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# Japan's Golden Route

*A Quintessential Active Adventure to Experience Japan's Beauty & Culture*



***Kiyomizu-dera Temple in autumn***

2026 DATES	Double	Single
October 13	\$13,495	\$17,395

2027 DATES	Double	Single
May 12	\$13,995	\$17,795
October	TBA	TBA

## **Book by April 2 & SAVE \$500pp**

*Within 70 days of departure, flights and prices are subject to availability. Land-only pricing is available, and alternative "home airports" can be arranged, subject to availability and price. ([See Terms & Conditions - Prices](#))*

TOUR DETAILS	
Duration	16 Days
Fitness Scale	<a href="#">Level A2</a>
Group Size	Max 16
Flights	INCLUDED

**Haven't heard of our Connections Program? Find out more [here](#).**

**BOOK NOW**

**PRINT INFO**

This is the best of Japan! In Tokyo, experience the interesting juxtaposition of imperial

heritage with the modern, metropolis. Hike Mount Takao, and walk the ancient Nakasendo trail. You will marvel at the majestic Mount Fuji, visit historic Hiroshima, and experience Kyoto's ancient temples and traditions.

Japanese cultural experiences abound. Savour the culinary experiences in tea houses and street markets, embrace the serenity found in the shrines and temple gardens, and appreciate the variety of architecture both ancient and contemporary. The efficiency and safety of the train system will be on display during our journey, and there will be opportunities to enjoy shopping in both vibrant urban districts and quaint post towns.

Woven into this adventure are walking tours and hiking tours that showcase the city highlights and the country's natural beauty. This active journey exploring the Golden Route will provide an immersive introduction to Japan's history, culture, and traditions, and is sure to provide many lasting memories.

## What's Included



- Roundtrip air from Toronto, ON to Tokyo, Japan
- Connections Program
- Airport transfers
- local transportation
- 14 nights of accommodation (plus 1 on the plane)
- 14 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 5 dinners (plus food service on the plane)
- Local professional guides & all other entry fees and passes
- Services of a Professional Tour Director

*Prices are in Canadian dollars, are per person, and include HST.*

### INCLUDED HIGHLIGHTS

#### TOKYO

- City tour: Imperial Palace Plaza, Nijubashi Bridge, Imperial Palace East Gardens, Shibuya Crossing
- Koishikawa Korakuen Garden
- Skytree Tower
- Japanese Calligraphy experience
- Mount Takao

#### MOUNT FUJI

- Onsen (hot springs) Bath
- Oschino Hakkai springs
- Lake Kawaguchiko: Arakura Fuji Sengen Shrine, Chureito Pagoda, Oishi Park

## NAGOYA

- Nakasendo Trail

## HIROSHIMA

- Peace Pagoda & Mitaki Temple
- Itsukushima Shrine
- Mount Misen & Shishi-iwa Observatory

## OSAKA

- Osaka Walking Tour

## KYOTO

- Nara –historic monuments, temples, and shrines
- Arashiyama Bamboo Grove and Tenryu Ji
- Sagano Romantic Train
- Samurai & Ninja Museum
- Kinkaku-ji and Kiyomizu-dera Temple
- Kimono Tea Ceremony

## Why This Tour is Great



### **A Comprehensive “BEST OF” Tour**

Japan’s Golden Route covers Japan’s most popular cities: Tokyo, Mount Fuji, Nagoya, Hiroshima, and Kyoto. In-depth visits to cosmopolitan cities are combined with nature, and highlights include sites related to ancient heritage and traditions as well as modern Japanese culture.

### **Iconic Trails, Unforgettable Views**

During this adventure, hike some of Japan’s most historic routes, such as the ancient Nakasendo Trail, and be rewarded with stunning panoramic views, such as the view of Mount Fuji from the Arakura hillside.

### **Active Experiences**

Experience a variety of walking and hiking adventures, from the lively energy of bustling markets to the calm serenity of shrine gardens. Traverse an ancient trading route with stone-paved streets, quiet lanes, and forested trails. Hike easy to moderate forest paths, including stone steps that lead to summits offering breathtaking vistas and glimpses of unique, historic temples.

### **Immersive Cultural and Culinary Experiences**

This tour is full of hands-on fun. You'll try your hand at calligraphy, enjoy a traditional kimono tea ceremony ... even learning about the foods and flavours of Japan is woven into this adventure.

### Visit 4 UNESCO World Heritage Sites

1. "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara"
2. Tenryu-ji, a major Zen temple complex
3. Itsukushima Shrine, with its famous iconic "floating" torii gate
4. Kiyomizu-dera Temple, celebrated for its grand wooden terrace overlooking the city of Kyoto.



**Tsumago-juku, a historic post town along the Nakasendo Trail**



**Kimono tea ceremony**



**Kiyomizu-dera Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site**

## Day-to-Day Itinerary



### Day 1: Fly to Japan

This is a big travelling day. Enjoy your overnight flight from Toronto to Tokyo. Remember that in crossing the International Date Line, you will lose one day.

**Stay:** N/A (in flight)

**Meals:** (on plane)

### Day 2: Arrive in Tokyo – Free Time to Relax

Welcome to Tokyo! After clearing customs and collecting your baggage, a friendly airport assistant will meet you, help with your luggage, and ensure a comfortable transfer to your hotel. Once checked in, the rest of the day is yours to relax and settle in after your journey.

**Stay:** Tokyo hotel, 4-Star or similar (4 nights)

**Meals:** (on plane)

### **Day 3: Tokyo – A City of Vibrant Diversity**

After breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a full day exploring Tokyo's diverse attractions. Using public transit, begin at the Imperial Palace Plaza and admire the iconic Nijubashi Bridge, then stroll through the serene Imperial Palace East Gardens. Around lunchtime, explore the historic Tsukiji Outer Market, where you can sample local delicacies at nearby restaurants. In the afternoon, experience Tokyo's diversity firsthand from the traditional serenity of Meiji-Jingu Shrine to the stylish sophistication of Omotesando Avenue, and the youthful energy of Harajuku. Pause to witness the organized chaos of Shibuya Crossing, the world's busiest pedestrian intersection. The day concludes with a welcome dinner, the perfect introduction to your Tokyo adventure.

**Meals:** B, D

### **Day 4: Tokyo – Culture & Traditions**

Start your day with breakfast at the hotel before exploring more of Tokyo's culture and traditions. Stroll through Koishikawa Korakuen Garden, where bonsai trees and serene ponds contrast with the surrounding skyscrapers. Visit Asakusa, home to the historic Senso-ji Temple, and wander along Nakamise Shopping Street, sampling traditional souvenirs and street food for a taste of old Tokyo. Experience Japanese calligraphy firsthand, creating a keepsake with brush and ink. Then, enjoy panoramic city views from the iconic Skytree Tower. In the afternoon, dive into Shinjuku, Tokyo's vibrant nightlife district. Explore Omoide Yokocho's cozy yakitori stalls, and discover the lantern-lit alleyways of Kabukicho and Golden Gai, where intimate bars and boutique clubs showcase the city's playful and mysterious side.

**Meals:** B

### **Day 5: Mount Takao and Yakuo-in Temple (Hikes #1 & #2)**

Today, embark on a unique urban nature experience. Mount Takao is a mountain retreat/recreation area in western Tokyo. Upon arrival, grab some snacks and drinks at a café or shop near the station. Be sure to use the restroom and check your outfit before we head out. The morning hike features a moderate ascent through lush forest. At the summit, enjoy the views and a chance for lunch. After lunch, visit the historic Yakuo-in Temple with its impressive tengu statues and the famous "Octopus Cedar" tree. Descend along a well-paved and easy-to-walk path. Stop at traditional teahouses along the way to try local sweets. After returning to Takaosanguchi Station, browse the souvenir shops for local wagashi (Japanese sweets) and other limited-edition items before the return trip. Dinner at a local restaurant will provide an opportunity to share your favourite experiences, thus far.

**Meals:** B, D

### **Day 6: Free Time, Travel to Mount Fuji Area**

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast and morning where you can relax or explore the city at your own pace. After check out, travel by private coach to the Mt. Fuji area, and

check in to an onsen hotel, a traditional-style inn built around a natural, geothermal hot spring. Take the rest of the day to explore the surrounding area or relax and experience the healing and mind-cleansing benefits of the onsen bath.

**Stay:** Onsen Hotel, Mt. Fuji (2 nights)

**Meals:** B, D

### **Day 7: Mount Fuji**

Following breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a full-day tour of the area. Stroll through the enchanting springs of Oshino Hakkai, a serene collection of eight spring-fed ponds in Oshino Village, designated as a National Natural Monument. Next, head to Lake Kawaguchiko, one of the Fuji Five Lakes, which boasts the longest shoreline and is renowned for its numerous scenic viewpoints. Delight in panoramic views of Mount Fuji reflected on the tranquil waters and the serene beauty of the surrounding landscape. To visit Arakura Fuji Sengen Shrine, located on the hillside of Mt. Arakura, it takes about 5 minutes to walk from Shimoyoshida Station, and then about 30 minutes to climb the stone steps to reach the Chureito Pagoda. The combination of Mt. Fuji and the red pagoda is popular among tourists for its picturesque beauty. You can enjoy ukiyo-e-like scenes with different views in each season. Continue to Oishi Park on the northern shore of Lake Kawaguchi with one of the best views of Mt. Fuji. The view is also known for its fields of nemophila (light blue wild flowers) in May, lavender from late June to mid-July, and crimson kochia in the fall. The beautiful collaboration of the lake, Mt. Fuji, and flowers makes it a popular photo spot. Return to the hotel, and the rest of the day is yours to relax.

**Meal:** B, D

### **Day 8: Bullet Train to Nagoya**

Pack your overnight bag for your two nights in Nagoya, and prepare your big luggage to be transferred to Hiroshima. After breakfast, transfer to the Odawara train station for the scenic journey by bullet train to Nagoya, then be escorted to the hotel to check in. The remainder of the day is yours to relax or explore.

**Stay:** Nagoya hotel, 4-star (2 nights)

**Meals:** B, L

### **Day 9: Nakasendo Trail (Hike #3)**

Today is an exciting full-day along the historic Nakasendo Trail. Travel by public transit to the beautifully preserved post town of Magome-juku, a vital stop for travellers in the past, and our journey's starting point. As you stroll, enjoy breathtaking views of the Kiso Valley and the surrounding mountains, while your guide shares the town's rich history and its role in Japan's feudal travel network. Don't miss the chance to sample local delicacies, such as gohei mochi (grilled rice cakes) and kurikomameshi, a chestnut rice dish, which has nourished travellers for centuries. Sights along the trail include the Ichiroku Toge Tateba Teahouse, the Otoko-daki and Onna-daki Waterfalls, twin cascades whose contrasting flows symbolize harmony and balance in nature, and Tsumago-juku, another beautifully

preserved post town. After a day of history, culture, and scenic hiking, your evening is free to relax.

**Meals:** B, L

### **Day 10: Travel to Hiroshima, Peace Pagoda & Mitaki Temple (Hike #4 & #5)**

After breakfast, check out and board the train to Hiroshima. Relax as the Japanese landscape gradually unfolds outside your window. Upon arrival at Hiroshima Station, meet the local guide and transfer to your hotel. Take some time to refresh before heading out on an afternoon hike that blends Hiroshima's natural beauty with its rich history. Follow the trail up to the Peace Pagoda, where panoramic views stretch over the city and out across the shimmering Inland Sea. Continue to the tranquil Mitaki Temple, wandering its peaceful grounds and soaking in the serene atmosphere. After your hike, return to the hotel and enjoy the rest of the day at your own pace.

**Stay:** Hiroshima hotel, 4-star (2 nights)

**Meals:** B

### **Day 11: Tour of Miyajima Island, Mount Misen, and Shishi-iwa Observatory (Hike #6 )**

Start the day with a leisurely breakfast before heading to the enchanting island of Miyajima. Visit Itsukushima Shrine, where the iconic vermilion torii gate appears to float on the sea, and the main hall exudes timeless serenity. Continue to the Five-Story Pagoda and Toyokuni Shrine, where architecture and nature blend beautifully. Stroll along Omote-sando Shopping Street, sampling local delicacies and browsing traditional crafts. In the afternoon, hike up Mt. Misen, the island's symbolic peak. From the Shishiiwa Observatory, enjoy sweeping views of the Seto Inland Sea and its islands. Return to the hotel to unwind, explore at your own pace, and enjoy dinner at leisure.

**Meals:** B, L

### **Day 12: Travel to Osaka, Osaka Walking Tour (Hike #7)**

After breakfast, board a private bus for the journey to Osaka. Upon arrival, enjoy a walking tour that immerses you in the city's culture, starting with a culinary experience at the Kuromon Market, and continuing through the bustling shopping and entertainment districts of Shinsaibashi and Dotonbori. Check in to your hotel, then spend the rest of the day exploring at your own pace.

**Stay:** Kyoto hotel, 4-star (4 nights)

**Meals:** B

### **Day 13: Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara**

After a leisurely breakfast at the hotel, take the train to Nara, a World Heritage site known for its historic temples and shrines. At the Todai-ji Temple, marvel at the grandeur of the colossal Great Buddha, at Kasuga Taisha Shrine, stroll among the beautiful vermilion-coloured buildings, and enjoy the serene atmosphere. Take a

walk through [Nara Park](#), where friendly deer roam freely and offer a unique opportunity to interact with the local wildlife. Kofuku-ji Temple showcases the development of Japanese Buddhist culture and architectural techniques, and Tōshōdai-ji Temple, founded in 759, is a key temple in the history of Japanese Buddhism. The included lunch provides a taste of regional specialties. Following the lunch, visit Horyuji Temple, one of the country's oldest temples, founded in 607 by Prince Shotoku. After returning to your hotel in Kyoto, the remainder of the day is free.

**Meals:** B, L

### **Day 14: Kyoto - Arashiyama and the Samurai Ninja Museum**

Today's adventure features Kyoto's natural and cultural beauty. In the Arashiyama district, stroll through the [Bamboo Grove](#). Nearby, the UNESCO World Heritage site [Tenryū-ji](#) is an impressive complex of Zen temples. Walk the Togetsukyo Bridge, a 155-meter bridge built across the Katsura River, which flows leisurely through Saga Arashiyama. Experience the [Sagano Romantic Train](#), a charming Art Deco-style train that travels along the Hozugawa River, offering breathtaking views of the surrounding hills and riverside scenery. Return to Kyoto and visit the [Samurai Museum](#), home to an impressive collection of authentic Samurai armour, including rare pieces from the Edo period that are over 300 years old.

**Meals:** B, L

### **Day 15: Kyoto - Temples & Tea Ceremony**

Following a delightful breakfast at the hotel, begin your day at [Kinkaku-ji](#), the Golden Pavilion, one of Japan's most iconic landmarks. Surrounded by tranquil gardens and a reflective pond, this magnificent temple embodies the spirit of Zen and serenity. Visit [Kiyomizu-dera Temple](#), a UNESCO World Heritage Site celebrated for its grand wooden terrace overlooking the city. From this vantage point, enjoy sweeping views of Kyoto and feel the timeless grace of Japan's ancient capital. Visit the world-renowned Fushimi Inari Taisha, famous for its thousands of vermilion gates that weave through the sacred Mount Inari. Wander along the mystical pathways and experience the harmony between nature and spirituality that defines this revered Shinto site. Conclude your day with a Kimono Tea Ceremony experience. A skilled tea master will guide you through the foundations of Zen philosophy that have shaped the Japanese art of tea: Wa, Kei, Sei, and Jaku, which represent harmony, respect, purity, and tranquility. As you savour each movement and gesture, you will come to appreciate the profound mindfulness and aesthetic grace at the heart of this centuries-old tradition. To provide a grand finale, following the tea ceremony, gather with the group for a joyful farewell meal.

**Meals:** B, D

### **Day 16: Fly Home**

After breakfast, take a few final moments to relax or explore before checking out and heading to the airport, carrying unforgettable memories from your journey

along Japan's Golden Route.

**Meals:** B

## Hiking Details



### DAY 5

#### **1. Mount Takao Ascent - Scenic Trail No. 6**

(A2/Moderate - 3.7 km, 391m) Duration: about 1h30

This trail follows a quiet stream through lush forest. Enjoy the peaceful atmosphere and a refreshing forest walk.

#### **2. Mount Takao Descent- Scenic Trail No. 1 (Omotesando)**

(A1+/Easy - 3.8 km)

This is a well-paved and easy-to-walk path. Stop at traditional teahouses along the way to try local sweets.

### DAY 9

#### **3. Nakasendo Trail**

(A2/Moderate - 9 km)

Start at Magome-juku, a beautifully preserved post town that once served as a vital stop for travelers, merchants, and samurai journeying between Edo (Tokyo) and Kyoto during the Edo period. Along the trail, there'll be moments of feeling like you're stepping back into history with stone-paved streets lined with traditional wooden buildings, tea houses, and charming souvenir shops. As you stroll, enjoy breathtaking views of the Kiso Valley and the surrounding mountains. Continue along the trail to the Otoko-daki and Onna-daki Waterfalls, twin cascades whose contrasting flows symbolize harmony and balance in nature. Reach Tsumago-juku, one of the best-preserved post towns on the trail.

### DAY 10

#### **4. Hike to Peace Pagoda**

(A2/Moderate - 2km) Duration: 40-60 mins

The trail takes you through a primordial forest, a tunnel of torii gates, and rewards you with great views over the city of water and out over the Inland Sea.

#### **5. Hike to Mitaki Temple - Course B**

(A1+/Moderate -1.1 km 356m) Duration: 20 mins

The trail begins just inside the temple gate, featuring a fairly steep climb to the summit with rewarding views. The trail then takes you along the ridge and drops you at the top end of the temple complex after a bewitching descent through a beautiful bamboo forest.

## DAY 11

### 6. Hike up Mount Misen

(A1+ and H2/Moderate Options) all options take about 2h00 to ascend:

1. **Momijidani Course**, the shortest but steepest route through the forest
2. **Daisho-in Course** offers stunning views and is comparatively easier
3. **Omoto Course** is a longer but gentler path

Along the trails, you may encounter deer, and though rare, perhaps wild monkeys.

## DAY 12

### 7. Osaka Walking Tour

(A1/Easy) duration is approximately 4h00

## Important Info for this Tour



Although this tour includes round trip flights from Toronto to Tokyo, guests can join this tour from anywhere in the world! Please contact us to discuss your airfare and pre-and post-tour accommodation options.

Before departure, creating a personal WhatsApp account and getting comfortable with its features will make it easier to stay in touch with the group during your travels, as well as with friends and family back home.

It's recommended to install an e-SIM on your smartphone for internet access in Japan, ideally a day or two before departure.

Luggage Permitted: 1 checked item, maximum weight 20 kg. and a maximum length of 160 cm, plus 1 handbag/personal item. Although airlines may have more generous limits for the checked bag, this weight and size constraint is for ground transportation during the trip.

Proper hiking shoes/boots, as well as comfortable walking shoes, are recommended.

Additional packing suggestions will be provided a few weeks before departure.

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