

Join Panda Travel in...



# 2024 Fall Foliage in Tokyo and Beyond

(GPI3202)



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

Nov 17 – 24, 2024  
6 Nights/ 8 Days

*Tokyo - Chichibu - Kumagaya/Saitama -  
Takasaki - Kusatsu - Matsumoto*

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

**\$3,469\***

per person-triple occupancy

**\$3,469\***

per person-double occupancy

**\$3,889\***

single occupancy

pandaonline.com

(808) 734-1961

1017 Kapahulu Ave, Honolulu, HI 96816

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

# Itinerary

## Day 1: (Sun) Nov 17 – Honolulu Depart Honolulu via Hawaiian Airlines

→ Please meet the Panda Travel representative 3 hours prior to departure at the Hawaiian Airlines check-in counters.

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## Day 2: (Mon) Nov 18 – Haneda-Tokyo

Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ Arrive at Haneda Airport, meet your English-speaking local guide at the arrival lobby, and then we'll transfer to Sunshine City Prince Hotel, our accommodations for the night. 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-hr Family Mart convenience store and a Seiyu supermarket for snack, bento, and beverage pickups. Enjoy your evening at leisure.

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## Day 3: (Tue) Nov 19 – Tokyo-Chichibu-Kumagaya/Saitama (B/D)

Toki No Yu Onsen Hotel Heritage (Free Wi-Fi) - Enjoy onsen

→ Breakfast at hotel.

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

→ 10:30am – Our day kicks off with the **Nagatoro River Boat Ride**. November is the best time of year for sightseeing here, and our skilled boatmen will steer our traditional Japanese boat along the Arakawa River and through a majestic valley to experience the most mesmerizing natural views of **greens, reds, oranges, and yellows**. Enjoy this fun, yet serene cruise!

→ 11:45am – Next, a visit to every nature lover's dreamland: **Lunar Stone Maple Park**. Considered one of the best spots in Japan to **view fall foliage**, the park is replete with maple trees and flora flaunting its striking reds, vibrant yellows, and every autumn color.

→ 1:15pm – Take some free time to explore and enjoy lunch on your own at **Matsuri no Yu**. Designed after Chichibu's famous festival, this exciting complex features shopping, and food areas. Check out the many eateries offering delectable Chichibu specialties like Waraji Katsudon (crispy pork cutlet rice bowl), Buta Miso Don (miso-marinated pork rice bowl), and miso potato.

→ 3:00pm – From here, a stop at Saitama Prefecture's historic **Bukou Shuzo Sake Brewery**. Housed in a centuries old building registered as a national tangible cultural heritage, Bukou Shuzo has maintained its status as a leading sake producer with its high quality brews that incorporate natural waters drawn from an onsite well. Here, visitors are treated to a behind the scenes look at their sake making

process.

→ 5:15pm – Arrive at **Toki No Yu Onsen Hotel Heritage**, a tranquil retreat tucked in nature. One of the top hotels in Saitama, this relaxing natural hot spring resort has also hosted members of the Imperial family, including the Emperor and Empress of Japan. And at 6:30pm, enjoy your **Japanese-style dinner**.

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## Day 4: (Wed) Nov 20 – Saitama-Takasaki-Kusatsu (B/L/D)

Yorokobi no yado Takamatsu (Free Wi-Fi) - Enjoy onsen

→ Breakfast at hotel.

→ 8:45am – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a drive to **Takasaki**, Japan's highest producer of the good luck figures: Daruma dolls. Other than being known as "Daruma Town," Takasaki is also nicknamed, "Pasta Town," for its numerous Italian restaurants. It also serves as the site for the annual "King of Pasta" gourmet event. We'll make a rest stop during our drive to this unique city.

→ 10:00am – Once here, we'll visit **Tokumeien Garden**.

Nestled in a valley beside Doukutsu Kannon Cave, this site is regarded as one of the finest and most tranquil Japanese gardens in the Kanto region. In addition to featuring a waterfall, a koi pond, a moss garden, and an undulating landscape, this zen sanctuary offers unparalleled seasonal beauty, flaunting every shade of fall with its **autumnal leaves** during our visit.

→ 1:30pm – After a **western-style lunch at a local restaurant**, we'll visit **Daruma no Furusato Daimon-ya**. There, we'll learn about the Daruma doll production and color in the pupil(s) and beards of our very own **Daruma doll** at the **painting workshop**—a meaningful personalized memento we can take home. Enjoy this hands-on experience. With roots in Buddhism and origins here in Takasaki, Fuku-Daruma ("Daruma") is well-known in Japanese lore as a good-luck charm and talisman to ward off evil. Traditionally, one paints the left eye to make a wish/goal and paints the right only when the wish/goal is fulfilled. A one eyed doll serves as emotional support and a motivating reminder to persevere.

→ Now, we'll head to **Kusatsu**, one of Japan's most famous hot spring resorts.

→ 4:15pm – Before going to our onsen for the evening, we end our touring day with a **Yumomi and Dance Show** at 4:30pm. This 30 min performance is a unique opportunity to observe the centuries old practice of using large wooden paddles to stir the bath with a precision that retains the water's special properties while cooling down its temperature.

→ 5:15pm – Arrive at **Yorokobi no yado Takamatsu**,

followed by a **Japanese-style dinner at the ryokan at 6:30pm**. This traditional Japanese hotel is well-known for its excellent indoor and outdoor onsens that are fed from Yubatake (“hot water field”), the fresh geothermal hot spring famous in the region.

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#### **Day 5: (Thu) Nov 21 – Kusatsu-Matsumoto (B/L)** Matsumoto Marunouchi Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **8:30am – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a full day tour to Matsumoto.**

→ **11:00am – Welcome to Jigokudani Monkey Park!** Home to over 160 of the world famous Japanese Macaque or “snow monkey.” Despite the seemingly harsh conditions of snow cover during most of the year and the rough cliffs and hot springs bursting from the ground, this is a snow monkey’s paradise. Having grown accustomed to humans, these unbothered monkeys will not mind an audience as they take a dip and relax in the natural hot spring that is their spa.

→ **1:00pm – Enjoy a Japanese style lunch at a local restaurant.**

→ **2:45pm – We are now off to a fun apple picking experience** at NTA farm.

→ Next, we’ll head to **Matsumoto**, the second largest city in the Nagano Prefecture and home to the famous Matsumotojo, one of Japan’s most beautiful original castles. We’ll make a rest stop along our drive.

→ **5:30pm – Arrive at Matsumoto Marunouchi Hotel**, a short walk from Matsumoto Castle and the popular shopping streets of Nawate and Nakamachi. You can also find a wide variety of shops and dining options around our hotel.

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#### **Day 6: (Fri) Nov 22 – Matsumoto-Tokyo (B/L)** Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **8:30am – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for Matsumoto.**

→ **8:45am – The morning begins with a visit to majestic Matsumoto Castle.** One of Japan’s premier castles, this historic “hirajiro”—a castle built on plains rather than on a hill or mountain—is uniquely positioned such that its black and white exterior boldly contrasts against the magnificent backdrop of the Japanese Alps. Among several unique architectural novelties, Matsumoto Castle also features a moon viewing pavilion. During our visit, be sure to take a look at the moat’s waters as it captures the beautiful

reflection of the castle and its surrounding autumn red leaves. **Enjoy the fall colors!**

→ **10:15am – We’ll then enjoy Nawate dori**, a charming shopping street near Matsumoto castle. Affectionately called “frog street” by the locals, this stretch of 50+ shops offers antiques, “dagashi” candy stores, stylish bakeries, and much more. You’ll also spot statues and products celebrating frogs, an homage to the Kajika frogs that inhabited the Metoba River before the devastating 1959 flood. In its efforts to revitalize the community and boost morale after the flood, the castle town designated the frog, a symbol of rebirth, as its mascot.

→ **11:30am – A Japanese-style lunch** will be served at the **Ishii Miso Factory**. Founded in 1868, Ishii Miso makes miso the way they always have – aging it in cedar barrels for 3 years. They pride themselves in exclusively using soybeans and rice grown in Japan and local natural spring water. After lunch and a factory tour, enjoy a cone of miso ice cream and take some time browsing the gift shop for miso items.

→ **2:45pm – Now a visit to Yamanashi Prefectural Park of Art Forest.** Here, a constellation of art sculptures dot the grounds and accentuate the beauty of the colorful maple trees, ginkgo biloba, and other flora that surround. Enjoy the varying hues of **fall foliage** alongside beautiful artworks!

→ **6:00pm – Arrive at Sunshine City Prince Hotel.** Enjoy your stay here for the next two nights.

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#### **Day 7: (Sat) Nov 23 – Tokyo/Free day at leisure (B)** Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **After breakfast, enjoy your free day to explore Tokyo!**

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#### **Day 8: (Sun) Nov 24 – Tokyo-Haneda-Honolulu (B)**

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

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

→ **9:30am – The morning begins with a visit to Meiji Jingu Gaien**, one of the most beautiful places in Tokyo to admire the fall foliage. With its nearly 1,000 foot long ginkgo tree-lined avenue, Meiji Jingu Gaien is the perfect site for the annual **Ginkgo Trees Festival**. Enjoy your stroll beneath the brilliant golden leaves of 146 ginkgo trees and check out the vendors dotted along the path as we celebrate the Ginkgo Trees Festival!

→ **11:00am – Next, we’re off to Shibuya Sky**, an observatory offering a 360-degree view of Tokyo (there’s a special spot to see Mt. Fuji on a clear day!), and over 200 commercial outlets with restaurants, cafes, and shopping. The tower also overlooks the famous and ever busy intersection, **Shibuya**

**Scramble Crossing.** With giant video screens and neon signs as a backdrop to several hundreds of people walking in all directions at every light change, this “scramble” of people is surely a site to witness. You can also pay a visit to the famous Hachiko Dog statue.

→ **2:15pm** – Here we are at the brand new **Toyosu Senkyaku Banrai**, opened in Feb 2024 and inspired by the historic streets of Tokyo. This Edo themed multi-story shopping and entertainment center treats visitors to a variety of boutiques, as well as eateries featuring specialty foods like Toyosu’s signature fresh seafood and produce.

→ **Transfer to Haneda Airport via Hawaiian Airlines for our flight home.**

→ **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 13, 2024.**
- » **Final payment due by September 25, 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.