

# Luxury Japan October Tour 2012

October 18<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup> 2012



## 15 day tour to experience Japan's most spectacular locations

This tour includes the best of everything Japan has to offer. It is designed for newcomers to Japan who want first class hotels and follows a leisurely pace starting with 3 full days in Kyoto and Nara. There are no one night stays and your luggage is sent by courier between each location.

We have a special treat at the start of the tour, when we witness one of Japan's most famous festivals. Jidai Matsuri, is a costume procession through the streets from the Imperial Palace to Heian Shrine, celebrating Kyoto's history as the ancient capital in the Meiji and Heian periods.

The tour finishes with a spectacular "farewell dinner" where you will be entertained by a private geisha performance. One geisha will perform traditional dances while another accompanies her on traditional instruments. You will have a chance to find out about the real life of a geisha and take those magical photos.

All the details in the schedule and hotel accommodation will be reconfirmed 60 days before departure.



Day	Suggested Schedule	Transport	Accommodation	Meals
Oct 18 <sup>th</sup>	Flight to Japan		Overnight Flight	
Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>	Transfer to hotel in Kyoto. You are invited to join us for dinner in the evening.	Airport train	Kyoto Hotel	
Oct 20 <sup>th</sup>	We visit Gion, home of the geisha before a walking tour of the temples and shrines around Maruyama Park. In the afternoon we go to the stilted Kiyomizuera and enjoy the views across and over Kyoto. There is time to visit Sanjusangendo or the National Museum if you wish.	Walking / Taxi	Kyoto Hotel	B
Oct 21 <sup>st</sup>	We spend a full day in Nara deer Park, visiting Todaiji Temple and the shrines on the wooded hillside.	Local Train Walking / Taxi	Kyoto Hotel	B
Oct 22 <sup>nd</sup>	The morning is spent at the Golden Pavillion and Ryoanji. In the afternoon we watch the Jidai Matsuri, a traditional costumed parade reliving Kyoto's Meiji and Heian Eras. The day finishes with a visit to Nijo Castle.	Coach	Kyoto Hotel	B
Oct 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Our first ride on Shinkansen (bullet train) takes us west and to Beppu. We see the devil's pools and try a sand bath in Japan's most famous hot spring town. Experience the hospitality and fantastic traditional food in our Japanese Inn.	Bullet Train Coach	Yufuin Japanese Inn	B, D
Oct 24 <sup>th</sup>	We visit Mount Aso taking our coach to the peak of the active volcano. We visit several vantage points to enjoy spectacular views of the vast caldera surrounding it. After free time in Yufuin we return to the ryokan to enjoy the hot spring baths in the evening before savouring the traditional cuisine.	Coach	Yufuin Japanese Inn	B, D
Oct 25 <sup>th</sup>	You have another opportunity to enjoy a traditional breakfast before the train journey back east towards Hiroshima. In the afternoon we spend the afternoon visiting the Atomic Dome and Peace Park.	Bullet Train Tram / Walking	Hiroshima Hotel	B
Oct 26 <sup>th</sup>	A leisurely day is spent on Miyajima island, visiting the famous temple and torii gate, with time to walk up to the island peak or browse through the village and shops.	Taxi / Train / Ferry/Cable car	Hiroshima Hotel	B
Oct 27 <sup>th</sup>	We stop by Okayama and the famous Korakuen, one of Japan's three famous stroll gardens, on our way to Hakone.	Bullet Train / Taxi	Hakone Hotel	B, D
Oct 28 <sup>th</sup>	We have a day to enjoy the views of Mount Fuji. The 'Scenic' travel pass will allow us to take the cable car, tram and a steam boat ride on the lake.	Train/Cable Car/Steamer	Hakone Hotel	B, D
Oct 29 <sup>th</sup>	We spend a few hours in Kamakura, visiting the giant buddha and enjoying views out to the Pacific Ocean, before our final destination, Tokyo.	Coach	Tokyo Hotel	B
Oct 30 <sup>th</sup>	We drive through Ginza on our way to a walking tour of the Imperial Palace Gardens. After lunch we visit Tokyo's oldest temple, Asakusa Kannon. A boat on the Sumida river and a stroll through Hamarikyu gardens brings us back to our hotel. In the evening you will enjoy a special farewell dinner with Private Geisha performance.	Coach / Walking / Boat	Tokyo Hotel	B, D
Oct 31 <sup>st</sup>	We visit Meiji Shrine and then explore the trendy Omotesando area. For the rest of the day you have the choice of sightseeing or you can take time to have your own adventure and make the most of the final chance for shopping.	Metropolitan train / Walking	Tokyo Hotel	B
Nov 1 <sup>st</sup>	After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to the airport for your flight home	Airport Bus		B

# Detailed Itinerary

October Tour 2012

October 18<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup> 2012



Day	Schedule	
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> October <b>Departure for Japan</b>	Flight to Japan.	
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> October <b>Arrive in Japan</b>  KYOTO HOTEL	Transfer to your hotel in Kyoto and relax after check-in. You are invited to join us for dinner in the evening.	
<b>Kyoto &amp; Nara</b>	<i>Kyoto has a phenomenal collection of temples and shrines, dating back to its days as the capital city and before. There are about 2,000 temples in total, many having national significance. Nara was the capital before Kyoto's longer reign and although smaller today, it has a number of elaborate temples in the main park. Our three days in Kyoto and Nara give you a perfect introduction but people often return to discover more temples they have not yet seen.</i>	
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> October  <b>Kyoto</b> Gion Maruyama Park Kiyomizu Temple  KYOTO HOTEL	<p>On our first morning in Kyoto, we visit Gion with its traditional wooden buildings, cobbled streets and renowned Geisha. You may even be lucky enough to see them, shuffling along in their kimono and clogs. From Gion, a short walk takes us to Maruyama Park and its complex of temples, in the foothills of the mountains east of Kyoto. This is a good opportunity to take part in some temple traditions like throwing a coin and ringing the bell at the temple entrance. The gods will welcome you inside - as long as you take your shoes off!</p> <p>We stroll from temple to shrine, pausing for lunch on the way, then head uphill gradually to another Kyoto icon - Kiyomizu. The main temple rests against the hill slope with 20 metre high wooden stilts supporting it. From here, there are fantastic views over the whole city and you can try the 'love walk' - finding a path from one ancient boulder to another with eyes closed. Superstition states that if you make it, you will be lucky in love but if you don't, there are always plenty of good luck charms to buy instead!</p> <p>Sanjusangendo and the National Museum are both located in the area, and there will be time to visit one or the other if you wish. Dating back to the 13th Century, Sanjūsangen-dō is a Tendai Buddhist temple which houses 1001 statues of Kannon, the Buddhist goddess of mercy. Though the golden statues are said to have one thousand arms apiece, most visitors notice fairly quickly that they have only forty - the Buddhist formula is that each arm can save an impressive 25 worlds. The nearby Kyoto National Museum has a permanent collection that spans Kyoto's history, as well as special exhibitions that change throughout the year. As the day comes to an end, we walk back to the hotel or take a taxi for comfort.</p>	  
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> October  <b>Nara</b>  KYOTO HOTEL	<p>We take the hour-long train journey to Nara following an ancient route through the countryside between Japan's two former capitals. When we arrive at Nara we visit the huge Deer Park which, in addition to the more popular temples and giant buddhas, has many quieter areas of natural beauty. There are also opportunities to try Japanese snacks from traditional food stalls, watch turtles in the ponds and walk in the hills for views over the parkland. As the name suggests, the park is home to many deer - visitors need to be brave to feed them as they are likely to be buffeted from all sides by the greedier ones! For your own meal, you can choose from a traditional bento (lunch box) in the park or a restaurant lunch.</p> <p>We finally make our way back to the station via the main arcade. Even if shopping is not your idea of fun, it is well worth wandering through shopping areas to see how Japanese people live day to day - it is quite different from the average UK high street. We arrive back at the hotel in Kyoto in time to rest before dinner.</p>	 

# Detailed Itinerary

October Tour 2012

October 18<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup> 2012



Day	Schedule	
<p>Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</p> <p><b>Kyoto</b> Golden Pavilion Ryoan-ji Jidai Matsuri Nijo Castle</p> <p>KYOTO HOTEL</p>	<p>We head for the northwest and the world famous Golden Pavilion and Ryoanji temples. As with Christianity, Buddhism has many denominations and each famous temple is often the seat of one particular sect. More religious Japanese people may consider it a personal pilgrimage to visit such temples. The glittering Kinkaku-ji Temple is a three-storey structure overlaid with gold leaf, which was restored in 1988. The stone garden at Ryoan-ji Temple represents Zen philosophy, consisting of fifteen stones of different sizes placed in white sand representing an image of islands and an expanding sea. The simple beauty of Zen inspired rock gardens is intended to give people a blank space in which to imagine their own landscape. The garden is also referred to as "The Crossing of Tiger Cubs" as it resembles a mother tiger carrying her cubs across dangerous river torrents.</p> <p>We stop for lunch, before viewing two of Japan's most renowned festivals. The Jidai Matsuri dates from 1868 when the Imperial Court moved to Tokyo. It begins with the shrines of the first and last Kyoto emperors being carried to the Old Imperial Palace where they are joined by a procession of about 2000 people in traditional costume. It then embarks on a 5-hour walk to the Heian Shrine. The costumes represent periods from Kyoto's history, beginning with Meiji era (1868) and going back as far as the Heian era when the capital was first established in Kyoto.</p> <p>The day will finish with a visit to Nijo Castle, completed by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1603. The architecture – ostentatious for its day – was designed to illuminate the shogun's growing strength in contrast the emperor's dwindling power. Don't miss the nightingale floors, which worked as an early burglar alarm!</p>	  
<p><b>Shinkansen</b></p>	<p><i>The Shinkansen is truly a fantastic experience - travelling so smoothly at such a speed. Watching the beautiful landscape whiz by, you soon realise how mountainous Japan is and why the pockets of flat land come at such a premium. The inaccessibility of the mountains has protected the original vegetation and wildlife from human impact. Surprisingly, the extreme landscape did not deter construction of the shinkansen train line for the 1964 Olympics. It was carefully engineered to use the most direct routes, tunnelled through mountains and on tracks over suburban areas.</i></p>	
<p>Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</p> <p><b>Beppu</b></p> <p>YUFUIN RYOKAN</p>	<p>We experience the shinkansen on its fastest stretch, travelling west from Kyoto and then south on the coastal line to Beppu. We enjoy a bento lunch on the train, reaching Beppu in the early afternoon. The city was founded on 1st April 1924 and is famous for its thousands of sacred onsen (hot springs). Beppu is Japan's onsen capital, containing nine major pools sometimes referred to as the 'Nine Hells of Beppu'. It is a beautiful setting - the sea to one side and mountains on the other with onsen always evident by their columns of rising steam. Most people walking around Beppu wear traditional yukata (kimono-style cotton robes) provided by their Ryokan (Japanese Inn). It is very comfortable and makes a picturesque scene as people potter through the town trying the different baths. We guide you to the various hot baths and the 'devils pools' to see bubbling, boiling mud. For the really ambitious there is usually time to try the hot sand baths at Takegawara Spa. It is a short journey to Yufuin and after arriving at the ryokan we leave you to relax and sample the outdoor baths. You are encouraged to remain in your yukata for dinner as we try some elaborate traditional cuisine in our ryokan (Japanese inn).</p>	 
<p><b>Ryokan</b></p>	<p><i>Staying at a Ryokan allows you to enjoy the very best of Japanese hospitality from a tradition that has hardly changed in the last century. As you enter your room, the distinctive scent of tatami floors and paper and wood doors set the scene. The yukata (kimono-style cotton robes) are neatly folded, ready for you to change and head to the onsen as soon as you arrive. In the evening, enjoy sumptuous Japanese cuisine with round twenty tiny dishes brought to you in stages by your hostess. You may struggle to recognise most of them but you should certainly try them all. With meticulous attention to aesthetics and detail, this is just as much a feast for the eyes as the stomach.</i></p>	

# Detailed Itinerary

October Tour 2012

October 18<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup> 2012









Day	Schedule	
<p>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October</p> <p><b>Mt Aso</b></p> <p>YUFUIN RYOKAN</p>	<p>We enjoy a traditional ryokan breakfast before visiting the active volcano, Mount Aso. We leave Yufuin on a private coach, travelling through wide open green landscapes, very different to the typical steep wooded mountains in central Japan. We approach from the north and when the panoramic view suddenly opens out across the caldera, you will see the volcano in the distance. From here the profile is often described as a reclining Buddha. The floor of the crater is almost perfectly flat and very fertile making it ideal for the rice fields and other crops which give it a stunning patchwork appearance. After enjoying the views the coach heads down the outer wall of the crater and soon the scale of the towering volcano becomes clear. The coach winds to the top of Mount Aso and we make two stops to take in the views and walk up to the boiling mud cauldron. The volcano was so powerful that the gases here are noxious and constantly monitored to protect visitors (visits are occasionally affected according to the wind direction). After lunch, we travel back to Yufuin stopping for some free time in the picturesque town.</p>	 
<p>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> October</p> <p><b>Hiroshima</b> Peace Park Atomic Dome HIROSHIMA HOTEL</p>	<p>You have time to enjoy the hot spring baths one more time before we enjoy another traditional breakfast. From Yufuin we travel north by train following the valley to Hakata and then east by bullet train on to Hiroshima. We arrive late morning and as Hiroshima is famous for its <i>Okonomiyaki</i>, a dish somewhere between a pancake and an omelette, we head straight for lunch.</p> <p>We then spend the afternoon visiting the Atomic Dome and Peace Park. The <i>Heiwa Kinen Shiriyokan</i> (Peace Memorial Museum) documents the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1945 and its aftermath, with exhibits demonstrating the tragic destruction of the city and its people and the events leading up to it.</p>	
<p>Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October</p> <p><b>Miyajima</b></p> <p>HIROSHIMA HOTEL</p>	<p>We reach Miyajima island by ferry from Hiroshima. The temple on the shoreline and the red <i>torii</i> (temple gate) at high and low tides deserves a full day on any schedule. The inland sea swells around the temple stilts at high tide and the torii appears to float magically on the water. At low tide you can stroll across the sand to the huge gate. The village has lots of interesting shops and the park surrounding the area is populated by placid deer patiently waiting for food. We then take the cable car to the island summit for great views or, for the more energetic, there is time for a gentle hike if you don't mind being joined by a few of the local monkeys!</p>	
<p>Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October</p> <p><b>Okayama &amp; Hakone</b></p> <p>HAKONE HOTEL</p>	<p>A short journey by Shinkansen takes us to Okayama where we see one of Japan's three famous walking gardens, Korakuen. Completed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the name means "Garden of Pleasure After", referring to a Confucian quote stating that a wise ruler must attend to his subjects' needs first and only then attend to his own. The first impression may be that of a giant lawn, crisscrossed with wide paths and the occasional teahouse but as you explore you find waterfalls, tiny shrines, miniature maple forests, a lotus pond, and traditional red bridges creating many different but very Japanese landscapes. After lunch, we travel on to Hakone and our first views of Mount Fuji.</p>	 
<p>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October</p> <p><b>Hakone</b></p> <p>HAKONE HOTEL</p>	<p>The Hakone checkpoint on the historic Tokaido (east sea) road marks the edge of the Kanto region. While Hakone has its fair share of hot springs and health resorts, the main attractions are the views of Mount Fuji and Lake Ashi. Closer inspection reveals that 'Fuji-san' is not quite as perfect as it appears as there are several volcanic craters on its slopes. The area known as Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park is still volcanically active and its Great Boiling Valley is full of sulphurous springs. We spend a day enjoying the Mount Fuji including a cable car ride, a cruise on the lake and a visit to Hakone Shrine. Those who enjoy Japanese art will be thrilled by the Narukawa Museum which houses one of Japan's best collections of traditional paintings and drawings.</p>	
<p>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> October</p> <p><b>Kamakura</b></p> <p>TOKYO HOTEL</p>	<p>Kamakura, surrounded by mountains and the open water of Sagami Bay, is a natural fortress. Consequently, during the Heian period, it was the chief city of the Kanto region and from 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Minamoto Shoguns ruled Japan from here. Kamakura is now famous for its temples and shrines. A tsunami destroyed the temple housing the Great Buddha in the 15<sup>th</sup> century but the statue survived and has weathered the elements ever since. Kamakura's other sites include the Tsuruoka Hachiman Shrine. This was moved by the famed Minamoto Yoritomo, the first shogun of the Kamakura regime in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, from a nearby site as a tribute to the Minamoto family.</p>	

# Detailed Itinerary

October Tour 2012

October 18<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup> 2012



Day	Schedule	
Tokyo	Tokyo, like London, has distinct districts, an urban train system with a loop line, numerous parks and expensive department stores. This is where modern Japan thrives and you will be amazed just how advanced and hi-tech it is. Some local trains have replaced posters with LCD displays that share line information with quick fashionable commercials. Most passengers, however, are fully occupied video-mailing on their mobile phones. The famous capsule hotels have been superseded by all-night internet cafes that offer the latest DVDs or games plus high-speed internet access. Sleeping and eating seem a waste of time to busy salarymen so a myriad of fast food stalls offer excellent Japanese food in minutes. Huge screens play pop videos and commercials 24 hours a day in the busiest districts. It is immediately clear why so many sci-fi novels and films have looked to Tokyo for inspiration. Within the busy city, there are pockets of tranquility to be found and we include some of them in the tour.	 
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> October  Tokyo  TOKYO HOTEL	We start the day viewing the Ginza area from our coach on the way to the Imperial Palace, to enjoy our gentle walking tour of the gardens in the home of the Japanese royal family. From traditional Tokyo we pass through to Akihabara, one of the high-tech shopping districts, and from there it is a short journey to Asakusa to visit the Asakusa Kannon Temple. This is the oldest in Tokyo and you may recognise the colossal lantern at the entrance. There is also an avenue leading up to Senso-ji temple, lined with traditional souvenir stalls. We return to the Hotel via the Sumida River sea bus and a stroll through the Hamarikyū Gardens. In the evening you are treated to a <b>special private dinner with a dance and music performance by two Geisha</b> . Keen photographers can get some memorable shots.	 
Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> October  Tokyo  TOKYO HOTEL	After breakfast we take the metropolitan train to Harajuku to visit Meiji Shrine. It is dedicated to the spirits of Emperor Meiji and his wife, hidden away in extensive forests alongside Yoyogi Park. The Park was one of the main locations for the 1964 Olympics and now a favourite for buskers at the weekend. We walk into the Omotesando area, a visually amazing district and one of the centres of Japan's youth fashion. After lunch you are free to enjoy Tokyo at your leisure. Alternatively we would be delighted to take you to the famous Shibuya crossing and other areas of interest in central Tokyo.	
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> November  Return to UK	After breakfast at the hotel, take the airport limousine bus to transfer to the airport for your flight home.	



# Luxury Japan October Tour 2012

October 18<sup>th</sup> – November 1st 2012



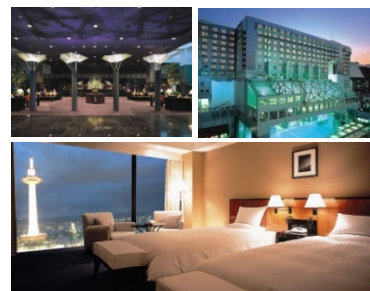
## Accommodation

### Kyoto – Granvia Hotel

**5 Star, Deluxe Class Modern Hotel**

Situated at Kyoto station, the Granvia Hotel is perfect for visitors arriving by bullet train. Kyoto Tower, a department store and theatre are all within walking distance. The chic décor blends traditional and contemporary styles and there is a wide variety of restaurants, cafés, bars and lounges to choose from in addition to an indoor swimming pool.

<http://www.granviakyoto.com/>



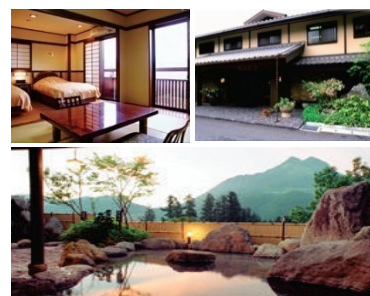
### Beppu – Saigakukan

**Ryokan, Traditional Japanese Inn**

A traditional Ryokan nestling on the hillside on one side of Yufuin village. We have an easy schedule so you can make the most of the facilities. The spectacular mountain views can be enjoyed from the outdoor hot spring baths. If you are not ready to try these shared (single-sex) baths, this ryokan also offers private hot spring baths which can be booked for you or your family. We particularly like this ryokan because the rooms give you choice of sleeping on a bed or futon on the tatami mat floor.

<http://www.saigakukan.co.jp/en/>

<http://www.saigakukan.co.jp/institution/>

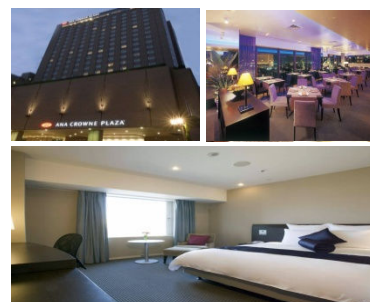


### Hiroshima – ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel

**5 Star, Deluxe Class Modern Hotel**

The newly renovated ANA Crown Plaza Hotel is conveniently located – just minutes from both the Peace Park and Hiroshima Station. The hotel boasts a comprehensive fitness centre, as well as an indoor swimming pool. Japanese, Chinese, and French restaurants are among the other extensive facilities

<http://www.anacrowneplaza-hiroshima.jp/en/>



### Hakone – Yamano Odakyu Hotel

**4 Star, Superior First Class Modern Hotel**

Odakyu Hotel de Yama, on the shores of Lake Ashi, is conveniently located just a 15-minute walk from the Narukawa Art Museum and Moto-Hakone Port, home of the Hakone Sightseeing Cruise. The hotel's garden, covering 36.7 acres (148,800 square meters), offers panoramic vistas of Lake Ashi and Mount Fuji. Together with the season's fresh greenery, the garden's 3,000 azaleas bloom in a profusion of color and its rhododendrons are an added attraction. Visitors will come away with lasting impressions of the bright colors of nature on display.

<http://www.odakyu-hotel.co.jp/yama-hotel/english/>



### Tokyo – The Conrad Hotel

**5 Star, Superior First Class Modern Hotel**

Tokyo's Conrad Hotel is one of Japan's best, with impeccable service, incredible views, and irresistibly luxurious rooms.

The Shiodome location is ideal for sight-seeing - just minutes on foot from the Tokyo Wholesale Fish Markets at Tsukiji, and even closer to the Hamarikyu Gardens that are overlooked by the Conrad's garden rooms.

The Conrad offers unparalleled dining options, with Gordon Ramsay at Conrad Tokyo serving Ramsay's signature French Cuisine, and China Blue, arguably Japan's best Chinese restaurant, which offers Michelin-starred modern Chinese dishes. Breakfasts are served at Cerise by Gordon Ramsay.

<http://conradhotels1.hilton.com/en/ch/hotel>



*\*In some cases the Japanese website has been listed. This is because they often have many more images than the English version.*

# Luxury Japan October Tour 2012

October 18<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup> 2012

## Tour Price and Booking Details

**Price per person : £4,550 (without flights)**

\*Single supplement : £1295

\*A single supplement is necessary for all single bookings  
Prices are valid for exchange rate exceeding £1=115yen  
Flight prices start from around £700 in economy, £1200 in premium economy, £2200 in business depending on airline and departure airport. Flight classes can often be mixed and then the airfare is approximately the average of the two fares.

**Minimum number of people: 10**

**Maximum number of people: 16**

The tour is guaranteed as soon as we receive 10 guaranteed bookings. In the unlikely event there are less than 10 confirmed bookings 60 days before departure the tour may be cancelled or offered to you with modified conditions.

Please note that there is a small chance that the price will change due to taxes or the pound - yen exchange rate (see above & booking conditions). However all prices are guaranteed from 60 days before departure.

### Included in Tour Package Price

- Escorted service from first evening in Kyoto throughout tour available 24hrs/day up to and including final hotel departure
- Emergency assistance from our Japan Office throughout tour
- Local Japanese guides in addition to group escort above
- All accommodation (total 13 nights in Japan and 1 night on overnight flight)
- All meals as shown on itinerary (total excl. meals on flights; 13 breakfast, 0 lunch, 5 dinner)
- All train travel in first class including the bullet train
- All other transport except during free time as shown on itinerary
- All entry fees and any other necessary fees and tips except during free time (Free time when you may need to pay some transport/entry fees on this tour is on the final full day in Tokyo)
- Luggage courier service whenever changing tour location

### Not included in the Tour Package Price

- International flights
- Travel Insurance
- Meals not listed on brief itinerary
- Incidental costs such as personal laundry, drinks, snacks
- Passport and other visa document fees (UK citizens do not need a visa for stays up to 90 days in Japan)

Full tour details including confirmed hotels will be sent to you by 18<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

### Optional extras

We will be happy to make a personal quote for any of the following:

- Requests for additional services during the tour including theatre tickets
- Additional accommodation or personal tours before or after the scheduled tour

### Bookings

Bookings are confirmed by sending a signed and completed booking form which includes all participants and making the deposit payment of £500 per person by cheque or bank transfer.

Once we have received the booking form and the deposit payment has been cleared we will send you booking confirmation with tour details within 2 working days.

We can accept a provisional booking which holds a place on the tour. To keep a provisional booking we must receive a completed booking form within 7 days. This will be held until you confirm or cancel. If we contact you before that, you will be given at least 7 days to decide. If you wish to confirm we must receive your deposit as cleared funds within 14 days.

### Your Financial Protection:

All monies paid by you for an air holiday package as shown are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is 6977.

If you purchase a tour without flights then you are protected by our TOPP insurance. For more information see our booking terms and conditions.



### Tour extensions

Your scheduled tour can be extended towards the end of your visit to leave more free time or to visit somewhere of particular interest. Our staff in Kyoto and Tokyo can arrange escorted extensions or make some suggestions for more independent visits to suit your interests. On our flight inclusive tours, we will happily change the date of your return flight at no extra charge, discuss your plans and provide a personalised quote. Almost anything is possible so please feel free to ask!

### Visas

British nationals do not require a visa and will normally receive a 90 day permit on entry. For other nationalities, please check with the Japanese embassy at [www.seejapan.co.uk/fvisitor.html](http://www.seejapan.co.uk/fvisitor.html).

### Meals

There is a huge variety of food available in Japan including European and other world cuisines. Most visitors enjoy traditional Japanese food but strict vegetarian dishes are not always easily available. Breakfast is included at all accommodation during the tour with hotels usually offering a breakfast buffet including English, continental and Japanese dishes. Ryokan accommodation offers traditional Japanese breakfast and dinner comprising lots of small, immaculately presented dishes. For other meals during the tour, we can offer guidance on the best local restaurants and delicacies if you would like to explore on your own. Alternatively, we can usually join you for dinner if you are unsure and need help deciphering the menu! We can also recommend local European, American or Asian restaurants if you prefer something more familiar! Food is very good value in Japan, despite what you may have heard! You can easily find good quality lunches for £5 and dinner for just £10. Dining in hotels or more exclusive restaurants can be much more expensive but in general you will get much better quality for your money than in the UK.

We have included a brief guide to the most popular Japanese dishes. If you have a particular dietary concern, please contact us.

### Single Supplements

We understand that single supplements are a considerable extra cost. Most of the hotels we use do not have smaller 'single' rooms due to their high standards so the accommodation costs are almost double but you can expect the same high standards as those sharing rooms.

### Group Leaders

In most cases, you are joined by a member of our Japan staff on arrival who is your tour leader throughout your stay. We also use the services of local guides so there are generally two members of staff with you at each location.



### Popular Japanese dishes

*Sukiyaki* is prepared at your table in a bubbling pot by cooking thinly sliced beef with vegetables, tofu and noodles



*Tempura* is fish, seafood & vegetables coated in a very light and crisp batter, deep fried in vegetable oil.



*Sushi* is exquisitely prepared fish or seafood placed on a ball of specially seasoned, sticky rice. A few non-seafood options are usually available



*Sashimi* is super fresh, delicately sliced fish eaten raw with soy sauce and fiery wasabi.



*Kaiseki Ryori* is regarded as the most exquisite culinary refinement in Japan. The dishes are mainly composed of vegetables, fish, seaweed and mushroom flavours and the presentation is truly a work of art.



*Yakitori* is small pieces of seasoned chicken or other meat and vegetables, cooked on skewers over a charcoal grill.



*Tonkatsu* is a crispy crumbed pork cutlet, fried and usually served with a distinctive, fragrant sauce and salad.



*Shabu-shabu* is a communal dining experience – using your chopsticks, fine slices of beef and vegetables are swirled in a pot of bubbling water, then dipped in a special sauce.



*Soba and Udon* are two kinds of Japanese noodle. Soba is made from buckwheat flour and Udon from wheat flour. They are served either in a soup or a sauce and are available in hundreds of delicious variations.



### Luggage

Your luggage is couriered between hotels so you need only carry a small bag during your trip. When moving on to the next location, you either prepare your suitcase the day before or in the morning before breakfast and leave it in your room. It will be sent to the next hotel and will be available for you after dinner. Carrying luggage on trains can be difficult in Japan where storage space and lift access is limited. Surprisingly, luggage forwarding services are not included on many tours but we view this as a basic requirement for a relaxing tour!

### Laundry

Most hotels offer a laundry service which is very straightforward to use as we stay at least two nights in each location. The cost for laundry services is similar to hotels in the west and can be quite expensive.

### Health Advice

There are no particular health or immunisation requirements for travel to Japan. However, it is worth noting that the flight is quite long usually about 11-12 hours. Our scheduled tours are intended to be relaxing and enjoyable with a few hours of free time each day before dinner. We stay for at least two nights in each location so you can easily take a day to yourself if you want to rest and recover from jet lag. Our tours are specifically designed for people who enjoy a relaxed holiday avoiding anything too physically demanding!

### Climate and clothing

All scheduled tours are in the spring and autumn when the climate is very pleasant. The latitude is further south than the UK so the sun is quite warm (similar to Spain) and afternoons are generally sunny. You do not necessarily need formal clothes and it is perfectly acceptable to bring comfortable, casual clothes for your entire stay as there are no religious or cultural taboos regarding dress. Mornings and evenings can be colder especially in March and November and we would recommend bringing some warmer clothes. Rain is not common in spring or autumn but a light raincoat or fold-up umbrella is a sensible addition to your day-bag. All such clothing and equipment can be bought easily and cheaply in Japan, although the sizes are small, have a slightly different cut and large sizes are quite rare.

### Ryokan

Our scheduled tours include a two-night stay at a Ryokan and this is one of the special Japanese experiences that most people will treasure. However, sleeping on a futon on the floor may be a concern to some people but we would like to reassure you that Japanese futons are softer than those sold in the UK. They are placed on special tatami mats for extra cushioning rather than the rigid wooden frames often used in Britain. The overall affect is similar to harder western bed. If you remain unconvinced, we can usually arrange alternative western style accommodation nearby.

Meals are taken sat at low tables on the floor but back supports can usually be supplied to make it easier. We may be able to arrange alternatives if this is going to be particularly difficult for you and if you have any other concerns regarding the stay in a Ryokan, please feel free to discuss it with us.

### Bathing and Bathrooms

Japanese hi-tech bathrooms are slightly different to British versions and sometimes include reheating baths, digital temperature control pads and heated loo seats! In general, bathing is very thorough, typically including a vigorous shower before stepping into a hot bath. Baths are shorter but much deeper and very relaxing. In addition to standard facilities, some hotels and ryokan offer traditional communal bathing in large hot pools an experience not to be missed if once you get used to the idea! Traditional Japanese WCs are also somewhat different but there is usually a combination of Japanese and British styles in most places.

### UK connections and flight upgrades

We will advise you about flights, depending on your preferred class of travel, departure airport and airline. British Airways, All Nippon Airways, Japan Airlines and Virgin Atlantic fly direct from Heathrow to Tokyo with connections on to Osaka. If you wish to depart from Edinburgh or Manchester then Air France, Lufthansa and other European airlines can be good options. We will happily arrange a separate airport meeting and escort for you if required. You are not restricted by group flights in any way.



## Why choose our group tours?

At Into Japan Specialist Tours, our staff have lived in Japan for an average of ten years. We speak the language and are fascinated by the culture. Japan is an enthralling country with a long history, and we pride ourselves on continuous learning. We are delighted to conduct research in order to meet specialised or unusual requests. We believe that our expertise, experience, and enthusiasm make us the leading choice amongst Japan tour operators.

Our specialised knowledge allows us to plan unique, theme-based tours, taking in the very best of the country. From our spring and autumn luxury tours, which focus on Japan's highlights and include some of the country's best accommodation, to our samurai tour which visits off-the-beaten-track locations, accompanied by Michael Jay, who is only the second non-Japanese to ever hold a samurai rank.

We are also unique in that we have our own offices in Tokyo and Kyoto. Other tour operators work with external ground agents; with Into Japan your tour will be handled exclusively by us, from your first enquiry through the duration of your tour. Being accompanied by tour leaders who are our own experienced specialists means personal and professional service throughout your tour.

No other company can provide this level of quality personal service. With only one company involved, your holiday will be both smooth and efficient, giving you value for money and an enhanced experience in Japan.



## What our clients say...

**"The Luxury Japan Tour was just wonderful. Warren and I are so glad we booked this holiday, and we had a brilliant time. I have been looking forward to going to Japan for a long time now. And I must say that this holiday has been one of the highlights of my life. What could have been a daunting and highly stressful experience on our own, was turned into a highly relaxing and enjoyable one thanks to Into Japan. Warren and I have now gained knowledge and confidence to look forward to our next trip to Japan on our own. Many thanks to all of you for your help throughout".**

*"Amazing - from skiing in Hokkaido to roaming in Tokyo, everything went so smoothly – not one hitch. Japan is a fantastically interesting country and we learned a lot. The cherry blossoms were beautiful. Pity we didn't see Mt. Fuji who declined to reveal herself and remained "the veiled lady", but we did see Mt. Yotei in Hokkaido – a Fuji look-alike. Into Japan has made travelling so easy and everything was efficient and delightful... It was not an inexpensive trip but I would recommend Into Japan Specialist Tours to anyone wishing to go to Japan. From the picnic in the park in Okayama to the Ikebana class three of us attended, to the excellent Geisha theatre, we felt part of life in Japan, from tradition to contemporary".*

**"Megumi's sunny disposition and spontaneity make her the perfect "minder"! She was always happy to explain, helpful and resourceful, acting instantly to solve individual problems or meet someone's needs. Delightful. Into Japan has a pearl!"**



*"The trip exceeded our expectations, the best holiday we have ever had. Especially as we have been to Japan before. We would go again tomorrow, we didn't want to go home!"*

**"The tour was excellent. I really enjoyed myself and I had many experiences to bring home. The hotels were excellent, especially the Conrad. I could get used to this sort of luxury. The tour lived up to its "luxurious" description. I thought all the guides were top rate - knowledgeable without being dull, and happy to adjust to the vagaries of the weather. Some of the best bits came from informal parts of the programme."**

*"Excellent, very informative tour. The hotels were all excellent, and the ryokan in Yufuin was a good experience. The guides were all very helpful, and they were eager to share their love of Japan. Naomi was exceptional in her organisation, even when the weather was against her. She was also flexible with the itinerary when asked or was necessary. A truly memorable holiday."*

**"A most enjoyable tour. We liked the order of the tour – Old Kyoto, Hot springs, etc, and ending up in ultra-modern Tokyo. The accommodation was very good, especially the very nice onsen facilities in the Hakone hotel. The guides were very good, especially Nobu, who spoke of wartime Hiroshima most movingly."**

# Into Japan Specialist Tours Booking Conditions



## Booking Conditions

Please read the following conditions carefully. All holidays are sold subject to these conditions and the information in our brochure and quotation.

Into Japan Specialist Tours is a trading name of Oxford International Exchange Ltd, whose administrative offices are at Wesley House, 7 High St, Kidlington OX5 2DH, UK. In these conditions Into Japan Specialist Tours is referred to as 'we', 'us' and 'our'. The person or persons named on the booking form are referred to as 'you' and 'your'. This contract and all matters arising out of it are governed by the laws of England and Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

### 1. Holiday Payment

(i) The deposit for all scheduled tours is £500 / US\$1,000 or 15% of the total price per person for all other holidays. Once we have received your deposit we will send you your confirmation which will confirm all details of the holiday and what is included in the price. Once this confirmation has been sent to you a contract will exist between you and us. You must check all details on the confirmation and contact us immediately if there is anything you believe to be incorrect.

(ii) The confirmation details will also state what balance is due on the holiday and when payment is to be made. The balance will be due 60 days before the departure date and if this is not received we reserve the right to cancel your booking and charge cancellation fees as detailed below. It is our company policy to send a reminder at this time but it is still your responsibility to pay the balance even if you do not receive the reminder. If for any reason you have informed us of an exceptional reason for delay in payment and we choose to retain your booking, you will be liable for the higher cancellation fees if you do not pay the balance as stated or cancel at a later date.

(iii) If a holiday is booked within 60 days of departure, full payment is required to confirm the booking.

### 2. Insurance

It is required that every person named on the booking form is fully covered by travel insurance for the purposes of this holiday. We must receive a copy of your policy cover note at least 60 days before departure.

We highly recommend that you take out travel insurance that will cover cancellation costs of your holiday due to unforeseen circumstances.

### 3. If you change your holiday

If you request any changes to your booking after we have issued confirmation you may be liable for any costs including administration and/or cancellation fees that arise from the changes. We will do our best to accommodate your changes and we will do our best to avoid any additional costs. Please note that misspelled names can require flights to be rebooked and up to 100% cancellation fees applied to the original booking.

### 4. If you cancel your holiday before departure

If any person named on the booking form cancels their holiday the cancellation fees below will apply. Cancellation can only be accepted when confirmed in writing. The date this confirmation is received will be taken to be the cancellation date. We can accept signed faxes provided the original is posted to us immediately. The cancellation costs can be covered in many cases by appropriate travel insurance.

Cancellation charge per person based on number of days before departure when written confirmation of cancellation is received at our office.

More than 60 days: Deposit only

59-43 days: 30%

42-29 days: 60%

28-8 days: 80%

Within 7 days: 100%

### 5. Alterations or cancellations by you after departure

In general we are unable to make any refunds for unused portions of the holiday. We strongly recommend that adequate travel insurance is taken out that will cover all possible unforeseeable situations. If changes requested by you result in additional charges then these charges will be passed on to you. In particular, if special assistance is needed from our Japan office due to an emergency situation then you will be liable for additional costs (although these may be covered by your travel insurance).

### 6. If we change your holiday

All aspects of your holiday are normally arranged several months in advance but occasionally changes are unavoidable as we rely on our suppliers in Japan. We reserve the right to make minor changes as defined below. We will only cancel your holiday less than 60 days before departure if you have not complied with the booking conditions as described or if we have no choice as a result of 'force-majeure' as described below. Minor changes include change in order of schedule (without changing the contents), change to named hotel (without decreasing the standard or changing the type of accommodation), changing mode of transport (without changing the main schedule).

Major changes include change to contents of schedule (such as location change), change to flight departure or arrival date, decrease in standard or change of type of accommodation.

If a major change is made to the holiday we will inform you as soon as possible and you will have the choice to accept the change, cancel the holiday booked and book an alternative holiday (a balance may be due but we will not charge you for an increase in price on the same holiday schedule), or cancel the holiday booked and receive a full refund. You will have 10 days from the date we inform you to confirm your decision. If a major change results in reduced costs (for example a lower standard of hotel) and you do not cancel the holiday then we will make a corresponding refund to you. In addition we will make a further £50 / US\$100 compensation payment to you.

Most holidays will give a minimum number and a maximum number of persons on the tour. If the minimum number of persons for a tour is not reached 60 days before departure we reserve the right to cancel the holiday. We may offer you alternative arrangements (such as the same schedule with a group escort in Japan but no escort from the UK) and you may choose to accept these arrangements if you wish.

If a major change is made to the holiday after departure we will do our best to compensate you during the tour, either financially or through additional services. If a major change is as a result of 'force-majeure' then we do our best to carry out the schedule as planned but we reserve the right to terminate a schedule early and return you to the point of departure. In both of these cases all refunds that we can obtain from suppliers will be passed on to you.

'Force majeure' means any event (man-made or natural) which is out of the control of us and our suppliers can avoid during normal planning and preparation. This would include earthquakes, extreme weather, fire, technical problems with transport, operational decisions of air carriers, actual or threatened terrorist activity, industrial action and any similar events.

### 7. Surcharges

If there are any surcharges to be made you will be notified at least 60 days before departure. We will not make any additional charges whatsoever after that. The only possible reasons for a price surcharge are as follows:

(i) A change in the yen - pound exchange rate. You will only be asked to pay a surcharge in exceptional circumstances. There will only be a surcharge if the actual rate changes by more than 10% after the tour price is published/quoted. Should the exchange rate surcharge represent more than 10% of the original tour cost you will have the right to cancel and receive a full refund with 14 days of receiving notification.

(ii) A new tax or duty is imposed by the airline or government. This would normally be due to fluctuations in oil prices.

### 8. Our responsibilities

We will carry out the holiday as advertised and described to the best of our ability. We will accept responsibility for all the actions of our staff and suppliers when carrying out their work during the tour. We will not accept responsibility if injury, death, illness, damage or loss is the result of

(i) your actions

(ii) the actions of a third party not related to part of the described schedule of the tour

(iii) an event which we and our suppliers could not foresee

(iv) the actions of any other member of the tour group

(v) any health or condition which was not informed to us at the time of booking

(vi) additional services (for example, those that may be supplied by hotels) which are not included as part of the tour price

(vii) excursions not detailed in the tour schedule (although these may be introduced to you by our staff). These are taken at your own risk and your contract is directly with the operator of these excursions.

If you are not happy with any aspect of the tour it is your responsibility to make it known to the group escort or our Japan or UK office as soon as is reasonably possible and during the tour whenever possible. We will discuss the situation with you, and then endeavour to deal with the complaint at the time and request feedback from you. If you do not report a problem, which can be dealt with at the time, we cannot accept any associated liability at a later date. Tour escorts and our offices will keep logs of such reports during tours and these will be referred to when dealing with claims. If you are still not happy after the end of the tour and wish to make a claim you must write to us within 30 days of your return with full details of your complaint. If your claim is our responsibility and your travel insurance processes the claim but there is an excess, we will pay the excess due.

Claims related to transport or accommodation will be limited to the maximum amount of compensation for which we are liable under the international convention or regulation which would normally apply. We are entitled to deduct from this amount and compensation given by the supplier in question. There may also be claims for which we have no liability according to the international convention or regulation.

You must assist us in dealing with any claims, transfer any rights against suppliers to us if requested and cooperate with us or our insurers in enforcing these rights. For further details please refer to the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992.

### 9. Your responsibilities

The flight details shown on original booking confirmation are subject to change. Final details will be confirmed on your travel documentation, sent approximately 14 days prior to departure. Any such change will not entitle you to cancel or change other arrangements without paying our normal charges unless the departure or arrival time has changed by more than 12 hours, or a non-stop flight has changed to a flight that is not non-stop.

The company can accept no responsibility for clients who arrive later than 2 hours prior to check in and miss their flight as a result nor can we accept responsibility for any loss by you of your holiday/flight travel tickets, vouchers or coupons. We cannot accept liability for any delay related to air travel unless it has a material effect on your holiday arrangements.

During the tour you will follow the directions and instructions of the group leader without reserve or hesitation at all times. You will also behave in an appropriate fashion which does not lead to possible damage, danger or annoyance to property or people. If, in our view, this is not the case we will have the right to terminate your contract with immediate effect without any further obligations to you in respect of covering any expenses, compensation, refunds, or arranging for your return home.

You accept responsibility for any damage or loss caused by you or any member of your party. Full payment for any damage or loss must be paid direct at the time to the accommodation owner or manager or other supplier. Otherwise you will be liable for any later claims against us (including any legal costs) which are due to your actions. You must prepare all the necessary valid travel documents including full passports, visas, vaccination certificates, currency and traveler's cheques. You must check the name on your airline tickets is exactly the same as the name that appears on your full passport. We cannot be liable for your entry refusal into Japan and if this is due to invalid documents you will be liable for any financial penalty to us.

### 10. The brochure details and quotations

We reserve the right to change the prices, services or other particulars contained in this brochure or any quotation at any time before we enter into a contract with you.

We will notify you of any change before entering a contract. Additional tour information, hotel information and schedules can be taken to be part of the contract. Note that hotel classifications are subjective as there is no international standard. You must check all details of your chosen holiday (including the price) with us at the time of booking and on your booking confirmation.

### 11. Dealing with special requests

If you have any special request, you must advise us in writing at the time of booking. We cannot guarantee any request will be met unless we have specifically confirmed this in writing. Note we may also confirm a special request has been received without confirming that it is possible. If you or any member of your party has any medical problem or disability which may affect your holiday or any other members in the group, you must tell us at the time a booking request is made. Otherwise we reserve the right to cancel your booking or curtail your holiday as described under your responsibility above.

### 12. Your holiday protection

For our flight inclusive packages departing from the UK we are licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority, ATOL number 6977 and you will be fully covered under the terms of the license for our holidays. For non-flight inclusive packages you are protected by our TOPP policy.

### Total Payment Protection (topp) Policy cover:

In compliance with the UK Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 and the Civil Aviation (Air Travel Organiser's Licensing) Regulations 1995 an insurance policy has been arranged with Travel & General Insurance Company plc, authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority, to protect customers' prepayments in the unlikely event of our financial failure and paid in respect of:

- non-flight inclusive packages commencing and returning to the UK
  - flight inclusive packages, where the initial flight from your home country, which is outside of the UK, was included in the package price of the holiday
  - the ground handling aspects of packages where the customer is responsible for arranging travel to the destination offered in this brochure/literature/document/on this website (subject to the terms of the insurance policy), for:
    - a refund of such prepayments if customers have not yet travelled, or
    - making arrangements to enable the holiday to continue if customers have already travelled, or
    - repatriation of customers to the UK or their home country as may be applicable.
- Customers' prepayments are protected by a top policy. In the unlikely event of financial failure please contact the claims helpline on 0870 0137 945. A copy of the policy is available on request.

### 13. Personal information and images

We will pass your personal information to suppliers as necessary for the planning and the operation of the tour. Your personal information will not be passed on to a third party for any other purpose. Any photographs or video taken during the tour may be used for our own promotional materials both in print and on our website. They will not be used for any other purpose.

These booking conditions were revised in January 2009 and are valid until December 31st 2012.  
Registered Address: Wesley House, 7 High St, Kidlington OX5 2DH, UK Company Reg. No. 3819860