

Day 1

Arrive Tokyo

On arrival at Narita or Haneda airport, you will be met by an assistant in the arrival lobby after you exit the security zone. Then you will be escorted to the airport bus for your shared transfer to your hotel. The assistant will help you board the bus and then say goodbye. The bus will announce your stop in English. Check in to your hotel on your own and rest of day is at leisure.

Duration 4 Nights

Accommodation

Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo

Day 2

Tokyo

Today experience the traditional and modern side of Japan, starting with a hands-on activity. Meet your guide in the lobby of the hotel and travel together by taxi to the venue for your taiko lesson. Taiko is a Japanese drum used in ceremonies, festivals, sports and other events in Japan. Japanese students learn how to play the taiko drum in elementary school. Enjoy a shared group lesson (approx. 1 hr) to learn the rhythm and technique of taiko drumming and a live drum demonstration by the teachers.

After the lesson meet your guide and begin your sightseeing tour of Tokyo using public transportation. Visit Tokyo Skytree, the tallest building in Tokyo for a spectacular view from the observation deck. Then, take the train to Harajuku, the pop culture neighborhood. Walk along Takeshita pedestrian street and have lunch at the Kawaii Monster Cafe. Kawaii is the Japanese word for 'cute,' and you will soon find out why. The cafe has a series of brightly colored themed rooms, staff dress up in cute outfits and there is a regular song and dance performance featuring a cute wide-eyed monster. The food is western themed and rainbow in color and kids are sure to find something they like. After lunch take the train to Tokyo station where your guide will drop you off at Tokyo Character Street. Character street has over 30 shops selling popular Japanese character merchandise. Choose to visit the Pokemon Store, the Hello Kitty Shop or other stores. Afterwards, make your own way back to your hotel (your guide will provide directions). The evening is at leisure.

Meal Plan Breakfast and Lunch

Day 3

Tokyo

Spend the whole day at Disney's magical kingdom! Choose to visit either Tokyo Disneyland or Disney Sea with a 1-day passport. Take your hotel's Disney shuttle bus to/from the amusement park and explore the park on your own.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 4

Tokyo

Today visit one of Japan's most famous animation studios, the Ghibli Museum (closed on Tuesdays). Miyazak Hayao's Studio Ghibli has produced many feature length films that have received worldwide recognition including My Neighbor Totoro, Spirited Away and Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea. Entrance tickets will be provided, make your own way to/from the museum. The rest of day is at leisure.

Other suggested activities for today: dinner at the Ninja themed restaurant, attend a baseball game (subject to seasonality) or visit a Karaoke place.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 5

Tokyo to Hakone

Say goodbye to Tokyo and travel to Hakone, the hot spring capital of Japan. Hakone is apart of Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park and famous for views of nearby Mount Fuji on clear days. A guide will meet you at your hotel in Tokyo in the morning and help you ship your main luggage to your hotel in Kyoto (approx. cost is 2,000 yen per person per suitcase, standard size). This way you can travel light on the trains, carrying only your overnight bag to Hakone (shipping luggage is very common in Japan). After this, your guide will escort you Shinjuku station and help you board the Limited Express train to Odawara station (approx. 1 hr). On arrival at Odawara station, begin your self guided tour of the Hakone region using many different types of transportation. There are switchback trains, cable cars, boats and buses to travel around the mountainous area. A 3-day Hakone Pass is included so you can travel unlimited. We suggest you take the Hakone rope way to Owakudani, an active volcanic zone and crater where you can hike around, see views of Mount Fuji on clear days and try the popular hot spring cooked eggs that have black shells. From here you can continue by cable car to Lake Ashi where you can take a pirate ship across the lake.

The next 2 nights you will stay at a traditional Japanese inn, called a "ryokan" with hot spring baths. At the ryokan you will have a Japanese style room with futon bedding and enjoy Japanese kaiseki (multi-course) dinners featuring a variety of small plates.

Meal Plan Breakfast and Dinner

Duration 2 Nights

Accommodation

Ichinoyu Honkan

Day 6

Hakone

Enjoy a free day in Hakone. We suggest you visit Yunessun, a hot spring theme park with indoor and outdoor baths and water slides. You can also enjoy the hot spring baths at your hotel.

Meal Plan Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7

Hakone to Kyoto

Check out and make your own way to Odawara station using your Hakone Pass. Then travel by bullet train from Odawara to Kyoto (approx. 2 hrs). Directions will be provided to make sure you have a smooth trip.

Meet, greet on arrival in Kyoto and walk to your hotel to drop off your luggage and then begin your afternoon tour. Take the train to the Fushimi area of Kyoto where you will visit a kimono shop to get dressed up in a kimono, a unique Japanese experience. Adults and children can select a kimono to wear from different color and pattern options. After getting dressed up, visit Fushimi Inari Shrine, home to over 10,000 red tori gates forming a pathway up the mountain. Explore the shrine pathways and enjoy taking photos in your kimonos.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Duration 4 Nights

Accommodation

Rihga Royal Hotel Kyoto

Day 8

Kyoto

Enjoy a full day guided tour using public transportation to see more Kyoto highlights. You will start your day with a visit to Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion), which was originally built as a retirement villa for the Shogun. After his death it became a Buddhist Temple at his request and is now one of Kyoto's most famous temples.

Then you will head towards Arashiyama area to visit Arashiyama Monkey Park. After hiking uphill for about ten minutes, you will find an open area with over a hundred monkeys roaming freely. There are also nice views down onto the city.

Then take a break from walking and hop into a rickshaw, for a fun two wheeled carriage ride. Your local rickshaw driver will pull you through Arashiyama's famous bamboo grove. Each rickshaw fits 2 people and the tour is approx.30 minutes. After, visit Tenryuji zen temple, the largest temple in Arashiyama. Your guide will escort you by public transportation back to your hotel in the late afternoon.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 9

Day Trip to Osaka

Spend the whole day at Universal Studios in Osaka! Osaka is a short train ride from Kyoto (approx. 30 mins). The whole day is at leisure to enjoy the amusement park. Entrance tickets and directions will be provided.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 10

Kyoto

Your last day in Japan is free at leisure. Optional tours can be booked, such as a calligraphy and origami lesson, excursion to Nara or Hiroshima, or additional sightseeing in Kyoto.

Meal Plan Breakfast

Day 11

Depart Kyoto

Day at leisure until your shared bus transfer to Itami or Kansai airport for your departure flight.

Meal Plan Breakfast