

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: New Hankyu Hotel Osaka

Day 03: Osaka
An afternoon tour will take you to see Osaka Castle and Osaka city from a river cruise on the Aqua Liner. (B)

Day 04: Osaka-Kyoto
Transfer to Kyoto by train. Enjoy an authentic Japanese dinner at your hotel. (B/D)
Accommodation: Ryokan Gion Shimonoso

Day 05: Kyoto/Nara
Full day Kyoto & Nara tour; visiting Nijo Castle, Golden Pavilion, Kyoto Imperial Palace, lunch at Kyoto Handicraft Center. After lunch, onward to Nara; visit the Todaiji Temple, Kasuga Shrine and Nara Park. (B/L/D)

Day 06: Kyoto - Tokyo
Travel to Tokyo by bullet train. Alight at Shinagawa Station, proceed to hotel. (B)
Accommodation: Hotel Pacific Tokyo.

Day 07: Tokyo - Hakone - Mt. Fuji - Tokyo
One day Hakone & Mt. Fuji tour; visiting the 5th station of Mt. Fuji; enjoy a boat cruise at Lake Ashi; visiting Komagatake Aerial Cableway and Odawara. (B/L)

Day 08: Tokyo
A morning tour will take you to visit Tokyo Tower, Imperial Palace Plaza, Asakusa Kannon Temple & Nakamise Shopping Arcade. (B)

Day 09: Tokyo - U.S.
Transfer to airport, depart Tokyo for U.S. (B)

Departure (2010)	Tour cost
APR 01-29 OCT 24 - NOV 08	\$2,875
APR 30 - MAY 08 JUN 05 - AUG 22 DEC 13 - 16, 27-31	\$3,030
MAY 09 - JUN 04 AUG 23 - OCT 23 DEC 17 - 26	\$2,920
NOV 09 - DEC 12	\$2,850

Prices included fuel surcharges and subject to change without notice.



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: Hotel Pacific Tokyo

Day 03: Tokyo
A morning tour will take you to visit Tokyo Tower, Imperial Palace Plaza, Asakusa Kannon Temple & Nakamise Shopping Arcade. (B)

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-Nara
Depart Hakone for Kyoto via bullet train. Lunch at Kyoto hotel; afternoon tour to Nara visiting Tokaiji Temple and Kasuga Shrine. (B/L)
Accommodation: Kyoto New Hankyu Hotel.

Day 07: Kyoto
Morning tour of Kyoto visiting Nijo Castle, Golden Pavilion and Old Imperial Palace. Afternoon at leisure. (B)

Day 08: Kyoto-Osaka
Depart Kyoto for Osaka by local train. Afternoon tour of Osaka on the Aqua Liner and visit Osaka Castle. (B)
Accommodation: New Hankyu Hotel Osaka.

Day 09: Osaka
Day free at leisure. (B)

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

Departure	Tour cost
APR 01-29 OCT 24 - NOV 08	\$3,098
APR 30 - MAY 08 JUN 05 - AUG 22 DEC 13 - 16, 27-31	\$3,250
MAY 09 - JUN 04 AUG 23 - OCT 23 DEC 17 - 26	\$3,145
NOV 09 - DEC 12	\$3,075

Prices included fuel surcharges and subject to change without notice.