



CLASSIC JAPAN - A LUXURY SMALL GROUP JOURNEY (2024)

Discover the incredible breadth of Japan's culture and history, from the contemporary flair of Tokyo to the charms of traditional Kyoto, visiting historic temples, overnighting at a sought-after ryokan and sampling its culinary treasures.

Small Group Journeys, Luxury Small Group Journeys



Asia, Japan



9 days from AU\$23,300 pp



18 Guests

Journey Overview

Discover the incredible breadth of Japan's culture and history, from the contemporary flair of Tokyo to the charms of traditional Kyoto, visiting historic temples, overnighting at a sought-after ryokan and sampling culinary treasures.

Journey Highlights

- Behold the exalted flowering cherry trees, known locally as *sakura*, or view the vivid red leaves of autumn
- Experience neon-lit Tokyo and feel the vitality of this buzzy world capital, playing *taiko* drums and visiting a seafood market
- Stay at Gôra Kadan, one of the country's most exclusive *ryokans* (traditional inns), thanks to A&K's small group size
- Zoom by bullet train along the classic stretch past majestic Mount Fuji to Osaka, where you savour a foodie experience in the renowned Dotonbori district
- Immerse yourself in the rich cultural heritage of Kyoto as you discover the art of the tea ceremony, witness sumo wrestling and take part in a special geisha dinner



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Tokyo, Japan

Arrive in Tokyo, Japan's exciting and modern capital. Transfer to your hotel, located near the Imperial Palace.

Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Otemachi

Day 2: Tokyo | Spiritual Centres & Exclusive Workshops

This morning, visit Asakusa Kannon Temple. This colourful pagoda-style temple was completed in 645 and is dedicated to Kannon, the goddess of mercy in several East Asian spiritual traditions. Continue to a family-owned workshop that specialises in Japanese drum making — and try your hand at playing the *taiko* — on an A&K-exclusive experience. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before exploring the Tokyo National Museum, the oldest national museum in Japan and home to a vast collection of Japanese art and antiquities. Continue to Meiji Shrine, a Shinto complex dedicated to an emperor that was rebuilt after World War II. Tonight, gather for a welcome dinner.

Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Otemachi | Meals: BLD

Day 3: Tokyo | Design Your Day

Start your day at a local fish market, a bustling hub of Japanese daily life boasting a dizzying array of seafood. Then, receive a lesson in sushi making, followed by lunch, during a Chef's Table experience. This afternoon, enjoy one of these **Design Your Day** activities.

- **Explore the Mori Art Museum** to take in local contemporary art.
- **Learn the Secrets of the Samurai Warriors** and test your sword skills during a private class led by a modern-day master samurai.
- **Indulge in a Sake Tasting**, sampling some of Japan's finest sake and learning about its cultural importance.

Return to your hotel for an evening at leisure.

Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Otemachi | Meals: BL

Day 4: Hakone | Traditional Ryokan

Travel to Hakone, among Japan's most popular hot-spring destinations, and immerse yourself in the stunning beauty of Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park. Board an aerial tram rising above the wooded slopes for inspiring views of Mount Fuji. Enjoy lunch before strolling the grassy hillsides of Hakone's Open-Air Museum. Admire the impressive contemporary sculptures and artwork on display, including pieces by Henry Moore and Rodin. The museum also features one of the world's finest Picasso exhibits, with over 100 works by the cubist master. Tonight, experience unparalleled service and traditional Japanese cuisine at Gôra Kadan, a top-rated ryokan (traditional inn), which is also your accommodation for the night.

Gôra Kadan | Meals: BLD

Day 5: Osaka | Dotonbori District Delicacies

After breakfast at your ryokan, visit the Okada Museum of Art to view its stunning collection of paintings, ceramics, lacquerware and bronzes from Japan, Korea and China. Then, Ride Like a Local by bullet train to Osaka. Historically known as a merchant city, it is today renowned as Japan's undisputed culinary capital, where diners indulge in everything from octopus dumplings to okonomiyaki, a battered, grilled concoction of chopped cabbage, meat or seafood, and seaweed, topped with mayonnaise. This evening, take in city views, refreshing drink in hand, on a Scenic Sundowner, before you set out on a foodie tour in the popular Dotonbori District, sampling dishes from the brilliantly lighted and gastronomically creative restaurants that line the street.

The St. Regis Osaka | Meals: BL

Day 6: Nara | Insights into a Profoundly Spiritual Heritage

Travel to Nara, Japan's first capital, to visit Todai-ji, a temple complex and UNESCO World Heritage Site that contains the largest bronze Buddha statue in Japan. Proceed to Nara Park, home to hundreds of deer, venerated here as divine spirits, which you have the opportunity to feed by hand. Complete your Nara excursion with a visit to celebrated Kasuga Taisha Shrine and experience a Shinto ceremony firsthand. Pause for lunch at a local restaurant before proceeding to the Kehaya-za Sumo Pavilion, where you observe a demonstration of this fabled Japanese sport by two sumo wrestlers. Return to your hotel, where you enjoy dinner.

The St. Regis Osaka | Meals: BLD

Day 7: Kyoto | The Golden Pavilion & Bamboo Grove

Travel into Kyoto early this morning to contemplate the iconic Zen rock garden at Ryoan-ji, the perfect spot for a meditative moment, and discover the glittering Kinkaku-ji Temple (Golden Pavilion) — covered with gold leaf and surrounded by green gardens — casting its delicate reflection in the tranquil pond beside it. After lunch, explore the Arashiyama neighbourhood, including the garden of Tenryu-ji Temple. Later, bask in the magical atmosphere of Arashiyama Bamboo Grove, strolling along a winding path as sunlight filters down through towering bamboo shoots, considered by many a healing experience.

Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto | Meals: BL

Day 8: Kyoto | Hillside Views & Tea Traditions

Visit Kiyomizu-dera Temple for stunning views of Kyoto. Proceed to a local temple to experience the art of the tea ceremony, noting its refined sense of hospitality and etiquette, which dates to the time of the samurai. Tonight, savour traditional Japanese cuisine, while an attending *geiko* (as a geisha is known in Kyoto) and *maiko* (apprentice geisha) dance, sing, pour sake and share stories about life in modern Kyoto.

Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto | Meals: BD

Day 9: Depart Kyoto

After breakfast, transfer to Kansai International Airport or Itami Airport, both located just outside of Osaka, for your flight home, or begin a post-tour extension to Hiroshima.

Meals: B

Journey Details

This journey includes long walks.

Minimum age is 10 years.

First group event: welcome briefing at 8:00 a.m. on Day 2.

Last group event: farewell dinner at 7:00 p.m. on Day 8.

Departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 2 guests.

Please note: Cherry Blossoms & Red Leaves: Springtime in Japan is glorious, with the iconic *sakura* (cherry blossoms) on full display. Likewise, autumn's red maple leaves are inspiring to behold. Choose from select departures for the chance to set eyes on them. Contact A&K for details.

Included with every Luxury Small Group Journey

- English-Speaking Resident Tour Director and Local Guides
- Hand-Selected Luxury Accommodations
- Airport Meet and Greet with Private Transfers
- Travelling Bell Boy Luggage Handling
- Breakfast in Bed on Select Days
- Full Breakfast Daily; Select Lunches and Dinners
- Your Choice of Activity on Design Your Day
- Traveller's Valet Laundry Service
- Internet Access
- Entrance Fees, Taxes and All Gratuities Except Resident Tour Director
- 24/7 A&K On-Call Support
- Guaranteed Departures with Just Two Guests

Customise this Journey

Talk to one of our expert Journey Designers or your travel agent about booking this tour as a private journey for your own small group with family or friends. Or, if you would prefer to travel privately, find out more about creating the perfect bespoke Tailor-Made Journey based on this itinerary.

Map



Extensions



Nikko Pre Tour Extension -
A Luxury Small Group
Journey (2024)

See Details



Hiroshima Post Tour
Extension - A Luxury Small
Group Journey (2024)

See Details

Accommodation

Gôra Kadan



The sublime Gora Kadan is situated in the striking Hakone National Park. The former retreat of the Kanin-no-miya imperial family, the Gora Kadan is elegantly designed with tatami-style rooms, sliding-doors and futons overlooking a green valley of pine trees and celebrated cherry trees.

A mesmerising mixture of traditional and modern, the Gora Kadan offers the very best of Japanese hospitality and an authentic experience. Slip into your kimono and explore the grounds, then feel the 21st century melt away as you relax in the tranquil Onsen amongst the trees and bamboo forests, or have all of your cares smoothed away with a traditional Shiatsu massage.

Why we like it

- Gora Kadan is the former retreat of the Kanin-no-miya, the youngest of the four branches of the Imperial Family of Japan
- Enjoy an authentic Japanese experience with views overlooking Hakone National Park
- The restaurant serves traditional Kaiseki cuisine meticulously prepared by the skilful chefs
- We love the Kadan Suites; choose one with a private open-air bath, Jacuzzi and steam sauna or panoramic wooden bath
- The ultimate in relaxation in the warm alkaline waters of the large hot spring spa
- Facilities include a heated swimming pool, outdoor Jacuzzi, Kadan Spa and beauty

salon

St. Regis Osaka



Located along the famed street of Midosuji, heralded as the Champs Elysées of Osaka, the St. Regis Osaka is an eloquent expression of comfort, tranquillity and refined Japanese aesthetics. Each of its 160 rooms and suites are elegantly furnished with all the amenities you would expect, with the highlights being opulent marble bathrooms with deep soaking tubs, exclusive Remède bath amenities, walk in closets and picturesque city views.

If you can bring yourself to leave your private sanctuary, bask in the tranquillity of the outdoor rooftop Zen garden or indulge in a rejuvenating treatment in the Iridium Spa, exclusive to the St Regis Hotel Group. Or head to the distinguished St Regis bar and sink into one of the plush velvet armchairs to indulge in afternoon tea, handcrafted speciality cocktails, or both. When hunger calls, you won't need to venture far – the hotel boasts two exclusive restaurants: Rue D'or is a classically inspired bistro serving authentic French cuisine matched with the freshest Japanese produce, and the hotel's signature Northern Italian grill restaurant, La Veduta, transports diners to Tuscany with its multi-course dining and lavish buffets.

Why we like it

- The 24-hour St Regis Butler Service has been the signature of the St Regis experience for over a century
- The exclusive Iridium Spa is an exquisite sanctuary for the body and soul.
- Two exclusive restaurants, composing menus of Japanese, French and Italian cuisine
- Find serenity in the outdoor rooftop zen garden and terrace bar

Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto



Just 15 minutes' drive from the famous Gion Geisha District, the Four Seasons is perfectly positioned for exploring the historical and culturally rich city of Kyoto. Set in the scenic district of temples, the hotel has been designed around a beautiful 800-year old ikeniwa, or pond garden.

The spacious guest rooms blend refined, modern aesthetics and the creations of Japanese artisans - including washi-paper lamps, fusuma screens and urushi lacquerware.

The hotel's eclectic mix of restaurants, lounges and bars will satisfy even the most discerning foodies, including their unique Tea House, set in a beautiful 800-year-old pond garden. A specialist sushi restaurant serves up fresh and elegant creations at the characterful, 10-seater Hinoki counter.

The peaceful Four Seasons' spa offers an extensive treatment list, including their authentic and energising Sake Bath. Two saunas, steam rooms, whirlpools and a contemporary swimming pool are also at guests' disposal. At the end of a busy day exploring Kyoto, sink into a customised Four Seasons bed in your spacious suite for a good night's sleep.

Why we like it

- A thoroughly modern embodiment of Japanese culture and tradition
- 800-year-old garden centred around a meditative pond
- Seven spa treatment rooms, including a couples' spa suite
- Garden Tea House by day sake bar by night
- Myoho-In and Sanjusangendo Temples are just five minutes from the property

Dates & Pricing

Prices are in AUD, per person, based on double occupancy

Sep 16, 2024 - Sep 24, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Sep 23, 2024 - Oct 1, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Sep 30, 2024 - Oct 8, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Oct 4, 2024 - Oct 12, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$24,545 pp	AU\$11,840	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Oct 7, 2024 - Oct 15, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Oct 14, 2024 - Oct 22, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Oct 18, 2024 - Oct 26, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Oct 21, 2024 - Oct 29, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$25,630 pp	AU\$12,915	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Oct 25, 2024 - Nov 2, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Nov 1, 2024 - Nov 9, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Nov 15, 2024 - Nov 23, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Nov 22, 2024 - Nov 30, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Nov 29, 2024 - Dec 7, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$23,300 pp	AU\$10,760	AU\$0	Call for Availability

Abercrombie & Kent

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