



## **Japan: Kyoto, Tokyo & the Michinoku Coastal Trail**

11 days, Kyoto to Tokyo

Trip code AJYT

## What's included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Wellness Moment: Onsen Bath
- Your OMG Day: Mt Fuji Day Tour or Tokyo Food Tour, Tokyo
- Welcome dinner
- Village hike in the Kitayama Mountains
- Kyoto highlights walking tour
- Kayak or Cycle Lake Tazawa
- Cherry Bark Hand-on Craft Experience
- Hike the Michinoku Coastal Trail
- Sake Brewery Tour and Dinner
- Nyuto Onsen Hot Springs stay
- CEO led walk in Kakunodate Samurai Street
- Unotori Shrine Hike with Kagura performance
- Jodogahama Beach visit
- Sappa Boat Tour along the Iwate coastline
- Visit Fudai Village with local food tasting
- Tokyo Highlights walking tour
- Farewell dinner
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

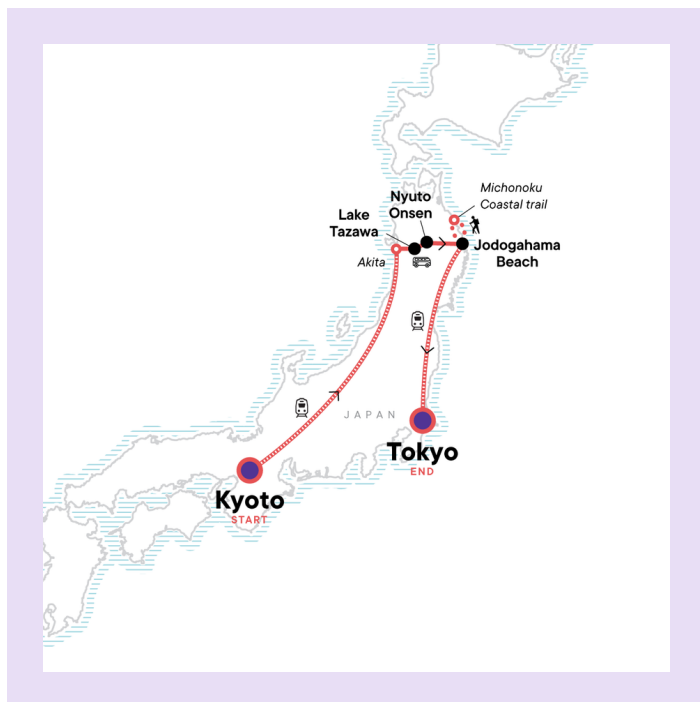
The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing September 18th, 2023 and onwards

# Itinerary

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**NOTE:** Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1

## Kyoto: A Cultural Capital

Once the capital city of Japan for over a thousand years, Kyoto now finds itself the cultural capital, if not the actual one. In its evolution, what Kyoto lost in title, it has more than made up for in culture, gastronomy, and charm. Your journey through Japan begins in this unforgettable former capital. Welcome to Kyoto, and to Japan, and we invite you to embrace your evolution. Like Kyoto, we only get better with age.

Arrive at any time and choose to join your CEO on a brief walk to stretch your legs after a long flight. Join your CEO for dinner at the hotel.



### Meals included

Dinner



### Accommodation

The Hotel Higashiyama by Kyoto Tokyu (or similar)

Hotel



### Today's Activities

ACTIVITY

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to ask reception for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Kyoto Highlights CEO-led Tour

Kyoto

2h30m

Set off on foot around Kyoto with your CEO. Get your bearings with visits to a local shrine before walking back to the hotel in town. The walk is 1 hour and your CEO will discuss the historical and cultural significance of the sights you see along the way.

Day 2

## Kyoto: Kitayama Villages Hike

The Kitayama mountains border Kyoto on the north and juxtapose bustling Kyoto with their tranquil wooded pathways. The bright red Tengu, a physical statue of a supernatural spirit, is your starting point as you hike from village to village, exploring the forest and the cultural treasures within it.

Hike from Kurama village to Kibune—two villages that mark the start and endpoint of the hike. As you wind your way through the canopied forest, visit the Kifune shrine and Kurama-dera temple. Return to Kyoto for a CEO led walking tour and visit to Geisha district, Gion.

Please note, in preparation for tomorrow's bullet train, you will not have access to your main luggage for 2 nights, as we utilize Japan's takkyubin service to conveniently and reliably transfer luggage from Kyoto to Tazawa and avoid hauling large bags on crowded trains. You must pack an overnight bag with everything you'll need until you're reunited with your luggage on Day 4. Only one bag per passenger is permitted on the luggage transfer. If you have more, there will be an additional charge at the traveler's expense.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Accommodation

The Hotel Higashiyama by Kyoto Tokyu (or similar)

Hotel



### Today's Activities

CEO-Led Hiking Tour from Kurama to Kibune

Kyoto

2h30m

Transfer by train and subway to Kurama Station and begin your CEO-led hike. Walk between these two picturesque, quaint villages in the Kitayama Mountains and follow the stone steps up into the verdant, mist-shrouded forests. Pass through the highland and visit smaller temples and search for spring water outlets flowing down the trail. Stop along the way at the Kurama-dera Temple—located atop the mountain with stunning views of the countryside, Yuki Shrine, Maiden, ending at Kibune Shrine. The total hike time will be 2.5 hours for a total of 3.9km and a total elevation gain of 584m.

## Kyoto Walking Tour

Kyoto

2h-2h30m

Explore the ancient city of Kyoto on a walking tour led by your CEO. On the tour, walk to the historic Geisha district, Gion and admire the beautiful city. The walking tour through Gion, nearby highlights and through the scenic paths of Kyoto will take 2 to 2.5 hours in total.

## Lake Tazawa: Japan's Deepest Lake

Legend goes that Tatsuko, a girl known for her beauty, went to Lake Tazawa to search for the spring of eternal beauty. Upon taking gulp after gulp, she is turned into a dragon and is thrust into the lake. Her quest to find eternal beauty was left unfulfilled, but the beauty of Lake Tazawako remains, as stunning now as it was when Tatsuko drank from its shores.

Bullet train brings you from Kyoto northbound to the Akita prefecture. Both exceedingly deep (Japan's deepest) and with a unique blue color, Lake Tazawa can be explored by kayak or by cycle today upon arrival. Choose your adventure this afternoon. Fountain of youth not guaranteed.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Dinner



### Accommodation

Tazawako Rose Park Hotel (or similar)

Hotel

Rose Park Hotel is situated on the shore of Lake Tazawa in Akita prefecture. Rooms are spacious and offer stunning views of the lake just outside your door. Meals are served using local ingredients only found in Akita prefecture.



### Today's Activities

Bullet Train

Kyoto - Tazawako-jindai

5h-5h15m

840km

Get to your next destination faster than the speed of light (ok, maybe not that fast) aboard a high-speed train. First take the bullet train from Kyoto station to Tokyo station where there will be a transfer the next bullet train to Tazawako Station. Enjoy a Japanese bento lunch box on board, while you sit back and soak in the scenery whipping by.

Lake Tazawako Cycling

Tazawako-jindai

Lake Tazawako is Japan's deepest and clearest lake due to its naturally occurring acidity. It serves as a picturesque hub for outdoor water activities. Depending on weather conditions, paddle out onto the lake on a guided kayak tour. Feel the peaceful calm as you float on the mesmerizing, unique emerald blue of the lake. Alternatively, join your guide for a relaxing cycle and snack tour through rice paddies and mountainside communities. Pass the lake with a view of Mt. Akita-Komagatake, a beautiful volcano and the highest mountain in Akita prefecture.

## Lake Tazawa: An Ode to Rice and Sake

Exploring this small part of Akita prefecture feels as though you have been let in on a very good secret. Cherry blossoms, sake and samurai may sound like familiar emblems of Japanese culture, but the day's explorations shed an entirely new light on what you thought you knew. Small samurai villages, friendly local people, and a stunning preservation of culture that invites you to slow down and take in what makes Japan truly unique.

Begin the morning with a local business run by the same family for generations. Their craft uses the bark of the cherry blossom to produce charming works of art. Build your own alongside the experts. Wander a samurai village at your own pace, making your own discoveries along the way. This early evening at the sake brewery begins with song and ends with a full stomach.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



### Accommodation

Tazawako Rose Park Hotel (or similar)

Hotel

Rose Park Hotel is situated on the shore of Lake Tazawa in Akita prefecture. Rooms are spacious and offer stunning views of the lake just outside your door. Meals are served using local ingredients only found in Akita prefecture.



### Today's Activities

Cherry Bark Craft Experience

Tazawako-jindai

1h30m

The craft known as Kabazaiku has been passed down from generation to generation, and is the only craft in the world that uses bark from wild cherry blossoms. When the bark is peeled using this technique, the tree will be able to regenerate in a few years and doesn't need to die in order for the bark to be used. Visit this family-run craft business and spend time in the workshop at their home. A common thread in Akita is an unspoken pledge to work in harmony with nature, sustainably using the local resources, and we invite you to join your local hosts and get your hands dirty on a cherry bark creation of your own.

CEO-Led Visit of Kakunodate Town

Tazawako-jindai

1h45m

After enjoying lunch at a local restaurant the group will set out on the Samurai Street walk led by your CEO. Pass through Kakunodate Town famous for its samurai tradition and its abundance of weeping cherry trees. The town remains remarkably unchanged since it was founded in 1620. It was built with two distinct areas, the merchant district and the samurai district. On the walk there will be an option to visit Samurai House or to do some tasting of locally produced miso, and other delicious treats.

Sake Brewery Visit

Akita

2h30m

Visit a sake brewery and take a tour learning from the Suzuki family who has been making great sake for the last 330 years. Sit down for dinner and sake pairing with some delicious locally produced foods, and listen to stories from the 19th generation of Suzukis on the 2nd floor of the brewery in a traditional room. The tour includes an in-depth look into the brewing process as you see the facilities. See the establishment's collection of art, samurai armour, and pieces of jewelry dating back to the 17th century. For all this time the fields of Akita have remained bountiful, the water crisp, making it possible to continue making sake the same way for centuries. Taste the warm, fruity flavours and sip a drink that has become an age old tradition.

Day 5

## Nyuto Onsen: Hot Springs in the Mountains

Just outside Lake Tazawa lies the village of Nyuto. Seven different Ryokan call Nyuto home, and one of these Ryokan is your resting place for the evening. This area is famous for its Onsen, Japanese natural spring baths. Take time to enjoy the peace and tranquility of being far from the rest of the world while the warm spring water refreshes you from the outside in.

Before you can hop into the rejuvenating spring water, explore Nyuto village by e-bike on a guided tour. Far from the rush of places like Kyoto and Tokyo, your experience in Nyuto invites you to explore rural Japanese life in a place not often visited by travellers coming to Japan.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



### Accommodation

Taenoyu Ryokan (or similar)

Ryokan



### Today's Activities

Free Time

Tazawako-jindai

Enjoy a relaxing morning at the hotel.

Private Vehicle

Tazawako-jindai - Nyuto Onsen

30m

25km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle from Lake Tazawa to the town of Nyuto Onsen.

Nyuto Onsen sustainable community tour

Sembokuchō

1h30m

5km

Ride a bus to Nyuto Onsen village where you will set out on an orientation walk with locals and learn the traditions and history of the healing waters that flow here. Then, pedal on an e-bike through Nyuto touring the forests soaking in the views of other hidden rustic Ryokans nestled around the base of Mt Nyuto. Visit different Onsen in the village and learn about the history, culture and unique characteristics of each Onsen.

Note in the colder months (November-April) e-biking is unavailable due to winter weather and will be replaced with a walking tour.

#### ACTIVITY

Spend time relaxing in the Onsens on the property of your accommodation. These Japanese natural spring baths provide peace and tranquility in one of the world's oldest rituals.

## Iwate: Fudai and a Story of Resilience

The Tsunami that hit the coast of Japan in 2011 devastated communities along the northeastern coastline. One village, however, was spared. Fudai, in Iwate prefecture, is a place left untouched by western commercialism, and luckily, by the effects of the Tsunami. An incredibly bold, forward thinking mayor initiated the building of a seawall that proved ominously prescient. Thanks to the seawall, centuries of tradition, culture and history were preserved. Because of this, we have an extremely rare and unique opportunity to hike to an ancient shrine and witness a performance very few people on Earth have ever had the chance to see. Spend time in Fudai eating local Japanese delicacies, hearing from locals about their experiences after the Tsunami, and visit the seawall itself.

After your experience discovering the village of Fudai, hike up to the Unotori shrine. Witness a unique cultural performance that is closely connected to the traditional Japanese "nature worship". These performances are so rare that often many Japanese visitors are seeing it for the first time themselves. Conclude day with a five course meal at a French inspired restaurant with locally sourced and produced ingredients.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



### Accommodation

The Park Hotel Jodogahama (or similar)

Hotel



### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Senboku - Iwate

3h-3h30m

200km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Fudai Village Walking Tour

Fudai

2h

2km

Learn stories about the village and the locals experiences with the 2011 tsunami.

Hike to Unotori Mountain Shrine

1h30m

1km

Hike up to Unotori Mountain Shrine and experience a Kagura demonstration. This Kagura is unique, in that the local community has gotten younger adults involved in the local traditions in an effort to keep

their culture from disappearing in these remote areas. The total length of the hike is 1.6km and has an elevation gain of 424 m.

Day 7

## Iwate: Michinoku Coastal Trail Trek

The Michinoku Coastal Trail is a story of community tourism. It's a story of building back better after a devastating loss. The trail itself offers unparalleled views of the blue ocean crashing into rocky sea caves. The day spent with local trekking guides and fishermen give a glimpse into local life here in Iwate.

The trail stretches over 1000-kilometers from Hachinohe to Soma City in Fukushima. Spend the day trekking one of the most picturesque portions of the trail-traversing just over 9kms. Rest your legs after a long day by boarding a small fishing boat. Cruise along the shoreline learning from the local fisherman as you take in the dramatic scenery.



### Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



### Accommodation

The Park Hotel Jodogahama (or similar)

Hotel



### Today's Activities

Michinoku Coastal Trail Hike

Iwate

4h

9km

The trek begins at Kurosakiso and finishes at the Kitayama Visitors Centre. You will be walking on part of the Michinoku Coastal Trail. Upon arrival to the end point, drive to the limestone tunnels for a short walk to admire the natural beauty.

Total distance: 9km

Duration: 4 hours

Sappa Fisherman Boat Excursion - From Kitayamazaki

1h

Board a small fishing boat and cruise the shoreline while learning about daily life of the fisherman, which has been the experience of many locals living here for generations.

Day 8

## Tokyo: Jodogahama Beach

Jodogahama beach looks like something slightly out of a scene from Star Wars-rock formations jutting straight out of the clear blue water. A six minute walk brings you straight to the beach-with time for a swim or leisurely seaside walk. Bright and busy Tokyo is on the horizon so breathe in that salty air while you can.

After a leisurely morning at the beach, relax on a bullet train to Tokyo throughout the afternoon.

Please note, you will not have access to your main luggage for approximately 24 hours, as we utilize Japan's takkyubin service to conveniently and reliably transfer luggage from Iwate to Tokyo and avoid hauling large bags on crowded trains. You must pack an overnight bag with everything you'll need until you're reunited with your luggage the following day. Only one bag per passenger is permitted on the luggage transfer. If you have more, there will be an additional charge at the traveler's expense.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Accommodation

Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo (or similar)

Hotel



### Today's Activities

Bullet Train

Morioka-eki - Tokyo

2h15m

465km

Get to your next destination faster than the speed of light (ok maybe not that fast) aboard a high-speed train from Morioka station to Tokyo.

Jodogahama Beach Walk

1h30m

2km

Walk to Jodogahama Beach and enjoy the strange rock formations this morning. Relax in the soft sand or plunge in the cold water if you dare. Breathe in the last of the salty air before the group travels to the city.

Private Vehicle

Iwate – Morioka-eki

2h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle from Jodogahama to Morioka station.

Day 9

## Tokyo: A Modern Story

From its humble beginning as a fishing village, Tokyo, formerly known as Edo, is now Japan's most populous city. Get the most out of your time here with your local CEO. In the morning, explore old town Asakusa. Walk from Shibuya Crossing to Takeshita Street on an afternoon walking tour of Tokyo's can't miss spots.

After a busy morning walking the streets of Asakusa, the afternoon can be as busy or relaxing as you make it. Your CEO will lead a tour through some of Tokyo's most iconic areas, to Meiji Jingu Shrine, through Harajuku and the Shibuya Scramble.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Accommodation

Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo (or similar)

Hotel



### Today's Activities

Asakusa Walk

Tokyo

Discover this historic entertainment district on a guided orientation tour of the area. Take in one of Tokyo's iconic sites with a stop at Sensoji temple.

Modern Tokyo City Tour

Tokyo

2h30m

Head into the metropolis and discover some of Tokyo's modern highlights on a CEO-guided tour. Visit places like Meiji Jingu Shrine, Shibuya, Harajuku, and with a combination of train rides and walking.

Eat or walk, walk or eat? If you are an active foodie, you're familiar with this internal debate. Your OMG Day will be incredible no matter what you choose-but it's up to you to decide what the day holds. Join your CEO for a full day excursion to Mt. Fuji or meet a local guide and dive headfirst into all things Japanese cuisine, slurping and crunching your way through the day.

Your day will be epic no matter which way you spend it on your OMG Day. Fill in your fellow travellers on what the day held over a delicious farewell dinner in downtown Tokyo.

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## Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

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## Accommodation

Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo (or similar)

Hotel

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## Today's Activities

### ACTIVITY

Option 1: Led by your CEO, hop on a train from Tokyo and ride for about 2 hours to visit the Kawaguchiko area where you can soak in the impressive views of Mount Fuji while walking along the lake with your CEO. The walk can take 1-2 hours depending on the pace of the group. Afterwards the group will transfer back to Tokyo.

Option 2: Embark on a food tour with a local guide from the hotel. Visit the local shopping street, Yanaka and sample street food there. This is one of the most unique areas in Tokyo and it transports visitors back in time. From specialty stores to the freshest local ingredients this street is chock full of delicious eats. Sample ramen and finish with a mochi for dessert. Conclude the walking tour in an area filled with Japanese temples and an old 100-year-old house turned into a cafe.

Day 11

## Tokyo

Your adventure comes to an end, and you can depart at any time today.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Departure Day

Not ready to leave? Your CEO can help with travel arrangements to extend your adventure.

## What's included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Wellness Moment: Onsen Bath
- Your OMG Day: Mt Fuji Day Tour or Tokyo Food Tour, Tokyo
- Welcome dinner
- Village hike in the Kitayama Mountains
- Kyoto highlights walking tour
- Kayak or Cycle Lake Tazawa
- Cherry Bark Hand-on Craft Experience
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- Sappa Boat Tour along the Iwate coastline
- Visit Fudai Village with local food tasting
- Tokyo Highlights walking tour
- Farewell dinner
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

## What are the main highlights of this trip?

Hike in the Kitayama mountains, Kayak Lake Tazawa, Sake Brewery Experience, Onsen Hot Spring stay, Hike the Michinoku Coastal Trail, Jodogahama Beach, Tokyo City Tour.

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## **Is there a disclaimer I should read before booking this trip?**

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you view a final copy of your Trip Details a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## **Is there a travel disclaimer for my itinerary I should review before booking this trip?**

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

## What important notes should I be aware of before the trip?

### 1. Tattoos

Tattoos are not common or widely accepted in Japan. There is no cause for concern, but do your best to cover your tattoos when possible and note that you may not be permitted to enter public spas or onsens (hot springs).

### 2. Luggage size restriction

All G Adventures tours in Japan use the world-famous Shinkansen bullet trains, which have a restriction on maximum luggage size. Your luggage must be less than 160cm in total. This is roughly the size that most airline companies consider as "carry-on baggage" and allow in overhead storage compartments.

### 3. Overnight Luggage Transfer Service:

Please note there will be a luggage transfer service between Kyoto and Lake Tazawa on days 2 and 3, then again between Iwate and Tokyo on days 7 and 8 due to limited space on the bullet train. Please make sure to bring a small overnight/day pack to hold anything you might need during the travel day and overnight while luggage is being transferred.

4. We strongly recommend bringing a day pack or backpack to use during the day, in addition to your carry-on sized luggage. Please see "What to take" under Tour details for more information.

### 5. ACCOMMODATION NOTE:

Please be aware that properties we stay in with only two stories may not have elevators installed and climbing the stairs with your luggage will be necessary.

## What is the role of the group leader during this trip?

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officer (CEO). The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are traveling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense, you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects.

## How large will the group be?

Max 15

## What meals are included in this trip?

10 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 7 dinners

## **What are the meals like on this trip?**

Eating is a big part of traveling. G Adventures knows that worldwide, local cuisines define the cultures. We think sampling regional delicacies are intrinsic to truly experiencing the country. We want you to be able to try foods according to your individual tastes, comforts, and budgets.

Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility. At times, meals will be taken together as a group. Other times, your CEO will point you in the direction of several delicious options, and you will have free time to pick and choose at will. Often in Japan it is fun to get some snacks and beverages with the salarymen in the evenings at small restaurants, and other times it is fun to sit with a few friends at a sushi train.

Your CEO will always strive to cater for all dietary requirements/preferences, but please keep in mind that Vegetarianism/Veganism and Gluten Free Options are very uncommon in Japan, especially in rural areas, so this may mean a more limited selection for you.

Please refer to the Meals Included and Budget Information for information regarding included meals on your trip. Japan's kitchen is at your fingertips!

## **What are the modes of transportation on my trip?**

Bullet train, private vehicle, fishing boat, local train, subway, local bus taxi, walking.

## **What transportation will we take on this trip?**

On our tours in Japan we use a mix of private and public transport, making use of Japan's world famous transport system. From the super fast Shinkansen Bullet Train to Tokyo's extensive local train and subway network, we ride with the locals.

## **Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?**

We believe solo travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and solo travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## **Where will we stay during the trip?**

Hotels (9nts), Ryokan (1nt).

## **Will I get my own room?**

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops

## What kind of accommodation can I expect on this trip?

Japan is one of the most populous countries in the world and space is at a premium. Therefore, hotels rooms are small! Additionally, most Japanese hotels do not have designated non-smoking rooms. Therefore, we ask hotels to deodorize rooms before check in.

Ryokan are traditional inns found across Japan. Featuring tatami floors (soft mats of woven straw), futon beds, Japanese-style baths, cotton kimono (casual robe worn to lounge around or to head to the bath), and elaborate kaiseki meals that are pleasing both to the eyes and the pallet, a ryokan is the perfect place to experience traditional customs and hospitality. As ryokan are usually top tier accommodations, most guests stay only one night, often to celebrate a special occasion or holiday. Don't be intimidated by the formalities inherent to a stay at a ryokan, your hosts will welcome you the same way they do all their guests. Have fun and enjoy this relaxing opportunity to learn more about Japan's unique customs.

Please note that some of the traditional Japanese inns used on this tour only offer shared bathing facilities. This means that individual shower stalls will not be available, instead several shower stations are available in an open, same-sex bathing area. Shared bathhouses and onsen (hot springs) are an essential part of Japan's culture, traditionally serving as a place for men or women to gather, relax, and discuss the days happenings.

## What are the joining instructions?

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

Please note that day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned on this day.

Upon arrival to your Joining Hotel (note that check-in time will be in the afternoon), join your group and CEO for a Welcome Meeting in the evening around 6:00 pm.

Please ensure you arrive on time for the welcome meeting and bring your passport so your CEO can collect the required information for your train tickets.

If you are arriving later and will miss the Welcome Meeting, your CEO will leave a note at reception for you with any information you may need, and with morning instructions for the next day.

# Who should I contact in case of an emergency?

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Local Office (Japan)

During office hours: Mon-Fri (Excluding national holidays) 9:00-18:00 Local Time

From outside Japan: 1st contact +81 3-6809-1212. (2nd contact +81 90 1223 2336 or +81 80 6779 1851)

From within Japan: 1st contact 03-6809-1212 (2nd contact 090 1223 2336 or 080 6779 1851)

After office hours emergency number

Primary phone: +81 90 1223 2336 or +81 80 6779 1851 (from within Japan: 090 1223 2336 or 080 6779 1851)

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below which will connect you directly with our Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found [here](#).

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

# What should be on my packing list?

## Cold weather:

- Long-sleeved shirts or sweater
- Scarf
- Warm gloves
- Warm hat
- Warm layers

## Conservative Dress:

- Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)
- Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

## Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

**Essentials:**

- Toiletries (required) (Preferably biodegradable)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Ear plugs
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Footwear (with traction)
- Hat
- Locks for bags
- Long pants/jeans
- Moneybelt
- Outlet adapter
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Sunglasses
- Swimshirt/rash guard
- Swimwear (For included visit to geothermal baths and kayaking, including swim shorts)
- Walking poles
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

**Health & Safety:**

- Face masks (Clients will be only be required to wear a face mask where it is mandated by local regulations.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Pen (Please bring your own pen for filling out documents.)

### **Trekking & Rain Gear:**

- Fleece jacket or warm layer
- Foldable Hiking Poles
- Foldable Umbrella
- Hiking boots/sturdy walking shoes
- Hiking pants (Convertible/Zip-off and quick dry recommended)
- Neck gaiter, buff, or scarf (For covering face during cycling around the lake in cold weather)
- Packable Light Down Jacket
- Warm base layer shirt: Wool or wool blend recommended
- Warm Socks
- Waterproof lightweight hiking boots
- Windproof rain jacket

### **Warm Weather:**

- Sandals/flip-flops
- Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- Sturdy water shoes/sandals
- Sun hat/bandana
- Swimwear Note: During the colder months (Nov-Apr) the mountains can be very cold, so please make sure you pack warm clothes. During summer (Jun-Sep) temperatures be very hot and humid. Lightweight breathable clothing is recommended.

## **When can I do my laundry on this trip?**

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels but this is very expensive. Your leader can show you self service coin laundries in larger cities. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

## What are the visas and entry requirements for my trip?

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your own responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. Visa requirements for your trip will vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as far as possible, but rules do change and sometimes without warning. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check the information yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page [here](#)

## What should I consider when planning my personal expenses and discretionary spending for this itinerary?

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

## What should I know about currency, credit cards, and exchanging money while on this tour?

As currency exchange rates in Asia fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com). As of March 2024 the exchange rate for JAPAN was 1 USD = 150 (Japanese Yen).

Every Post Office and Convenience store has an ATM machine that accepts Visa, Mastercard and Debit Cards. At times, Maestro/Master Card/Cirrus have been problematic at these machines, so please bring a back-up card.

Credit Cards are widely accepted throughout Japan, but some places still only accept cash. . Money can be exchanged at Post Offices and some banks and hotels in major cities, however it can be a very slow process.

## How much emergency money should I bring on this trip?

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

## Do I need to pay a departure tax?

Departure Tax is included in all International and Domestic tickets.

## Should I be tipping on my trip?

Tipping for service is not practiced in Japan. Leaving money at restaurants, in taxis etc will simply cause confusion.

Tipping within the travel industry is standard to recognize the guide for a great experience. Our CEOs work hard to make your trip special. If you're happy with their service, a tip of \$8-\$12 per day is a great way to say thanks, though the final amount is completely up to you.

## What activities are optional on this trip?

- No optional activities

## Are there any health considerations I should know before travelling?

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure.

We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit, hand sanitizer/antibacterial wipes, and a full supply of any personal medications. Always carry your prescription medication in original packaging with your doctor's prescription and ensure your medication is legal in Japan. In Asia, you will not find the same drugs as you get at home. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities. Also note that for legal reasons our CEOs (tour leaders) are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. When selecting your tour, carefully read the itinerary and note the physical demand rating and assess your ability to cope with the demands of the tour and travel style.

G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a tour without refund if, in the reasonable opinion of the CEO, they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

## What do I need to know to about safety and security on my trip?

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it deemed necessary, due to safety concerns. Your Chief Experience Officer (CEO) will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy and explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgement when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards), have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk. [Read more about travel safety](#) for ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling.

## What rules should I know before joining this trip?

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of people in the sex trade is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they utilize the services of paid sex workers, in any capacity.

## What is Planeterra?

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally.

G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

## How should I dress to respect local customs during the tour?

In Asia the dress standard is more conservative than it is back home. When packing try to pick loose, lightweight, long clothing that will keep you cool in the usually hot and humid climate of Asian summers. In predominately Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim countries we ask that you dress respectfully and avoid very short shorts/skirts and singlets/tanktops when visiting temples, mosques or other holy sites.

## How can I share feedback about my trip experience?

Earn 5% off your next G Adventures Tour (up to \$100 USD)\*

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us and to thank you for your time, we are pleased to offer a 5% discount (up to a maximum of \$100 USD) off your next G Adventures holiday. All you need to do is submit the form within 4 weeks of the completion of your tour, and you'll be able to join the thousands of travellers who have taken 2, 3, 4 or even 10 or more tours with us!

Discount cannot be combined with other offers or applied to 'Independent' style trips. Maximum discount value is \$100 USD (or equivalent currency). Valid for new bookings only. G Adventures reserves the right to withdraw or modify this offer at any time without notice. Limited to one discount per person.

## Does G Adventures have an email newsletter I can subscribe to?

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at [www.gadventures.com/newsletters/](http://www.gadventures.com/newsletters/)

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

## How old must I be to join this trip?

On a G Adventures Geluxe Collection tour the minimum age is 18 years.

## Are international flights included in this trip?

No, international flights are generally not included in the price of your tour.

However, on some combo tours travelling between two different countries, international flights are included as part of the itinerary and price of the tour. Please speak to your GCO or booking agent for further details.

In addition, check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.

## What should LGBTQ+ travellers know about safety and travel considerations on this trip?

The safety and well-being of all of our travelers is a priority at G Adventures and that includes our travelers who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. We recognize that there are specific concerns and questions you may have about your adventure in terms of safety and security. We encourage you to visit our [LGBTQ+ page](#) for useful resources to ensure you feel safe and comfortable throughout the duration of your trip. The Equaldex tool linked on this page can be of particular help when deciding where you may want to visit next.

## Dossier Disclaimer

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.