

## CHINA &amp; JAPAN'S RAIL ODYSSEY



## TRIP OVERVIEW

Uncover the ancient city sights of China and the neon-lit districts of Japan, two countries bound by their Buddhist ties and imperial histories yet offering wildly different cultural, culinary and natural attractions. Journey from the geisha districts of Kyoto and towering high rises of Tokyo to explore the iconic sights of Xi'an, Beijing and Shanghai on this 15-day East Asian exploration.

## ITINERARY &amp; DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to China & Japan. Please take the time to read this dossier 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 Kyoto**

Depart London on your scheduled, overnight flight to Osaka, via Beijing.

**DAY 2: Kyoto**

On arrival in Osaka, you will be met and transferred to your hotel in the nearby city of Kyoto.

**DAY 3: Kyoto B**

Experience traditional Japan at its finest as you tour Kyoto, a city of shrines, temples and geisha teahouses that boasts 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Enjoy double visions of gold as you witness the gold-leaved pavilion of Kinkaku-ji and its shimmering reflection mirrored in the surrounding moat. Visit Fushimi Inari and stroll through a colourful arcade of vivid red 'torii', or shrine gates, inscribed with dedications to Inari, the god of rice. Browse the maze of food stalls in the 400 year old Nishiki Market, bearing fresh produce, intriguing pickles and steaming bowls of udon noodles, then continue on to the geisha district of Gion. Spot geishas draped in lavish kimonos and explore the charming wooden buildings, teahouses and restaurants of the area before returning to your hotel.

**DAY 4: Kyoto B/D**

A day trip to the nearby city Nara allows you to delve into the cultural legacy of Japan's ancient former capital. Visit the Buddhist complex at Todaiji Temple, home to the world's largest wooden structure and the colossal bronze Buddha statue nestled in its interior. Continue on to nearby Nara Park and watch over 1,200 deer roaming its greenery, perhaps purchasing some deer crackers to feed to these friendly park inhabitants. Travel back to Kyoto for your evening meal, followed by an evening's entertainment allowing you to experience an age-old tradition with a geisha performance.

**DAY 5: Kyoto to Tokyo B**

After breakfast catch a public train to the station to board your train bound for Tokyo and experience Japan's high-tech rail network, renowned for its speed, cleanliness and punctuality. Journey past rolling rural landscapes and through small, traditional towns as you follow the coastline, arriving in Tokyo later this afternoon a public train ride will take you to your hotel where you will enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. **Please note:** An overnight bag/day pack will be required during your train journeys due to luggage limitations on the trains. Your luggage will be transferred using a 24hr luggage delivery service which will arrive at your accommodation the following day.

**DAY 6: Tokyo B/L**

Tokyo's fusion of futuristic districts, centuries-old palaces, family-run ramen booths and streets dotted with cutesy anime depictions provides endless chances for exploration. A full day of sightseeing begins at Sensoji, Tokyo's oldest temple. Wander down Nakamise Shopping Street to reach the main hall and pagoda, where incense and Buddhist prayer chants fill the air. Follow in the footsteps of Japan's masterful sushi chefs as you learn more about this iconic dish at a sushi making class then continue on to the area of Ginza, the country's biggest luxury shopping and entertainment district. Wander past luxe department stores, flashing neon signage and colourful buildings then end your tour in Akihabara Electric Town where a maze of high rises houses gadgets and gizmos galore.

**DAY 7: Tokyo B**

Following breakfast, visit 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. Take a Hakone Ropeway cable car ride to a mountaintop station with spectacular vistas of the sparkling, blue waters of Lake Ashi and Fuji's snow-capped peak. From here, a short walking trail leads to Owakudani Valley, an active volcanic crater, where hot springs, bubbling pools and steam vents serve as reminders of the area's volcanic might.

**DAY 8: Tokyo to Shanghai, China B/D**

Bid farewell to Japan as you transfer to the airport for your flight to Shanghai, China. On arrival, experience your first taste of this fast-paced metropolis with a visit to the Bund, Shanghai's waterside walkway, followed by a stroll along Nanjing Road to observe the world's busiest shopping street. Check into your hotel in time for dinner.

**DAY 9: Shanghai B/L/D**

Shanghai, China's biggest city, is also its most international. Enjoy the colonial-era and traditional Chinese elements of the city on today's tour. Explore the tranquil pavilions, rockeries and ponds of Yu Garden, the tree-lined avenues and chic eateries of the French Concession and the charming alleyways of the Old Town before taking in the ancient artefacts of the Shanghai Museum. Later, an optional evening river cruise down the Huangpu River that runs through Shanghai gives an excellent vantage point of the city's skyline.

**DAY 10: Shanghai to Xi'an B/L/D**

After breakfast, board your bullet train to Xi'an, on your arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel in time for dinner.

**DAY 11: Xi'an B/L/D**

Taking nearly four decades to complete and over 700,000 workers, Xi'an's Terracotta Warriors were built to protect China's first emperor in his afterlife. Explore this impressive underground mausoleum, and the 8,000 extraordinarily sculpted warriors, bronze chariots and preserved weapons on display. Continue

on to the Small Wild Goose Pagoda and the Muslim Quarter, home to historic mosques and a labyrinth of market stalls selling everything from souvenirs to edible delicacies. Later this evening, travel back in time as you watch a colourful Tang Dynasty dancing show.

### DAY 12: Xi'an to Beijing B/L/D

Today take a visit to Xi'an's City Wall, a long stretch of fortifications which is the oldest in China and provides dramatic views over the city. In the evening, board an overnight sleeper train as you travel to Beijing, taking in the night-time scenery that passes you by.

### DAY 13: Beijing B/L/D

On arrival in Beijing, you will be met and transferred to your hotel, before today's excursion starting at the iconic Great Wall, constructed over 2,000 years ago to guard the Chinese Empire against Mongol invaders. Stroll along a section of this amazing structure which stretches over 5,500 miles, crossing deserts, grasslands

and mountains. Travel back into the city and browse the old, traditional calligraphy and book shops of Liulichang Antique Culture Street and the historic stores of Qianmen Dashilan, where some of China's most notable silk stores are located.

### DAY 14: Beijing B/L/D

China's dynamic capital is built on an impressive scale, with its imposing monuments serving as reminders of its imperial past. Today's full-day tour takes you around the highlights of the city, starting with Tiananmen Square, where you'll explore the world's largest public square under the watchful eye of Chairman Mao's large, central portrait. From here, enter the vast Forbidden Palace and wander its 9,999 rooms and chambers before travelling onward to the tranquil Temple of Heaven. Later tonight, experience one of China's top delicacies as you savour a crisp, fragrant Peking duck dinner.

### DAY 15: Beijing to the UK B

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your return flight to the UK.

## ACCOMMODATION DETAILS & MAP

### Hotel information

#### Kyoto (3 nights) 3★ Royal Park Hotel The Kyoto

Address: Higashiiru Kawaramachi Sanjodori, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto 604-8004, Kyoto Prefecture, Japan

Contact number: 0081 34 510 1431

#### Tokyo (3 nights) 3★ The B Ikebukuro

Address: 1-39-4 Higashiikebukuro, Toshima 170-0013, Tokyo Prefecture

Contact number: 0081 03 3980 1911

#### Shanghai (2 nights) Departures in 2019: 4★ Hua Ting Guest House Xujiahui

Address: 2525 Zhongshan W Rd, Xuhui Qu, China, 200000

Contact number: 0086 21 6439 1818

Departures in 2020: 4★ Ocean Hotel. Address: 1171 Dongdaming Rd,

Hongkou, Shanghai, China, 200082 Contact number: 0086 21 6545 8888

#### Xi'an (2 nights) 4★ Xi'an Jianguo Hotel

Address: No.2 Huzhu Road, Beilin District, Xi'an 710048, China

Contact number: 0086 10 6500 2233

#### Please note: departures 28/08/19 will stay at the 4★ Titan Times Hotel

Address: 19 Jiangong Roda, East Hi-tech Industries Development Zone, Xi'an, China, 710043. Contact number: 0086 29 6862 8888

#### Xi'an to Beijing (1 night) Overnight Sleeper Train

#### Beijing (2 nights) 4★ Landmark Hotel

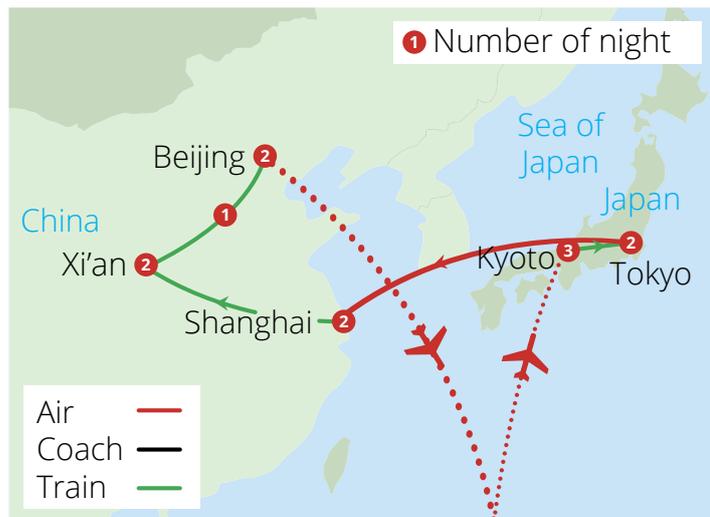
Address: 8 North Dongsanhuan Road, Beijing, China, 100004

Contact number: 0086 10 6590 6688

#### Please note: departures 28/08/19 & 09/10/19 will stay at the 4★ Jinglun Hotel

Address: No.3 Jianguo Menwai Main Street, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100020, China. Contact number: 0086-10-65002266

**Please note: departures 25/09/19, 23/10/19, 06/11/19, 20/11/19 & 04/12/19 will stay at the 4★ Grand Metropark Hotel Beijing.** Address: No.338 Guanganmen Nei Avenue, Xicheng District, Beijing 100053. Number: 0086 10 8352 9999



### Accommodation

All accommodation is 3★ or 4★ and features an en suite bathroom, air-conditioning/heating and TV. Please note that upon arrival in Kyoto check in will be from 15:00 onwards.

Mercury Holidays has visited and inspected all of the hotels to ensure that they meet the high standards of service which we require for our clients. If the hotels detailed are not available, alternatives will be used of a similar standard.

**Please note: the hotels listed are provided for guidance only and final confirmation of your accommodation will be sent in a document, along with your final flight information, approximately 10 days before you travel.**

### Meals

#### Japan

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.

#### China

Breakfast is always western style and served in the hotel each morning. Lunch and dinner will be taken in local Chinese restaurants and served with either one beer or soft drink. A variety of restaurants are visited giving you the chance to experience a range of dishes and flavours.

## ON YOUR ARRIVAL

### Japan

On your arrival in Kyoto you will be met by a representative from our local agent in Japan, **Beauty of Japan**, holding a sign displaying 'Mercury Holidays'. The Mercury Holidays/Beauty of Japan representative will transfer you to your hotel on arrival where you will spend your first night. If you need to contact Beauty of Japan during your stay the details are:

#### Beauty of Japan

Sumida-ku, 4 Chome-37-2 Ryogokoku TKF Khaikan 5F, Tokyo 130-0026

Office: 0081 3 66599074 / 66599075

e-mail: Pankaj@beautyofjapantours.com and info@bojt.jp

### China

On your arrival in Shanghai you will be met by a representative from our local agent, **China Travel Service**, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/China Travel Service will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your national guide will be on hand 24 hours a day should you have any queries. However, if you need to contact your representative during your stay the details are:

#### China Travel Service

Head office address: 15F CTS (HK) Grand Metropark Hotel Beijing, No.338

Guang'an Men Nei Street, Xicheng District, Beijing, China

Telephone: 0086 10 85908336 / 0086 10 85908341

### Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for Beauty of Japan

24 hour emergency number: 0081335370788

### Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for **China Travel Service:**

During Office Hours: 0086 10 85908336 / 0086 10 85908341

After Office Hours: Ms. Linda Liu (Mobile): 0086 61 3911043036

Ms. Shine Cao (Mobile): 0086 61 8284532334

## WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR TOUR

### Visas

**Japan:** 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 visas and passport validity.

**China:** A visa is required for entry into China. We work closely with The Travel Visa Company who will be able to arrange your visa for you on your behalf. Please call them on 01270 250 590 and quote "Mercury Holidays". The cost of the visa is approximately £189.00, when calling the Travel Visa Company, they will advise you of the most up to date fees. The visas take around 10 working days to issue and are valid for unlimited trips to China for 2 years from the date of issue. We therefore recommend that you apply for your visa 8 weeks before travel, however please be aware that your passport will be required for the application so make sure that you will not need it during this time.

Please see the below information required when applying for your Chinese Visa; Company license number ; 91110000710938407L

Company name: China Travel Service Head Office (Beijing)Co. Ltd  
 Contactor mail: lhs.oz@ctsho.com

### Insurance

We strongly recommend that you and all members of your party are suitably insured as soon as you book your holiday. It is a condition of booking that you must have suitable travel insurance. It is important that you purchase travel insurance that suitably covers your participation in whatever activities you may undertake at the time that you make your booking. To assist you with this, we have arranged travel insurance in partnership with Holiday Extras. To arrange your travel insurance with Holiday Extras, please call **0800 781 4237** and quote 'WK830' for preferential rates. 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

It is your responsibility to check any health and vaccination requirements applicable to your booked arrangements. We can only provide general information about this. Health and hygiene facilities and disease risks vary from country to country. You should take health advice about your own needs as early as possible and in good time before your departure. Sources of information include; [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk), [www.travelhealthpro.org.uk](http://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk), [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk), your General Practitioner or a specialist clinic.

### Tour Guides

**Japan:** This is an escorted tour meaning that you will be met by a local guide in each of the cities that you visit, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times. During your transfers an English-speaking assistant will be provided. Please note that during train journeys a guide/assistant will not be available.

**China:** This is a fully escorted tour meaning that you will be met by a local guide in each of the cities that you visit, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

### Tipping

**Japan:** Tipping is part of 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.

## WHAT TO PACK

- Sunscreen and hat in summer
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Camera and charger
- A travel plug adaptor - The voltage in China is 220 Volts. It is advisable to bring a multi-adaptor, In Japan, the electricity supply is 110/120 volts and two or three flat pin plugs
- Loo paper for public WCs
- Binoculars

Please note; Lighters are not allowed on planes ,trains or sights of special interest, such as Tiananmen square, Forbidden city, The Temple of Heaven , Terracotta Warriors , Three Gorges Dam , Wild Goose Pagoda.

The following items cannot be transported in Checked Baggage; Mobile phone battery charging packs, Lithium batteries of lower than 100 Wh for laptops, mobile phones and cameras among other personal portable electronic devices. These items must be put in your hand luggage.

**China:** It is customary to tip your national guide, local guide and driver approximately £5 (CNY40.00) per person per day. Your national guide will collect this for your convenience on the first day of your tour in Beijing, approximately £35.00 (CNY320.00) per person for the total duration. Tips are collected in Chinese Yuan.

### Physical Accessibility

This tour is accessible to most people with a good level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves climbing of steep stairs and getting on and off coaches and boats. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties.

### Group Size

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 12, and the maximum will be 40. If in the unlikely event there are less than 12 people booked on your tour date, we will endeavour to reduce any disruption to your holiday and try to operate your tour with lower passenger numbers. If we are not able to operate your departure date then you may be asked to change to a different date and a full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

### Currency Exchange

**Japan:** 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 at 7 Eleven shops.

**China:** The currency in China is the Renminbi, known as RMB or CNY. It is often referred to as the yuan. We recommend that you exchange your currency before you leave the UK. US Dollars are widely accepted in China should you wish to keep an alternative currency on you.

### 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 £600 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

As normal practice you will be asked for your credit card details on check-in at the hotel in order to cover any extras incurred during your stay. If you do not have a credit card, you may be asked for a cash deposit. American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in hotels.

### Itinerary Changes

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in country are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction &/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.



- Personal first aid kit containing travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, antiseptic creams, aspirin etc
- Small day pack for excursions
- Waterproof, lightweight jacket
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Lightweight clothing
- Sweater

### FLIGHT INFORMATION

Your initial flight is to **Kansai International Airport (Osaka)**, via **Beijing**, with **Air China (CA)**, departing from **London Heathrow Terminal 2**. Your return flight is from **Beijing International Airport** to **London Heathrow**.

**IMPORTANT: Please note that 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

Baggage allowance (per person): Please note that the baggage allowance may vary. Please refer to the bottom right of your E-ticket receipt for the correct allowance. For example, if it shows "20k" this means your allowance is 20kg. If it shows "2PC" this means your allowance is two bags not exceeding 23kg each. Important note: For handling purposes the maximum weight of any single piece of baggage is 23kg. If the allowance shown on your ticket exceeds this you will need to take an additional bag. You may also take hand luggage of 5kg not

exceeding 55cm x 40cm x 20cm in size.

**Important: An overnight daypack/bag is required for your train journey on Day 5 from Kyoto to Tokyo.**

#### 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 on 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

### WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.

