

# TREASURES OF JAPAN

Tokyo, Hakone National Park, Takayama, Kanazawa & Kyoto



*The land of the rising sun boasts one of the world's most enthralling and unique cultures and civilisations. Perhaps nowhere else on earth is there such a stark juxtaposition between the future and the past. Japan is a nation of samurai castles and Zen Buddhist temples on the one hand, and bullet trains racing through neon-tinted futuristic cityscapes on the other. This fully immersive tour offers a fantastic introduction to this fascinating country.*

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to Japan. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important information such as flight details, visa requirements and travel insurance.

#### Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

#### DAY 1: UK to Tokyo

Depart London on your scheduled direct flight to Tokyo's Haneda Airport.

#### DAY 2: Tokyo

On arrival in Tokyo you will be met by a local guide and transferred to your centrally located hotel to enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to relax and settle in.

#### DAY 3: Tokyo B/L

Originally a small fishing village, Tokyo has survived a turbulent past to prosper as one of the world's major metropolises. Neon skyscrapers rise up to dizzying heights amongst ancient shrines and temples, all home to the city's population surpassing 13 million. From juicy yakitori to fresh sushi and ramen noodle, it is a foodie's heaven with a plethora of exciting dishes to try. A full day of sightseeing will take you to Sensoji, Tokyo's oldest temple and to the traditional Asakusa area for a special sushi making experience. Stroll through the popular area of Ginza and visit the iconic Akihabara Electric Town to experience the city's passion for all things electronic. After the day's sightseeing, spend the night at your hotel in the city.

#### DAY 4: Tokyo B

Your excursion today is to Hakone National Park, home to one of Japan's most instantly recognisable sights, the iconic Mount Fuji. Fringed by thick forests and a crescent-shaped ring of shimmering lakes, a stop at fifth station is the best place to appreciate the spectacular views on a clear day. Heading south your guide will take you to explore the charming mountain resort of Hakone town itself before passing the velvety dark blue waters of Lake Ashi on the return to your hotel in Tokyo.

#### DAY 5: Tokyo to Takayama B

After breakfast you will travel to Matsumoto, a small city embraced by the great peaks of the Japanese Alps and home to the exquisite Matsumoto castle. Dating back

to the 8th century, the city's protected position saw the Ogasawara clan prosper through the defining Edo period to the present day. The castle itself, known locally as 'Crow Castle' due to its striking black and white design contains narrow wooden windows once used by archers and gunmen and now affording picturesque vistas of the regal mountains, city and koi fish circling the moat below. Continuing your journey, pass through spectacular alpine scenery to the secluded mountain town of Takayama.

#### DAY 6: Takayama B

Nestled between the snow-capped peaks of the northern Alps, the mountain town of Takayama has retained a traditional atmosphere like few others in Japan. Established as a merchant town, the high altitude and remote location has allowed a unique culture to develop. Boasting intricate and ornate oriental facades, the Edo period buildings found scattered throughout the town are some of the finest in the country. This morning, a guided tour takes you back to a bygone Japan, along Sannomachi Street in the heart of the quaint Old Town. Here canals flow under the eaves of merchant houses with their latticed bay windows, and sake brewing houses display bundles of cedar leaves indicating that the new season's rice wine is available.

#### DAY 7: Takayama to Kanazawa B

Today takes you to the fairy tale World Heritage Site of Shirakawago. Located in a quiet highland region, unique farm-style houses date back to the 11th century and can be seen dotted throughout the rolling green countryside and rice fields. This afternoon, continue your journey to the UNESCO city of Kanazawa. On arrival, a visit to the Nagamachi Samurai district provides a fascinating insight into the life-style of a samurai during the feudal era when Japan was almost totally secluded from the outside world. Taken over in 1583 by Maeda Toshiie, companion of the Great War Lord Toyotomi Hideyosh, Kanazawa remained at the centre of the feudal domain until its collapse in the 1860s. Wander around the well-preserved samurai region where grandiose residences still line the streets that once belonged to the Kaga Clan; with ochre clay walls covered with shingled roofs, many remain exactly as they stood over 400 years ago.

#### DAY 8: Kanazawa to Kyoto B/D

Most definitely a highlight of the tour, today includes a visit to the famed Kenroku-en, an exquisite 17th century garden next to Kanazawa Castle. Initially an intimate private terrace after the first lord of the Kaga Clan made his triumphant entry into the castle, the site now covers an area of 28 acres and is one of the top three gardens in Japan. The beauty of the expertly landscaped grounds twist and turn, boasting meandering streams framed by pastel irises and avenues of cherry blossom trees. Departing Kanazawa, a coach journey will take you south, arriving into the ancient capital of Kyoto late afternoon. After some time to rest at your hotel, this evening is host to a spellbinding traditional geisha dance performance and dinner. Famous the world over, geishas generally only perform at small private gatherings in certain districts so it is considered a great honour to observe the unique art form that has been developed over many generations, particularly as now the number of geishas in Japan are in decline.

#### DAY 9: Kyoto B

Once the imperial capital of Japan, the ancient city of Kyoto boasts a history of over 1200 years and as many as 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. It was lucky enough to be relatively unscathed from the devastation of World War II and pockets of the old world still linger where traditional geishas can be seen shuffling along narrow streets in their wonderfully colourful kimonos. A full day tour delves into the city's rich history exploring the Zen Buddhist temple of Kinkakuji, the impressive Fushimi Inari shrine and the 400 year old Nikshiki Market. Enjoy a stroll around the Gion area, a collection of streets defined by old wooden buildings, teahouses and exclusive restaurants before returning to your hotel.

#### DAY 10: Kyoto to Tokyo B

After a morning of leisure you will board the gleaming bullet train to travel back to Japan's capital. With comfortable, spacious seating and reaching speeds of over 180 miles per hour, gliding across the country on the effortless 'Shinkansen' is an experience in itself. On arrival in Tokyo enjoy the evening at leisure.

#### DAY 11: Tokyo to the UK or Extension B

This morning transfer to the airport for your flight back to the UK, or continue on to your chosen extension.

### Hotel Information

**Tokyo (4 nights):** 4★ Sunshine City Prince Hotel - 3-1-5, Higashi-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo, 170-8440. Telephone Number: 0081 3 3988 1111

**Takayama (2 nights):** 4★ Route Inn Takayama - 1070-1 Chishimamachi, Takayama, 506-0032. Telephone Number: 0081 577 32 0100

**Kanazawa (1 night):** 4★ Hotel Resol Trinity Kanazawa - 1-18 Musashimachi, Kanazawa, 920-0855. Telephone Number: 0081 762 21 9269

**Kyoto (2 nights):** 4★ Daiwa Roynet Kyoto - 9-2 Higashikujo Kitakarasumacho, Minami-ku, Kyoto 601-8017, Kyoto. Telephone Number: 0081 75 693 0055

All accommodation is 4★ and features a television and air-conditioning/heating. Mercury Holidays has visited and inspected all of the hotels to ensure that they meet the standard of service which we require for our clients. If the hotels detailed above are not available, alternatives of a similar standard will be used. Please note that hotel rooms in Japan are smaller than western hotels so please be aware you may not have as much space as you are used to. Final confirmation of your hotels will be sent in a document approximately 10 days before you travel.

### Meals

Breakfast is always served in your hotel each morning and will be western style. Lunch and dinner where included will either be taken at your hotel or at a local restaurant.

### On your arrival

On your arrival in Tokyo you will be met by a representative from our local agent in Japan holding a sign displaying 'Mercury Holidays'. The Mercury Holidays/Big Holiday International representative will transfer you to your hotel on arrival where you will spend your first night. A guide will meet you the following morning to remain with you throughout the tour and will be able to answer any queries you may have.

However, if you do experience any issues on arrival or need to contact the local team in an emergency the details are:

**Big Holiday International**  
Hongo Daiya Building 8F,  
3-18-14  
Hongo Bunkyo-ku  
Tokyo 113-0033  
Japan  
Office: 0081 3 6240 0602

### Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for Big Holiday International  
24 hour Emergency number: 0081 70 6557 6050

### Visas

UK passport holders are not currently required to obtain a visa prior to departure. A tourist visa will be issued on arrival for a duration of 90 days when you show your passport (must be valid for at least six months from the date you are due to leave Japan). Visa, arrival and departure requirements are subject to change and obtaining a visa is the responsibility of the traveller and not Mercury Holidays. We recommend you check with your destinations' Tourist Board or Embassy prior to departure for the most up to date guidelines regarding these.

### Insurance

You must obtain suitable travel insurance prior to departure. Mercury Holidays is partnered with Holiday Extras who offer insurance at the following prices, (worldwide, excluding USA).

Age in years	Up to 64	65-74	75-85
Up to 17 days cover	£42	£79	£135

For all persons 86 years and over, please contact us for insurance prices. If you decide to organise your own travel insurance, please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

### Health and Vaccinations

We recommend that you consult your local GP for advice on travel health/vaccinations before departure. You can also visit the NHS travel health website [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk). It is not advisable to drink the tap water.

### Physical Accessibility

This tour is accessible to most people with an average level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves full days of sightseeing, often on foot and

includes some hiking, trekking, climbing of stairs and getting on and off coaches. Please note that this tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties.

### Group Size

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 16 and the maximum will be 40. In the unlikely event that there are fewer than 16 people booked on your tour date, you may be asked to change to a different date. The choice to switch to any of our other tours, or cancel with a full refund will also be available to you should an alternative date not be suitable.

### Tour Guides

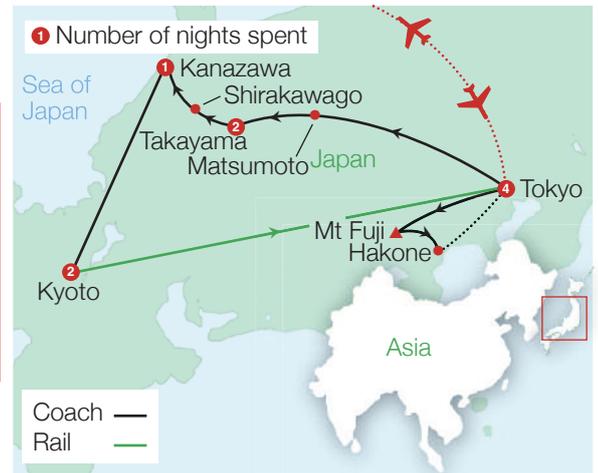
This is an escorted tour, meaning you will be met on arrival at Tokyo airport and will have a guide with you for the duration of your tour, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge and assistance at all times.

### Tipping

Tipping is part of the life in Japan and customary on a tour but you should not feel obliged or pressured to tip if you feel you have not received good service. Gratuities are usually expected for local guides on excursions and tips are also appreciated by the tour leaders/guides at the end of your tour. We recommend an average of GBP £2 per person per day for the duration of your tour. This is only if you feel that their service was up to standard and is completely at your own discretion.

### Currency Exchange

The currency in Japan is the Japanese Yen (JPY or ¥). You can purchase the currency before you travel but you will probably get a better exchange rate if money is exchanged when in Japan. You can buy Yen at foreign exchange banks and at the airport. Credit, debit and prepaid cards from international brands are accepted at a wide variety of places in the major cities within Japan. Outside of these, cards may not be widely accepted, although you will be



able to withdraw cash in the local currency across the country at ATMs.

### Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry, any meals not included in the itinerary as well as drinks and any additional snacks. We recommend you bring along a minimum of GBP £500 per person to change to local currency. It is a good idea to try and maintain a supply of small notes and change in the local currency for tipping or small purchases.

### Credit Card Information

Credit cards are accepted in most major cities but we also recommend taking some cash and a debit card (to withdraw cash from ATMs) in addition to relying solely on a credit card.

### Itinerary changes

Our intention is to adhere to the day to day itinerary as printed here. However, the order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are made aware of them and keep you updated as much as possible. Some road construction and/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times.

### What to Pack

- Sunscreen, insect repellent and wide-brimmed hat
- Waterproof, lightweight jacket
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Lightweight clothing
- Sweater
- Camera and charger
- Small day pack for excursions
- Swimwear
- A plug adaptor – the electricity supply is 110/120 volts and two or three flat pin plugs

### Flight and Airport Information

Your flight is to Tokyo's Haneda Airport with British Airways (BA) departing from London Heathrow Terminal 5.

Route	Depart	Arrive	Flight Duration	Flight Number
London Heathrow - Tokyo	11:40	07:20	11 hours 40 minutes	BA7
Tokyo - London Heathrow	08:50	13:15	12 hours 25 minutes	BA8

**IMPORTANT: Please note that all flight times and numbers listed above are provided for guidance only and are subject to change. Final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.**

### Baggage Allowance

Each passenger is entitled to 23kg of hold luggage. There is also an allowance of one cabin bag not exceeding 25cm x 45cm x 56cm in size and one personal bag not exceeding 45 cm x 36 cm x 20 cm that you can take on the aircraft as hand luggage. Weight restrictions will be finalized on your e-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay an additional fee for this at check-in. Heathrow Airport advises that you should arrive at the airport at least three hours prior to your flight time for international departures.

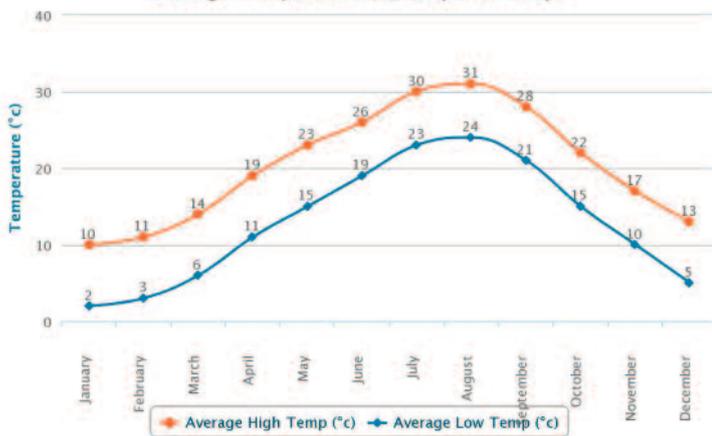
### Airport Extras

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking, lounges or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras - Tel. 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

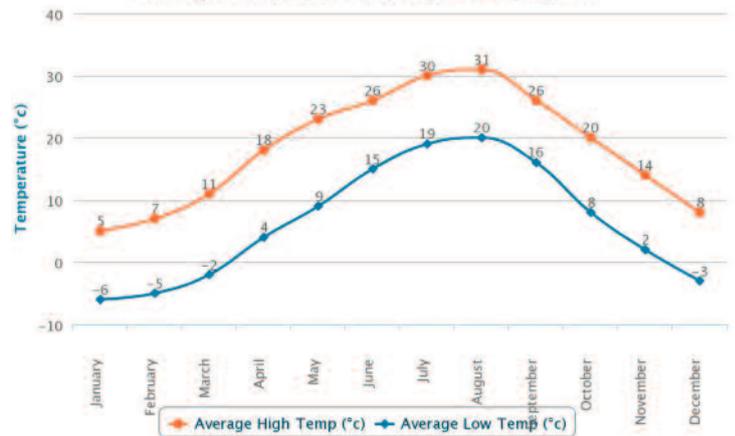
### Weather and Climate

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year so please familiarize yourself with the climate charts below for a guideline of what to expect.

Average Temperature (°C) Graph for Tokyo



Average Temperature (°C) Graph for Takayama



Average Temperature (°C) Graph for Kyoto

