



The Golden Route

Exclusive Tour | 12 Days | Comfortable
Tokyo – Hakone – Kyoto – Osaka

Explore Japan in 5 star style travelling from Tokyo to Osaka experiencing all the quintessential elements of Japan as you go, from the unique culture to the breathtaking landscapes.

- Learn to make sushi like the locals
- Take a cruise on Lake Ashi
- Marvel at the Magnificent Mt Fuji
- Experience the speedy Bullet Train
- Study the art of Kendo
- Discover Zen meditation



The Golden Route tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- 5* accommodation throughout
- Meals as stated in the itinerary
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- 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, meals not included, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Exclusive Tours:

These tours have been meticulously designed with the more discerning traveller in mind. Our deluxe journeys through Asia feature distinctive and exclusive experiences which bring the region to life. Our exclusive collection tours include:

- Champagne moments
- Unique experiences
- Small group sizes
- UK chauffeur transfers
- Porter service to and from your hotel rooms
- A mid tour Laundry service

Comfortable Tours:

'The Golden Route' is a **comfortable** tour. Although this is the easiest grading of tour Wendy Wu Tours offers it still requires a reasonable level of fitness.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- You will be required to get on and off the boat at Lake Ashi without assistance

Of course, our National Escort and local guides 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 – The Golden Route

Days 1-2: Tokyo

Meals included: Dinner

Travel by chauffeured transfer to the airport for your overnight flight to Tokyo, the capital of Japan and transfer approximately 1 and a half 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.

Please note: Early check in is not included today, if your flight arrives in the morning and you wish to arrange this please speak to your reservations consultant.



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

Meals included: Breakfast

Tokyo is an ultra modern yet deeply traditional city. This morning you will be picked up by coach for a city tour; you will spend approximately 3 to 4 hours on foot sightseeing. Head to the top of the Tokyo Skytree for panoramic views over the city before trying on traditional Kimonos and wandering through the district of Asakusa, stopping at the Sensoji Temple and Nakamise shopping street. This afternoon explore the Edo Tokyo Museum and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.



For May and September departures only: Tickets to a Sumo tournament this afternoon are included. Many of Japan's most ancient traditions are preserved in the sport; the ritual involved in the performance is just as fascinating to watch as the sport itself.

Destination Information

Tokyo Skytree – 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 – An ancient Buddhist Temple and the oldest in Tokyo; the Sensoji 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.

Edo Tokyo Museum - Learn more about Tokyo's history and culture at the Edo-Tokyo Museum. The museum's permanent exhibition illustrates the Tokyo's past dating back to when it was known as Edo, including Edo Period architecture, cultural heritage, politics and more.

Day 4: Tokyo

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Spend a morning at leisure before transferring to a sushi restaurant for lunch where you will learn the art of sushi making. After lunch take a look at the famous Shibuya road crossing and visit the impressive Meiji shrine, sightseeing will involve approximately 2 hours on foot. This evening admire the bright lights of the city from a dinner cruise on Tokyo bay.



Destination Information

Meiji Shrine – Located in a huge evergreen forest the Meiji Shrine is dedicated to the spirits of Emperor Meiji and his wife Empress Shoken.

Day 5: Tokyo – Hakone

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning transfer 2 hours to the spa region of Hakone and take a 15 minute cruise on the calm waters of Lake Ashi to enjoy the stunning scenery. Next take the 7 minute cable car to the summit of Mount Komagatake, if the weather permits you will get a magnificent view of Mt Fuji. Head back down the mountain and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Explore the fascinating Hakone Open-air Museum where you will find a wonderful sculpture garden and an impressive collection of works from artists such as Picasso and Henry Moore, you will be at the museum for approximately 1 hour. Transfer half an hour to your hotel in time for dinner.



Destination Information

Lake Ashi – Formed after Mount Hakone's last eruption 3000 years ago, Lake Ashi is the symbol of Hakone and on a clear day offers spectacular views of Mount Fuji in the distance.

Mount Komagatake – Created by a Hakone Volcanic eruption 40,000 years ago Mount Komagatake is a 1357 metre high lava dome.

Hakone Open-air Museum – Opening in 1969 the Hakone Open Air Museum was Japan's first open-air museum.

Day 6: Hakone

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Transfer 2 hours to Japan's most iconic landmark – Mount Fuji. Start at the Mount Fuji Visitor Centre for an introduction to this world-famous mountain before heading to the 5th Station and enjoy a glass of Sake. Please note travelling to the 5th station at Mount Fuji is only possible if weather conditions permit it. Return to your hotel for an afternoon at leisure.



Destination Information

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 7: Hakone - Kyoto

Meals included: Breakfast

Transfer 45 mins to Odawara station where you will board the 2-hour Bullet train to Kyoto; your luggage will be transferred separately and will arrive at your hotel later today. On arrival the rest of your day is at leisure; check in time at your hotel will be from 5pm.



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.

Day 8: Kyoto

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Take a full day tour of the city by coach today starting at Kinkaku-ji, the 'Golden Pavilion' and Japan's most famous classical garden – Ryoan-ji. Next you will have a couple of hours of free time in the Arashiyama district where you can explore the Bamboo forest and wander the shops. This afternoon take part in a Kendo lesson to learn the basic forms and techniques of this martial art before enjoying a Maiko (apprentice Geisha) performance and a traditional Japanese meal.



Destination Information

Kinkaku-ji Temple - 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.

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

Arashiyama – Famed for the Bamboo grove, Arashiyama is a sightseeing district of Kyoto filled with temples and shrines.

Day 9: Kyoto

Meals included: Breakfast

This morning learn the art of meditation at a Buddhist centre of Zen, Kodaiji temple; you will be here for approximately 1 and half hours for meditation and a traditional tea ceremony. Next visit the impressive Kiyomizu Temple and take a stroll around the old neighbourhood of Higashiyama stopping to learn about some of Japans traditional arts – Calligraphy and Origami. The rest of the day is at leisure.



Destination Information

Kodaiji Temple – The temple was established in 1606 in memory of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, one of Japan's greatest historical figures, Kodaiji is surrounded by peaceful Zen gardens.

Kiyomizu Temple – Meaning 'Pure Water Temple', Kiyomizu is one of the most celebrated temples of Japan and houses the Jishu Shrine dedicated to the deity of love.

Day 10: Kyoto - Osaka

Meals included: Breakfast

Visit the enchanting Fushimi Inari Taisha, an important Shinto shrine, before transferring 1 hour to Nara. Explore the city visiting Todaiji Temple, to see the Great Buddha, Nara Deer Park and Kasuga Shrine; sightseeing in Nara will last approximately 4 hours. Transfer 1 hour to Osaka to check into your hotel.



Destination Information

Fushimi Inari Taisha – Famous for its brilliant red traditional torii gates, Fushimi Inari shrine sits at the base of the mountain also called Inari and is the head shrine for 40,000 Inari shrines throughout the country.

Nara - With eight Unesco World Heritage Sites the beautiful city of Nara was Japan's first permanent capital.

Osaka - Japan's third largest city. What Osaka lacks in sightseeing locations, it makes up for with its flamboyance, fun loving people and amazing food.

Day 11: Osaka

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning take a tour of the city by coach stopping at the Umeda Sky Building where you will visit the rooftop observatory, continue on to the vibrant Dotonbori district and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. This afternoon is free at leisure before a delicious farewell meal this evening.



Destination Information

Umeda Sky Building – The 173 metre tall Umeda Sky Building is built as two towers connected with each other by the "Floating Garden Observatory" on the 39th floor.

Dotonbori district – Historically a theatre district and still a popular entertainment area today the Dotonbori district offer an eccentric and electric atmosphere.

Day 12: Osaka

Meals included: Breakfast

Transfer 1 hour to the airport, according to the time of your international flight departure. Any time before your flight is at leisure. On arrival at the airport in the UK, be met by your airport chauffeur who will transfer you back home.

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



The Golden Route 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. 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.

We have included all of your breakfast meals throughout your itinerary and some lunch and evening meals. For these included meals we have arranged for you to dine in not only high-end restaurants, but those that allow customers to experience and taste the real flavours of the local area. For those meals which are not included, this gives you the opportunity to select your own dining experience, allowing you to immerse in the local culture or take advantage of your hotels' many restaurant options.

Evenings at leisure

To give you more flexibility and choice when travelling on selected Exclusive tours; we have carefully balanced special highlight meals with evenings at leisure so that you can explore the many culinary delights that Japan has to offer. Alternatively, you can use this time to enjoy the facilities of your luxurious accommodation. Your National Escort will be happy to provide you with advice about good places to eat, and assist in the booking of transportation to get you there (at your own expense).

Accommodation

As 'The Golden Route' tour is part of our Exclusive Collection, you will be staying in international 5* accommodation throughout your tour. We have provided time in your itinerary to have the opportunity to experience the facilities of your accommodation, or relax, allowing you to get the most out of the hotel experience. There will be a laundry service provided at your Kyoto hotel up to the value of JPY 8,500 per person.

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.

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 18 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. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

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 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.

Last updated: January 2017