

Geographically, Japan is a narrow chain of archipelago stretching approximately 3,000 km. from eastern Siberia down to the East China Sea. Its four largest islands, Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu were divided into 47 prefectures administratively. Culturally, it is a fusion of East and West; old and new; tradition and changes. During the Meiji Restoration in the mid 19th century, it is a country that embraced Western technologies to modernize and at the same time, retained its own strong traditional cultural identity. Today, you often see postcard images of Mt. Fuji and cherry blossom with a bullet train zooming past in the foreground; or a girl in kimono instant-messaging with a latest-model cell phone. In Tokyo, you'll find a Shinto Shrine surrounded by modern skyscrapers; art deco café serving espresso and French pastries with a traditional 'izakaya' just a few doors down. Visitors are often bewildered by these paradoxes; and that's what make Japan so unique and attractive.



Tokyo. In 1603 Edo, a fishing hamlet clustered around a crumbling castle, became the national capital, replacing Kyoto. By the 18th century it was already the largest city in the world; in the early 21st century Tokyo (its name since 1868) has a population of 11 million. During the national closure (1637-1868), Edo was the cradle of Japanese urban culture. After 1868 it became the nucleus for Western influences and rapid modernization. It was the city of firsts - railroads, stone buildings, factories, gas, electricity, trams and telephones. Presently, almost nothing of Edo remains, and most of older Tokyo was destroyed by the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923 and incendiary bombs two decades later. Postwar reconstruction transformed Tokyo beyond recognition. Tokyo suffers from a total lack of urban planning. Yet behind busy central thoroughfares and in the suburbs, quieter residential districts have their own temple, shrine, market, and main street, and many retain their old village atmosphere. Today, Tokyo is one of the most vibrant metropolises in the world.

Kyoto became the capital of Japan in the 8th century. It had flourished as the center for Japanese politics, economy and culture for some 1,200 years until the capital functions were transferred to Tokyo in the mid-19th century. Kyoto has every



thing visitors could wish for, with more than 1,800 temples, hundreds of shrines, historical buildings and neighborhoods, famous gardens, and beauty spots among wooded hills. The center of Kyoto is a modern city with shopping and entertainment venues. It includes a few important landmarks, notably Nishi Hongan-ji Temple and Nijo Castle. Crossing over the Kamo-gawa River to the east, there is traditional Kyoto. From the old geisha district of Gion, uphill to the Kiyomizu-dera Temple; to the north lies the famous kinkaku-ji (the Golden Pavilion) and Ryoan-ji with its world famous Zen rock garden. The city is also renowned for its handicraft and cuisines.

Nara is a small town; its unhurried ambience seems designed to avoid disturbing the long sleep of its illustrious ancestors. While Kyoto's grandeur emerges from a comparatively recent past, Nara and its environs contain buildings of such antiquity that their very survival is astonishing. In 710 A.D., Empress Gemmei found the city of Heijo, intended as a permanent capital. About 2 km. west of modern Nara, the city was modeled on China's mighty Tang Dynasty city of Chang'an, the cosmopolitan hub of the Silk Road and the most sophisticated metropolis of the ancient world. Profoundly affected by Chang'an, Nara was Japan's window on the world. Its temple treasure include ancient Chinese, Korean, Indian, and even Persian artworks, and experts still wrangle over the influence displayed by its art and architecture.



Tour Itineraries

Tour Itinerary: Japan 101(A) Northbound

Day 01: Honolulu-Osaka
Depart Honolulu for Osaka.

Day 02: Osaka
Arrive Osaka, meet by our representative; transfer to hotel.
Accommodation: Osaka Hilton Hotel.

Day 03: Osaka
Osaka walking tour, visiting the Aerial Garden Observatory and the Umeda area; Osaka Castle and a ride on the Aqualiner Water Bus. (B/L).

Day 04: Osaka-Kyoto
Transfer to Kyoto by train. Afternoon tour to visit the Kiyomizu Temple, Kodaiji Temple, Yasaka Shrine and the Gion Geisha district. Enjoy an authentic Japanese dinner at your hotel. (B/D)
Accommodation: Ryokan Yachiyo.

Day 05: Kyoto/Nara
Morning tour to Nara, visiting Todaiji Temple, Kofukuji Temple and the Nara Deer Park. Afternoon is free for you to explore Kyoto at your own pace. Dinner at hotel. (B/D).

Day 06: Kyoto - Tokyo
Travel to Tokyo by bullet train. (B)
Accommodation: Keio Plaza Hotel.

Day 07: Tokyo - Hakone - Mt. Fuji - Tokyo
One day Hakone & Mt. Fuji tour; visiting the 5th station of Mt. Fuji; Owakudani Boiling Valley and ride on the Hakone Sky Gondola; enjoy a boat cruise at Lake Ashi before returning to Tokyo. (B/L)

Day 08: Tokyo
A day tour will take you to see the Tokyo Tower, Meiji Shrine, Akasaka Guest House, the National Diet Building, Imperial Palace East Garden, Hama-Rikyu Garden, cruise on the Sumida River, Asakusa Kannon Temple and Nakamise shopping street. (B/L).

Day 09: Tokyo
Day free for you to explore Tokyo at your own pace. (B).

Day 10: Tokyo - U.S.
Transfer to airport, depart Tokyo for U.S. (B)

Tour Costs

Air: airfares are seasonal and vary depending on conditions such as flight availability and fuel surcharges. Please call for information.

2013 Land cost based on double occupancy	\$2,820
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Single Supplement	\$1,280
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Tour Itinerary: Japan 101 (B) Southbound

Day 01: Honolulu-Tokyo
Depart Honolulu for Tokyo.

Day 02: Tokyo
Arrive Tokyo's Narita Airport, meet by our representative; transfer to hotel.
Accommodation: Keio Plaza Hotel.

Day 03: Tokyo
A day tour will take you to see the Tokyo Tower, Meiji Shrine, Akasaka Guest House, the National Diet Building, Imperial Palace East Garden, Hama-Rikyu Garden, cruise on the Sumida River, Asakusa Kannon Temple and Nakamise shopping street. (B/L).

Day 04: Tokyo
Day Free for you to explore Tokyo at your own pace. (B)

Day 05: Tokyo-Mt. Fuji-Hakone
Depart Tokyo for Mt. Fuji along the Tomei Expressway; drive to the 5th Station of Mt. Fuji, enjoy a panoramic view of the Pacific Ocean from 8,000 ft. altitude. Lunch at a local restaurant. Onward to Hakone, visit Owakudani Boiling Valley and a boat ride at Lake Ashi. (B/L)

Accommodation: Palace Hotel Hakone.

Day 06: Hakone-Kyoto
Depart Hakone for Kyoto via bullet train. Lunch at Kyoto hotel; Afternoon tour to visit the Kiyomizu Temple, Kodaiji Temple, Yasaka Shrine and the Gion Geisha district. (B/L)
Accommodation: Kyoto New Hankyu Hotel.

Day 07: Kyoto-Nara-Osaka
Morning tour to Nara, visiting Todaiji Temple, Kofukuji Temple and the Nara Deer Park. Afternoon train to Osaka.
Accommodation: Osaka Hilton Hotel.

Day 08: Osaka
Osaka walking tour, visiting the Aerial Garden Observatory and the Umeda area; Osaka Castle and a ride on the Aqualiner Water Bus. (B/L).

Day 09: Osaka
Day free for you to explore Osaka at your own pace. (B)

Day 10: Osaka-U.S.
Transfer to airport; depart Osaka for U.S. (B)

Tour Costs

Air: airfares are seasonal and vary depending on conditions such as flight availability and fuel surcharges. Please call for information.

2013 Land cost based on double occupancy	\$2,820
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Single Supplement	\$980
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