

Join Panda Travel in...



# 2023 Kyushu Cherry Blossom

(G12889)



**March 28 - April 5, 2023**  
**7 Nights/9 Days**

***Yanagawa - Karatsu - Nagasaki -  
Shimabara - Kumamoto - Kirishima -  
Kagoshima - Kumamoto - Beppu - Hakata***

**\$100 OFF PER PERSON**  
when you pay with a personal check

**\$4168\***

per person-triple occupancy

**\$4208\***

per person-double occupancy

**\$4748\***

per single occupancy

[pandaonline.com](http://pandaonline.com)

(808) 734-1961

1017 Kapahulu Ave, Honolulu, HI 96816

**Cancel for any  
reason up to  
60 days prior to  
departure date for a  
FULL REFUND!**

A minimum of 16 participants is required for the tour to operate

# Itinerary

## Day 1: (Tue) Mar 28 – Honolulu Depart Honolulu 1:05pm via Hawaiian Airlines #827

Please meet the Panda Travel representative **3 hours prior to departure** at the Hawaiian Airlines check-in counters located at Terminal 2, Lobby 4.

## Day 2: (Wed) Mar 29 – Fukuoka-Hakata

Hotel Clio Court Hakata (Free WiFi)

Arrive Fukuoka at 6:40pm. After clearing customs, our English-speaking local guide will greet us at the arrival lobby. We'll then transfer to our hotel, which is adjacent to the JR Hakata Station.

## Day 3: (Thu) Mar 30 – Hakata-Yanagawa-Hakata (B/L)

Hotel Clio Court Hakata (Free WiFi)

After breakfast, please meet in the lobby by 9:00am.

This morning, we journey to **Yanagawa**, a traditional castle town built in 1588 that is known for its wide canals. Sit back and relax as we meander through the watery boulevards of the "Venice of Kyushu" on a donkobune, a traditional flat river boat steered with a 6.5 ft pole. During this 70 min cruise, our bamboo hatted boatmen will guide us around the many interesting sights of Yanagawa with **cherry blossoms in bloom**.

Next, we'll visit **Yanagawa Tachibana-tei Ohana**, the former residence of the Tachibana family—a clan of feudal lords during the Sengoku and Edo periods. Designated as a national site of natural beauty, its garden boasts hundreds of 300 year old pine trees, 1500 garden stones, and 14 stone lanterns centered around a pond.

After a **Japanese style lunch**, we'll visit **Maizuru Park**. The park was built around Fukuoka castle ruins and is home to 1,000 cherry trees and other seasonal flora. Admire the natural beauty of this **cherry blossom viewing spot** while strolling along a tunnel of flowers!

We'll return to our hotel by 4:30pm. The remainder of the afternoon and evening is at leisure.

## Day 4: (Fri) Mar 31 – Hakata-Karatsu-Nagasaki (B/L)

Hotel New Nagasaki (Free WiFi)

After breakfast, please meet in the lobby by 8am.

Our morning begins with a drive to **Saga**, a small prefecture on Kyushu Island best-known for its pottery from the town of **Arita**.

Once here, we'll stop at **Karatsu Castle**. Often referred to as "The Dancing Crane," this castle dates back to 1608 and its shape resembles a bird's arched neck with the shores of the Karatsu Bay acting as its wings. Its high white walls and tiered roofs offer panoramic views of the city, looking out to the Genkai Sea, with lush gardens of wisteria and **cherry blossoms coloring the scenes** below.

Next, we'll visit **China on the Park** to peruse pottery and porcelain designs. This large facility contains a factory, galleries, shops, and a restaurant with a seasonal menu. Enjoy your **lunch** at this classy restaurant!

We'll then head to **Nagasaki** and make a stop at the **Kasutera (Honey Cake) Factory** in **Isahaya** along the way. Modeled after the Portuguese castella cake, the honey cake was first introduced by Portuguese merchants in the 16th century and has since become Nagasaki's specialty. Taste test this sweet, spongy delight, and take some home as an omiyage gift!

We'll check in at our hotel by 5pm with the remainder of the evening at leisure. Our hotel is located a short walk from the Nagasaki Station as well as many shopping and dining options.

## Day 5: (Sat) Apr 1 – Nagasaki - Shimabara - Kumamoto - Kirishima (B/L/D)

Kirishima Hotel (Free WiFi)

After breakfast, please meet in the lobby by 8:00am.



Day 5 - Nagasaki Peace Park

The morning begins with a visit to the **Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park** and **Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum**. Constructed in remembrance of the tragic devastation during WWII, this solemn, commemorative space seeks to serve as a reminder to strive for world peace.

The surrounding Peace Park features the famed 32 ft tall Peace Statue. With Buddhist influenced themes of love and mercy in mind, Nagasaki native Seibou Kitamura, sculpted the statue with its right hand pointing to the sky from where the atomic bombs fell and its left hand gesturing to its side to represent peace. The park's **hundreds of cherry trees** bring added beauty and calm to this historic space.

From here, we'll make a 2 hr drive to **Shimabara** and enjoy a **Japanese style lunch** there.

We'll then make our way to **Shimabara Port** to board our **ferry** to **Kumamoto Port**. Our bus will be traveling along with us on the ferry. Once there, we'll head to our hotel for the evening.

Our expected hotel arrival time is 5:00pm and our **Japanese style dinner** is at 6:30pm. The hotel's onsen is a great place to unwind after dinner and in the morning before our departure.

## Day 6: (Sun) Apr 2 – Kirishima-Kagoshima-Kumamoto (B)

The New Hotel Kumamoto (Free WiFi)

After breakfast, please meet in the lobby by 8:30am. Our luggages will be sent directly to Hakata. **Please prepare a small overnight bag for the next 2 days.**

Our morning begins with a short drive to **Kagoshima** to visit **Kirishima Shrine**. This holy place is central to the ancient mythology of Japan and is dedicated to the deity, Ninigi-no-Mikoto. Legend has it that Ninigi-no-Mikoto descended from heaven, married a princess, and began the lineage of Japanese emperors. He's claimed to be the great-grandfather of Japan's first emperor, Emperor Jimmu.

While volcanic eruptions have repeatedly destroyed this shrine, it has always been rebuilt. The bright red, ornately decorated buildings you see now were built in the early 18th century and are usually decked in **cherry blossoms** around late March.

Next, we'll head to **Senganen and Shoko Shuseikan Museum**, recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Originally built as a steel factory in 1865, the site became a point of innovation and a center of adoption of western technology.

This museum walks you through the marriage between traditional Japanese life and modern technologies, taking a historical look at the "birthplace of modern Japan." Additionally, there are different **varieties of cherry trees** planted throughout the gardens.

Then, a visit to **Ichibangai Shopping Street Iddo** - the closest shopping street to Kagoshima Chuo Station and a local favorite. Most of the souvenir and food shops have retained the traditional Japanese architectural styles, blending together remnants of old Japan mixed in with the new. Enjoy free time here and have lunch on your own.

At the **Kagoshima Sightseeing Souvenir Center**, you can find karukan, satsuma-age, tsubotsuke pickles, shocho, and many other items. At Amamidori Yoshimi Sangyo, you'll spot island miso and other specialty products from Amami Oshima.

From here, off to the **Kagoshima Chuo Station** for our **bullet train ride** to **Kumamoto Station** with a 4:34pm arrival time.

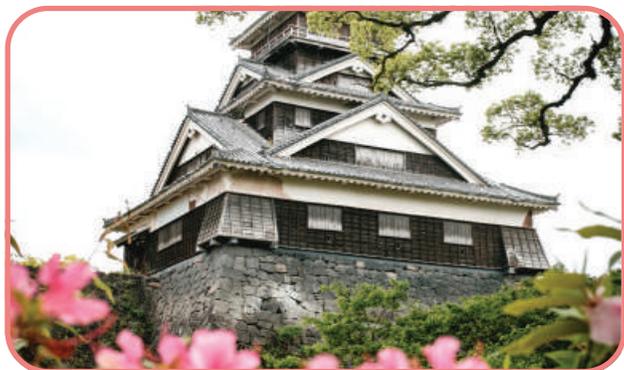
Once we arrive in **Kumamoto**, we'll take a few mins to walk to our hotel. You can also explore a variety of shops and dining options just a stone's throw away. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

---

### Day 7: (Mon) Apr 3 – Kumamoto-Beppu (B/L/D)

Motoyu no yado Kurodaya

After breakfast, please meet in the lobby by 8:00am.



Day 7 - Kumamoto Castle

Our morning begins with a visit to the magnificent **Kumamoto Castle**. Its massive castle grounds and impressive hilltop design has been aptly described by Japanese statesman and naval engineer, Katsu Kaishu, as there being "no other castle like this castle." Although it is currently undergoing a complete restoration, we can marvel at this cultural landmark from the outside and enjoy the majestic scenes with **600 cherry trees** surrounding.

Just below the castle hill is **Sakura no Baba**, a bustling feudal era castle town with shops, restaurants, and a museum chronicling the history of Kumamoto. We'll have a **buffet lunch** at a local restaurant here.

Next, we're off to see the **famous sakura tree** at **Isshingyo no Ozakura Park**. The Ozakura ("big cherry tree") was planted in memory of feudal warlord, Nakamura Hokinokami Korefuyu, who perished while valiantly defending Yazaki Castle. At 400 years old, this gargantuan tree towers at approximately 46 ft. in height and has a trunk circumference of 23 ft. The park is also considered to be one of Japan's top spots for **cherry blossom viewing**. Enjoy some free time here to explore.

Now, we'll head out to **Beppu**, with an approximate 2.5 hr drive time.

We plan to arrive at our hotel by 5pm. A **Japanese ryokan dinner** will be served at 6:00pm. The hotel's onsen is a great place to unwind after dinner and in the morning before our departure.

---

### Day 8: (Tue) Apr 4 – Beppu-Hakata (B/L)

Hotel Monterey La Soeur Fukuoka (Free WiFi)

After breakfast, please meet in the lobby by 9:30am as we are off on another full day of touring and circling back to where we began, Hakata.



Day 8 - Beppu Onsen

Our morning begins with a visit to 2 bubbling and steaming hot springs from a family of 8 Beppu onsens in the **Jigoku Meguri** ("Hell Tour").

Translated as "Blood Pond Hell," **Chinoike-Jigoku** is the oldest natural "hell pond" in Japan with a distinctive red hue colored by iron oxide.

Our second onsen sighting is **Umi-Jigoku** or "Sea Hell" for its beautiful cobalt blue. Despite being known as the "Hells of Beppu" for its unapproachable appearance and thermal temperatures of around 100 degrees, the hot springs are nationally acclaimed as a "place of scenic beauty."

Be sure to try the on site **onsen eggs** (boiled in the hot spring!) and “Jigoku Mushi-yaki Pudding”(Pudding steamed in Hell).

After a **Japanese style lunch**, we’ll head out to **Hakata** with a stop at **Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine**. This shrine is one of Fukuoka’s most popular destinations, with over 2 million visitors during the first 3 days of the New Year. Dedicated to famed prodigy in politics, literature, and poetry, Sugawara-no Michizane, this shrine honors Michizane as the god of academic achievements and is an especially sacred spot for Japanese youths from all over the country to pray for academic success during exam season.

In addition to shops, the shrine’s grounds include red-painted, ornate bridges that stretch over a pond designed in the shape of the Japanese character for “heart” and **6,000 plum trees** (Michizane’s favorite blossoming tree). Usually, by the time the cherry blossoms begin to bloom, the plum trees have completed their seasonal cycle. Enjoy this special **cherry blossom viewing** spot!

We’ll check into our hotel by 5pm. The remainder of the

evening is at leisure.

---

### Day 9: (Wed) Apr 5 - Hakata-Fukuoka Airport-Honolulu (B)

After breakfast, enjoy free time to explore Fukuoka on your own.

For your convenience, we’ve arranged a late checkout for our rooms with access to your room until we depart.

**Please meet in the lobby by 5:00pm** as we’ll head out to the airport to begin our check-in for the flight home.

**Depart Fukuoka 8:40pm via Hawaiian Airlines #828.**

**Arrive in Honolulu at 9:40am.**

**Thank you for traveling with us!**



---

### Please note the following:

- **\*Fares and fees** (priced in USD) are subject to change in light of fuel supplements, taxes, and fees. Tour members are responsible for any differences in costs. Additionally, we reserve the right to make changes to the itinerary with or without notice.
- **Travel insurance:** We highly recommend the purchase of trip insurance. Please ask our representatives for more information.
- **Special Assistance:** You must inform us of any disability/impairment that requires special attention at the time of your making the reservation. We reserve the right to cancel the reservation(s) if the disability/impairment is unsuitable for the tour. You are also responsible for any costs and/or accommodations related to your disability/impairment, such as providing your own travel companion.
- All U.S. citizens must hold a valid passport at the time of travel, which includes a passport that will not expire at least within 6 months from the return tour date. Non-U.S. passport holders must check with the Japanese Consulate to see if a visa is required.
- You are expected to abide by domestic and international government and accommodation policies related to health, safety, and welfare.
- Land Tour Operator is Nippon Travel Agency.
- Land Tour costs are based on current currency conversion rates, which are subject to change. We will notify tour members of any substantial changes to the costs.
- Not Included in the tour: Gratuities for local English speaking guide; additional baggage fee charges from the airlines; alcohol and soft drinks with meals.
- A **minimum of 16 participants** are required for the tour to operate.

### Booking requirements/Payment policy/Cancellation policy:

- **Reserve with \$75 per person deposit. Refundable up to 60 days prior to departure, January 27, 2023.**
- **Final payment due by February 8, 2023. Package is non-refundable after this date.**