

14 DAY CHERRY BLOSSOMS OF JAPAN

DESTINATIONS

—
TOKYO
KAWAGUCHI
TAKAYAMA
KYOTO
OSAKA
HIROSHIMA



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TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1

Destination	Home ➔ Tokyo
Meals included	
Hotel	3 ★ Kichijoji Tokyo Rei Hotel, or similar

Today, board your flight for Japan!

Upon arrival to Tokyo, please make your own way to the starting point hotel.

This evening there will be a welcome meeting at the hotel to discuss some tour logistics and to give you a chance to meet your fellow travellers.

Arrival & check in:

Haneda International Airport (HND). The most popular way to travel from Haneda International Airport (HND) to Kichijoji Tokyo Rei Hotel is by train. Simply take the Keikyu Line to Nihombashi Station where you change to the Tozai Line to Kichijoji Station. From Kichijoji Station it is a 1-minute walk to the hotel. The trip takes about 75 minutes and costs approximately 820 Yen.

Narita International Airport (NRT). The best way to travel from Narita International Airport (NRT) to Kichijoji Tokyo Rei Hotel is also by train. Take the Keisei Narita Skyaccess to Nihombashi Station and change to the Tozai Line towards Kichijoji Station. From Kichijoji Station it is a 1-minute walk to the hotel. The trip takes 1hr 45 min and costs approximately 1710 Yen.

Travellers will be arriving at various times throughout the day. If arriving prior to standard check-in time (3pm) you are welcome to leave your luggage with hotel reception and explore your surroundings until check-in becomes available, as there are no scheduled activities on Day 1 of the itinerary. The hotel may grant early check-in; however, this is strictly subject to availability and at the hotel's discretion.

Please note: Some flights may depart Australia the night before

DAY 2

Destination	Tokyo
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	3 ★ Kichijoji Tokyo Rei Hotel, or similar

This is arguably one of the most extraordinary capital cities on the planet. The Tokyo metropolitan area spreads over three prefectures with 38 million residents.

In spring, local and international tourists alike flock to Japan to see the renowned cherry trees bloom and join in the sakura (cherry blossom) festivities. Even for a city so densely populated, Tokyo has a lot of parks and green spaces, making it perfect for sakura viewing.

Enjoy a full day tour of the city's highlights. We'll start with a visit to the Tsukiji Outer Market, a shopping district adjacent to the enormous former wholesale fish market. It's a dream for foodies. This lively area is home to everything food-related – fresh ingredients, street food vendors, kitchen utensils. You'll find great sushi and other restaurants around here, too.

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We'll see a beautiful public park that has served many purposes over the centuries. It was originally built as a feudal lord's Tokyo residence and duck hunting grounds during the Edo period, but later served as a strolling garden and an imperial detached palace, before eventually being opened to the public in its current form.

Depending on the season's timing, your guide will carefully choose another viewing spot around Tokyo for you to enjoy these lush pink blooms and the joy of sakura.

DAY 3

Destination	Tokyo
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	3 ★ Kichijoji Tokyo Rei Hotel, or similar

Enjoy the serenity of Ueno Park, the city's largest green space and home to numerous temples and museums. There's even a zoo here. More than 800 cherry blossom trees line the wide central path. The first cherry trees were planted here by legendary shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, whose reign began the Edo Period (1603-1868). It's said to be one of the oldest hanami (a cherry blossom viewing party) places in the city and it's certainly a popular spot, so be prepared for crowds. The trees here typically bloom a little bit earlier. At night it's especially magical when this space is lit up.

The annual blooming of sakura is a sacred occurrence that has been celebrated for over 1,000 years. Cherry blossom season is widely fêted all over the country. Hanami, usually with a picnic, is a chance to celebrate the arrival of spring and the transient, fleeting beauty of sakura.

You'll have some free time for lunch and a wander among the blossoms.

In the heart of the quirky Harajuku district, we'll stop at Yoyogi Park. It's a popular gathering place year-round and in spring, with around 600 cherry trees, it's another lively spot for hanami parties. We'll then visit nearby Meiji Shrine (Meiji Jingu), located within a 170-acre forest in the centre of Tokyo. Constructed of cypress wood and copper, the shrine commemorates Emperor Meiji, who presided over Japan's industrial revolution in the second half of the 19th century. This calm, peaceful escape is beautiful in cherry blossom season.

DAY 4

Destination	Tokyo 🚗 Kawaguchiko
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	4 ★ Oiso Prince Hotel, or similar

We'll head to Kawaguchiko today, about a two hour drive. Lake Kawaguchiko is the most accessible of the Fuji Five lakes; popular sightseeing spots each offering an astonishing view of dramatic, iconic Mount Fuji. Sakura season aside, this is a great place to get back to nature.

Here we'll visit Mt Fuji 5th station to hopefully view the divine mountain before visiting, Oishi Park on the north side of the lake. Seeing the cherry blossoms with Japan's most famous mountain in the background really is an experience. There are about 300 cherry trees on the northern shore, stretching for about a kilometre.

You'll see the lakeside trail along the eastern shore of the lake that boasts many weeping cherry trees. There will be time for lunch.

This lake is also home to a cherry blossom festival held during the season, one of the most popular in the country.

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DAY 5

Destination	Kawaguchiko 🚗 Takayama
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	4 ★ Okada Ryokan, or similar

We'll drive to the traditional city of Takayama today, still home to many Edo-period buildings.

We'll visit Matsumoto Castle, also known as 'Crow Castle' due to its dramatic black exterior. The donjon (keep) – Japan's oldest remaining wooden keep, completed around 1593 – is listed as a National Treasure of Japan. This historic site is particularly lovely when hundreds of cherry blossom trees surrounding the castle are in bloom.

For a taste of authentic, old Japan, we'll enjoy a tour of Takayama old town, nestled in the Hida mountains. This city still retains a traditional feel, especially in its beautifully preserved old town (Sanmachi Suji). Here you'll find quaint, old latticed wooden buildings and Sannomachi Street, with pretty homes, restaurants and sake breweries. We'll see the Takayama Jin'ya, the former government headquarters under the Tokugawa Shogunate from 1692-1871.

DAY 6

Destination	Takayama 🚗 Shirakawago 🚗 Kyoto
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	3 ★ Hotel Elcient Kyoto, or similar

Today travel to Shirakawa-gō Village, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that has more than 100 'Gassho-style' houses, which feature steeply-pitched roofs. Built many hundreds of years ago, these historic houses stand together in a beautiful natural setting. From the site's observation deck you can enjoy a panoramic view of this unique village, its thatched-roof houses sitting among gorgeous mountain scenery. Following this we will transfer to Kyoto where the afternoon is at leisure to ensure this UNESCO delight.

DAY 7

Destination	Kyoto
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	3 ★ Hotel Elcient Kyoto, or similar

In north-eastern Kyoto, we'll walk along the Philosopher's Path, running alongside the Lake Biwa Canal. It's perfect for a slow stroll under the fragrant blossoms.

Heian Jingu Shrine is a relatively young sacred location – built in 1895 – but this Shinto shrine is very impressive, with its enormous torii (sacred gate) standing almost 25 metres high. The garden behind the main hall – a shining example of Meiji-era garden design – is home to several weeping cherry trees.

Visit Kinkaku-ji Temple, otherwise known as the Golden Pavilion. This is a Zen temple and a UNESCO World Heritage Site with two floors covered entirely in thin layers of pure gold. The site is set within a beautiful classical Zen garden. The detailed architecture of Kinkaku-ji incorporates three distinct architectural styles – Shinden, Samurai, and Zen.

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DAY 8

Destination	Kyoto
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	3 ★ Hotel Elcient Kyoto, or similar

Today is a full free day to spend in Kyoto. This golden city was once the capital of Japan and sits on the island of Honshū. It's famous for its numerous classical Buddhist temples, as well as gardens, imperial palaces, Shinto shrines and traditional wooden houses. In the city's famous Gion district, Geisha can often be seen strolling through the streets.

DAY 9

Destination	Kyoto 🚗 Nara 🚗 Osaka
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	4 ★ FP Hotel South-Namba, or similar

This morning, we travel the short distance to Nara. Visit Tōdai-ji (Great Eastern Temple), famed for its Great Buddha Hall, which remains one of the largest wooden buildings in the world. This impressive building houses a 15m-tall bronze statue of the Buddha Vairocana. Following this we'll wander through gorgeous Nara Park, where more than 1200 tame sika deer roam freely.

Following our tour we'll depart Nara and head to Osaka, a vibrant tourist destination renowned for its food culture.

DAY 10

Destination	Osaka 🚗 Himeji 🚗 Hiroshima
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	3 ★ Hiroshima Tokyu Rei Hotel, or similar

Today your main luggage will remain at the hotel in Osaka to meet you upon your return in two days time. Please ensure you have an overnight bag packed for your two evenings in Hiroshima.

After breakfast we'll depart Osaka to visit the so-called 'White Heron Castle', Himeji – it's the largest surviving example of a traditional Japanese castle. Comprising 83 buildings, the white roof of this UNESCO World Heritage-listed complex is said to evoke the wings of a heron taking flight, hence the popular name Shirasagi-jō (White Heron Castle). This is the most visited castle in Japan and the site offers some wonderful views of surrounding Himeji city.

From here we'll continue on to Kurashiki, a city on Japan's Seto Inland Sea, where we'll tour the Bikan Historical Quarter, known for its centuries-old buildings and lovely local shops. After our visit here we'll transfer to our hotel in Hiroshima.

DAY 11

Destination	Hiroshima
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	3 ★ Hiroshima Tokyu Rei Hotel, or similar

After breakfast this morning our guide will meet us in the hotel lobby. Together we'll board a ferry for the short trip to Miyajima, an island known for its forests and ancient temples. Just offshore, there's a 'floating' torii, which becomes

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partially submerged at high tide. It marks the entrance to the Itsukushima Shrine, which was first built in the 12th century. Nearby, the Museum of History and Folklore has cultural artifacts in a 19th-century merchant's home. We'll take a walk along Omotesando Shopping Street where you can grab some lunch before returning to Hiroshima by ferry.

Once we're back in Hiroshima we'll visit the Atomic Bomb Dome, otherwise known as the Genbaku Dome, or the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. A shell of a building that was one of very few left standing after the United States bombed Hiroshima in 1945. In Hiroshima today, locals have mixed feelings about the UNESCO World Heritage-listed structure: some see it as a reminder of war, while others consider it a tribute to the lost that ensures we'll never forget the tragic events that took place here.

Later, we'll visit the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, which contains many poignant, yet important, exhibits. The flame in the cenotaph is intended to burn until the last nuclear weapon has been destroyed.

DAY 12

Destination	Hiroshima 🚶 Osaka
Meals included	Breakfast, Dinner
Hotel	4 ★ FP HOTELS South-Namba , or similar

This morning we'll depart Hiroshima via the bullet train to Shin-Osaka Station. Upon arrival in Osaka we'll begin a full-day coach tour with our guide, beginning at Osaka Castle, which played a major role in the unification of Japan during the Azuchi-Momoyama period in the 16th century.

Later, we'll tour Kuromon Ichiba, one of the city's main food markets. This spacious covered market features vendors peddling street food, fresh produce, shellfish and trinkets and souvenirs.

After a short break for lunch our tour continues to the Minami area in the city's south – a district that's bursting with boutiques, designers outlets, restaurants and bars.

We'll also enjoy a walking tour of the Dōtonbori area. One of Osaka's most popular tourist destinations, this street runs parallel to the Dōtonbori canal and is a hugely popular destination for shopping, street food, bars and entertainment. At night the streets here are illuminated by hundreds of colourful neon lights and mechanised signs, including the famous running Glico Man sign and the Kani Doraku crab sign.

This evening we'll enjoy dinner as a group at a local restaurant.

DAY 13

Destination	Osaka ✈ Home
Meals included	
Accommodation	N/A

Enjoy one last delicious breakfast this morning, before your Japanese adventure comes to an end.

Departure & check out:

There are several ways to travel from your hotel to either Osaka International Airport (ITM) or Kansai International Airport (KIX), from shuttle buses to trains and taxis. Transport to the airports can cost between 250 Yen to 21,000 Yen depending on the form of transport you choose. Your Tour Leader will be able to assist you arrange the most

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convenient way to the airport on the last day of the trip.

Standard hotel check-out is from 10am-12pm. You are welcome to leave your luggage at hotel reception and spend your final moments of free time exploring the area or alternatively please speak with hotel staff if you would like to extend your check-out time. Please note this service is subject to availability and will likely come at an additional cost.

DAY 14

Destination	Home
Meals included	
Accommodation	N/A

Arrive home today. We hope you've been *inspired*.

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Inclusions

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return international airfares with a full service airline
- All coach, rail and ferry transportation, including the iconic Japanese bullet train
- 12 nights in comfortable 3-4-star accommodation
- Daily breakfast, 1 dinner
- Ride the iconic Japanese bullet train
- Comfortable, dedicated private transportation throughout
- Fully escorted by professional, English-speaking guide
- Incredible sightseeing as per the itinerary, including the beauty of sakura (cherry blossoms) in beautiful destinations like Tokyo's Ueno Park, Kyoto's Heian Jingu Shrine and Lake Kawaguchiko with the backdrop of iconic Mount Fuji

SIGHTSEEING HIGHLIGHTS

- Tokyo – Enjoy sakura festivities and the art of hanami in this extraordinary city's remarkable green spaces
- Kawaguchiko – Take in the natural beauty of this lake with astounding views of iconic Mount Fuji
- Takayama – Experience the timeless charm of this quaint, traditional city with a walk through its beautifully-preserved old town
- Kyoto – Experience sakura in Japan's spiritual heart as you stroll the Philosopher's Path under an umbrella of fragrant cherry blossoms
- Nara – See the country's largest Buddha statue and the famous Nara deer park
- Hiroshima – Ride the iconic Japanese bullet train between Osaka and Hiroshima
- Hiroshima – Visit the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum to understand the tragedies of Japan's not so distant past
- Miyajima - See the 12th-century Itsukushima Shrine and famous floating torii gate
- Osaka – Enjoy free time in this vibrant city renowned for its food culture

Fine Print

BOOK WITH CONFIDENCE

Inspiring Vacations has been globally recognised and awarded for its handling of COVID-19 during the pandemic. The safety and wellbeing of our guests is our highest concern during this time of uncertainty, and we are continuously monitoring the evolving COVID-19 situation.

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We have adopted the advice of the WHO to ensure all customers can travel with the knowledge of how to travel safely and with confidence.

Australian owned and operated with 100% Australian Customer Service support

We are proudly 100% Australian owned and operated, with our head office located in Melbourne, Victoria. When you make your booking, you will receive dedicated and ongoing support from our team of travel professionals throughout your booking, up until you are due to depart.

Flexible Date Change Option

Book now, change later with our Flexible Date Change option. You may select this \$99pp option at time of purchase, giving travellers the flexibility to change your date without penalty (subject to availability, less third party costs incurred, plus any applicable surcharges for the new date selected).

Date change must be requested prior to 65 days before your original selected departure date*. Once inside 65 days of departure, date changes are not permitted.

*some packages may have a varied period in which you can request a date change due to limitations with the third-party provider.

Please refer to our 'Book with Confidence' section for terms and conditions.

The Flexible Date Change option does not cover cost incurred for components not fulfilled by Inspiring Vacations or in the event extra services have been booked with Inspiring Vacations outside of the standard package, including but not limited to airfares, pre/post accommodation or insurance.

Airfare Inclusive packages - If you are purchasing an airfare inclusive package, the Flexible Date Change option applies to the tour portion of your package. Airfare flexibility will be subject to the airline's fare rules and a change fee plus any fare difference may be applicable.

Cooling off period

If you change your mind within 7 days of making your booking online, you can request a refund of your initial deposit payment as part of our cooling off period.

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Once your purchase date falls outside of the 7 day period, our standard terms and conditions will apply. Please ensure that any request to cancel your booking is received via email to support@inspiringvacations.com, including the reason for cancellation.

HOW TO BOOK & PAYMENTS

Deposit & Payments

- Secure your package with only a \$99 deposit per person.
- Pay a 2nd instalment of \$1500 per person within 28 days.
- You will then be invoiced for final payment 90 days prior to departure.

Booking Process

- Select the purple 'Reserve Your Seat' tab to begin your booking (you must 'Sign Up' first by entering your email and creating a password)
- Then select the purple 'Book now' tab of the tour you have selected
- Select your Departure Date, Departure City, Number of Passengers, Room Configuration, any Upgrade Options, and enter any Special Requests
- Click the purple 'Proceed to Secure Checkout' tab
- Enter your credit card or PayPal details to secure your deposit/payment. You may also pay via BPAY (not available within 70 days of departure).
- Once your order is complete, you will be prompted to complete a Booking Form so that we can fulfil your booking
- Your booking is confirmed once your Booking Form is submitted and you can begin the countdown to your Inspiring Vacation!
- You will then be allocated and contacted by one of our Dedicated Support Agent's (within 48 hours) who will support you right up until you return from your journey.

FLIGHTS, UPGRADES AND EXTENSIONS

Airfare Information

- Full-service airline used which will include meals, luggage and entertainment
- Flights may not be direct and may include a maximum of two connections.
- If you would like to travel with a preferred airline, please ensure you mention this in the special request field. Please note that appropriate fare and tax difference will be applicable in order to confirm your request.
- Adelaide customers will likely require two stops in either

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direction and will attract an airfare surcharge;

Adelaide Surcharge - \$250

- All tickets will include 20 kilos checked baggage per person, along with 7 kilos of hand luggage.
- Despite the airlines baggage allowance, we recommend travelling with 20 kilos per person due to restrictions with internal flights (where applicable), as well as coach and train transportation. Also, you will be responsible for handling your luggage at all times as the services of porters is not included. If travelling over this amount, you will be liable for any excess baggage fees enforced by the airline, payable direct.
- Once ticketed, flights are non-refundable; any changes will be subject to the airline rules and change fees
- Full names as per passport (including all middle names) are required
- Any airline schedule changes or cancellations are beyond our control

Premium Economy or Business Class upgrades

- Premium Economy - Not available.
- Business Class upgrade available from an additional \$6,500 per person (subject to availability).

Please specify this as a 'Special Request' when completing your booking and you will be quoted for the additional fare. In the event your selection is unavailable, or that you are dissatisfied with the quote, you will be provided with a full refund.

Land Only discount

To purchase this tour as a Land Only itinerary, please [CLICK HERE](#)

Extending Your Stay

Some customers like to enhance their holiday by extending their stay pre- and/or post-tour or including a stopover in another destination. If you wish to do so, please follow these steps:

1. Once you have logged in to your account, click on 'Book Now' and complete the required fields until you reach the 'Special Requests' free text field.
2. Here, please specify your preferred flight arrangements and/or preferred airline. Be sure to mention if you would like us to also quote additional nights' accommodation, with the number of nights needed.

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By choosing to extend your stay, please note that a supplement of \$150 per person, plus applicable fare and tax differences will apply. We will contact you via email with a quote and proposed flight itinerary, and then proceed with collecting the additional payment required to confirm your request.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Fitness Requirements While the tour itinerary should give you some guidance and overview to the expected requirements, to determine if this tour is right for you we categorise each of our tours in terms of their intensity. These guidelines are to ensure that each tour group is conducted as expected and to ensure the overall satisfaction of all Inspiring Vacations customers.

As a general rule, portage is not included, therefore at all times you are expected to handle your own luggage where help may not be available.

This particular tour is categorised as a "3".

3 – Moderate Tour: A good level of fitness and mobility is required, as this tour includes a moderate level of physical activity and is considered a medium-fast paced tour. You should be able to walk up and down stairs, get on and off the coach and able to walk reasonable distances of approximately 2 kilometres per day or more with ease. Any physical ailments you may have must be disclosed at the time of booking to determine your suitability. If you have any form of walking aids, other than a walking stick or hiking poles, then this tour is not suitable.

Tipping A friendly reminder that tipping is not included in your package. While tipping is not customary, it's of great significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels, inspires excellent service, and is an entrenched feature of the tourism industry across many destinations. You may also consider tipping your tour leader and driver for outstanding service throughout your trip. Suggested amount for your guide, 500Y per person per day. Remember, a tip is not compulsory and should only be given when you receive excellent service.

Accommodation The accommodation listed is subject to change. Any changes will be of an equal or higher standard. Bedding configurations (double or twin) are requests only. All efforts will be made to meet your preferences, however any changes are beyond our control.

Twin Share Bedding Configuration At any time, bedding

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configuration is subject to confirmation by the hotel and based on availability. While you have the option to select either twin or double bedding at time of booking, our recommendation when travelling to Japan is to choose twin bedding, as the rooms are often bigger than those that have a double bed. If insisting on double bedding, please note that the rooms will be smaller and more narrow. As a general expectation, we cannot always guarantee bedding at all hotel stays.

Single Supplement Single supplement is \$1099 per person in addition to the twin-share price.

Please note when choosing Single Supplement for this deal that you will receive a single room, which is smaller in size than a twin/double room. Unfortunately this is typical for Japan, as the cost to solely occupy a double/twin size room is incredibly high. We appreciate your understanding.

Triple Share Not available.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is required to protect yourself against the unexpected.

We have partnered with nib to offer our customers competitive rates for their travel insurance. You can book comprehensive or budget cover simply by clicking [HERE](#) to arrange your policy.

Visa & Passport information It is the traveller's responsibility to ensure they have a valid passport. The passport must be valid for a minimum of six months from the intended date of return.

Australian passport holders do not need a visa to travel to Japan, for stays less than 90 days.

Please note that these details are subject to change without notice. We recommend visiting <https://smartraveller.gov.au> for up to date information in terms of entry requirements.

Tour Documentation Final documentation including, e-tickets and hotel details, will be provided approximately 30 days prior to travel.

Group Size 20-35 people

Children Children must be 5 years old or above and share a room with parents at all times. Children are charged the same price as adults.

Trip Style - Group Tour Our Group Tours offer unparalleled value for

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money and are the perfect style of travel for those on a budget, though still eager to pack as much in to their itinerary as possible. These tours tick all the boxes with an abundance of inclusions such as sightseeing highlights, expert tour guides, quality accommodation, transfers, coach transportation, some meals and more. Please note that the maximum group size will vary between deals and will be mentioned within the Fine Print of each deal page.

Cherry Blossoms

Please note: cherry blossoms are weather dependent and it is not guaranteed that they will be in bloom at the time of your arrival.

EXCLUSIONS

- Airport transfers
- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Tipping
- Anything not mentioned in the itinerary
- Optional activities
- Personal expenses

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EXTRA SERVICES

You can enhance your package by choosing some of the following extra services available for this package:

Pre and post tour accommodation

If choosing Land Only and arranging your own flights, we can arrange additional nights accommodation for you where required, though please note that you are still required to make your own transfer arrangements both from and to the airport:

- Pre-tour accommodation (Tokyo): \$312.00 per room per night for double/twin/single including breakfast
- Post-tour accommodation (Osaka): \$312.00 per room per night for double/twin/single including breakfast

Please specify in the 'Special Request' field when making your purchase your preferred travel arrangements and if you would like our team to book additional nights' accommodation. The additional cost for these land arrangements will be added to your final payment invoice and are subject to availability. Alternatively, you may purchase 1 pre or post-night accommodation, at time of booking.

Arrival and departure airport transfers

You are welcome to utilise the airport shuttle service upon arrival and departure, though please keep in mind that the shuttle service only operates at certain times, therefore you would need to make sure that your arrival flight time is appropriate. Final hotel details will be provided 30 days before departure. The hotels mentioned in the itinerary are to be used as a guide only and may not be confirmed for your chosen tour date.

When using the shuttle service, please note that there will be no representative to meet you, so you will need to make your own way to the shuttle pick up point, which will then take you to your hotel and vice versa from hotel to airport. Please note that this is a shared service with other travellers. If you would prefer a private transfer service, you will need to make those arrangements independently at your own expense.