



Jewels of Japan

Classic Tour | 11 Days | Moderate

Tokyo - Fuji Five Lakes - Kyoto - Hiroshima - Osaka

Immerse yourself in the unique and fascinating culture of Japan taking in the futuristic cities, imperial heritage and magnificent nature that this country has to offer.

- Discover the delights of vibrant Tokyo
- Admire breathtaking Mount Fuji
- Make your own Japanese soba noodles
- Experience the speedy bullet train
- Explore Japan's history in Kyoto



Jewels of Japan tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals (From dinner on day 1 to breakfast on the last day)
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with ABTA, ATOL and IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Classic Tours:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Japan on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully-inclusive basis so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

Moderate Tours:

'Jewels of Japan' is a **moderate** tour. This means that the itinerary requires a good level of fitness.

- On several days there will be sightseeing on foot for extended periods of time, often involving steps or uneven ground.
- You will be required to get on and off the boat on Tokyo Bay without assistance.

Of course, our National Escort will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Itinerary – Jewels of Japan

Days 1-2: Tokyo

Fly overnight to Tokyo, the capital of Japan and transfer approximately 1.5 hours to your hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to explore the city until an informal welcome dinner tonight. Group members arriving late in the evening may miss dinner but will receive a refund if so.

Please note: Early check in is not included. If your flight arrives in the morning and you wish to arrange this, please speak to your reservations consultant. Transfers will differ depending on group size, but you may share a coach with other passengers who are not part of a Wendy Wu Tour. Meals will be at your own discretion until your welcome dinner tonight.



Destination Information

Tokyo – One of the world's most cutting-edge capital cities, Tokyo is a city of contrasts, famous for its neon-lit landscape, towering skyscrapers, peaceful shrines and lovingly tended gardens. Although long the political and cultural centre of Japan, Tokyo became the official capital when the Meiji Emperor moved it to Tokyo in 1867.

Day 3: Tokyo

Tokyo is the ultimate 24-hour city, but look behind its frantic, high-tech frontage and you'll find plenty of tranquil backstreets and old temples to explore; today take a tour by coach of this fascinating city. Head to the 1st observatory of the Tokyo Skytree for panoramic views over the city before taking a wander through the district of Asakusa for an opportunity to pick up some souvenirs on Nakamise Shopping street and visit Sensoji Temple. Explore the Edo Tokyo Museum or the Tokyo National Museum (which you visit is dependent on the day of the week) and Tokyo's Imperial Palace East Garden (you will not enter the palace itself). You will be on your feet for 4-5 hours during your touring in Tokyo. Dinner this evening will be at a local restaurant within walking distance of your hotel.

Destination Information

Tokyo Skytree – is the tallest structure in Japan and the tallest tower in the world. Tokyo Skytree is predominantly a television and radio broadcast tower and is earthquake resistant.

Sensoji Temple – is an ancient Buddhist Temple and the oldest in Tokyo. The temple was originally founded in the 7th century. The temple adorns an image of the Buddhist Goddess Kannon, who was said to have been rescued by two fishermen from the Sumida River in Tokyo.

Tokyo Imperial Plaza Garden – Is the garden belonging to the main residence of the Emperor of Japan. Built on the original site of Edo Castle, the Plaza is made up of a palace, museum and large park.

Day 4: Tokyo

Spend a relaxed morning wandering around the classical landscapes of the Hamarikyu Garden and exploring the huge evergreen forest that encompasses the Shinto Meiji Shrine. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before returning to your hotel, driving by the Shibuya “Scramble” Crossing on the way. Return to your hotel where your guide will let you know what time to meet for this evenings dinner cruise, the rest of the afternoon is free for you to explore independently or relax in the hotel. Transfer from the hotel to your boat and take a leisurely 1-hour dinner cruise on Tokyo Bay for some excellent city vistas. You will need to get on and off your boat this evening without assistance.

Destination Information

Hamarikyu Gardens – is a beautiful example of Japanese garden style which sits at the mouth of the Sumida River.

Meiji Shrine – Is a Shinto shrine dedicated to the Emperor Meiji and his wife Empress Shoken.

Day 5: Tokyo - Fuji Five Lakes

Journey 2 hours through the foothills of the iconic Mount Fuji to its base, where you will find the Fuji Five Lakes. The region is spectacular with the calm waters of the five lakes, formed by past volcanic eruptions, reflecting Fuji’s picture-perfect cone. Try your hand at making traditional Japanese soba noodles before tucking in to your creations for lunch. Continue to Oshino Hakkai, a scenic area of ponds full of crystal clear spring water created by Fuji’s melting snow, where there is also a small museum, Hannoki Bayashi Shiryokan. The museum is a traditional farm house with household items, samurai armour and weapons. Please note during bad weather or if there is a special event on Hannoki Bayashi Shiryokan may be closed.

In the Fuji Five Lakes area we use a selection of hotels, some of which are more traditional in style we use a selection of hotels but you will be accommodated in Western-style rooms.

Destination Information

Fuji Five Lakes – Formed by previous Mount Fuji eruptions, the Fuji Five Lakes is a region at the base of Mount Fuji made up of five beautiful lakes.

Mount Fuji - At 3,776m, Mount Fuji is the highest of Japan's mountains and an iconic symbol of the country. Mount Fuji is notoriously shy and is often enveloped by clouds.

Day 6: Mount Fuji

Today is a full day of touring, start with a visit to the Fuji San World Heritage Centre where you can learn about the cultural and ecological history of Mount Fuji. Head up Fuji's 5th Station for spectacular mountain vistas, please note it is only possible to reach the 5th station if weather permits. After lunch transfer 1.5 hours to Iyashi no Sato historical village, located on the western shores of Lake Saiko, it is famous for its thatched-roofed houses. Return to your hotel for dinner.



Please note: You will need to pack a smaller overnight bag for tonight as your main luggage will be transferred this morning to your Kyoto hotel.

Destination Information

Fuji San World Heritage Centre – is a comprehensive introduction to the nature, culture, history and ecology of Mount Fuji.

Iyashi no Sato Historical Village – is a replica village based on a former farming village which was destroyed by a landslide in 1966. The houses here have traditional thatched roof.

Day 7: Fuji Five Lakes - Kyoto

Drive 1 hour 45 minutes to Mishima to board your 2-hour bullet train to Kyoto. An enchanting city, Kyoto was capital for a thousand years; today it is the legacy of ancient Japan, full of tranquil temples, silk-clad geisha and sublime gardens. Visit a traditional teahouse where you will be joined by a Geisha or an apprentice Geisha, known as a Maiko. Next, take a tour of the Ryoanji Temple before heading to the Kinkakuji Temple, also known as the Golden Pavilion, due to its gold-like exterior. Continue to your hotel to check in for a 2-night stay.



Destination Information

Kyoto - was the ancient capital of Japan for approximately 1,000 years until 1867 when it was moved to Tokyo. Many national treasures can be found in Kyoto and in nearby Nara, including old shrines and temples, screen paintings, beautiful gardens, and statues of Buddha.

Geisha – the art of the Geisha can be traced back to the Edo Period. Geisha are highly skilled entertainers who will perform with a musical instrument, a tea ceremony, Ikebana etc to entertain her guests. Geisha usually wear kimonos and an obi, a sash for traditional Japanese dress.

Ryoanji Temple – is a Zen temple which is renowned for its garden which features a dry, sand landscape with large rocks and smooth pebbles.

Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) – is a Buddhist temple and is an excellent example of Japanese garden design. The structure is a brilliant golden hue colour and is very minimalistic.

Day 8: Kyoto

Start the day visiting the spectacular Kiyomizu Temple. You will spend 1.5 hours on foot exploring the temple. After lunch, learn traditional Japanese handicrafts such as origami and enjoy the art of a tea ceremony. Return to your hotel and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

Please note: Kiyomizu Temple is undergoing renovations which may last until 2020. You can still visit the temple and the shrines around it and your touring will not be affected. If you require any further details, please visit the link: <http://www.kiyomizudera.or.jp/en/news/>

Destination Information

Kiyomizu Temple – Is a 16th century Buddhist Temple in Kyoto. A highlight is the Hondo's veranda which is perched over the hillside, offering spectacular woodland vistas.

Day 9: Kyoto - Hiroshima

This morning, transfer to Kyoto station and take the bullet train to Hiroshima, a journey of 1 hour 40 minutes. A modern and prosperous city, Hiroshima will be forever remembered as the world's first atomic bomb target. Travel by coach to the famous Peace Memorial Park and Museum. Please be aware that the museum may be confronting and upsetting for some group members and it is at your discretion if you wish to visit or enjoy time at leisure exploring the Peace Memorial Park. After lunch, travel 1 hour by coach and take a short ferry ride to Miyajima Island, where sightseeing will be at a leisurely pace on foot. Visit Itsukushima Shrine and explore the traditional market town at leisure. Later this afternoon, return by ferry and then coach to Hiroshima for dinner before checking into your hotel.



Destination Information

Hiroshima - An atomic bomb was dropped over Hiroshima on 6th August 1945, and the city's name became famous worldwide for this unenviable distinction. The destructive power of the bomb obliterated nearly everything within a 2km radius. The city has been rebuilt and has risen phoenix-like from the ashes and destroyed sites of historical heritage were reconstructed.

Peace Memorial Park and Museum - One of the most prominent features of the city. The trees, lawns and walking paths are in stark contrast to the surrounding downtown area. Before the bomb, the area of what is now the Peace Memorial Park was the political and commercial heart of the city and this is why it was chosen as the pilot's target. The museum focuses on the events of August 6 and the subsequent outcome for the residents.

Miyajima - A small island less than an hour outside of Hiroshima. While officially named Itsukushima, the island is more commonly referred to as Miyajima, Japanese for 'Shrine Island'. This is because the island is well-known for its main attraction, Itsukushima Shrine, a giant torii gate, which at high tide seems to float on the water.

Day 10: Hiroshima - Osaka

Travel 3.5 hours by coach to Himeji, with a rest stop along the way. On arrival, enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before visiting the beautiful Himeji Castle and Koko-en Garden. Himeji Castle is largely in its original condition so, please be mindful of your step when walking around. You will have to remove your shoes before walking along some of the wooden floors and there are some steep wooden steps to reach certain areas. After the reopening in March 2015, Himeji Castle has welcomed a large number of visitors. As such, they now issue numbered tickets to enter the Main Keep in order to limit the number of people who can enter, reducing congestion, waiting time and to protect the cultural properties. Please note this means that there may be cases where some visitors are not allowed to enter the Main Keep, however, there are many other parts of the castle to explore. Transfer approximately 2 hours to Osaka for your overnight stay.



Please note: There will be a substantial amount of walking today, including a large number of steps.

Destination Information

Himeji - The second largest city of Hyogo Prefecture after Kobe, with approximately half a million inhabitants. Most famous for its magnificent castle.

Himeji Castle - Widely considered as Japan's most magnificent castle for its imposing size and beauty. The well-preserved castle is both a national and world heritage listed treasure. Himeji Castle has never been destroyed by war, earthquake or fire and survives to this day as one of the country's twelve original castles.

Day 11: Depart Osaka

This morning is free at leisure before you transfer to Osaka airport for your return flight home.

Please note: Only breakfast is included today. Late check-out is not included in our Jewels of Japan tour. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in Osaka, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

Jewels of Japan Travel Information

Visas

A visa is not required for UK citizens visiting Japan.

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. These details will be available to your national escort should they be required. 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.

Eating in Japan

Japanese cuisine is delicious, colourful and healthy. Meals are usually served with a bowl of rice and a bowl of miso soup and consist usually of fish, pickled vegetables and meat. Japan's other main staple is noodles, most famous being Udon and Soba. 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. 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.

Breakfast will mostly be buffet style but may be a set-menu. Lunches are mostly pre-set options as is custom in many local restaurants. Dinner is usually buffet-style, featuring a wide selection of high quality Japanese and Western dishes, but may occasionally be a set-menu. We usually find this style of dining suits the wide and varied tastes of our customers on tour. 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. Please note: if you have any dietary requirements, you need to inform us before your tour starts, and please be aware that restaurants may not always be able to accommodate these. Gluten-free food may not be as readily available as in the UK.

On some days where lots of sights are covered, dinner times may be early and your tour group may head directly to the restaurant after sightseeing without stopping at your hotel to freshen up.

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. In the Fuji Five Lakes area, hotels tend to be more traditional in style and culture. In this area, you may be asked to take your shoes off at the door and store them in a secure locker – this is very traditional Japanese culture.



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.

Please note that in Japan hotel rooms and bathrooms are renowned for being small. Standard single rooms are usually smaller than a standard double or twin room, contain one small double bed (or one single bed), and are designed for one person to use. For your comfort, we have selected to book twin rooms for single use on all of our escorted group tours. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Hotels in Japan often do not have porters and you will be required to carry your own luggage. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/local guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Roads in Japan are extremely well maintained and are comparatively smooth with the rest of Asia.

Bullet trains: Second class reserved seats are booked for our groups on bullet trains; there will be toilet facilities on board. Due to the limited space on bullet trains, a separate luggage transfer service will be arranged for all suitcases. You will need to pack a separate overnight bag to carry on the train as your suitcase will not arrive until the following day after a bullet train journey. Your guide will indicate when you will need to prepare for this throughout your tour.

Development in Japan

Japan is a developed country and as such matches the west in modernity and technological advances. Japan is an extremely safe country and takes great responsibility in maintaining high safety standards.

Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a national escort. There will usually be no more than 29 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

Climate

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

After your booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

Itinerary changes

It is our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

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