

Join Panda Travel in...



2024 Discovering Japan's beauty: Autumn Foliage & Cherry Blossoms

(GP13183)



Nov 7 - 16, 2024

8 Nights/ 10 Days

*Tokyo - Nagoya - Obara - Gero Onsen -
Takayama - Shirakawago -
Kanazawa - Kyoto - Okayama -
Kurashiki - Himeji - Kobe - Osaka*

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

\$4,589*

per person-triple occupancy

\$4,589*

per person-double occupancy

\$5,198*

single occupancy

pandaonline.com

(808) 734-1961

1017 Kapahulu Ave, Honolulu, HI 96816

Cancel for any reason up
to 65 days prior to departure
date for a FULL REFUND!

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

Itinerary

Day 1: (Thu) Nov 7 – Honolulu Depart Honolulu via Hawaiian Airlines

→ Meet the Panda Travel representative 3 hrs prior to departure at the Hawaiian Airlines check-in counters.

Day 2: (Fri) Nov 8 – Haneda-Tokyo Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ Arrive at Haneda Airport.

→ Meet your guide at the arrival lobby. Transfer to **Sunshine City Prince Hotel**. Our hotel is directly connected to Sunshine City shopping center with many shopping and dining options available to you. Nearby, you'll also find a 24-hour Family Mart convenience store and a Seiyu supermarket for snack, bento, and beverage pickups.

Day 3: (Sat) Nov 9 – Tokyo (B) Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ Breakfast at hotel.

→ 8:30am – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a full day tour around Tokyo.

→ 9:00am – This morning begins with a visit to **Tsukiji Outer Market**. A renowned bucketlist spot, Tsukiji is the largest fish market in the world. While the inner auction market relocated in 2018, the charm remains in its outer market. With the 90 mins we spend here, be sure to enjoy all that the outer market has to offer, from seasonal produce and candy tasting to knife-making artisan shops.

→ 11:00am – Now, we are at **Toyosu Senkyaku Banrai** (opened its doors in Feb 2024) and inspired by the historic streets of Tokyo, this Edo themed multi-story shopping and entertainment center treats visitors to a diverse selection of boutiques, as well as eateries featuring specialty foods like Toyosu's signature fresh seafood and produce.

→ 1:00pm – This afternoon, we'll explore **Asakusa**, a famous district that melds the culture and traditions of ancient Tokyo with the metropolitan styles of modern Japan. It's also home to Japan's first cinema!

→ Widely regarded as the most important temple in Japan, Asakusa's iconic **Sensoji Temple** and **Kaminarimon Gate** (aka "Thunder Gate") with its massive lantern, are a "must see" in every guidebook, boasting over 30 million annual visitors. Traditionally, as a sign of respect, visitors clap twice and bow their heads at the top of the temple steps. With the belief that coins trap the dangers of daily life, visitors also customarily make a small offering by tossing coins into a wooden rack, tossing away those dangers as well. You'll also find the **Five Storied Pagoda** there. Regarded as one of the "Four Edo Pagodas," this nearly 174 foot monument

stands to represent Tokyo's few remaining pagodas. The temple grounds also include the **Nakamise Shopping Arcade**, a lively and extensive shopping street lined with good luck charms, traditional goodies, and Japanese snacks. Enjoy lunch on your own.

→ 2:45pm – Next a stop at **Tokyo Solamachi**. Located at the base of Japan's tallest structure—the Tokyo Sky Tree—this large shopping, dining, and entertainment complex features over 300 establishments.

→ 5:00pm – Return to hotel. The remainder of the day is yours at leisure.

Day 4: (Sun) Nov 10 – Tokyo-Nagoya-Obara-Gero Onsen (B/L/D) Suimeikan (Free Wi-Fi) - Enjoy onsen

→ Breakfast at hotel.

→ 8:00am – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby. We'll then transfer by charter coach to Tokyo Station and board a bullet train to Nagoya Station. Your luggage(s) (2 pcs per person) will be delivered to your hotel in Takayama the following day. Please pack an overnight bag for a 1-day stay.

→ 10:39am – Arrive at **Nagoya Station**, we'll embark on a full day tour of Nagoya.

→ 11:15am – We'll start our tour at **Nagoya Castle**, the first castle in Japan to be designated a National Treasure. Constructed as the seat of one of the three branches of the ruling Tokugawa family, this magnificent palace was among the largest castles in Japan during the Edo Period. Today, this historical site hosts the annual **Nagoya Castle Autumn Festival** (TBA).

→ 12:30pm – A **bento lunch** will be provided on the bus to enjoy during the drive to Obara, a small town in Aichi Prefecture known for its stunning Shikizakura trees that bloom in both spring and autumn.

→ 1:30pm – Experience the magical allure of the **Obara Shikizakura Festival**. Unlike traditional cherry blossoms that bloom only in spring, shikizakura trees bloom twice a year, offering a stunning spectacle of delicate pink blossoms amidst the vibrant colors of autumn leaves. This captivating event spans from late October to early December.

→ 2:45pm – Next, we will visit the **Obara Paper Art Museum**, a diverse collection of traditional and contemporary Washi paper artworks, including sculptures, origami, and paintings. As an introduction to Washi paper, we'll enjoy a **hands-on papermaking experience!**

→ Now, we'll drive to **Gero Onsen**, ranked among Japan's top 3 renowned hot springs and also one of the most popular

tourist destinations in the Hida region of Gifu Prefecture. Known for its incredibly smooth and silky water, it bestows its bathers with smooth and radiant skin.

→ **6:00pm** – Arrive at **Suimeikan ryokan**, followed by a **Japanese-style dinner at 6:30pm**.

Day 5: (Mon) Nov 11 – Gero Onsen-Takayama (B/D)
Takayama Green Hotel, Orinkaku Bldg (Free Wi-Fi) - **Enjoy onsen**

→ **Breakfast at ryokan.**

→ **9:00am** – **Meet your guide at the ryokan lobby.** We'll walk together to Funsenchi Pond to start our morning by indulging in a foot bath at the **Funsenchi outdoor hot spring**.

→ **10:15am** – We're now heading to **Takayama**. Located in the mountainous Hida region of Gifu Prefecture. Takayama is renowned for its well-preserved Edo-period streets, traditional architecture, and vibrant cultural festivals.

→ **11:30am** – Here we are at **Hida Folk Village Hida no Sato**, an open-air museum exhibiting over 30 traditional houses built during the Edo Period from the Hida region. These houses were relocated to the museum's grounds in 1971. Just a short walk away, we'll enjoy a **hands-on experience in crafting the beloved sarubobo doll**, a popular local symbol.

→ **1:00pm** – Now, enjoy a stroll and have lunch on your own on **Kamisannomachi Street**. Admire the well-preserved traditional houses from the Edo period and explore the picturesque and historic area, which offers a glimpse into the rich cultural heritage of Takayama.

→ **3:00pm** – Next, visit **Yatai Kaikan**, also referred to as the Festival Float Museum, which displays the ornate and elaborate festival floats used in Takayama Matsuri, one of Japan's most famous festivals. Explore the cultural heritage and traditions of Takayama through these magnificent floats.

→ **4:30pm** – **Arrive at Takayama Green Hotel**, followed by a **buffet dinner at 5:30pm**. After dinner, relax in the incredible hot spring baths.

Day 6: (Tue) Nov 12 – Takayama-Shirakawago-Kanazawa (B/L)
ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel Kanazawa (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **8:30am** – **Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a full day tour of Shirakawago and Kanazawa.**

→ **8:45am** – Start your day at **Miyagawa Open Air Market**, one of Japan's largest morning markets with around 60 stalls. Located along the Miyagawa river and dating back to

the Edo period, this vibrant marketplace offers a wide range of products exclusively sourced from local farmers. From organic dried popcorn and Hida wood pepper holders to Takayama honey, dried Kabu chips, and fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables, the market proudly displays the pride of local farmers. Enjoy this fantastic cultural hub, where both locals and visitors come together!

→ **10:45am** – Next, we'll explore **Shirakawago Village**, a UNESCO World Heritage site known for its traditional gassho-zukuri farmhouses. These unique structures feature steep thatched roofs that resemble the hands of Buddhist monks in prayer and are designed to protect from heavy snowfall. Some of these remarkable farmhouses date back over two centuries.

→ **12:30pm** – **Enjoy Japanese-style lunch at a local restaurant.**

→ **3:00pm** – Here we are at the **Gold and Silver Leaf Shop**, a specialty store that offers traditional crafts adorned with gold leaf. Gold leaf production dates back 400 years in Kanazawa, and we'll learn more as we participate in a fun, **hands-on experience - gold pasting workshop**.

→ **4:15pm** – Now, a stop at **Higashichaya Old Town**, known for its picturesque charm. This historic district features ancient tea houses that once thrived during the Edo era, where geishas and samurai once roamed. While samurai are no longer present, Kanazawa remains one of the few places in Japan where geishas still practice. Take time to browse the craft shops, perfect for finding unique gifts.

→ **5:30pm** – Arrive at **ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel Kanazawa**, with the remainder of the evening at leisure. Our hotel is within walking distance of Kanazawa Station and offers a variety of dining and shopping options.

Day 7: (Wed) Nov 13 – Kanazawa-Kyoto-Okayama (B)
Hotel Granvia Okayama (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **Please pack an overnight carry-on bag for 2 nights. A courier service will deliver your luggage(s) (2 pieces per person) from Kanazawa to Osaka.**

→ **9:00am** – **Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a half day tour in Kanazawa.**

→ **9:15am** – This morning, we'll visit **Kenroku-en Garden**, one of Japan's most stunning gardens. Created by the Maeda family over many centuries near Kanazawa Castle, Kenroku-en translates to "Garden of the Six Sublimities," representing the six essential qualities in Chinese landscape theory that define a perfect garden.

→ **11:00am** – Our next stop is **Omicho Market**, Kanazawa's

largest fresh food market. The market is composed of a bustling network of covered streets, boasting approximately 200 stalls. While seafood and produce are the main attractions, you can also discover a variety of items such as flowers, clothing, kitchen tools, and more.

→ **12:45pm** – Upon arrival at **Kanazawa Station**, we will board a **Limited Express Train** to Kyoto Station. From there, we will transfer to a **bullet train** bound for Okayama Station.

→ **5:05pm** – Once we arrive at Okayama Station, we will take a **short walk** to our hotel, **Hotel Granvia Okayama**. Enjoy the evening of shopping and dining at your leisure.

Day 8: (Thu) Nov 14 – Okayama-Kurashiki-Himeji (B/L) Hotel Monterey Himeji (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **8:15am** – Meet your guide at the lobby for a full day tour to Himeji.

→ **9:00am** – Our morning begins with a visit to the **Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter**, a beautifully preserved historical area converted from the former city's rice storehouses with modern eateries, souvenir shops, and museums woven in. Immaculately preserved from the Edo period, this old rice-merchant quarter consists of around 300 old houses and granaries, with the oldest being 300 years old. Some families who have lived here for generations are still there! Today's old Kurashiki consists of dozens of characteristic whitewashed, black-tiled kura (rice granaries) centered around a willow-lined transport canal, making for a beautiful picturesque scene. It is a "must see traditional neighborhood" that blends the past with the present.

→ Now, a drive to **Himeji**, a charming seaside city located on the western edge of the Kansai region. This picturesque destination is best known for its magnificent castle, which has stood strong and remained unscathed by wars and earthquakes throughout the centuries.

→ **1:00pm** – Once here, we'll enjoy a **Japanese-style lunch** and visit the **Nadagiku Sake Brewery**, considered one of the best breweries in Himeji. After the brewery tour, enjoy sake tasting and spend some time in the gift shop. Some of the sake sold here is not available anywhere else.

→ **2:45pm** – This afternoon, a visit to **Himeji Castle**, one of the last surviving feudal castles. Known as "White Heron Castle" for its unique white exterior, it resembles a bird in flight. Himeji Castle consists of 83 buildings and is adjacent to the beautiful **Koko-en Garden**. This well-preserved garden, built in the architectural style of the Edo period (1603-1867), is famous for its **fall foliage** and features nine different gardens, including the Garden of Bamboo and the Tea Ceremony Garden. Himeji Castle is considered a

national treasure of Japan and a UNESCO World Heritage site, highlighting the beauty of Japan's four seasons.

→ **5:00pm** – Arrive at **Hotel Monterey Himeji**, conveniently located near Himeji JR Station. Enjoy the remainder of the evening shopping and dining on your own.

Day 9: (Fri) Nov 15 – Himeji-Kobe-Osaka (B) Hotel Monterey Grasmere Osaka (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **8:30am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a full day of touring as we head to Osaka.

→ **9:45am** – Our first visit this morning is the **Kobe Nunobiki Herb Gardens & Ropeway**. Reachable via a 10 minute gondola ride, this Kobe landmark features panoramic views of Kobe, Kyoto, and Osaka. Atop, you'll find the Welcome Garden with flowers in bloom, a recreation area with free play equipment, a hammock section, a souvenir shop selling herbs and other aromatic products, and a veranda with 360 views where you can grab a drink and some snacks while you enjoy the picturesque scenery.

→ **12:00pm** – We're now at the **Sannomiya Center Gai Shopping Street**, a large shopping arcade offering a wide variety of retail and food outlets.

→ **3:00pm** – Arrive at **Hotel Monterey Grasmere Osaka**. Welcome to Osaka, Japan's third-largest city and the capital of commerce with a bustling street life in its arcades, markets, and byways. Osaka's citizens speak the Kansai dialect and are known for their outgoing nature, as well as for their abiding love of delicious street food. Our hotel is located just a short walk to Osaka's most famous entertainment districts. Enjoy the rest of the day of shopping and dining on your own.

Day 10: (Sat) Nov 16 – Osaka-Kansai-Honolulu (B)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **9:30am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a full day tour around Osaka.

→ **10:00am** – Ever wonder how the mouthwatering food displayed in restaurant windows is made to look so lifelike? Let's find out at the interactive "**food sample**" making workshop, where you'll handcraft your very own realistic foods. Have fun!

→ **11:45am** – It's now time to explore **The Expo '70 Commemorative Park**, also known as Banpaku Kinen Park. Originally built for the 1970 Japan World Exposition, it now serves as a popular local park filled with lush greenery, beautiful gardens, and various attractions.

→ **1:00pm** – Enjoy shopping, dining, and leisure activities at **Lalaport EXPOCITY**, one of Japan’s largest malls, located in the Expo City development. It features a variety of shops, restaurants, cafes, and entertainment options, including the Expo ‘70 Commemorative Park and the Redhorse Osaka Wheel.

→ **3:30pm** – Our next stop at everyone’s favorite, **CUPNOODLES Museum Osaka Ikeda**. Here, you’ll learn about the history and development of instant ramen noodles and peer into a replica shed of where it all started. Perhaps most thrilling is the **hands-on workshop - My CUPNOODLES experience**, where you become both chef and artist.

→ **5:45pm** – Arrive at **Kansai International Airport** and begin our check-in process for the flight home.

→ **Depart from Kansai via Hawaiian Airlines.**

→ **Arrive in Honolulu (same day).**

Thank you for traveling with us! 🐼



Need to Know...



Payment Policy

- » **Reserve with \$75 per person deposit. Refundable up to 65 days prior to departure date, September 3, 2024.**
- » **Final payment due by September 15, 2024. Package is non-refundable after this date.**

* Fares and Fees (Priced in USD)

- » Are subject to change in light of fuel supplements, taxes, and differences in costs.
- » Air ticket fare is guaranteed, but taxes, fees, and fuel surcharges are subject to change until tickets are issued, approximately 53 days out.
- » We reserve the right to make changes to the itinerary with or without notice.



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.



Travel Insurance

- » We highly recommend the purchase of trip insurance. Please ask our representatives for more information.



Travel Documents

- » A valid passport is required for all U.S. citizens and must be valid and not expire at least 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.



Land Tour Operator & Costs

- » Land Tour Operator is Nippon Travel Agency.
- » Land Tour costs are based on current currency conversion rates, which are subject to change.



Other remarks

- » 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.
- » You are expected to abide by domestic and international government and accommodation policies related to health, safety, and welfare.