the shrine.

When you have finished exploring Fushimi Inara-Taisha Shrine, you will travel again on the local train, for a ten-minute ride back to Kyoto Station.

On arrival at Kyoto Station, John will show the highlights of the Station, as well as the extremely interesting food floors, where many Japanese people shop each day for their evening meals.

We will be back at our hotel with some time to rest prior to our evening meal.

Dinner tonight is provided, and is a traditional Yakiniku meal. The translation of Yakinuki means 'grilled meat' cuisine. You will need to work for your dinner though, you will be provided the meat, however you will need to cook it on a burner built into your table. This is a fun and interesting way to have dinner.

Following your included dinner, for those who wish to do a little more exploring, Tour Escort John will walk you through Kyoto Station, to The Cube Shopping Centre. This is a modern and interesting shopping centre with something for everyone.

Day 4. 21/10/2024

Following your included breakfast, you will travel with your Tour Escort, John, on a private mini-bus, to the beautiful tourist district of Arashiyama.

On arrival at Arashiyama, you will tour the enchanted Arashiyama Bamboo Grove, riding on a traditional Japanese rickshaw. This is a truly beautiful experience, with the rickshaw driver taking special photos of you while in the private section of the bamboo grove. The Arashiyama Bamboo Grove is one of the most photographed sights of Kyoto, where you will view and hear the sounds of the towering bamboo.

Following your rickshaw ride, we will then walk to the historic Togetsukyo Bridge. This area provides excellent photo opportunities of both the Togetsukyo Bridge and the magnificent Katsura River. This bridge is used in many period film productions.

Lunch is your own choice in the bustling main street, filled with a variety of food and gift shops.

Following lunch, you will experience the beautiful Sagano Scenic Rail, known as the Romantic Train, on a 25-minute ride to Kameoka Station. You will then return to Arashiyama on the Sagano Scenic Rail, giving everyone the opportunity to sit on the picturesque river side of the train.

If time permits, on your return to Arashiyama, you may choose to visit the Arashiyama Iwatayama Monkey Park. Be warned that the 25-minute walk up the hill to the Monkey Viewing Area is steep. Entry to the Iwatayama Monkey Park will cost 600jpy.

John will then return you to Kyoto Station and your hotel, on our private mini-bus. Dinner tonight is included in your hotel restaurant.

For those of you who are feeling adventurous, John will take you, following dinner, back to Fushimi Inara-Taisha Shrine, to experience this beautiful, eery shrine at night.

Day 5. 22/10/2024

Day 5 will be one of your favourite days. After your included breakfast, along with your Tour Escort, John, and an English-speaking Japanese Guide, you will board a private Limousine Bus, the most convenient and comfortable way to explore Nijo Castle, Ryoanji Temple and Rock Garden, and Kinkakuji Temple (The Golden Pavilion).

After your included lunch, you travel via the private Limousine Bus to Gion for a private tour with your Tour Escort, John, and an English-speaking Japanese Guide. Gion is Kyoto's geisha district, holding the history and mystery of Kyoto, where you will explore the narrow and traditional laneways of this historic area. When your tour concludes, Tour Escort, John will take you to a restaurant for you to experience a traditional Japanese meal. This unique experience is included in your tour.

Following dinner, Tour Escort, John will return you to your hotel via the subway train, using your included Suica Card. For the adventurous, you may choose to explore Gion after dinner and return to the hotel yourself. It is an easy trip.

Day 6. 23/10.2024

Today is a day for a sleep-in after the big tour day and night at Gion. You can enjoy a later included breakfast as we will not be leaving the hotel until 9:30 am.

Today we will travel by local train to a suburb of Kyoto, where we will experience a traditional Japanese shopping area. Here, you will find locals going about their daily activities, not bothered by tourists. Once we have walked through the shopping area, we will head to the Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum. You will be able to tour the museum at your own pace, and sample different styles of sake at the end of the tour.

For those who feel like an additional adventure in the late afternoon, you can visit Nishiki Markets, with your Tour Escort, John. The markets were founded in 1310 and are known as the "Kitchen of Kyoto". The markets sell an impressive range of fresh and cooked Japanese cuisine.

Your included dinner tonight is a short walk from our hotel to an English style pub, where you will be able to enjoy a meal of fish and chips.

Following dinner, Tour Escort, John will walk you to Kyoto Station, where you will be taken on a tour of Kyoto Tower at night Here you will experience how vast Kyoto is, and from the top of Kyoto Tower.

Day 7. 24/10/2024

After your included breakfast, you will board the private Limousine Bus, travelling in a convenient and comfortable manner, with Tour Escort, John, and an English-speaking tour guide, for an exciting day in Nara. The bus ride will take approximately 1 hour. You will tour attractions such as Nara Park and Todai-ji Temple, The Hall of the Great Buddha and Isuien Garden.

Nara is considered a cultural treasure of Japan. Your guides will tour you through temples and shrines. You will enjoy the beautiful gardens and see the wandering tame deer. Lunch will be your own experience, with recommendations from your English-speaking guide.

You will return to your hotel late in the afternoon, with dinner being your own choice. Your Tour Guide, John, has a number of recommendations for dinner that are inexpensive, traditional and delicious.

Day 8. 25/10/2024

Following your included breakfast, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your creativity.

Today, using your included Suica card, you travel by subway train, with Tour Escort, John, to experience a private Sekka Shibori Scaff class and visit the Sekka Shibori Scaff Museum. You will learn how to dye a silk scarf or handkerchief, using the Sekka Shibori method. At the end of your private class, you will have a beautiful scarf or handkerchief to serve as a souvenir of your trip to Japan.

Tour Escort, John will then return you to your hotel, where you will pack for your trip the following day to Hiroshima and Miyajima Island. Your last night in Kyoto will be a dinner of your own choice. Your Tour Guide, John, has a number of recommendations for dinner that are inexpensive, traditional and delicious.

Day 9. 26/10/2024

Today your large suitcase will be privately transferred to Osaka, as large suitcases are unable to be taken on the Shinkansen. You will need an overnight bag for the two nights on Miyajima Island.

Following your included breakfast, Tour Escort, John will lead you to the Kyoto Shinkansen Station, for your first ride on a Shinkansen or Bullet Train.

You will travel for approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes, via Bullet Train, to Hiroshima Station. This is a very relaxing and interesting trip, where you will see both urban and rural Japan.

On arrival in Hiroshima, we will travel via Trolley Car, to the Hiroshima Peace Park, The Atomic Dome and Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. You will use your included travel card to pay for the trolley car transport.

When you reach the Peace Park, you will place your overnight bag in a locker, at a cost of approximately 200jpy, while you tour the Peace Park and Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. It is important that you have some 100jpy coins to use in the lockers.

Following your tour of the Peace Park and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, we will travel by private boat to a beautiful hotel on Hiroshima Bay. This hotel overlooks Miyajima Island. You will be able to relax by walking through the parks and paths beside the bay prior to dinner. Dinner tonight is an included buffet dinner.

Day 10. 27/10/2014

Today, following your included breakfast, you will travel to Miyajima Island via launch. Today is a day of relaxation and exploration, where you will be free to explore at your leisure, a day where you can wander the island at your own pace. You can visit points of interest such as the Itsukushima Shrine, the giant floating Torii Gate, Gojunoto the Five-Storied Pagoda, the Omotesando Shopping Arcade and the world's largest rice paddle.

Lunch is your own adventure, with the island being famous for oysters and seafood.

Included in your tour are tickets to ride the Miyajima Ropeway. The ropeway will take you to the top of Mount Misen, where you will have magnificent views of Hiroshima Bay. After breakfast, your Tour Escort, John, will take those who would like an escorted ride on the Ropeway, however, you may also choose to experience the ropeway at your leisure at any time during the day.

The included evening meal is a traditional Japanese dinner. You will enjoy the meal in the dining area with your fellow adventurers.

Day 11. 28/10/2024

After enjoying your included breakfast, you will say farewell to Hiroshima. We will return to Hiroshima Shinkansen Station for our shinkansen ride to Himeji.

You will then board the Shinkansen, with your Tour Escort, John; and travel approximately 1 hour 40 minutes to Himeji, to visit the beautiful Himeji Castle, also known as the White Heron. For those who are feeling adventurous, your Tour Escort, John, will guide you through Himeji Castle. The stairs in the castle are extremely steep and narrow. Himeji Castle is beautiful to look at, however difficult to tour through.

You will also have the opportunity to tour through the beautiful gardens that are part of the castle complex. This is a highlight of the day at Himeji.

Lunch will be your own choice at Himeji. For lunch, there are some welcoming coffee shops to be found in the covered shopping arcade close to Himeji Castle.

After your Himeji tour, you will board the Shinkansen for a 30-minute ride to Osaka. On arrival at Osaka, you will be reunited with your large suitcase at your hotel. There will be time to rest before your Tour Escort, John, takes you on a walk through the local shopping area to find dinner. Osaka is a 'foodie paradise' and in Osaka Japanese use the word, *kuidaore*, which means "to ruin yourself with extravagant food found there."

On arrival at your Osaka hotel you will be reunited with your main suitcase.

Day 12. 29/10/2024

After enjoying your included breakfast, your Tour Escort, John, will take you via local train, using your included Suica Card, the beautiful Sumiyoshi Shrine. The castle is extremely beautiful, as are the surrounding gardens.

Lunch today is a unique experience. Today you will be taught how to make sushi, with lunch including sushi that you have made during the class. This will be an enjoyable and fun experience.

Your included dinner is at the Zauo Fishing Restaurant. You will sit around an indoor pond and fish for your dinner. Don't worry, if you can't catch a fish, you won't starve. This is a fun and sometimes hilarious way to have dinner.

Following dinner, your Tour Escort, John, will walk you back to your hotel, or you can choose to further explore the Dotonbori area for your last night in Japan.

Day 13. 30/10/2024

Today is our last day in Japan. After your included breakfast, your Tour Escort, John, will take you on a private mini-bus to Osaka Castle. You will tour the castle and return to your hotel by mid-day. You will have until 01:00pm in your room to do a final pack and rest.

At 01:00pm, we will take our bags to the foyer for storage and head to lunch in the local shops. After lunch, you will have the opportunity to do some final shopping, prior to hopping on our private airport bus, which will take us to Kansai Airport, departing our hotel at 05:00pm.

Day 14. 31/10/2024

We will have an early morning arrival back in Brisbane, landing at 06:40am.

