

JAPAN HIGHLIGHTS

18 DAYS / 17 NIGHTS



Destination overview:

“Where traditional values co-exist with modern life” usually comes up in people's minds when they think about Japan. On the surface, Japan appears exceedingly contemporary with high technology, amazing inventions, and dazzling events. However, traveling around the country offers a wide variety of opportunities to observe and experience its traditional culture. From neon-lit Tokyo and nostalgic Kyoto all the way to laid-back Okinawa and wintry Hokkaido, Japan is a high-tech world mixed with the politeness and respect of their past.

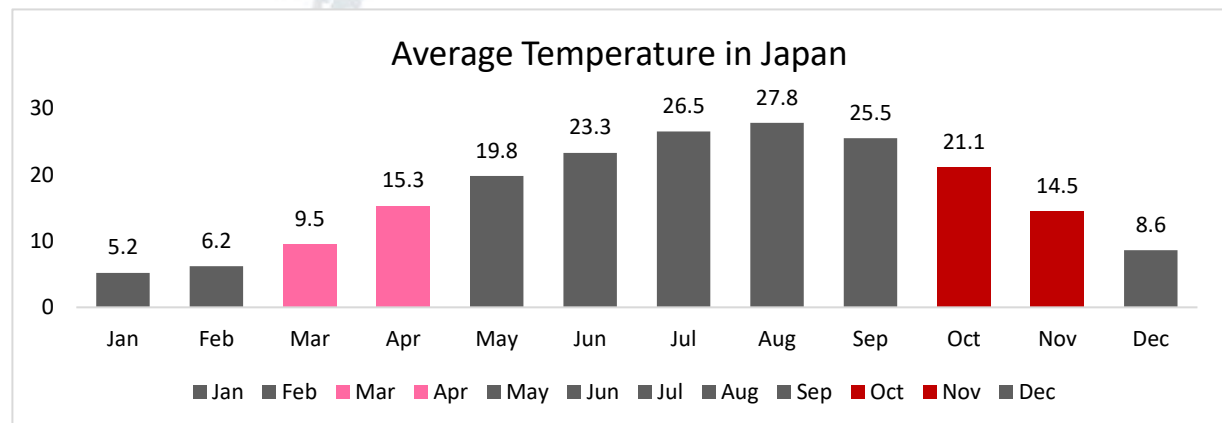
Japan has 4 distinct seasons:

Japan's four distinct seasons offer a diverse travel experience, with each season offering its own unique charms.

Spring and autumn are the most popular times to visit Japan, thanks to the mild weather and stunning scenery. Spring is synonymous with **cherry blossoms**, while autumn is ablaze with fiery reds and oranges **autumn foliage**. However, keep in mind that these seasons are also the busiest and most expensive.

Summer in Japan can be hot and humid, but it's also a time of lively festivals and events. If you're a beach bum, summer is the perfect time to hit the coast and soak up the sun.

Winter is a magical time to visit Japan, especially if you love snow sports. Ski resorts are abundant in the north and mountains, and winter festivals offer a unique glimpse into Japanese culture.



Itinerary Summary

Day 1: Tokyo Arrival

Day 2: Tokyo (Harajuku & Asakusa)

Day 3: Explore Tokyo your own way

Day 4: Takayama

Day 5: Takayama - Shirakawago

Day 6: Kanazawa

Day 7: Kanazawa - Hiroshima

Day 8: Hiroshima - Miyajima

Day 9: Kyoto

Day 10: Kyoto

Day 11: Kyoto

Day 12: Kyoto - Kurashiki

Day 13: Nagasaki

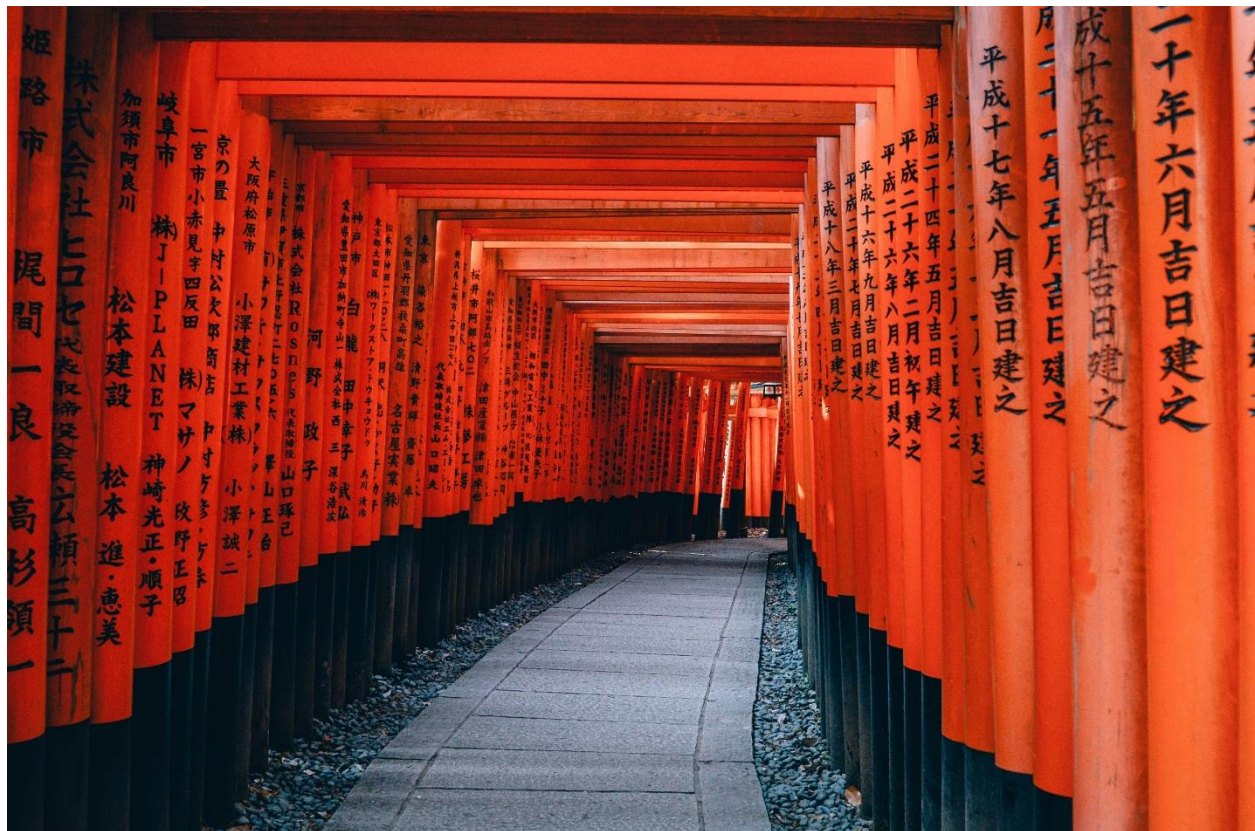
Day 14: Nagasaki

Day 15: Beppu

Day 16: Beppu

Day 17: Beppu - Fukuoka/Osaka

Day 18: Departure



ITINERARY

DAY 1: TOKYO ARRIVAL

Meet your assistant at Narita Airport for hotel transfer. Relax at the hotel before walking out for dinner at Japanese-style restaurants in the nearby area.

DAY 2: TOKYO (HARAJUKU & ASAKUSA)

Wake up to a tasty breakfast before beginning your adventure. Journey to Hama Rikyū, the former private garden of an Edo Period Lord. Stopover for sampling Japanese green tea, followed by a short cruise along Sumida River. Later on, travel to Asakusa for a visit to the renowned Sensōji! Stroll along Nakamise shopping street nearby, where typical Japanese souvenirs and various traditional snacks are sold!

After lunch, we will visit magnificent Meiji Jingū, a Shinto shrine dedicated to Emperor Meiji. The shrine is crowded in the first day of the year because of hatsumode (first prayers). In other times, if in luck, you may witness solemn procession of Shinto weddings. Continue the journey to Harajuku and Omotesando. This tree-lined avenue features a multitude of dazzling architecturally ambitious buildings of global haute couture brands. Finish the day with Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building in Shinjuku for a city panoramic view if time permits.



DAY 3: EXPLORE TOKYO YOUR OWN WAY

Let's exploring the metropolitan. Going back to visited fascinating alleys for an insight? Use our information packet to discover new places? Interested in Japanese technology? Odaiba - a unique island of gaming and multimedia - is perfect for you! Akihabara is also recommended for electronic gadgets' lovers. If traditional art is your interest, come to the Kabukiza Theatre in Ginza and watch a performance.

Travel to the outskirts of Tokyo? An optional one day trip to Nikko to visit UNESCO World Heritage Toshogu Shrine, or to Kamakura to admire the giant Buddha statue is available.



DAY 4: TAKAYAMA

After breakfast, embark on bullet train to Nagoya and transfer to Hida Express train to arrive at Takayama. Takayama is renowned for its beautiful old town, where traditional touch is preserved. In the afternoon, head out on a walk of the town visiting the old town and sake brewery. The freshest sake is the best - find out for yourself how it's made!



DAY 5: TAKAYAMA – SHIRAKAWAGO

Wake up to a tasty breakfast before your visit to Miyagawa market. Immerse in market's atmosphere, where vegetables and fruits unique to Japan are on display. Later on, journey to Yatai Kaikan, which displays an array of exotic and flamboyant floats. In the afternoon, we will travel to Shirakawago. Shirakawago region lines the Shogawa River Valley in the remote mountains that span from Gifu to Toyama.



Declared as UNESCO world heritage site in 1995, the place is famous for their traditional gassho-zukuri farmhouses, some of which are more than 250 years old.

DAY 6: KANAZAWA

Continue your journey to Kanazawa bright and early in the morning. Kanazawa is the town of great cultural achievements, rivalling Tokyo and Kyoto. In the afternoon, journey to nation's most celebrated garden Kenrokuen, and perhaps visit the slowly restored Kanazawa Castle if time permits.

The evening will be enjoyed freely, you may wish to travel to the largest one of three regional well preserved Chaya districts – Higashi Chaya district. The word 'Chaya' means an exclusive restaurant, where geishas perform song and dance to entertain patrons. Another signature of Kanazawa is gold leaf handicrafts.



DAY 7: KANAZAWA - HIROSHIMA

Next we head over to Hiroshima, a city made world-famous in the aftermath of the Second World War. However, what you'll find the most intriguing is the vibrancy and culture which has regrown itself from the ashes. With the tranquil Peace Park and Museum in the center of the city reminding us of humanity's recent past, you'll find shopping centers, confectionary hubs, teahouses, museums, and sports fields branching out all around. At your leisure, visit Prefectural Museum of Art, Shukkei-En Gardens, baseball stadium, and eat a style of okonomiyaki unique to the city!



DAY 8: HIROSHIMA - MIYAJIMA

We will begin the day with a visit the Mazda factory after booking in advance. Then travel to Miyajima - one of the "Three Great Views of Japan" popularized in the Edo Period. The bright, floating red gate is a signature spot of this island. Wander the temples and hike (or take a cable car) to the top of Misen Mountain to experience the life of monk.



DAY 9: KYOTO

Wake up to a hearty breakfast and head to train station for your bullet train to Kyoto. Upon arrival, join a tea ceremony at "machiya" – a restored traditional wooden house that is typical to Kyoto and many parts of Japan. If you wish, combine this experience with kimono fitting! The traditional dress comes with many colors, ranging from colorful style to quite plain and simple.

Free evening to enjoy at your leisure to walk through Gion, where you may get a glimpse of Geisha, walking through the narrow alley.



DAY 10: KYOTO

We start with the sprawling, breath-taking Nijō Castle, followed by Ryōanji - the UNESCO World Heritage Zen temple with famous rock garden. This unique garden has no plant, apart from little patches of moss around the stones. Afterward, visit Kinkakuji, the shining pavilion completely covered by gold leaf that was originally built as a shogun's summer house.



Transfer to the outskirts of Kyoto for a gentle walk through Sagano lush bamboo grove. The sunlight filters through the densely packed grove, projecting thin slashes of light onto this enchanting forest. Head to Tenryūji temple, which survived centuries maintaining its original design. Then continue to Jojakkoji Temple nestled in the quiet and understated wooded hill. Crossing over the iconic landmark Togetsukyo Bridge for stunning views of adjacent cherry forest.

DAY 11: KYOTO

Enjoy today at leisure. You can choose to explore Kyoto at your own pace or visit Nara. Nara is second only to Kyoto as the richest collection of cultural sites in Japan.



DAY 12: KYOTO - KURASHIKI

Embark on a bullet train to Kurashiki. The city is renowned for its preserved canal area, which were built to allow boats and barges to navigate between the city's storehouses and the nearby port when Kurashiki was still a vital rice trading center.

Enjoy the afternoon wandering around this canal town. Ohara museum, Ohashi house, Ivy Square and buy yourself Japanese jeans made at a local factory is recommended.



DAY 13: NAGASAKI

After breakfast, take a bullet train to Nagasaki. Nagasaki is a town of churches - that is, churches, temples, pagodas, shrines and mosques! This multi-cultural city has created a delightful mish-mash of color, culture and design. Sample kappo-ryori at a Kappo restaurant, where you can watch the chef cooking right in front of you!

Option to take a cruise to Gunkanjima (Battleship Island). The small, deserted island that used to serve as coal mine until 1974, located about 20 kilometers from Nagasaki.



DAY 14: NAGASAKI

Today, embrace an insight into Nagasaki on foot and by the trams - the iconic transportation of the city. Journey along Teramachi-dori where many old temples lined up, followed by Sōfukuji Temple and Urakami Cathedral. Nagasaki has always had a bonding relationship with Christianity - glimpses of Christian influence can be seen in the city's every breath. We also take you to another dark stone in this grand city's history - Nagasaki Peace Park. See how the city resurrect like a phoenix throughout history. Journey to Glover Garden and Dejima - another multi-cultural asset in this city's many facets.



DAY 15: BEPPU

Fuel up yourself with a good breakfast before your journey by bullet train to Beppu. Beppu is a city by the seashore on Kyushu Island. The region is an abundant source of hot spring, making it home to over 2,000 onsens. Immerse yourself in

unmatched range of baths, from ordinary hot water baths, mud baths, sand baths to even steam baths during your stay here.

DAY 16: BEPPU

Today will be a free day to enjoy Beppu. Journey to Jigoku - the Hells of Beppu to admire the view of the dangerous hot springs, namely Umi Jigoku, Oniishibozu Jigoku, Shiraike Jigoku, Kamado Jigoku and many more! Savour local delicacies uniquely cooked by natural hot spring steam.



DAY 17: BEPPU - FUKUOKA/OSAKA

Wake up to a tasty breakfast before your bullet train journey to either Fukuoka or Osaka for the last night in Japan.

DAY 18: DEPARTURE

Today you will transfer to Narita airport and board your flight home.

TOUR COST

This itinerary is provided for sample purposes only.

Please contact us at inquiry.bjapaninternational@gmail.com for complete details, including pricing.