



# Discover Japan

**Discover Japan – Medium Pace tour**  
**13 Days**  
**Fully Inclusive from the UK**

Immerse yourself in the remarkable country of Japan. Visit the iconic Mt. Fuji, traditional Kyoto and ultra-modern Tokyo. Spend the night in a Buddhist Temple on Mt. Koya, learn the art of origami and see the beautiful gardens of Kanazawa.

**Fully Inclusive price includes:**

- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- All meals (excluding drinks)
- Touring with Guides and entrance fees

**Your Tour Dossier**

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.



## Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

Japan continues to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in a country with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in Japan requires patience and potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout Japan, so your local guides or National Escort will be indispensable during your trip.

Almost everything will be different to what you may be used to. We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding. It is essential that all passengers recognize the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they may encounter in some areas.

## Discover Japan - Medium Paced Tour

These tours are accessible to most people with an average level of fitness and normal mobility. They involve sightseeing on foot, some climbing of stairs and getting on and off boats throughout the tour.

This pace of this tour is at a medium level. There is a great deal included and some of the days may be long. Anyone with a reasonable level of fitness should be able to complete this itinerary. Of course our guides always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance, but they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

*NB: Please note that times and distances listed in the tour dossier are approximate.*

### Days 1-2: UK/Tokyo

Fly overnight to Tokyo Narita Airport for a three night stay. A meet and greet service will be waiting for you when you clear customs and immigration at Narita Airport and will show you to your seat-in-coach transfer to your hotel. There may be a short wait as these run to a timetable. The drive from the airport to your hotel is 1.5-2 hrs.

### Day 3: Tokyo

Make a visit to the top of Tokyo Sky Tree for sweeping views of the vast city. Travel to Asakusa where you will visit Sensoji Temple. Wander through the Nakamise shopping street. Stroll through Hama-Rikyu Gardens (45 minutes on foot). Overall, there is around 3-4 hours on foot involved in today's sightseeing. This evening, take a cruise (40 minutes) along the Sumida River.

### Day 4: Tokyo to Mt. Fuji

You will have an early start. Drive 2.5 hrs to Mt. Fuji (130km from Tokyo to Mt Fuji). Drive up to the 5th station of Mt. Fuji (2,305m) if weather conditions permit. Continue to Hakone (70km from Mt Fuji to Hakone, 1.5 hr drive). After lunch, you will take the world's second longest cable car up Mt. Owakudani (1.4km long, 1,044m high). Please be aware that these springs have a unique scent which may be quite strong for some people. Duration of sightseeing on foot today is limited to around 1 hr but there is a lot of moving between locations so please listen to meeting places and times as advised by your guide.

*Today's touring and viewing of Mt. Fuji is subject to weather conditions as this is very changeable around Mt. Fuji.*

### Day 5: Tokyo to Takayama

Leave Tokyo and drive to Takayama (5.5 hr drive). Stop en route in Matsumoto (3 hr drive from Tokyo), where you will visit Matsumoto Castle. There are steep ladder-style steps in Matsumoto Castle that you must climb up and back down again. If you choose not to look inside the castle, the surrounding gardens, moat and the façade of the castle will keep you entertained. Continue to one of Japan's largest wasabi farms where you can try your hands at making pickled wasabi vegetables (please note that wasabi can be quite hot on the palate, if you wish to sample this it is best to start with only a very small amount at first). Continue to Takayama (2.5 hrs from Matsumoto) across the alpine mountain range. The road is winding and you will pass through many tunnels. Please remain seated at all times with your seatbelt fastened.

### Day 6: Takayama

Today you will have approx. 5-6 hrs sightseeing on foot as you walk around the small town of Takayama. Head to the Miyagawa morning market and try some of the regions fruit and vegetables. Later, visit traditional houses and local museums, including the Takayama Festival Floats Exhibition Hall, Kusakabe Folk Museum (there are some steps up to the second level of the house) and the Takayama Jinya. You will also visit one of Takayama's sake (rice wine) breweries to see how this traditional Japanese drink is made.

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit [www.wendywutours.co.uk](http://www.wendywutours.co.uk) or see your preferred travel agent.

Due to its location this town has been secluded from the rest of Japan for a long time, so please respect the traditional and local customs.

#### **Day 7: Takayama to Kanazawa**

*NB: You will be staying in Kanazawa for one night before travelling by coach to Kyoto.*

Travel to UNESCO Shirakawago, (2 hr drive) famous for its traditional gassho-zukuri farmhouses, some of which are more than 250 years old (1.5 hrs on foot). There are some stairs in the house which you can climb if you want to explore the higher levels. Try your hand at making Japanese washi paper before continuing to Kanazawa, (1.5-2 hrs) where you will visit the Nomura Samurai House and walk through the Old District (1.5 hrs of sightseeing on foot).

#### **Day 8: Kanazawa to Kyoto**

Wander through Kenroku-en Garden this morning and visit the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museum of Contemporary Art (around 3 hrs on foot). After lunch, board your coach to Kyoto (approx. 3hrs 30 mins).

#### **Day 9: Kyoto**

Today is a very busy day of sightseeing to make the most of your time in Kyoto. You will spend around 2 hrs on foot walking through the Golden Pavilion (Kinkakuji) and the Ryoanji Temple. There are some steps throughout the complexes. At the traditional townhouse, there is one set of stairs to climb up and down to the classroom. This is a traditional townhouse so the steps are steep but there is a hand railing.

#### **Day 10: Kyoto – Nara**

Today you will travel to Nara by coach (45 mins from Kyoto). Visit the Todaiji Temple, Isuein Gardens, and Nara Park, which locals call Deer Park, as deer live in the park. The deer will approach you to be fed. Whether you choose to do so is entirely at your discretion. You will spend around 2 hrs on foot in Nara. Return to Kyoto stopping en route at Fushimi Inari Shrine. The gates mark the entrance to the top of Mt. Inari (233 metres high). The entire hike up the mountain takes 2.5-3 hrs, but of you will only walk part of the way. There are some steps and the incline allows a steady-paced walk.

#### **Day 11: Kyoto to Koya-San**

*NB: You will be staying in Koya-San for one night before driving to Osaka. Your main luggage will be sent by luggage courier from Kyoto to Osaka. You will only need to take a small overnight bag with you for Days 11/12.*

***Please take what you need for the evening and following day including any medication and valuables, as you will not see your main luggage again until you arrive at your Osaka hotel.***

Travel to Koya-San (3 hour drive). Here you will visit Kongobunji Temple and Garan temple complex (45 minutes on foot). Okunoin holds the mausoleum of the founder of Shingon Buddhism, Kobo Daishi. The walk to the mausoleum and back is 2km on a sometimes uneven surface, but generally flat. You will pass 200,000 tombstones belonging to feudal lords and prominent monks along the way. Tonight you will stay in a Buddhist temple lodge, known as a *shukubo*. The temple stay is staffed by the monks and they generally do not speak English. Accommodation is traditional but basic. Single mattresses will be laid on the tatami mats and can be pushed near each other to create a double bed. The tatami mat floors are not hard and mattresses are designed for comfortable sleep. The doors are made from rice paper and noise will travel. There will be shared bathroom, shower and toilet facilities here. Rooms are individually heated but hallways are not. The evening meal is a Buddhist vegetarian dinner, known as shojin ryori and is served promptly at 1800hrs and your bedding is prepared by the Monks while you are at dinner. The evening is free for quiet reflection in your room. There are no TV's on the premises.

#### **Day 12: Koya-San to Osaka**

Rise early to witness the monks chant their morning prayers at 0630hrs. The ceremony is in Japanese, lasts around 40 mins and very solemn. Photography is not allowed. Following this you will have a shojin ryori breakfast. Breakfast is vegetarian and minimal as it is in keeping with Buddhist tradition; this is a great experience to learn about this unique way of life. Later, drive to Osaka 2.5 hrs for an overnight stay. Visit Osaka Castle (around 2 hrs on foot and there are many stairs in the castle) and take a cruise (1 hr) along the Yodogawa River. Tonight you will wander down Dotonbori, a restaurant mecca, where you can sample local delicacies.

#### **Day 13: Depart Osaka**

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight.

#### **Land Only**

If you are travelling on a land only basis, then you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel in Tokyo on Day 2. On Day 13, you will checkout from your Osaka hotel, and continue as per your own arrangements.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries inclusions and tour extensions available as well as full booking conditions.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Before You Leave**

**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 Japan are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your Local Guide or National Escort will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction and/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times in Japan. Day 4 is subject to change pending local conditions as traffic may result in limited time spent at Mt Fuji.

**Vaccinations and Your Health** - We recommend that you contact either your local GP or a travel doctor for advice on vaccinations and travel health. [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) is a comprehensive website that you may also find useful.

**Climate** - Please refer to our website or brochure for detailed temperature charts.

**Insurance** - It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours 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.

### **What to Expect on Tour**

**Group Size** – In most cases, the group will operate with a minimum of 10 passengers.

**Accommodation** - Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and Japan. Rest assure that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

**Tippling** - Tipping is not practiced in Japan, not even to waitresses, taxi drivers, or bellboys. Attempts at leaving a tip can cause confusion.

**Respecting Local Customs and Traditions** - Japanese society and culture is built on intricate social etiquette and customs. As foreigners, we are not expected to be knowledgeable about all etiquette, but it will make your time in Japan more enjoyable if you are respectful of local customs. Some examples of scenarios you may encounter include removing your shoes and hats when entering a temple or house (some restaurants as well). You may be supplied with slippers at some places, but please come prepared with plenty of clean socks with no holes, and shoes that are easy to take off for the fairly regular occasions when they must be removed. Your will mention some of these other customs to you in the first few days of your tour.

**Meals** - All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout Japan.

Breakfast will be buffet style. Lunches and dinners are pre- set options as is custom in many local restaurants. These are also pre-booked in advance prior to your arrival by your guides. This will provide greater flexibility and allow you to sample a broad range of local cuisines and dishes. All beverages will be at your own expense and are readily available.

Food is an important element of Japanese culture. It is a time for families and friends to come together and much of family life revolves around the dinner table. Most food is eaten with chopsticks so best get practicing as cutlery is not always available at restaurants.

Tea and coffee facilities are not always available in hotels in Japan, so bring your own supply of coffee and tea bags.

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**Personal Expenses-** You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of £150 per week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

**After Your Booking**

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard a suggested packing list, along with your final itinerary and international etickets.

Updated November 2014