



## The Best of the West

For our Best of the West Tour you can fly in and out of Kansai International Airport (Osaka) and visit the best that the western mainland has to offer. You will see everything from the modern bustling cities of Osaka and Hiroshima to the smaller more traditional towns of Kurashiki and Tsuwano in rural Japan. No trip to Japan would be complete without visiting Kyoto, where you will start your adventure.



## Kyoto

Kyoto is where you will find the Japan of silent temples nestling in bamboo groves, gardens of finely raked sand and bewitching geisha. This city is home to over 2,000 temples and shrines, exquisite crafts and some of the best cuisine in the country. In short, Kyoto is the heartbeat of traditional Japan.

Not to be missed are Kinkaku-ji, Ginkaku-ji and Kiyomizu temples, although be aware that these do become crowded. For a more peaceful, intimate temple experience we recommend the temple complex of Daitoku-ji, in particular Daisen-in sub-temple, and the Arashiyama area to the west of the city.

## Hiroshima, Miyajima island

Hiroshima is an attractive, cosmopolitan city which has risen from the Ashes of the world's first atomic bomb attack on 6 August 1945. The hypocentre of the explosion is now the Peace Memorial Park, a beautiful expanse of greenery housing monuments to the tragedy. The park is flanked by the A-Bomb Dome, the former Industrial Promotion Hall which is the only surviving building from the blast, and the Peace Memorial Museum which tells of the bomb and the devastation of Hiroshima.

A superb network of trams will transport you around the city to some of Hiroshima's other attractions, namely Hiroshima Castle and Hiroshima Museum of Art. You can also use the tram to take the scenic route to Miyajima Island.



## Tsuwano and Yonago

A quiet mountain town in rural Japan. The former samurai quarter houses some wonderful old building with colourful carp swimming up and down the roadside water channels. Just outside of town you can ride a cable car to the castle ruins for a beautiful view of the town and the surrounding mountains. The highlight of Yonago is the garden of the Adachi Museum of Art which have been named the best garden in Japan annually since 2003 by the Journal of Japanese Gardening.

## Kurashiki

In the Edo period Kurashiki was an important trading town for rice and later becoming known for textiles. Having largely escaped World War II bombing much of Kurashiki's old storehouses, mills and shops remain in good condition. With arching bridges and weeping willows flanking the Edo period canal, Kurashiki will give you a sense of where people lived and worked in old Japan.



## Osaka

Known as the "kitchen of Japan", Osaka is renowned for its warm-hearted, lively locals. Osaka Castle dominates the city as the old mixes with the very modern skyline and the aquarium is not to be missed. The city comes alive at night with endless opportunities to wine, dine and party. The beautiful port city of Kobe is also a stone's throw away. Known as the "kitchen of Japan", Osaka is renowned for its warm-hearted, lively locals. Osaka Castle dominates the city as the old mixes with the very modern skyline and the aquarium is not to be missed. The city comes alive at night with endless opportunities to wine, dine and party. The beautiful port city of Kobe is also a stone's throw away.



The JR Pass allows you almost unlimited travel for 7/14/21 days on all Japan Rail lines throughout the country. It allows you to travel on the world-famous Bullet Train (Shinkansen) as well as the popular ferry from Hiroshima to Miyajima.





# The Best of the West

## The Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrival in Japan, Meet & Greet at Kansai International Airport (Osaka)

Welcome to Japan! Our friendly Meet & Greet service representative will be waiting in the Arrivals lobby and holding a sign with your name on. The Meet & Greet will direct you to the express train to Kyoto. Check in to your clean and comfortable 3\* hotel in central Kyoto for 4 nights.

### Day 2: Kyoto

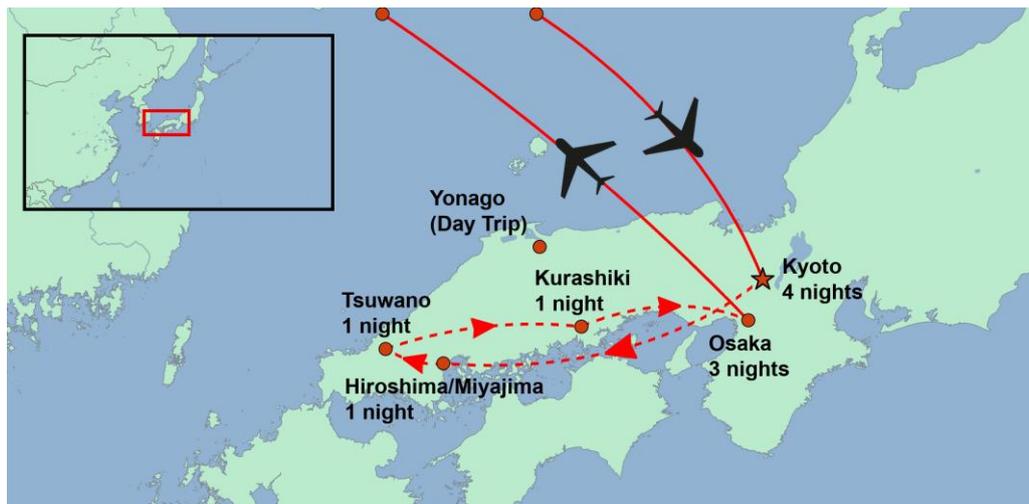
A rich history of religion, art and craft have combined to make this glorious city a spiritual home for the Japanese. For temples we recommend Kiyomizu-dera and Ginkaku-ji in the hills to the east of the city. Nijo Castle is also well worth a visit, and make sure you allow yourself plenty of time for the wonderful craft shops and delightful streets of Gion, the old geisha quarter.

**Optional guided excursion: Kyoto Day Tour** Join a guided coach tour. As well as visits to Nijo Castle, Kinkaku-ji (The Golden Temple), Sanjusangendo Temple and Kiyomizu Temple, today's tour also includes a delicious buffet-style lunch.

### Day 3: Nara at leisure

Whilst smaller than Kyoto, Nara is packed with attractions, with 8 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The most outstanding of these is Todai-ji temple, until recently one of the largest wooden buildings in the world and home to the Great Buddha statue – Japan's biggest. Other essential sights include Yakushi-ji and Horyu-ji temple, whose buildings include some of the world's oldest wooden structures.

**Optional guided excursion: Nara Afternoon Tour** Spend the afternoon on a guided coach tour to Nara. Your guide will



take you around Todaiji temple and Nara Park followed by visits to Kasuga Taisha Shrine before heading back to Kyoto by coach.

### Day 4: Kyoto

Spend another day in Kyoto where you may wish to venture out west to the leafy suburb of Arashiyama. Here you will find the magnificent bamboo forests and a hilltop monkey park where you can feed monkeys and enjoy a rewarding view of Kyoto.

### Day 5: Hiroshima/Miyajima

(Start using your 7-Day Japan Rail Pass today)

Check out of your hotel and board the Bullet Train to Hiroshima. The Atomic Bomb Dome and the moving Peace Memorial Park and Museum are sights not to be missed. Make the short trip by ferry to the lovely island of Miyajima. Enjoy the beautiful scenery and fantastic views of the o-torii of Itsukushima Shrine, one of the most famous sights in Japan. By late afternoon the day-trippers will have left the island, and you will spend a magical evening in a ryokan (traditional Japanese inn) where a delicious Japanese dinner and breakfast are included.

### Day 6: Miyajima-Tsuwano

After breakfast on Miyajima Island, you will make your way to the pleasant and relaxing town of Tsuwano affectionately referred to as "Little Kyoto". You will find koi carp swimming in the waterways along the beautiful streets of Tonomachi where you can explore the well-preserved samurai houses. Tonight, you will stay in a ryokan.

### Day 7: Yonago

Today journey east to visit the renowned Adachi Museum famous for its spectacular 6 gardens (and its collection of contemporary Japanese art). The landscape gardens are composed of the best pines and rocks collected from all over Japan and can be enjoyed in any season. In the late afternoon, board the train to Kurashiki where you will stay the night.

### Day 8: Kurashiki

Wake up in the picturesque town of Kurashiki. Take a stroll along Kurashiki's beautiful canals and visit a selection of traditional, feudal era warehouses that have been converted into an eclectic collection of museums the finest of which is the Ohara Museum. In the afternoon board the train



and bullet train to Osaka where you will stay 3 nights.

### Day 9: Osaka

Osaka is Japan's third largest city and will give you a taste of modern Japan. Spend the day enjoying the sights of Osaka including the lively Dotonbori district for shopping, eating and entertainment, Osaka castle and the wonderful Osaka aquarium.

#### Optional Tour: Osaka Bay Half Day

*On this tour you will visit the Osaka aquarium, one of the biggest public aquariums in the world. You will then board a replica of Christopher Columbus' flagship boat the, Santa Maria, for sightseeing cruise around Osaka Bay.*

### Day 10: Osaka

Spend a day at leisure in Osaka or take a day trip to the beautiful port town of Kobe. Considered one of Japan's most attractive cities, Kobe is sandwiched between the sea and the Rokko Mountain range where you can take a cable car to the top for a panoramic view of the city. You may wish to take the opportunity to dine on world famous Kobe beef.

### Day 11: Depart Japan

Transfer to Kansai International Airport (Osaka) for your flight back to the UK.

## Price Includes:

- 8 nights' accommodation in a Double/Twin room at 3\* hotels on a bed and breakfast basis.
- 2 nights' accommodation in a traditional Japanese ryokan including a delicious Japanese dinner and a breakfast in Miyajima and Tsuwano
- Airport transfer from Kansai International Airport to Kyoto on Day 1
- 7-day Japan Rail Pass allowing you unlimited travel on the entire Japan Rail network including Shinkansen (Bullet Train) services.
- Meet & Greet service on arrival at Kansai International Airport (Tokyo)
- Detailed Japan Journeys Information Pack including detailed train schedules, maps, & brochures.
- Personalised Japan Journeys App to help manage your documents.
- All Japanese sales taxes and service charge.
- Full financial protection via Japan Journeys' membership of the Travel Trust Association through which your monies are held in a Trust Account until you return home (under Membership No. U3078), see: <http://www.traveltrust.co.uk>

## Not Included In Price:

- International airfare
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Airport transfer on arrival
- Entrance fees
- Taxi, subway and tramway fees
- Insurance

#### Optional Tours Price:

Kyoto 1-Day Tour: **£111.00** per person

Nara Afternoon Tour: **£72.00** per person

Osaka Bay Half Day: **£99.00** per person

#### 3\* ACCOMMODATION

*from* **£1,345.00**

**per person based on  
Twin/Double room  
occupancy.**

*from* **£1,595.00**

**Single room occupancy**

#### 4\* and 5\* ACCOMMODATION

Please enquire



All price estimates are based on current rates of exchange and are subject to availability.

To make a booking, a deposit of **£250.00** per person is required. The balance of the price of the trip must be made 12 weeks prior to departure.

## HOW OUR INDEPENDENT TOURS WORK

Enjoy independent travel but not the hassle of planning? One of our Independent Tours could be just the ticket. Carefully put together by our team of specialists, our excellent collection of sample itineraries are designed to inform and inspire your next Japan adventure. Every one of our Independent Tours is fully tailor made for you, ensuring your trip is everything you want it to be.

It's quite straight forward to travel independently in Japan. We will provide just the right amount of support and logistical planning to make you feel comfortable in a very foreign land. These itineraries are available for any departure date (with a few exclusions which coinciding with Japanese National Holidays and some weekends). We'll do all the work for you and provide you with an information pack to make your trip run smoothly. You can also add guided tours as indicated and if you do want your own personal Guide, we can arrange this too.

## WHAT NEXT?

If you're interested in this itinerary, please let us know the following and we will get back to you with a quote:

- Your proposed dates of travel
- Your preferred grade of accommodation (e.g. 3\*, 4\*, or 5\*)
- Your preferred room type (e.g. Double, Twin or Singles)
- How many adults and children this is for (and the age of the children at the time of travel)

## NOT FROM THE UK?

Don't worry! We deal with countless passengers from outside of the UK. You just need to let us know the information above (and you can arrange your own flights to Japan).

To find out more, call one of our specialists now on **+44(0) 208 064 2771**.

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