

## Iconic Japan - AJENG

12 days: Tokyo to Kyoto

### What's Included

- Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Tsukiji Sushi Experience, Tokyo
- Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Zen Buddhist Meditation and Calligraphy, Kyoto
- Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Kambu Masters, Kyoto
- Your Hands-On Moment: Chopstick and Gold Leaf Painting Experience, Kanazawa
- Tour of Tokyo including Meiji Jingu Shrine and Asakusa and Harajuka districts
- Walking tour of Tsumago Village and countryside
- Kaiseki dinner
- Visit Kanazawa samurai and geisha districts
- Visit Nomura Family Samurai Residence and Myoryuji Ninja Temple
- Visit Himeji Castle
- Visit Hiroshima Peace Memorial
- Excursion to Miyajima Island
- Zen tea experience
- Tour Kyoto and Nara including Fushimi Inari, Kinkaku-ji Golden Pavilion, Todaiji Temple, Kasuga Taisha Shrine (Jan - Sep)
- Visit Gion Geisha district
- Japan Rail (JR) pass (7 days)
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

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**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing June 27th, 2018 and onwards

### Itinerary

**NOTE:** Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

#### Day 1 Tokyo

Arrive at any time.

Arrive in Tokyo at any time today. There are no planned activities so check into our hotel and enjoy the city.

On our tours in Japan we use public transport, making use of Japan's world famous transportation system. From the super fast Shinkansen Bullet Train to Kyoto's extensive local bus network, we ride with the locals.

As well, there is a lot of walking on this trip, every day - please ensure you have an average level of fitness and can walk unaided for long periods of time. A good pair of walking shoes are highly recommended.

We will use a baggage transfer service, so you will not have to worry about carrying your bags on and off trains as we travel. As such, you will not have access to your bags during transfer from each city - we recommend using a day pack for anything you may need during the transfer day, as well as to carry any valuables.

#### Arrival Day and Welcome Meeting

1h18:00

The adventure begins tonight. Feel free to explore before your welcome meeting, but make sure you're back in time to meet the group. After introductions, your CEO will review the details of your tour. Please note that normal check-in times apply at our start hotels, but you can usually store your luggage for the day if you arrive early.

#### Accommodation

## **Hotel Gracery Shinjuku (or similar)**

Hotel

## **Day 2 Tokyo**

Spend the day exploring vibrant Tokyo by public transit. As a city of extreme contrasts, we experience the ancient and traditional with visits to Meiji Jingu Shrine and the old town of Asakusa. We then see Tokyo's quirky and modern side with a walk through the pop culture-obsessed Harajuku district -- a great place to sit back and people-watch.

In Harajuku we catch a glimpse of the pop culture phenomenon of Kawaii. Directly translated as "cute", this Japanese popular culture movement is reflected, through various avenues of entertainment, toys, personal style, attitude and cuisine.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by metro and on foot.

On some departures of this tour the activities on Days 2 and 3 will be swapped.

### **Metro**

Tokyo

Get around underground via public transit.

### **Orientation Walk**

Tokyo

Let your CEO guide you around eclectic modern Tokyo.

### **Harajuku Visit**

Tokyo

The Harajuku district is known as the centre of Japanese youth culture and fashion. Here, find dozens of shopping and dining options including independent boutiques and larger international luxury stores.

### **Meiji Shrine (Meiji Jingu) Visit**

Shibuya-ku

Visit this shrine dedicated to the 123rd emperor of Japan, Emperor Meiji and his wife. The shrine is a great place to escape the bustle of the city and wander the grounds along the wide walking paths.

### **Asakusa Orientation Walk**

Tokyo

Discover this historic entertainment district on a guided orientation tour of the area. Take in one of Tokyo's iconic sites with a stop at Sensoji temple.

### **Meals included: Breakfast**

### **Accommodation**

## **Hotel Gracery Shinjuku (or similar)**

Hotel

## **Day 3 Tokyo**

This morning, insiders of the Toyosu Fish Market (formerly known as the Tsukiji Fish Market) take us on a tour to learn about the fishing industry in Japan, ending with a class led by sushi masters. Learn how to identify the freshest fish, to prepare and fillet, and the fine art of sushi-making and presentation. After, try your hand at making your own sushi and enjoy a taste of your creation. This afternoon is free to explore Tokyo on your own.

This afternoon, enjoy some free time exploring Tokyo. Opt to visit Ueno park and the museums, Akihabara for cutting edge electronics, Harajuku for funky fashions, Ginza for the highest of the high end, walk the grounds of the Imperial Palace East Garden, or just stroll the streets, looking for the traditional life that still lies just under the modern surface.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by metro and on foot.

Please note the visit to the tuna auction is unavailable until mid-January 2019.

Please be advised the April 29, 2019 departure of this trip will not visit the inner Toyosu Fish Market as it is closed during this period. Alternatively, the group will visit the outer market of the Tsukiji fish market.

## **Metro**

Tokyo

Get around underground via public transit.

## **Toyosu Fish Market**

Tokyo

Visit the Toyosu Fish Market, the biggest fish and seafood market in the world. Walk through the maze of fresh catches, massive fish and exciting business exchanges to get an idea how important this industry is in Tokyo. The market is busiest early in the morning, this is the best time to take in all the action and opt for a fresh sushi breakfast.

If you're hoping to get one of the rare and coveted spots to view the famous tuna auction be sure to arrive by 3am - and remember there are no guarantees!

## **Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Tsukiji Sushi Experience**

Walk through this sprawling facility of the Toyosu Fish Market with insiders that know its ins and outs. Later, take in a class with recognized sushi masters in the Tsukiji area, learning first how to recognize the freshest ingredients, before learning to prepare, fillet, and perform the delicate art of sushi-making and presentation. Then, try your own hand at making sushi and enjoy a taste of your own creation.

## **Free Time**

Tokyo Afternoon

Enjoy some time to explore the city on your own.

## **Optional Activities - Day 3**

### **Ueno Park Visit**

Tokyo

Free-500JPY per person

As Japan's most popular city park, Ueno is known for its museums and cherry blossoms. Stroll the pathways, admire the thousands of trees, including 1,200 cherry trees, look for lotus on the pond and visit the temples and museums.

### **Ginza Shopping**

Tokyo

Free

The Ginza district is Tokyo's equivalent of Fifth Avenue in New York. Window shop at Chanel, Dior, Gucci and Louis Vuitton, then check out the latest electronics at the Sony showroom or Apple store. Visit the Wako department store with its historic clock tower, housed in a building that dates back to 1894. If you are there on a weekend, head to Ginza's main street where pedestrians rule without Tokyo's traffic.

## **Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch**

## **Accommodation**

### **Hotel Gracery Shinjuku (or similar)**

Hotel

## **Day 4 Tokyo/Tsumago**

Depart Tokyo by train. Disembark at Nagiso and continue to our local ryokan accommodation. Enjoy a walk through the countryside, passing farms and hamlets into Tsumago, a traditional village. After, feast on a kaiseki meal, learn about Japanese customs, and sleep on a futon.

Ryokan are traditional Inns found across Japan. Featuring tatami floors (soft mats of woven straw), futon beds, Japanese-style baths, cotton kimono (casual robe worn to lounge around), and kaiseki meals (often served in the comfort of your own room); a ryokan is the perfect place to experience traditional customs and local immersion. The Ryokan is a simple, traditional Inn with few amenities and shared facilities, have fun and enjoy this relaxing opportunity to learn more about Japan's unique customs.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by train, bus and on foot.

## **Metro**

Tokyo

Get around underground via public transit.

## **Train**

Tokyo - Tsumago

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

## **Tsumago countryside and Village walk**

Tsumago1h30m-2h

Take a walk through the countryside, passing farms and hamlets, rice patties and waterfalls continuing into Tsumago, a traditional Village. Considered one of the best preserved post towns in Japan, the residents go to great lengths to recreate the feel of the Edo Period. Motorized vehicles are prohibited from the main street during the day and phone lines and power cables are hidden to allow visitors to feel as if they have stepped back in time.

**Meals included: Breakfast | Dinner**

## **Accommodation**

### **Hanaya Tsumago Ryokan (or similar)**

Ryokan

## **Day 5 Tsumago/Kanazawa**

Continue by train to the historic city of Kanazawa. Explore the ancient Samurai culture with a walk through the well-preserved Nagamachi Samurai district and visit to the Nomura Samurai family residence.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by public transportation and on foot.

## **Train**

Tsumago - Kanazawa

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

## **Taxicab**

Tsumago

Jump in the back and tell the driver to step on it, just like they do in the movies.

## **Local bus**

Kanazawa

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.

## **Nagamachi Samurai District Walk**

Kanazawa30m

Step back in time with a visit to the Nagamachi Samurai district of Kanazawa. Take a walk through the historic samurai district located just below the Kanazawa Castle, where traditionally samurai and their families lived in mud huts.

## **Visit Nomura Family Samurai Residence**

Kanazawa

Visit the Nomura Family Samurai Residence - who held executive posts from one generation to the next under rule of the Maeda family. A stunning landmark has a coffered ceiling constructed of Japanese cypress and stunning fusuma-e (paintings on sliding-door panels) which were created by the personal painter of the Maeda family. Also enjoy the garden which features a 400-year old Japanese bayberry and winding stream surrounded by ancient rocks.

**Meals included: Breakfast**

## **Accommodation**

### **Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel (or similar)**

Hotel

## **Day 6 Kanazawa**

Continue exploring Kanazawa, visiting the Myoryuji Ninja Temple and walking through the Higashi Geisha district. The city is also renowned as a centre of traditional arts and crafts. We delve into these traditions with a chopstick and gold leaf painting experience. Opt to visit the stunning gardens or original castles.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by public bus and on foot.

### **Ninja Temple Visit**

Kanazawa

Visit the famous Ninja Temple. While there's no evidence linking the temple to ninjas, the hidden doorways, passages and escape routes seem designed for stealthy attackers. Please leave all nunchucks with security.

### **Your Hands-On Moment: Chopstick and Gold Leaf Painting Experience**

Partake in a hands-on experience in one of Kanazawa's many famous craft studios and enjoy chop stick and gold leaf painting.

### **Free Time**

Kanazawa

Enjoy some free time to explore on your own.

### **Local bus**

Kanazawa

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.

### **Higashi Geisha District Visit**

Kanazawa

Step back in time with a visit to the Higashi Chaya geisha district of Kanazawa. Learn about the geisha culture, prevalent in Kanazawa since the 17th century. Visit the traditional two-storey wooden houses decorated with lattice and discover the traditions behind this iconic Japanese way of life.

### **Optional Activities - Day 6**

#### **Kanazawa Castle Visit**

Kanazawa

Free-310JPY per person

Visit the massive castle located beside the Kenrokuen Garden. At over 400 years old, the castle has a great history and is the perfect place to wrap up exploration of the gardens.

#### **Kenroku-En Garden Visit**

Kanazawa

400-560JPY per person

Walk around this breathtaking garden, ranked one of the top three in Japan. With unique bridges, ponds and fountains, pagodas and tea houses there's lots to see here in any season.

### **Meals included: Breakfast**

### **Accommodation**

#### **Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel (or similar)**

Hotel

### **Day 7 Kanazawa/Hiroshima**

Continue by bullet train train to Hiroshima and visit the park and Memorial Museum to learn more about the tragic history of this city.

The large Peace Park in the centre of the city is an extremely moving place dotted with memorials of those known to have been killed in the explosion and those that died as a result. A burning flame waits in the park to be extinguished when all nuclear weapons in the world have been destroyed. A tram ride through the city takes you to the Peace Park.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by train, public transportation and on foot.

### **Taxicab**

Kanazawa

Jump in the back and tell the driver to step on it, just like they do in the movies.

## **Train**

Kanazawa - Hiroshima

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

## **Tram**

Hiroshima

Move through the busy streets with ease via urban light rail.

## **Hiroshima Park and Peace Memorial**

Hiroshima

Walk through the Peace Park in the centre of Hiroshima, a living memorial dedicated to the tens of thousands who died from the atomic bomb blast in 1945. Visit the statue of Sadako Sasaki, a young girl who died of leukemia as a result of the bomb blast, despite folding 1,000 origami paper cranes to appeal to the gods to make her well. See the frame of the Gembaku Dome, the sole building to withstand the explosion. Reflect, remember, and be reminded of the power we all hold to create peace.

**Meals included: Breakfast**

## **Accommodation**

### **Grand Prince Hiroshima (or similar)**

Hotel

## **Day 8 Hiroshima**

Catch a ferry over to the sacred island of Miyajima to see the famous floating Torii Gate, considered one of Japan's most beautiful and sacred shrines. This afternoon is at your leisure. Opt to catch the ferry to other islands and explore on your own.

Enjoy Miyajima Island, a famous wooded island located in the Inland Sea, not far from the coast near Hiroshima. Here you will find perhaps the most photographed site in Japan - The Floating Torii Gate. Designated as one of Japan's '3 Most Beautiful Views', the shrine itself dates back to the 6th century and is designed in a pier like structure. Mere 'commoners' were not allowed to set foot on this holy place.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by public transportation, ferry and on foot.

Please note the floating Torii Gate will be under construction from June 2019 to August 2020.

## **Ferry**

Hiroshima - Miyajima

Get to the next spot on your route aboard a convenient and efficient ferry boat.

## **Miyajima Island Visit**

Miyajima - Hiroshima

Take a trip to Miyajima Island, famed as one of Japan's most scenic spots, with a free afternoon to explore. See the famous floating Torii Gate, set out in the bay, which glows extraordinarily at sunset. The island is dotted with shrines and temples, populated by deer and monkeys, and traversed with hiking trails for those who want to get some exercise. There are also lanes full of souvenirs and tasty treats. Visit Miyajima at your own pace, and have the option to hike up to the peak of the island, Mt Misen, to see spectacular views of the surrounding islands.

## **Free Time**

Miyajima

Enjoy some time to explore on your own.

**Meals included: Breakfast**

## **Accommodation**

### **Grand Prince Hiroshima (or similar)**

Hotel

## **Day 9 Hiroshima/Kyoto**

This morning we visit Himeji Castle, considered the best preserved and most stunning castle in all of Japan. After, continue by train to Kyoto, the former Imperial Capital and home of the country's most treasured remnants of Japanese imperial life. This afternoon, take a stroll around the Gion Geisha district.

As the Imperial capital, Kyoto is an essential part of any visit to Japan. Kyoto has some of the most magnificent temples in Japan which date back centuries. There are said to be 2,000 temples, shrines, palaces, museums and traditional gardens in Kyoto. Use your time to wander past huge wooden structures and multi-storied pagodas, all linked with famous walkways.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by train, public bus and on foot.

### **Train**

Hiroshima - Himeji

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

### **Himeji Castle**

Himeji

Visit the stunning Himeji Castle which unlike many other Japanese castles, was never destroyed in wars, earthquakes or fires and continues to stand in its original form. A UNESCO world heritage site the initial site was built in the 14th century, as a fort growing over time as the various clans, who ruled over the region, continued to expand. The complex, as it stands today, was completed in 1609.

### **Train**

Himeji - Kyoto

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

### **Gion Walk**

Kyoto

Walk through Gion, Kyoto's most famous geisha district. Visit shops, restaurants and ochaya (teahouses), where geiko (Kyoto dialect for geisha) and maiko (geiko apprentices) entertain.

### **Meals included: Breakfast**

### **Accommodation**

#### **Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyoto Shinmachi Bettei (or similar)**

Hotel

### **Day 10 Kyoto**

Visit the stunning Fushimi Inari, an ancient shrine at the base of the mountain of the same name. After, spend the day exploring sites around Nara, visiting the impressive Todaiji Buddhist Temple and Kasuga Taisha Shrine.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by public bus, metro and on foot.

Please note, the visit to the Kasuga Grand Shrine is not possible from October - December due to the shorter operating hours of this site.

### **Fushimi Inari Taisha Shrine Visit**

Kyoto

Pay a visit to Fushimi Inari shrine, located just outside of Kyoto. Walk under the thousands of iconic torii gates (as seen in the film *Memoirs of a Geisha*) and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere. The shrine itself is at the base of the Inari mountain but includes many trails up to smaller shrines in the area.

### **Day Trip to Nara**

Kyoto - Nara

Take a train excursion to the peaceful gardens and ancient temples of Nara, home of Japan's largest Buddha, a number of cute and docile deer that are the sacred symbol of the Kasuga Taisha shrine.

### **Todai-ji Buddhist Temple Complex**

Nara

Explore the famed Todaiji Temple which features the largest bronze Buddha in the world.

### **Visit Kasuga Grand Shrine**

Nara

Visit this Shinto shrine originally built in 768 AD by the Fujiwara family. This stunning shrine is famed for its hundreds of bronze and stone lanterns.

**Meals included: Breakfast**

**Accommodation**

**Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyoto Shinmachi Bettei (or similar)**

Hotel

### **Day 11 Kyoto**

This morning, visit a local temple to learn about the history and practice of Zen Buddhism in Japan. Here we meet with a local monk who will talk about Buddhism and instruct us in Zen meditation and calligraphy. Enjoy a traditional bowl of matcha tea before visiting the famous Kinkaku-ji Golden Pavilion. After, we learn about the etiquette of the samurai as well as the practice of basic kembu, and take a lesson on how to use the Japanese sword. Then, enjoy a performance by kembu masters which includes short poems, which were traditionally written by samurai about major events in their life. Later, take some time to explore on your own. Opt to visit museums, temples, or zen gardens.

Wear your comfortable shoes - today we will get around by public bus, metro and on foot.

**Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Zen Buddhist Meditation and Calligraphy**

Visit a local temple to learn about the history and practice of Zen Buddhism in Japan. One of the monks will instruct us in Zen meditation and Zen calligraphy. This insider access will allow us deeper insight into Japanese culture and beliefs, as well as how to use these techniques to reduce stress in our daily lives.

**Zen Tea Experience**

Kyoto

Relax with a traditional bowl of matcha tea at this historic temple where tea ceremony was developed into its current form by famous tea master, Rikyu.

**Kinkaku-ji Golden Pavilion Visit**

Kyoto

Explore Kinkaku-ji or the Golden Pavilion, named for the temple's top two floors that are covered in gold leaf. The temple is surrounded by trees and sits on a reflective pond, making this must-see in Kyoto a perfect place for photos. While the temple can be busy, there are gardens around the area to explore once you've had enough of the view.

**Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Kembu Masters**

Gain an understanding of kembu, an ancient art form that honours the culture of the Japanese warrior class, the samurai. Watch kembu masters practice this delicate artform and learn for yourself the basic moves of properly using a Japanese sword. It's said that in feudal times, samurai would perform these traditional routines to build courage and improve concentration, thereby expressing the spirit of the warrior.

**Optional Activities - Day 11**

**Zen Gardens of Ryoan-ji**

Kyoto

500JPY per person

The Ryoan-ji garden is one of the best examples of kare-sansui, or dry landscape, a type of Zen garden. Fifteen large rocks are placed within a sea of white pebbles raked into linear patterns to facilitate meditation. Stand on the platform to get the best view from above. Stroll the grounds around the Ryoan-ji Temple and along the Kyoyo-chi pond.

**Meals included: Breakfast**

**Accommodation**

**Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyoto Shinmachi Bettei (or similar)**

Hotel

### **Day 12 Kyoto**

Depart at any time.

There are no planned activities today and you are free to depart at any time.

**Meals included: Breakfast**

## What's Included

Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Tsukiji Sushi Experience, Tokyo

Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Zen Buddhist Meditation and Calligraphy, Kyoto

Your Journeys Highlight Moment: Kemu Masters, Kyoto

Your Hands-On Moment: Chopstick and Gold Leaf Painting Experience, Kanazawa. Tour of Tokyo including Meiji Jingu Shrine and Asakusa and Harajuku districts. Walking tour of Tsumago Village and countryside. Kaiseki dinner. Visit Kanazawa samurai and geisha districts. Visit Nomura Family Samurai Residence and Myoryuji Ninja Temple. Visit Himeji Castle. Visit Hiroshima Peace Memorial. Excursion to Miyajima Island. Zen tea experience. Tour Kyoto and Nara including Fushimi Inari, Kinkaku-ji Golden Pavilion, Todaiji Temple, Kasuga Taisha Shrine (Jan - Sep). Visit Gion Geisha district. Japan Rail (JR) pass (7 days). All transport between destinations and to/from included activities.

## Highlights

Explore the modern and traditional sides of Japan, Relax at a traditional Inn, Ride a ferry to Miyajima to see the famous floating torii, Learn the art of meditation from a local monk

## Dossier Disclaimer

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## Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

## Important Notes

### 1. Tattoos

Tattoos are not common or widely accepted in Japan. There is no cause for concern, but do your best to cover your tattoos when possible and note that you may not be permitted to enter public spas or onsens (hot springs).

### 2. Rail Pass

Please note that only foreigners traveling as a tourist are able to use a Japan Rail Pass. If you are a Japanese citizen/resident or traveling on a student/business visa please advise us at time of booking as you will not be able to take advantage of the rail pass.

### 3. Tsukiji Fish Market

Oct 8th 2018 departure: During this time Tsukiji Fish Market will be closed for official holidays, therefore, we cannot visit the fish market. The sushi-making class and discussion with sushi masters will run as usual.

### 4. Tokyo Included Activities

On some departures of this tour the activities on Days 2 and 3 will be swapped.

## Group Leader Description

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officer (CEO). The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are traveling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense, you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects.

## Group Size Notes

Max 15, avg 12

## Meals Included

11 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 1 dinner

## Meals

Eating is a big part of traveling. G Adventures knows that worldwide, local cuisines define the cultures. We think sampling regional delicacies are intrinsic to truly experiencing the country. We want you to be able to try foods according to your individual tastes, comforts, and budgets.

Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility. At times, meals will be taken together as a group. Other times, your CEO will point you in the direction of several delicious options, and you will have free time to pick and choose at will. Often in Japan it is fun to get some snacks and beverages with the salarymen in the evenings at small restaurants, and other times it is fun to sit with a few friends at a sushi train.

Your CEO will always strive to cater for all dietary requirements/preferences, but please keep in mind that Vegetarianism/Veganism is very uncommon in Japan so this may mean a more limited selection for you.

## Transport

Bullet train, express train, local train, ferry, metro, taxi, public bus, walking.

## Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## Accommodation

Hotels (10 nts), traditional Inn (1 nt).

## My Own Room

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops

## About Accommodation

A mix of Western style hotels (10 nights) and Japanese traditional inns (1 nights).

Japan is one of the most populous countries in the world and space is at a premium. Therefore, hotels rooms are small! Additionally, most Japanese hotels do not have designating non smoking rooms. Therefore, we ask hotels to deoderize rooms before check in.

## Joining Hotel

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

## Joining Instructions

To get to Gracery Shinjuku Hotel:

On Foot A 5-minute walk from JR Shinjuku station ( East exit )

From Haneda Airport

By train :Take the Keihin Express to Shinagawa Station. Change to the JR Yamanote line and get off at Shinjuku Station -East exit (approx. 50 minutes).

By limousine bus: Take the limousine bus to Shinjuku Station - West Exit or Busta (Shinjuku Expressway Bus Terminal) (approx. 60~85 minutes) then take a taxi for 5 mins.

From Narita Airport

By train: Take Narita Skyliner to Nippori Station. Change to the JR Yamanote line and get off at Shinjuku Station (approx. 60 minutes).

By limousine bus :Take the limousine bus to Shinjuku Station - West Exit or Busta (Shinjuku Expressway Bus Terminal) (approx. 120~150 minutes) then take a taxi for 5 mins.

Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned for that day other then your welcome meeting in the evening, so you can arrive at any time. Similarly the last day is a departure day during which no activities have been planned.

A G Adventures Representative will organize a short meeting around 6pm, during which you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip. A welcome note will be left for you in the hotel so you have all the necessary information regarding the meeting time. If you arrive late, s/he will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning.

## Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details.

## Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Local Office (Japan)

During office hours, Mon-Fri 9:30-18:00 Local Time

From outside Japan: 1st contact +81 3-6432-0195 (2nd contact +81 80 2725 5133)

From within Japan: 1st contact +81 3-6432-0195 (2nd contact +81 80 2725 5133)

After office hours emergency number

Ayako: +81 70-3607-8937 (from within Japan: 070-3607-8937)

Toshimi: +81 70-3607-8936 (from within Japan: 070-3607-8936)

G Adventures Asia Manager: Julie Fitzgerald

G Adventures Office Bangkok, Thailand

During Office hours (Weekdays, 9am-5pm Local Time)

From outside Thailand: +66 2 381 5574

From within Thailand: 02 381 5574

After hours emergency number (SE Asia Manager)

From outside Thailand: +66 87 049 6074

From within Thailand: 087 049 6074

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

## What to Take

We suggest that you pack as lightly as possible as you are expected to carry your own luggage.

We recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Suitcases are not recommended, most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size. You will also need a day-pack/rucksack to carry daily essentials like water, cameras, passport, i-pods etc.

Luggage Transfer ("Takuhaibin") - Japan's takuhaibin service is a convenient and reliable way to transfer luggage from one location to another throughout the country. Pick-up/drop-off/delivery dates and times can be easily scheduled (usually overnight) and costs are moderate. Service can be arranged at most hotels and airports. Using Takuhaibin to send your luggage between hotels, or from hotel to airport, is a great way to travel light and avoid hauling large bags on crowded trains or up and down stairs - just be sure to pack an overnight bag with everything you'll need until you're reunited with your luggage the following day.

## Packing List

Cold Weather:

\* Long-sleeved shirts or sweater

\* Scarf

\* Warm gloves

\* Warm hat

\* Warm layers

Conservative Dress:

\* Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)

\* Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

Documents:

\* Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)

\* Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)

\* Passport (required) (With photocopies)

\* Required visas or vaccination certificates (required) (With photocopies)

\* Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)

#### Essentials:

- \* Binoculars (optional)
- \* Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- \* Cash, credit and debit cards
- \* Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- \* Ear plugs
- \* First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- \* Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- \* Fleece top/sweater
- \* Footwear
- \* Hat
- \* Locks for bags
- \* Long pants/jeans
- \* Moneybelt
- \* Outlet adapter
- \* Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- \* Reusable water bottle
- \* Shirts/t-shirts
- \* Sleepwear
- \* Small travel towel
- \* Sunglasses
- \* Toiletries (Preferably biodegradable)
- \* Watch and alarm clock
- \* Waterproof backpack cover
- \* Windproof rain jacket

#### Smart Dress:

- \* Smart outfit (For evenings out)

#### Warm Weather:

- \* Sandals/flip-flops
- \* Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- \* Sun hat/bandana
- \* Swimwear

Note: During the colder months (Nov-Apr) the mountains can be very cold, so please make sure you pack warm clothes. During summer (Jun-Sep) temperatures be very hot and humid. Lightweight breathable clothing is recommended.

## Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels but this is very expensive. Your leader can show you self service coin laundries in larger cities. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

## Visas and Entry Requirements

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveler.

The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. For the most up to date information please check your governments foreign ministry website or with your travel agent as rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself.

For most travelers there will probably be a Japanese embassy or consulate in your home country.

JAPAN: Most nationalities receive A 90-DAY PERMIT ON ARRIVAL

## Detailed Trip Notes

Travel in Japan is easy, clean, fast and efficient, however please be aware that English is still not widely spoken, however a lot of patience, a sense of humour and a respect for the local culture goes a long way in any Asian country and will greatly enrich your experience.

## Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

## Money Exchange

As currency exchange rates in Asia fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com).

Every Post Office and 7-11 Convenience store has an ATM machine that accepts Visa, Mastercard and Debit Cards. At times, Maestro/Master Card/Cirrus have been problematic at these machines, so please bring a back-up card.

Credit Cards should not be relied upon for purchases as they are not widely accepted, except in some restaurants and department stores. Money can be exchanged at Post Offices and some banks and hotels in major cities, however it can be a very slow process.

## Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

## Departure Tax

Departure Tax is included in all International and Domestic tickets.

## Tipping

Tipping is not practiced in Japan. Leaving money at restaurants, in taxis etc will simply cause confusion!

Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is highly appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline \$5 USD per person, per day can be used.

## Optional Activities

Tokyo

- Ginza Shopping (Free)
- Ueno Park Visit (Free-500JPY per person)

Kanazawa

- Kenroku-En Garden Visit (400-560JPY per person)
- Kanazawa Castle Visit (Free-310JPY per person)

Kyoto

- Zen Gardens of Ryoan-ji (500JPY per person)

## Health

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical information pertaining to the country you are travelling to well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as a full supply of any personal medical requirements. In Asia, you will not find the same drugs as you get at home. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities. Also note that for legal reasons our Leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if, in the reasonable opinion of the CEO, they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

## Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities

that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

[www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/](http://www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/)

## **Trip Specific Safety**

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

## **A Couple of Rules**

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

## **Travel Insurance**

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

## **Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation**

The Planeterra Foundation [planeterra.org](http://planeterra.org) is a Canadian non-profit organization that helps empower local people to develop their communities, conserve their cultures, and create humane and supportive systems for their endeavours. Planeterra provides capacity building and catalyst grants to get community social enterprises off the ground. These businesses address local challenges by providing benefits for indigenous people, empowering marginalized women, and granting disadvantaged youth access to education, employment, and brighter futures. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating programs into G Adventures' itineraries globally.

G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

### **Dollar-a-Day Program**

G Adventures' Dollar-a-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar for every day you are on trip. 100% of these donations go directly to support community development projects worldwide that are implemented by Planeterra.

## **Local Dress**

In Asia the dress standard is more conservative than it is back home. When packing try to pick loose, lightweight, long clothing that will keep you cool in the usually hot and humid climate of Asian summers. In predominately Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim countries we ask that you dress respectfully and avoid very short shorts/skirts and singlets/tanktops when visiting temples, mosques or other holy sites.

## **Feedback**

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at [customerservice@gadventures.com](mailto:customerservice@gadventures.com) and we will send it on to you.

## **Newsletter**

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at [www.gadventures.com/newsletters/](http://www.gadventures.com/newsletters/)

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation - Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

## **Minimum Age**

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

## **International Flights**

Check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.