

JOURNEY TO JAPAN

11 - 30 APRIL 2026



We travel to Japan during blossom time to experience art, culture, history, palaces, temples, Mt Fuji, bullet trains, museums, gardens, and wonderful cultural immersion tours, including paper making, fabric dyeing, tea ceremony, gold leaf chopstick making, Kimono and pottery factory.

DAYS

20
Days

HIGHLIGHTS

Art galleries, temples, Mt Fuji, blossom time, our own concerts, cultural tours, markets, Mt Koya Buddhist experience.

GROUP SIZE

28
Travellers

MEALS

All breakfasts
10 Lunches
11 Dinners

MOBILITY

Active
Tour

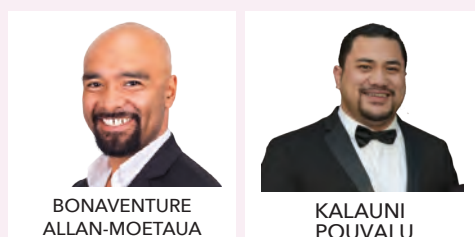
JOURNEY TO JAPAN

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- 20 day extensive tour of Japan visiting the following regions: Tokyo, Mount Fuji, Nagano, Kanazawa, Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Takayama and Mount Koya.
- Our own concerts plus many wonderful cultural immersion tours, including paper making, fabric dyeing, tea ceremony, gold leaf chopstick making, Kimono and pottery factory.
- Visit Japan during the blossom season but as seasons seem to be changing so dramatically at present, seeing the blossoms are dependent on the climate and when the blossoms appear in Spring in 2026.
- Experience many great temples, historic sites, palaces, gardens and galleries.
- Very special overnight trip in the beauty of Mount Koya as we stay in a Buddhist Monastery and experience total silence for the evening.
- Learn about Hiroshima: visit the Peace Memorial Park and Museum, take a short ferry ride to Miyajima Island and visit Itsukushima Shrine.
- Visit Nagano with special inclusions: the Japanese Alps to visit the Snow Monkeys.
- Experience the Mount Fuji region which includes the Fuji Five Lakes area, Mount Fuji.
- Sample many of the local delicacies as well as local wines and sake.
- Japan is highly regarded for its wealth of both traditional and modern arts and crafts and on this journey we will experience the full spectrum. From the rituals of the tea ceremony to refined garden design; dramatic and thought-provoking contemporary sculptures and light installations to a collection of world class galleries and museums, we get to experience it all.
- Hosted by the amazing team of Bonaventure Allan-Moetaua, Kalauni Pouvalu and our wonderful local guide who will be with us throughout the tour.



OUR HOSTS:



BONAVENTURE
ALLAN-MOETAUA

KALAUNI
POUVALU

MAP GUIDE:

1. TOKYO (2 nights)
2. LAKE KAWAGUCHI (1 night)
3. NAGANO (1 night)
4. KANAZAWA (2 nights)
5. TAKAYAMA (1 night)
6. KYOTO (3 nights)
7. HIROSHIMA (2 nights)
8. KURASHIKA (2 nights)
9. MOUNT KOYA (1 night)
10. OSAKA (2 nights)
11. TOKYO (1 night)



PLACES WE STAY

- **Hotel Niwa Tokyo (2+1 nights)** is located in Kanda-Misakicho, an area distinguished for its rich culture with universities and publishing houses that is also close to the secondhand bookshop district of Jinbocho.
- **Fuji Highland Resort, Lake Kawaguchi (1 night)**
- **Hotel Metropolitan, Nagano (1 night)**
The Metropolitan Hotel has extraordinary views of the mountains surrounding the area. The rooms are open and spacious and immerse guests in relaxation and sophistication.
- **Hotel Sanraku, Kanazawa (2 nights)**, a centrally located hotel which welcomes us with a stunning six-story waterfall in the courtyard. This elegant hotel was only opened in 2022.
- **Hotel Around Takayama (1 night)** is part of the Ascend Hotel Collection and enjoys a central location, close to the many incredible places of interest and business facilities in and around Takayama.
- **Nohga Hotel, Kyoto (3 nights)** is decorated with artworks and craftworks made by creators from and based in Kyoto. Their music, art, space design, and products are scattered around the property to demonstrate the diverse culture of Kyoto.
- **Sheraton Grand, Hiroshima (2 nights)** 1 minute's walk from the train station this 4.5-star hotel contains 238 spacious hotel rooms and is decorated with contemporary Western furnishings.
- **Setouchi Kojima, Kurashika (2 nights)** Situated on a hill, Setouchi Kojima Hotel boasts rooms and an open-air public bath with stunning views of the Seto Inland Sea.
- **Temple Lodge in Mount Koya (1 night)** We stay overnight at a temple lodge to enjoy Buddhist style vegetarian dinner and stay in total silence which we rarely have in our daily life.
- **Monterey Grasmere, Osaka (2 nights)** Conveniently located in Namba, central Osaka, many popular areas are within walking distance of the hotel. It is designed in the style of a British Manor House.



HOTEL NIWA, TOKYO



HOTEL SANRAKU, KANAZAWA



SETOUCHI KOJIMA HOTEL, KURASHIKI

Transport: In Japan we travel by coach within the cities and shorter distances in the countryside and often by Shinkansen (bullet trains) between cities. We have First Class reserved seats on the bullet trains. Over the past half century, the made-in-Japan technology behind these sleek trains has continued to evolve. Top speed has risen from 210 km/h (130 mph) to 320 km/h (200 mph), and ridership is now 1 million passengers per day.

Please note: Our luggage will not travel with us on the train. We will charter a luggage truck to drive our luggage between cities so you will need a day bag on the train which will be more convenient and safer getting on and off when travelling by train.



TOKYO



SUSHI MAKING CLASS



MEIJI JINGU SHRINE

TRIP ITINERARY

Experience the Exceptional:

● SATURDAY 11 APRIL 2026 (D) FLY TO TOKYO

Hotel Niwa, Tokyo (2 nights)

Capital of Japan since 1889 and with a population of 38.1 million, Tokyo is the dynamic epicentre of 21st century Japan. A dazzling fusion of ancient and modern, traditional and avant-garde, the city pulsates with promise.

Highlights Include:

- Fly Auckland to Tokyo.
- YO KO SO!!! (Welcome!!). We arrive at Narita Airport and transfer to our hotel for the evening.
- A casual dinner this evening to get to know each other and then a chance to get an early night after our long flight.

● SUNDAY 12 APRIL 2026 (B, L, D) TOKYO CITY TOUR

Highlights Include:

- Today it's all about exploring Tokyo. Our wonderful guide will share many stories and secrets behind the metropolitan city.
- First, we will visit Meiji Jingu shrine which is the mausoleum of the 122nd emperor of Japan. It is also an artificial forest designed 100 years ago by thinking over 100 years ahead.
- After leaving the shrine, we will attend the sushi making class and make our own lunch and then enjoy free time at leisure.
- Welcome dinner this evening with music from our wonderful artists, Bonnie and Kalauni.



MOUNT FUJI



MATSUMOTO CASTLE



VISIT THE FAMOUS SNOW MONKEYS

MONDAY 13 APRIL 2026 (B, L, D) TOKYO - LAKE KAWAGUCHI
Fuji Highland Resort, Lake Kawaguchi (1 night)

Highlights Include:

- Transfer to Lake Kawaguchi, Mount Fuji with its fantastic views of Mount Fuji (if weather permits). On arrival we enjoy lunch by the lakeside.
- We will sample some Hoto noodle which is the typical local pasta with vegetables and meat seasoned with Miso, fermented soy beans.
- Drop by Kubota Ichiku Tsujigahana museum where we are amazed by beautiful Kimono displays which Kimono designer Mr. Ichiku Kubota completed through years and years of trial and error.

TUESDAY 14 APRIL 2026 (B, L)
LAKE KAWAGUCHI - NAGANO
Hotel Metropolitan, Nagano (1 night)

Highlights Include:

- Visit Matsumoto castle on the way to Nagano. This is a national treasure castle which preserves its original structure dating back more than 400 years.
- After our lunch of local food, we head to Nagano and relax after the long drive from Mount Fuji area.

WEDNESDAY 15 APRIL 2026 (B, L)
SNOW MONKEYS - KANAZAWA
Hotel Sanraku, Kanazawa (2 nights)

Set at the southern end of the Noto Peninsula along the coast of the Sea of Japan, Kanazawa is Japan's hidden secret. Authentically Japanese, the city is home to one of the country's three most beautiful classical gardens, a historic samurai quarter, a traditional geisha district and a number of elegant handicraft workshops.

Highlights Include:

- A very special day planned as we meet the famous snow monkeys. They are called snow monkeys as their photos taken during wintertime have become very famous.
- To see the famous monkeys, we enjoy a walk through the forest by a river. This area used to be the bottom of the sea. Monkeys live by the hot spring where they bathe.
- After this wonderful visit, we will head to the Japan seaside and arrive at Kanazawa, famous for Kutani pottery, lacquerware and Yuzen dyeing, a variety of Japanese crafts.



KENROKU-EN GARDEN



VISIT THE GARDENS WITH OUR GREAT HOSTS

THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2026 (B, L, D) KENROKU-EN GARDEN - GOLD LEAF WORKSHOP

Highlights Include:

- Kanazawa is literary "gold stream". It was named after this story. There lived a man named Togoro. One day, when he dug up taro potatoes, they were shiny with gold dust. Yes, he hit the gold mine and became rich. Togoro was generous enough to share his money with lots of people in his village. The place has been called Kanazawa since then.
- Visit Kenroku-en garden which is one of the three major gardens in Japan.
- Enjoy a gold leaf chopsticks workshop at Gold Leaf Sakuda. This was founded in 1919 by a gold leaf artisan and is currently patronized by customers in a diversity of fields from all over Japan.
- In the afternoon, visit another must see place, Higashi Chaya gai, where you can see traditional wooden buildings.

FRIDAY 17 APRIL 2026 (B, L) PAPER MAKING WORKSHOP - CHARMS - TAKAYAMA Hotel Around Takayama (1 night)

Takayama and the surrounding area boast traditional architecture, opulent festivals and a range of the best mountains and onsen in Japan. Widely considered Gifu's crown jewel, Takayama is a fantastic destination surrounded by the scenic alpine countryside of the Japan Alps.

Highlights Include:

- Today we make our way to Hida Takayama. On the way, we will drop by Gokayama for a paper making workshop.
- We visit Takayama festival hall and enjoy festival floats. After lunch, we will make a monkey good luck charm called SARU-BOBO, which means Baby Monkey. It protects us on our travels.



GOKAYAMA



KYOTO



TEA MAKING CEREMONY



ENJOY A HOT POT DINNER

SATURDAY 18 APRIL 2026 (B, D) MARKETS - BULLET TRAIN TO KYOTO - TEA CEREMONY Nohga Hotel, Kyoto (3 nights)

Kyoto, once the capital of Japan, is a city on the island of Honshu. It is famous for its numerous classical Buddhist temples, as well as gardens, imperial palaces, Shinto shrines and traditional wooden houses.

Highlights Include:

- Firstly we experience the morning market in Takayama and visit one of the traditional wooden houses called Yoshijima house.
- After free time for lunch we move on to the ancient capital, Kyoto.
- Witness the scenery of Hida river on the way by bullet train from Nagoya to Kyoto. Our luggage will be transferred to the hotel so we do not need to worry about taking luggage on the train.
- Upon arrival at Kyoto, attend a tea ceremony, learning about the essence of former capital Kyoto.
- After the tea ceremony, we visit Yasaka shrine, one of the oldest and most prestigious shrines in Kyoto.

SUNDAY 19 APRIL 2026 (B, L, D) NIJO CASTLE - GOLDEN PAVILION

Highlights Include:

- Located in the centre of Kyoto, Nijo castle was built about 400 years ago by the shogun Ieyasu Tokugawa, the greatest figure in Japanese history, as his temporary residence in Kyoto.
- Tour the main building of Ninomaru Palace and see many gorgeous paintings on the walls and sliding doors as well as elaborate carvings and enjoy strolling in the beautiful garden outside of the palace building.
- Next comes the Golden Pavilion, the most popular site in Kyoto. Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) – is a Buddhist temple and is an excellent example of Japanese garden design. The structure is a brilliant golden hue colour and is very minimalistic.
- Then we head to the northwest of the city, Arashiyama area to visit one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Tenryu-ji temple.
- Enjoy a Buddhist style vegetarian lunch in this temple. In the afternoon we walk through a breathtaking bamboo forest and enjoy the area.
- Join a classical tea ritual and enjoy a cup of tea and a rest.
- At night, our dinner is a Shabu Shabu casual hot pot dinner together.



FUSHIMI INARI SHRINE



OFF ON THE BULLET TRAIN!



HIROSHIMA PEACE MEMORIAL

MONDAY 20 APRIL 2026 (B) FUSHIMI INARI SHRINE - MARKETS

Highlights Include:

- Firstly we visit the Fushimi Inari shrine, known as the shrine with a thousand gates. Founded in early 8th century, it is now one of the most renowned and iconic sites in the whole of Japan.
- We will be welcomed by many statues of foxes which are considered to be the messenger from the Inari god.
- After the shrine, we visit Nishiki market in the centre of the city.
- In the afternoon, the rest of the day is at leisure in the ancient capital city.

TUESDAY 21 APRIL 2026 (B, L, D) BULLET TRAIN - PEACE PARK, HIROSHIMA Sheraton Grand, Hiroshima (2 nights)

Hiroshima, a modern city on Japan's Honshu Island, was largely destroyed by an atomic bomb during World War II. Today, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park commemorates the 1945 event.

Highlights Include:

- Today, we take the bullet train from Kyoto to Hiroshima. Again our luggage will be transferred.
- After arriving in Hiroshima, we head to the Peace Memorial Park. In the morning of August 6th, 1945, the Atomic Bomb nicknamed as "the little boy" was dropped for the first time in human history, which completely destroyed the city.
- The area where the park is located, is only a minute walk from ground zero where the bomb exploded at 600m up in the sky.
- After strolling through the park and visiting memorials, monuments and statues dedicated to the victims of the bombing, we head to the Peace Museum to learn more details about the Nuclear Weapon.
- Enjoy lunch at an Italian restaurant.
- Dinner tonight will be Okonomiyaki pancake, a Hiroshima's specialty.



MIYAJIMA ISLAND, HIROSHIMA



KURASHIKI RIVER



CONTEMPORARY ART ON NAOSHIMA

WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2026 (B) MIYAJIMA ISLAND - ITSUKUSHIMA SHRINE

Highlights Include:

- Today, we have a short cruise to Miyajima Island at the west of Hiroshima, located in the Seto Inland Sea. From the ancient times, the whole island of Miyajima, also known as Itsukushima, has been revered by the locals as the place where the goddesses of the sea reside.
- Designated as one of the Most Beautiful Views in Japan, the island now attracts so many visitors from all over the world to see the famous "floating torii gate" standing in the water in front of Itsukushima shrine.

THURSDAY 23 APRIL 2026 (B, L) OKAYAMA - KURASHIKI - POTTERY FACTORY Setouchi Kojima, Kurashika (2 nights)

Highlights Include:

- Transfer to Okayama to visit Bikan (beautiful sight) district in Kurashiki.
- Enjoy a walk in the charming area along the Kurashiki river with a traditional townscape of white-walled warehouses and willow trees, and retro-flavored western style buildings.
- After leaving Kurashiki, visit the Hozangama pottery studio of Bizen-yaki, one of the oldest styles of pottery in Japan.

FRIDAY 24 APRIL 2026 (B, D) NAOSHIMA BENESSE MUSEUM

Highlights Include:

- We take a ferry to visit the island called Naoshima, where the entire island is dedicated to contemporary art. The island became a contemporary art space in 1998 starting from the house project by the Benesse corporation.
- Visit the Art House Project, a collection of abandoned houses, a temple and a shrine, which have been converted into art installations and venues for contemporary art by artists from Japan and abroad.
- We will also visit the Benesse Museum, another amazing museum, before leaving the island to head back to the hotel.



EXPERIENCE SILENCE WITH MONKS AT MT KOYA



OSAKA



FAREWELL CONCERT FROM OUR ARTISTS

SATURDAY 25 APRIL 2026 (B, D) BUDDHIST MONASTERY - MOUNT KOYA

Temple Lodge in Mount Koya (1 night)

Mount Koya is one of the most spiritual sites in Japan with more than 100 temples in the small town located in the basin on top of the mountain which is about 900m high.

Highlights Include:

- Mount Koya is the centre of Esoteric Buddhism originally founded by the great monk Kukai, the great master who spread the Buddhist Law across Japan.
- We walk through Okuno-in cemetery, the largest cemetery in Japan with more than 200,000 tombstones and to the mausoleum of Kukai himself.
- Explore the Danjo Garan complex where magnificent pagoda is standing.
- We stay overnight at a temple lodge to enjoy a Buddhist style vegetarian dinner and stay in total silence, something which we rarely experience in our daily life.

SUNDAY 26 APRIL 2026 (B, D) OSAKA

Monterey Grasmere, Osaka (2 nights)

Osaka is Japan's third largest city. Osaka is known for its flamboyance, fun loving people and amazing food.

Highlights Include:

- Leave the quiet Buddhist monastery to visit one of the most vibrant cities in Japan.
- Upon arriving at Osaka, we visit Dotonbori where lots of foodies gather day and night to enjoy inexpensive local foods.
- See the colourful, gigantic neon signs including the iconic "running man" advertisement by Glico and moving crabs by Kani-doraku.
- Walk through the main street of Dotonbori and have a chance to try some of the representative local foods such as Takoyaki (octopus dumplings) or Kushikatsu (deep-fried and breaded foods on skewers).

MONDAY 27 APRIL 2026 (B, D) SHIBORI DYEING - FAREWELL DINNER

Highlights Include:

- Today, we experience traditional shibori dyeing at a workshop at Kadono Sarashi in Sakai city.
- This evening, a spectacular farewell dinner with a view and the concert from our artists at Umeda Sky Building.



OSAKA



OUR TOUR ENDS WITH FABULOUS FRIENDS



SENSO-JI TEMPLE

TUESDAY 28 APRIL 2026 (B) Niwa Hotel, Tokyo (1 night)

Highlights Include:

- Our time in Osaka ends today as we transfer to the airport for our flight back to Tokyo with a casual evening after our travel day today.

WEDNESDAY 29 APRIL (B, L) IMPERIAL PALACE - FLIGHT HOME

Highlights Include:

- Today, we visit the Imperial palace to hear the history of the most prestigious and beloved family in Japan. The Imperial Palace was the main residence of the Emperor of Japan and the former site of Edo Castle.
- Then a visit to Asakusa, Senso-ji temple, one of the oldest temples in Tokyo to learn the history of Tokyo.
- After a wonderful final day, we transfer to the airport late afternoon for our flight home.

THURSDAY 30 APRIL

We arrive home, following our Journey to Japan, filled with wonder, knowledge and enjoyment of this amazing land.

**\$21650 PER PERSON
TWIN SHARE**
SINGLE ROOM SUPPLEMENT ADD \$5930

INITIAL DEPOSIT ON BOOKING: \$2000
SECOND DEPOSIT DUE 10 OCTOBER 2025 \$4000
FINAL BALANCE DUE: 19 DECEMBER 2025

THIS TRIP INCLUDES:

- Economy flights on Air New Zealand from Auckland - Tokyo return including all taxes plus internal airfares from Osaka to Tokyo.
- 20 day extensive tour of Japan visiting the following regions: Tokyo, Mount Fuji, Nagano, Kanazawa, Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Takayama and Mount Koya.
- Accommodation at 4-star hotels: Niwa Hotel, Tokyo (2+1 nights), Fuji Highland Resort, Lake Kawaguchi (1 night), Hotel Metropolitan, Nagano (1 night), Hotel Sanraku, Kanazawa (2 nights), Hotel Around Takayama (1 night), Nohga Hotel, Kyoto (3 nights), Sheraton Grand, Hiroshima (2 nights), Setouchi Kojima, Kurashika (2 nights), Temple Lodge in Mount Koya (1 night), Monterey Grasmere, Osaka (2 nights) (Please note: hotels correct at time of printing but subject to change).
- Our own concerts plus many wonderful cultural immersion tours, including paper making, fabric dyeing, tea ceremony, gold leaf chopstick making, Kimono and pottery factory.
- Visit Japan during the blossom season but as seasons seem to be changing so dramatically at present, seeing the blossoms are dependent on the climate and when the blossoms appear in Spring in 2026.
- Very special experience in the beauty of Mount Koya as we stay in a Buddhist Monastery and experience total silence for the evening.
- Learn about Hiroshima: visit the Peace Memorial Park and Museum, take a short ferry ride to Miyajima Island and visit Itsukushima Shrine.
- Visit great sites and witness amazing scenery including Mount Fuji, the Japanese Alps to visit the Snow Monkeys, forests, lakes, temples, art galleries, markets, palaces.
- All travel, transfers, bullet trains, entrances, tips, taxes are included, as listed in the itinerary.
- All breakfasts, 10 lunches and 11 dinners are included.
- Hosted by the amazing team of Bonaventure Allan-Moetaua, Kalauni Pouvalu and our wonderful local guide who will be with us throughout the tour.

ACTIVE TOUR

This is still a moderately paced tour, but you will be required to walk longer distances, walk on cobblestones and ancient ruins, and stand in museums. To really get the best out of this tour you need to be able to stand or walk for a couple of hours comfortably, be it at a leisurely pace. You also need to be able to climb up to three flights of stairs at a leisurely pace.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All itinerary details are subject to change, but changes will be replaced with a comparable or better option.
- Initial & Second deposits are fully refundable up until final balance due date, minus an administration fee of up to \$500 plus any non-recoverable costs.
- All monies are non-refundable at final balance due date. This becomes an insurance claim.
- Bank transfer payments incur no surcharge. Credit card payments incur surcharge of 1.5%.
- Travellers need to be independently mobile and fit to travel.
- Bookings will only be accepted with initial deposit & booking form.
- All travellers must obtain comprehensive travel insurance for international travel and insurance for domestic travel is recommended.
- Please refer to our terms and conditions on booking form.



VERSION DATE 02/09/25

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