

Japan Express - Osaka to Tokyo - AJJR

9 days: Osaka to Tokyo

What's Included

- Your Welcome Moment: Welcome Moment - Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in Mount Kōya Temple, Kōyasan
- Hiroshima Peace Park and Museum visit
- Miyajima Island excursion
- Nijo Castle and gardens visit
- Gion walk
- Fushimi Inari shrine visit
- Lake Ashino-ko boat ride
- Traditional kaiseki meal
- Japan Rail Pass
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

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 January 13th, 2023 and onwards

Itinerary Notes

Luggage size restriction - Effective from May 2020 onwards All G Adventures tours in Japan use the world-famous Shinkansen bullet trains, which have a restriction on maximum luggage size. Your luggage must be less than 160cm in total. This is roughly the size that most airline companies consider as "carry-on baggage" and allow in overhead storage compartments. We strongly recommend bringing a day pack or backpack to use during the day, in addition to your carry-on sized luggage. Please see "What to take" under Tour details for more information.

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 Osaka

Arrive at any time and join your group and CEO for a Welcome Meeting in the evening around 6:00 pm.

There are no activities planned until an evening welcome meeting. Please ensure you arrive on time for the welcome meeting and bring your passport so your CEO can collect the required information for your train tickets. Refer to your voucher for the most up to date welcome meeting time.

The most convenient way to get around Japan is by public transportation and on foot. The country's train system is often considered one of the best in the entire world so the majority of our trips utilize this efficient train network. In this tour, you will need to be able to spend the majority of the day on your feet and carry your luggage through busy train stations and streets. On average, tours in Japan walk about 15,000 steps a day. Please ensure you are fit enough to carry your own luggage and spend most of the day on your feet.

Your Welcome Moment: Welcome Moment - Meet Your CEO and Group

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Accommodation

City Route Hotel (or similar)

Hotel

Day 2 Osaka/Kōyasan

Travel to the centre of Buddhism in Japan and sleep in a temple atop the 800m Mt Koya. Savour a traditional dinner of shojin ryori (Buddhist vegetarian cuisine).

Journey to Mt Koya, a religious centre founded in 816 by the Buddhist monk Kobo Daishi. The train ride up the mountain is possibly one of the finest rail journeys in Japan. For the final steep ascent, switch to funicular and then hop on a bus to reach the monastery.

In the evening, dine on shojin-ryori, typical vegetarian cuisine, and relax in a yukata, or kimono.

Please note, you will not have access to your main luggage for approximately 24 hours, as we utilize Japan's takkyubin service to conveniently and reliably transfer luggage from Osaka to Hiroshima and avoid hauling large bags on crowded trains. You must pack an overnight bag with everything you'll need until you're reunited with your luggage the following day.

Train

Osaka - Kōyasan 3h Morning

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

Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in Mount Kōya Temple

During the overnight stay in the mountain temple, witness the routines of the monks and dine on typical fare. Explore the temples and moss covered Oku-no-in cemetery in the afternoon. In the evening, savour the shojin-ryori vegetarian cuisine, and relax in a yukata or kimono. Early morning at the temple offers the chance to observe the monks praying, before a vegetarian breakfast. Breathe the fresh mountain air and soak in the beautiful surroundings.

Meals included: Breakfast | Dinner

Accommodation

Sekishoin (or similar)

Monastery

Day 3 Kōyasan/Hiroshima

Watch the monks pray in the morning and enjoy a traditional breakfast. Have some time to enjoy Koyasan this morning, before travelling to Hiroshima this afternoon.

Early morning offers the chance to observe the monks praying. Breathe in some fresh mountain air before a vegetarian breakfast, then start the journey back down the mountain via bus, train and funicular.

Later, board a train to Hiroshima, a historically significant city, marked by the explosion of the first atomic bomb in 1945.

Bullet Train

Kōyasan - Hiroshima 5h

Get to your next destination faster than the speed of light (ok maybe not that fast) aboard a high-speed train.

Oku-no-in Cemetery Visit

Kōyasan

Oku-no-in is the most sacred site in Koyasan and the location of the mausoleum for Kobo Daishi (also known as Kukai), the founder of Shingon Buddhism. The area is surrounded by a massive cemetery, the largest in Japan. With over 200,000 tombstones lining the almost 2km path to Kobo Daishi's mausoleum, there is plenty of area to explore. Be sure to see Torodo Hall (Hall of Lamps), the main place of worship, where more than 10,000 lanterns are kept burning day and night.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation

Toyoko Inn Hiroshimaeki Shinkansenguchi II (or similar)

Hotel

Day 4 Hiroshima

This morning, visit the Peace Park and Memorial Museum commemorating the events of 1945. In the afternoon, take a ferry ride over to the sacred island of Miyajima to see the famous floating Torii Gate. Opt to hike around Mt Misen.

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.

Ferry

Hiroshima - Miyajima

Hop a ferry to reach the island and journey back in the evening.

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 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 Afternoon

Free time on Miyajima Island to make the most of this beautiful location.

Optional Activities - Day 4

Mt. Misen Visit

Miyajima 2-6km

Free-1840JPY per person

Set out for the summit of Mt. Misen, Miyajima's highest peak at 500m (1,640 ft) above sea level. Opt to hike one of three trails through the forest and keep an eye out for wild deer or catch a ride on the ropeway and walk the remaining distance to the top. Take in great views of the Seto Inland Sea and on a clear day see as far as the city of Hiroshima.

Accommodation

Toyoko Inn Hiroshimaeki Shinkansenguchi II (or similar)

Hotel

Day 5 Hiroshima/Kyoto

Travel to Kyoto and start exploring. Visit the impressive Nijo Castle and gardens, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the evening, explore the geisha district of Gion on a CEO-led walking tour.

Please note the Ninomaru Palace at Nijo Castle will be closed from Dec 26-Jan 3. Groups travelling during this time will visit the Kiyomizu-dera Temple.

Bullet Train

Hiroshima-eki - Ōsaka 1h30m

Get to your next destination faster than the speed of light (ok maybe not that fast) aboard a high-speed train.

Local Train

Osaka - Kyoto 1h

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.

Nijo Castle and Gardens Visit

Kyoto

Visit the Nijo Castle, the residence of the first shogun of the Edo Period built in 1603. Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the property is divided into three areas: the Honmaru (main circular fortification), Ninomaru (secondary circle of defense), and the gorgeous gardens that surround both.

Accommodation

Prince Smart Inn Kyoto Sanjo (or similar)

Hotel

Day 6 Kyoto

Enjoy a visit to the beautiful Fushimi Inari Taisha shrine and walk under the bright torii gates. Opt to shop, stroll along the riverbank, or explore another of Kyoto's many temples with free time.

Fushimi Inari Taisha Shrine Visit

Kyoto

Visit the 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.

Free Time

Kyoto Afternoon

Continue exploring Japan's historic capital with some free time.

Optional Activities - Day 6

Zen Gardens of Ryōan-ji

Kyoto

500JPY per person

The Ryōan-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.

Accommodation

Prince Smart Inn Kyoto Sanjo (or similar)

Hotel

Day 7 Kyoto/Hakone

Take a boat ride on Lake Ashino-ko, and hopefully catch a glimpse of majestic Mt Fuji. Enjoy a feast on a traditional Japanese kaiseki meal then soak in the natural hot springs.

Travel to Hakone, a town in the hills famous for its onsens, or natural hot springs.

In the evening, enjoy savouring a complex meal of traditional Japanese foods, followed by a recommended soak in the onsen.

Please note, you will not have access to your main luggage for approximately 24 hours, as we utilize Japan's takkyubin service to conveniently and reliably transfer luggage from Kyoto to Tokyo and avoid hauling large bags on crowded trains. You must pack an overnight bag with everything you'll need until you're reunited with your luggage the following day.

Bullet Train

Kyoto - Odawara 3h

Get to your next destination faster than the speed of light (ok maybe not that fast) aboard a high-speed train.

Local Bus

Odawara - Hakone 30m

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

Lake Ashino-ko Boat Ride

Hakone 30m

Hop aboard a passenger boat to cruise the waters of Lake Ashinoko. If you are lucky, on a clear day you can capture a view of Mt Fuji. The lake was formed from the caldera of Mt Hakone following its eruption 3000 years ago. Sit back, relax and enjoy.

Traditional Kaiseki Meal

Hakone

Savour a complex meal of traditional Japanese foods, then finish the day with a soak in the onsen.

Meals included: Dinner

Accommodation

Hotel Kagetsuen (or similar)

Hotel

Day 8 Hakone/Tokyo

Head to Tokyo with time to do some last-minute shopping.

Arrive before noon to Tokyo, with time to explore this energetic metropolis.

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.

Free Time

Tokyo Afternoon

With so much to do, start exploring now.

Local Train

Hakone - Tokyo

Climb aboard, take your seat, and get around like the locals do.

Optional Activities - Day 8

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.

Imperial Palace East Gardens Walk

Tokyo

Free

The Imperial Palace in Tokyo's city centre is home to Japan's Emperor and Empress. It is surrounded by a moat and three gardens, all open to the public. Stroll throughout the grounds, admire the azaleas and hydrangeas (when in season), discover the original stone wall that surrounded the palace back in 17th to 19th centuries during the days when samurai warriors defended the ruler. Visit nearby Sannomaru-Shozokan museum and see exquisite kimonos and Japanese paintings.

Sensō-ji Temple Visit

Asakusa

Free

Explore Sensō-ji Temple, a colourful Buddhist temple and the oldest temple in the entire city. Leading up to the temple the street is lined with shops selling yummy food and great souvenirs.

Ueno Park Visit

Tokyo

Free

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 approximately 800 Somei-yoshino cherry trees, look for lotus on the pond, or opt to visit the temples and museums (entrance fees).

Meiji Shrine (Meiji Jingū) Visit

Tokyo

Free-1000JPY per person

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.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation

The B Akasaka (or similar)

Hotel

Day 9 Tokyo

Depart at any time.

We highly recommend booking post-accommodation to fully experience this vibrant city.

What's Included

Your Welcome Moment: Welcome Moment - Meet Your CEO and Group

Your Local Living Moment: Overnight in Mount Kōya Temple, Kōyasan. Hiroshima Peace Park and Museum visit. Miyajima Island excursion. Nijo Castle and gardens visit. Gion walk. Fushimi Inari shrine visit. Lake Ashino-ko boat ride. Traditional kaiseki meal. Japan Rail Pass. All transport between destinations and to/from included activities.

What are the main highlights of this trip?

Take in views of Mt Fuji, stay in temple lodging and learn about Buddhism, gaze at the famous floating torii gate in Miyajima, explore Kyoto's Nijo Castle

Is there a disclaimer I should read before booking this trip?

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Is there an 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.

Are their Itinerary notes?

Luggage size restriction - Effective from May 2020 onwards

All G Adventures tours in Japan use the world-famous Shinkansen bullet trains, which have a restriction on maximum luggage size. Your luggage must be less than 160cm in total. This is roughly the size that most airline companies consider as "carry-on baggage" and allow in overhead storage compartments.

We strongly recommend bringing a day pack or backpack to use during the day, in addition to your carry-on sized luggage. Please see "What to take" under Tour details for more information.

What important notes should I be aware of before the trip?

1. The most convenient way to get around Japan is by public transportation and on foot. The country's train system is often considered one of the best in the entire world so the majority of our trips utilize this efficient train network. In this tour, you will need to be able to spend the majority of the day on your feet and carry your luggage through busy train stations and streets. On average, tours in Japan walk about 15,000 steps a day. Please ensure you are fit enough to carry your own luggage and spend most of the day on your feet.

2. COMBO TRIP

Please note that this tour combines with other G Adventures tours. As such, the staff and some travel companions on your tour may have previously been traveling together with G Adventures, prior to Day 1 of your tour. Likewise, some staff and travel companions may be continuing together on another G Adventures tour, after your trip concludes.

3. 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).

4. Luggage size restriction - Effective from May 2020 onwards

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on maximum luggage size. Your luggage must be less than 160cm in total. This is roughly the size that most airline companies consider as "carry-on baggage" and allow in overhead storage compartments.

We strongly recommend bringing a day pack or backpack to use during the day, in addition to your carry-on sized luggage. Please see "What to take" under Tour details for more information.

5. ACCOMMODATION NOTE:

Please be aware that properties we stay in with only two stories may not have elevators installed and climbing the stairs with your luggage will be necessary.

6. Japan 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/military/diplomatic visa, please advise us at time of booking as you will not be able to take advantage of the rail pass.

What is the group leader like?

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO 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 travelling 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. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting - we think it's the best of both worlds.

How large will the group be?

Max 15, avg 12

What meals are included in this trip?

3 breakfasts, 2 dinners

What are the meals like on this trip?

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.

Please refer to the Meals Included and Budget Information for information regarding included meals on your trip. Japan's kitchen is at your fingertips!

What are the modes of transportation on my trip?

Bullet train, local train, subway, tram, ferry, public bus, cable car, walking.

What transportation will we take on this trip?

Japan's reliable public transportation is the best option for both the environment and for experiencing Japan like a local! We will ride several forms of transportation throughout the country, from Shinkansen bullet trains, to subways, funiculars, local trains, and buses. Note that often times we will have to carry our luggage from one mode of transport to another, so please consider this whilst packing.

Are local flights included in the cost of the trip?

All local flights are included in the cost of your tour unless otherwise noted. It is important that we have your passport information at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal flight tickets are issued locally and will be given to you prior to the flight departure.

Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?

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.

Where will we stay during the trip?

Hotels (7 nts), mountain monastery (1 nt, shared facilities).

Will I get 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.

What kind of accommodation can I expect on this trip?

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 designated non-smoking rooms. Therefore, we ask hotels to deoderise rooms before check in. Please note rooms for couples usually still have two twin beds in Japan. Rooms with one large Queen or King bed are not common.

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 or to head to the bath), and elaborate meals (often served in the comfort of your own room), a ryokan is the perfect place to experience traditional customs and hospitality. As ryokan are usually top tier accommodations, most guests stay only one night, often to celebrate a special occasion or holiday. Don't be intimidated by the formalities inherent to a stay at a ryokan, your hosts will welcome you the same way they do all their guests. Have fun and enjoy this relaxing opportunity to learn more about Japan's unique customs.

Minshuku are Japan's answer to the Western bed and breakfast. Similar to ryokan, they have traditional features like tatami floors, futon beds, and Japanese-style baths. Minshuku are often family-run, and as such they offer a great opportunity to interact with local people and learn more about the nation's customs. More affordable and simpler than ryokan, minshuku tend to have smaller guestrooms, shared bathroom facilities, and any included meals (traditional, local, and delicious) are served in a communal dining room.

Please note that some of the traditional Japanese inns used on this tour only offer shared bathing facilities. This means that individual shower stalls will not be available, instead several shower stations are available in an open, same-sex bathing area. Shared bathhouses and onsen (hot springs) are an essential part of Japan's culture, traditionally serving as a place for men or women to gather, relax, and discuss the days happenings.

What are the joining instructions?

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

From Osaka Kansai airport (KIX), you can reach the city centre by taking the Airport Limousine Bus.

From Terminal 1, go to bus stop #5. The bus tickets can be purchased in the Airport Terminal 1, 1F at the airport bus stop 'C' ticket window.

From Terminal 2, go to bus stop #1. The bus tickets can be purchased at the Airport Terminal 2, 1F at the airport bus stop 'A' ticket window.

Please check the nearest stop to your starting hotel at the information desk.

From Osaka Itami airport (ITM), you can reach the city centre by taking the Airport Limousine Bus.

You will need to purchase your ticket from the ticket vending machine, prepare your transit IC card. If you require assistance or need to check the nearest stop to your starting hotel, please go to the information desk.

Please note that day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned on this day.

Upon arrival to your Joining Hotel (note that check-in time will be in the afternoon), join your group and CEO for a Welcome Meeting in the evening around 6:00 pm.

Please ensure you arrive on time for the welcome meeting and bring your passport so your CEO can collect the required information for your train tickets.

If you are arriving later and will miss the Welcome Meeting, your CEO will leave a note at reception for you with any information you may need, and with morning instructions for the next day.

What happens if I experience problems when arriving?

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.

Who should I contact in case of an emergency?

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 (Excluding national holidays) 9:00-18:00 Local Time

From outside Japan: 1st contact +81 3-6809-1212. (2nd contact +81 90 1223 2336 or +81 80 6779 1851)

From within Japan: 1st contact 03-6809-1212 (2nd contact 090 1223 2336 or 080 6779 1851)

After office hours emergency number

Primary phone: +81 90 1223 2336 or +81 80 6779 1851 (from within Japan: 090 1223 2336 or 080 6779 1851)

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 Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found [here](#).

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 should I take on my trip?

It's essential to pack as lightly as possible for rail travel in Japan. All G Adventures tours use the world-famous Shinkansen bullet trains, which have a restriction on maximum luggage size.

Any luggage brought on board must be less than 160cm in total (calculated as the sum of the height + width + depth of your luggage). This is roughly the size that most airline companies consider as "carry-on baggage" and allow in overhead storage compartments. We strongly recommend bringing a day pack or backpack to use during the day (for daily essentials like water, cameras, passport, etc.).

Please note that travellers who bring luggage that exceeds this restriction will be directly penalized by the Central Japan Railway Company. Any luggage between 160-250cm will require a fee of 1,000 JPY per luggage, for each leg of your train journey, and is strictly subject to availability. Any luggage over 251cm in total is prohibited on the Shinkansen trains.

If you absolutely must bring more than what fits into a single carry-on bag plus day pack, you may bring a second carry-on bag which also must be less than 160cm in total. Please note, however, that as with all G Adventures tours, you must be able to carry your luggage unassisted.

You will also be walking with your luggage in busy public train stations to catch connecting trains, so it is highly recommended that you travel light and have easy to handle luggage and are capable of walking up and down the stairs with your luggage without any assistance.

We recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Suitcases are not recommended for G Adventures trips. Most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size. A large bag will be an inconvenience to you and will slow you down!

Please note, you will NOT have access to your main luggage for approximately 24 hours on this trip, as we utilize Japan's takkyubin service to conveniently and reliably transfer luggage from one location to another throughout the country and avoid hauling large bags on crowded trains. You must pack an overnight bag with everything you'll need until you're reunited with your luggage the following day.

Please make sure to pack a day backpack or a small/lightweight bag for the group overnight in Koyasan.

What should be on my packing list?

Cold Weather:

- Long-sleeved shirts or sweater
- Scarf
- Warm gloves
- Warm hat
- Warm layers
- Warm waterproof jacket

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)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

Essentials:

- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- 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
- Headphones (Noise-cancelling recommended)
- 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
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

Health & Safety:

- Face masks (Clients will be only be required to wear a face mask where it is mandated by local regulations.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Pen (Please bring your own pen for filling out documents.)

Warm Weather:

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

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.

Please make sure to pack a day backpack or a small/lightweight bag for the group overnight in Koyasan.

Note: Hand sanitizer is a rare commodity in Japan, so it is best to bring this with you.

When can I do my laundry on this trip?

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.

What the visas and entry requirements for my trip?

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your own responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. Visa requirements for your trip will vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as far as possible, but rules do change and sometimes without warning. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check the information yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page [here](#)

Where can I read detailed notes about this trip?

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.

How much spending money do I need for my trip?

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.

What should I know about currency, credit cards, and exchanging money while on this tour?

As currency exchange rates in Asia fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: 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.

How much emergency money should I bring on this trip?

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!

Do I need to pay a departure tax?

Departure tax is included in all international and domestic flight tickets.

Should I be tipping on my trip?

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 \$5-7 USD per person, per day can be used.

What activities are optional on this trip?

Miyajima
- Mt. Misen Visit (Free-1840JPY per person)

Kyoto

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

Tokyo

- Ginza Shopping (Free)

- Imperial Palace East Gardens Walk (Free)

- Ueno Park Visit (Free)

- Meiji Shrine (Meiji Jingū) Visit (Free-1000JPY per person)

Asakusa

- Sensō-ji Temple Visit (Free)

Are there any health considerations I should know before travelling?

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

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. Always carry your prescription medication in original packaging with your doctor's prescription and ensure your medication is legal in Japan. 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.

What do I need to know to about safety and security on my trip?

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/

What are the trip specific safety considerations?

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.

What rules should I know before joining this trip?

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.

Is travel insurance required for my trip?

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.

What is Planeterra?

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects 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.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

How should I dress to respect local customs during the tour?

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 countries we ask that you dress respectfully and avoid very short shorts/skirts and singlets/tanktops when visiting temples or other holy sites.

How can I share feedback about my trip experience?

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 customersolutions@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Does G Adventures have an email newsletter I can subscribe to?

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/

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.

How old must I be to join this trip?

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.

Are international flights included in this trip?

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.

What should LGBTQ+ travellers know about safety and travel considerations on this trip?

The safety and well-being of all of our travelers is a priority at G Adventures and that includes our travelers who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. We recognize that there are specific concerns and questions you may have about your adventure in terms of safety and security. We encourage you to visit our [LGBTQ+ page](#) for useful resources to ensure you feel safe and comfortable throughout the duration of your trip. The Equaldex tool linked on this page can be of particular help when deciding where you may want to visit next.