

# Experience Japan

## Classic Tour | 12 Days | Physical Level 1

OSAKA – NARA – KYOTO – YUDANAKA – NAGANO – MATSUMOTO – MOUNT FUJI – MISHIMA – KAMAKURA – TOKYO

This tour not only visits the famous sights of Japan including Osaka, Nara, Kyoto, Mt Fuji and Tokyo, but is brimful of experiences allowing you to immerse yourself in the local culture — from traditional tea ceremonies to origami, fan painting, miso tasting and sake tasting!

- Discover delightful Nara
- Visit Matsumoto & Osaka castles
- Explore Arashiyama bamboo forest
- Search for the snow monkeys
- See Kamakura's Grand Buddha
- Visit the Impressive Mt. Fuji

## TOUR MAP




## EXPERIENCE JAPAN TOUR INCLUSIONS:

Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land-only option is selected)

- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English-speaking National Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only things you may have to pay for are personal expenditures e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check-in or late check-out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

## CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Japan on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully-inclusive basis so you will travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

## PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

Our tours come with a physical rating to guide you in selecting a holiday that suits your comfort level. Joining any of our tours involves independent mobility and the ability to stay active throughout the day, which is essential for fully enjoying the unique charm of each destination.

'Experience Japan' falls under a Physical Level 1 category. This indicates a level of fitness that allows you to comfortably remain on your feet with occasional rest. Expect to effortlessly navigate boarding and disembarking from various modes of transport, including coaches, trains, and boats. You will be walking around remarkable sites and ascending steps to capture those awe-inspiring views!

Sightseeing may often involve walking for a reasonable duration, sometimes over multiple steps, or uneven surfaces. You will also be required to get on and off the boat in Tokyo Bay without assistance.

Our National Escort is dedicated to providing a high level of service and support throughout your journey. However, their primary role is to manage the daily aspects of the tour. They are unable to offer extensive personal physical assistance. We kindly ask our travellers to be prepared for the physical aspects of the tour to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for everyone.

## JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 12 days in duration including international flights or 10 days in duration based on 'Land Only'.
Travellers booked on a 'Land Only' package, the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to our reservations team.

Join the tour on Day 2 in Osaka (arrive into either Itami Airport or Kansai Airport) and end the tour on Day 11 in Tokyo (departures from either Narita Airport or Haneda Airport). Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions regarding your departure. An informal Welcome Dinner will be held on Day 2 of the itinerary. If you miss this due to your arrival time, all information will be provided to you at breakfast the following morning.

## ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

**Day 1-2:** **Arrive Osaka** Meals: D

Fly overnight to the fast-paced city of Osaka and transfer to the group hotel. Depending on your time of arrival, the rest of the day is yours to start soaking up the local atmosphere before dinner.



*Please note: Early check in (before 3pm) is not included. If your flight arrives in the morning and you wish to arrange this, please speak to your reservations consultant. For luggage storage options prior to check-in, please speak to your hotel reception desk.*

**Destination Information**

**Osaka** – Osaka (formerly called Naniwa) is Japan's third-largest city, with a population of over 2.7 million. It is the economic powerhouse of the Kansai region, known for its bright lights, vibrant downtown district, and many urban canals.

**Day 3:** **Nara** Meals: B, L, D



Visit the famous Osaka Castle, one of the city's most famous landmarks. Recently restored, it is home to more than four centuries of Japanese history.

Drive approximately one hour to Japan's one-time imperial capital, Nara, home to 8 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Sightseeing here will be about 3 hours on foot, and may include a walk of approximately 15 minutes uphill from the coach parking area. Look out for the park's beautiful resident sika deer - who have learned to bow to visitors! These small, free-roaming deer have no fear of humans. They expect 'deer crackers' in return for bowing, and may become cheeky - if uncomfortable, show them your hands are empty and they will usually walk away.

Visit Todaiji Temple, the world's largest wooden structure. This temple is home to the Daibutsu, an eighth-century bronze Buddha standing almost 15 metres tall. Continue to Isui-en Garden, known for its natural ponds. Please note that if your visit falls on a Tuesday, you may instead visit the neighbouring Yoshiki-en Gardens or a similar site instead. Opening days can vary throughout the year.

Return to Osaka before dinner.

***Please note:*** *Occasionally, your morning and afternoon excursions in Japan may be switched around to match local availability or to give you the best possible experience. This applies throughout your time in Japan. Please also note that at some sites, the entrance may be up to a fifteen-minute walk from the coach parking area.*

***Important:*** *Many sites in Japan require you to remove your shoes before entering. You should remove shoes* ***before*** *stepping onto the shoe-free area. Bare feet are not considered acceptable in Japan. Therefore, we recommend carrying a spare pair of socks in your day bag throughout your trip.*

**Destination Information**

**Osaka Castle** – Osaka Castle is known for sweeping views of the city from its hilltop perch. Construction began in 1583 under Toyotomi Hideyoshi, a peasant who had risen to the rank of daimyo (feudal lord). He intended for the castle to become the centre of a new, unified Japan under his rule. In the early seventeenth century, the castle fell to Tokugawa Ieyasu, the first shogun of the Tokugawa Shogunate. It was later used as a military armoury during WWII, and was also restored by the government in the late 1990s.

**Nara** – Nara was Japan's first permanent capital, from 710 until 794, when it was moved to Kyoto. It remains full of historic treasures, including 8 UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

**Todaiji Temple** – The UNESCO-listed Todaiji is one of the Seven Great Temples of Japan and is home to the Daibutsu, one of the largest bronze Buddha statues in the world.

**Isui-en Garden** – Isui-en is an attractive Japanese garden divided into two parts, a front garden and a rear garden, with a number of tea houses scattered throughout. The front garden dates back to the mid-17th century, while the large rear garden was built in 1899 by a wealthy merchant.

## Day 4: Osaka - Kyoto

Meals: B, L, D

Drive approximately 90 minutes north to Kyoto. An enchanting city, Kyoto was the capital for a thousand years; today, it is the legacy of ancient Japan, full of historic temples and classical buildings. On arrival, stroll through the Arashiyama Bamboo Forest and admire the towering thickets. Visit Ryoanji, the Zen 'temple of the peaceful dragon', and the famous Golden Pavilion of Kinkakuji.



Check in at your Kyoto hotel, home for the next two nights.

**Destination Information**

**Kyoto** – Kyoto was the ancient capital of Japan for approximately 1,000 years, until the newly-restored Emperor Meiji moved it to Tokyo in the 1860s. Many national treasures can be found in Kyoto.

**Arashiyama Bamboo Forest -** This sprawling bamboo grove is one of Kyoto's most photographed spots. The trees here are moso bamboo, which can reach heights of up to 28 metres (92 feet).

**Ryoan-ji Temple** – Ryoan-ji Temple is a Zen temple renowned for its garden, which features a dry, sand landscape with large rocks and smooth pebbles. The garden has fifteen stones, cleverly arranged so that one rock is always hidden from view at any angle. Fifteen is considered the number of perfection; just as no individual is perfect, viewers are unable to see all the stones. It is a reminder of one's imperfect and limited perspective.

**Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)** – This Buddhist temple sits over a pond in a classical garden of the 'go round' style. The top two floors are covered in pure gold leaf.

**Day 5: Kyoto** Meals: B, L, D



Begin the day with a visit to one of Kyoto's most famous sites – the famous Fushimi Inari Shrine. The shrine is renowned for its thousands of vermillion torii gates, which frame a scenic path up the mountain's forested slopes. Due to the limited parking space at Fushimi Inari Shrine, you may need to walk for 15 minutes from the coach to the beginning of the torii gates, from which point you can walk up part of the mountain.

Later, witness the age-old rituals of a tea ceremony before trying your hand at origami. Later, your immersive experience continues with a short fan painting class, where you will learn the technique of this highly refined and sought-after visual art.

Please note that as with many sites in Japan, you will be required to remove your shoes when entering the cultural experience venues.

**Destination Information**

**Fushimi Inari Shrine** – An important Shinto shrine in southern Kyoto, Fushimi Inari is famous for its thousands of vermillion torii gates, which form a network of tunnels around the main shrine buildings. The shrine itself is dedicated to Inari, the Shinto god of rice. There are many fox statues in the grounds of the shrine, as foxes are thought to be Inari's messengers.

**Origami** – The word origami comes from 'oru', meaning 'to fold', and 'kami', meaning 'paper'. It was first recorded in Japan in the Heian Period (794-1185). As paper was still a rare commodity in this period, origami was a pastime for the elite.

## Day 6: Kyoto - Matsumoto

Meals: B, L, D



This morning, experience Japan's impressive rail network as you cross Central Honshu by train. Begin with a bullet train to Nagoya, where you'll connect with a Limited Express train to Matsumoto. The total travel time will be approximately three hours.

On arrival, head to a miso house and learn about the process of making this famous Japanese seasoning before lunch.

This afternoon, explore the formidable 16th-century Matsumoto Castle, nicknamed 'Crow Castle' for its intense black exterior.

***Please note:*** *You will need to walk approximately 15 minutes on flat road to reach the castle from the coach parking area. You will need to remove your shoes to access the castle; please note that there are very steep, polished wooden steps to reach the higher floors. Please take your time and be mindful of those coming the other way. If you choose not to look inside the castle, you can enjoy the surrounding gardens and architecture.*

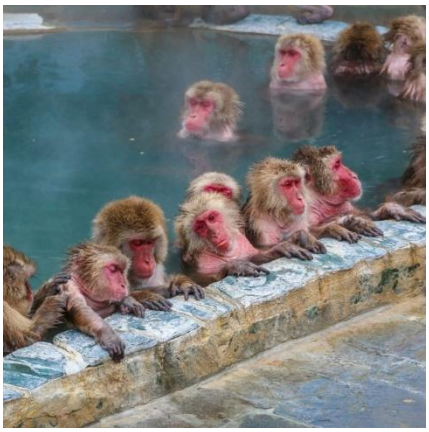
***Please note:*** *Your luggage will be transferred to Matsumoto separately and will arrive on your second night (max one suitcase per person). Please ensure that you pack an overnight bag for your first night in Matsumoto.*

**Destination Information**

**Matsumoto Castle** – Nicknamed Crow Castle for its dark black exterior, Matsumoto Castle dates back to the 16th century and is the oldest wooden castle in Japan. It is a 'hirajiro', meaning that the castle is built on plains, rather than a hill or mountain.

**Miso** – Miso is a traditional Japanese seasoning; a fermented paste created from a mixture of soybeans, sea salt and rice koji. It is a kitchen staple in Japan, often used in soups, marinades and condiments.

**Day 7:** **Nagano & Jigokudani Monkey Park** Meals: B, L, D



Drive 1 hour to Yudanaka in search of the snow monkeys (Japanese Macaques) at Jigokudani Monkey Park. Good shoes are required.

Enjoy a gentle trek through the sloping valley (up to 30 minutes each way) to reach the monkey pool, and watch them bathe and play in the warm waters. If you do not wish to walk through the valley, you will be able to wait in the café area near to the coach park.

Accustomed to visitors, the monkeys can be observed up close, and they almost completely ignore their human guests. Please remember that the monkeys are wild, not domestic, and **sightings cannot be guaranteed** (particularly during the breeding season, which runs from late September through to November.)

Stop in Nagano and visit a local sake brewery before returning to Matsumoto.

**Destination Information**

**Nagano** – The host city of the 1998 Winter Olympics, Nagano is the main access point for the Japanese Alps.

**Jigokudani Yaen-Koen** – Home to Japanese Macaques, also known as Snow Monkeys, Jigokudani literally means 'hell's valley'; it is named for the steam and boiling water that bubbles out of small crevices in the ground. It is in the baths of this hot water that the local Japanese Macaques like to soak. The monkeys live in large social groups and it can be quite entertaining to watch their interactions.

**Day 8: Mount Fuji** Meals: B, L, D



Drive south to reach the spectacular Fuji region. The calm waters of the local lakes, formed by past volcanic eruptions, reflect Fuji's picture-perfect cone. If weather permits, head up to Fuji's 5th Station to enjoy mountain views.

The 5th Station is occasionally closed due to inclement weather. If the centre is closed, or if visibility is too poor to make this visit worthwhile, your guide will take you to Fuji San World Heritage Centre instead (subject to local opening hours, which vary through the year).

Continue to tranquil Lake Ashi, and take a short cruise across the water before riding the Komagatake cable car for views of Mount Fuji and the lake below. Later, transfer to your hotel in the wider Mishima area.

**Destination Information**

**Mt Fuji** – At 3,776m, Mount Fuji is the highest of Japan's mountains and an iconic symbol of the country. Mount Fuji is notoriously shy and is often enveloped by clouds.

**Lake Ashi** – Formed after Mount Hakone's last eruption 3000 years ago, Lake Ashi is the symbol of Hakone. On a clear day, it offers views of Mount Fuji's summit in the distance.

**Day 9: Kamakura & Tokyo** Meals: B, L, D



Begin the day with a 2-hour drive to Kamakura, a charming coastal city located south of Tokyo. Famous for its many Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, Kamakura is surrounded by hills on all sides except the south, which opens onto Sagami Bay. These natural defences made it a strategic location for the seat of the Kamakura Shogunate of 1185-1333, which was the first military government in Japanese history.

Visit Kotokuin Temple, which houses Japan's second-tallest bronze Buddha statue. Stroll along Komachi Street, lined with pretty little shops, before visiting the city's most important shrine, Tsurugaoka Hachimangu. This hilltop shrine overlooks the city, with views of the sea on a clear day. Later, continue to Tokyo, Japan's incomparable capital. Check in at your hotel.

You will be on your feet for approximately 2-3 hours today.

**Destination Information**

**Kamakura** – A seaside city just south of Tokyo, Kamakura was the political centre of medieval Japan and is now a prominent resort town. The town is home to numerous Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, best known for the remarkable Kotokuin Temple's Great Buddha.

**Kotokuin Temple -** Kotokuin Temple is famously home to the second tallest bronze statue of Buddha in Japan. The statue was originally cast in 1252 and placed inside a large temple hall, however since the late 15th century the Buddha has been out in the open air.

**Tsurugaoka Hachimangu -** Tsurugaoka Hachimangu is Kamakura's most important shinto shrine and was founded in 1063 by Minamoto Yoriyoshi. The shrine is dedicated to Hachiman, the patron god of the Minamoto family and of the samurai in general.

**Tokyo** – Tokyo is a city of contrasts; neon-lit streets, towering skyscrapers, peaceful shrines and lovingly tended gardens. Tokyo became the official capital when the newly-restored Emperor Meiji moved it from Kyoto to Tokyo (then Edo) in the late 1860s. Its urban population is 14 million, while the population of the Greater Tokyo Area is more than 41 million.

**Day 10: Tokyo** Meals: B, L, D

Tokyo is the ultimate 24-hour city, but look behind its busy, high-tech façade and you will find plenty of tranquil backstreets and old temples to explore. Begin the day by exploring the Tokyo National Museum to learn about Tokyo's heritage. Afterwards, go on to ascend the soaring Tokyo Skytree for panoramic views of the city below. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before heading to the old district of Asakusa where you can soak up the atmosphere at Sensoji, Tokyo's oldest and most famous temple, before browsing the stalls on Nakamise Shopping Street.



Return to the hotel to freshen up. Later, transfer from the hotel to your boat and take a leisurely farewell dinner cruise on Tokyo Bay for some excellent city vistas.

*Please note that you will be on your feet for 4-5 hours during your touring in Tokyo. You will need to get on and off your boat this evening without assistance.*

**Destination Information**

**Tokyo Skytree** – The tallest structure in Japan, the earthquake-resistant Tokyo Skytree is predominantly a television and radio broadcast tower. It offers wonderful views over the vast metropolis of Tokyo.

**Asakusa** – Asakusa is the centre of Tokyo's Shitamachi (Old Town) District, where you can get a glimpse of historic Tokyo.

**Sensoji Temple** – Sensoji Temple is an ancient Buddhist Temple and the oldest in Tokyo. The temple was originally founded in the 7th century. The temple is adorned by an image of the Buddhist Goddess Kannon, who was said to have been rescued by two fishermen from the nearby Sumida River.

## Day 11-12: Depart Tokyo

Meals: B



This morning is free at leisure before transferring to the airport for your return flight home, arriving the following day. Please note, only breakfast is included today.

Late check-out is not included in our Experience Japan tour. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in Tokyo, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

*Please note: You may be transferred by shared coach with other passengers who are not part of a Wendy Wu Tour. If you are on a shared coach transfer, you may have to walk for a few minutes to get to your pick-up point. In this case, your guide will distribute transfer tickets in advance.*

**PLEASE INFORM OUR RESERVATIONS TEAM OF ANY ALLERGIES AND/OR SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS AT TIME OF BOOKING.**

# EXPERIENCE JAPAN TRAVEL INFORMATION

## VISAS:

A visa is not required for New Zealand passport holders for entry into Japan for stays up to 90 days.

Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back in New Zealand.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

## INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

## EATING IN JAPAN:

Japanese cuisine is delicious, colourful and healthy. Meals are usually served with a bowl of rice and a bowl of miso soup and consist usually of fish, pickled vegetables and meat. Japan's other main staple is noodles, most famous being Udon and Soba. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure.

Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout Japan. Food is an important element of Japanese culture. It is a time for families and friends to come together and much of family life revolves around the dinner table. Most food is eaten with chopsticks so best get practicing as cutlery is not always available at restaurants.

Breakfast will mostly be buffet-style but may be a set-menu. Lunches are mostly pre-set options as is custom in many local restaurants. Dinner is usually buffet-style, featuring a wide selection of high quality Japanese and Western dishes, but may occasionally be a set-menu. We usually find this style of dining suits the wide and varied tastes of our customers on tour. These are also pre-booked in advance prior to your arrival by your guides. This will provide greater flexibility and allow you to sample a broad range of local cuisines and dishes.

All beverages will be at your own expense and are readily available. Please note: if you have any dietary requirements, you must inform us before your tour starts, and please be aware that restaurants may not always be able to accommodate these. Gluten-free food may not be as readily available as in New Zealand.

On some days where lots of sights are covered, dinner times may be early and your tour group may head directly to the restaurant after sightseeing without stopping at your hotel to freshen up.

## ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. In the Fuji area, hotels tend to be more traditional in style and culture. In this area, you may be asked to take your shoes off at the door and store them in a secure locker – this is very traditional Japanese culture. Please note, double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality will exist between your home country and Japan.

Please note that in Japan, hotel rooms and bathrooms are renowned for being small. Standard single rooms are usually smaller than a standard double or twin room, contain one small double bed (or one single bed), and are designed for one person to use.

All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and a telephone. Hotels in Japan often do not have porters and you will be required to carry your own luggage. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

## PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that porterage is not included on our tours in Japan. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

## TRANSFERS:

As we offer our customers a variety of airlines to suit your needs, passengers will arrive/depart in Japan at various times during the day. Depending on the number of customers arriving/ departing on the same flight as yourself, the type of transfer to your hotel/ airport will vary.

You will always be met on arrival by English-speaking staff and transferred all the way to your hotel either by:

- Direct shared bus (shared with other passengers, not just Wendy Wu Tours clients).
- Shared bus plus taxi from the nearest bus stop to the hotel (maximum 5 minutes' walk).
- Chartered coach (if there are more than 8 Wendy Wu Tours passengers arriving at the same time).

On the departure day, all passengers will be met by English-speaking staff at the hotel and transfer by one of the three ways above. For those passengers using a shared bus or shared bus plus taxi to the airport, the guide services end when they drop you off at the bus stop, and you will need to check in at the airport on your own. If you have paid extra for a private transfer, the above does not apply.

You will meet your national escort at the welcome dinner or, if arriving late, the following morning after breakfast at the welcome meeting.

Please ensure your Wendy Wu Tours luggage tag is visible on your suitcase/hand luggage, as this may also assist your guide in identifying you. If at any stage you are unable to locate your representative, please contact our Japan ground operator on the number included in your final documents.

## TRANSPORT:

**Coaches:** Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Roads in Japan are extremely well maintained and are comparatively smooth compared with the rest of Asia. Coaches and mini buses do not have onboard toilet facilities, however frequent bathroom stops are made for passengers comfort.

**Bullet trains**: Second class reserved seats are booked for our groups on bullet trains; there will be toilet facilities on board. Due to the limited space on bullet trains, a separate luggage transfer service will be arranged for all suitcases (1 case per person). You will need to pack a separate overnight bag to carry on the train as your suitcase will not arrive until the following day after a bullet train journey. Your guide will indicate when you will need to prepare for this throughout your tour.

## DEVELOPMENT IN JAPAN:

Japan is a developed country and as such matches the West in modernity and technological advances. Japan is an extremely safe country and takes great responsibility in maintaining high safety standards.

## GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a national escort. There will usually be no more than 28 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). A national escort will accompany each group of 10 or more. However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

## TIPPING POLICY:

Although tipping in Japan is not customary, if you feel you have received an excellent service, please feel free to tip your guide at your discretion.

## CULTURAL DIFFERENCE:

Japanese society and culture are built on intricate social etiquette and customs. As foreigners, we are not expected to be knowledgeable about all etiquette, but it will make your time in Japan more enjoyable if you are respectful of local customs. Some examples of scenarios you may encounter include removing your shoes and hats when entering a temple or house (some restaurants as well). You may be supplied with slippers at some places, but please come prepared with plenty of spare socks, and shoes that are easy to take off for the fairly regular occasions when they must be removed. Your National Escort will advise you of some of these other customs at the beginning of your tour.

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

If you are travelling within the below Japan public holidays, please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed. Coach, air and train travel may also be affected. Tourist attractions will be open; but may be crowded. Showa Day is on 29th April every year, which will start Golden Week which then runs from 29th April – 5th May, Constitution Memorial Day is on 3rd May, and Emperor's Birthday is on 23rd February every year.

## SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrate a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

## LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

## PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURING:

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you.

It is highly recommended that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money when travelling to cities outside of Tokyo. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be very limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

## CLIMBING STEPS:

Sightseeing at nearly all the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defence against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails.

Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

## VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

Wendy Wu does not give specific health advice, but we do recommend you see your doctor at least six weeks prior to travel for advice and to allow time for any necessary vaccinations. Please remember to take your itinerary with you. Safe travel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

## BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.safetravel.govt.nz as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available.

Up until the day you travel, it is vital you keep up to date and familiarised with the entry requirements as these can change at short notice. You are personally responsible for completing any entry forms, conducting any covid tests (if necessary), etc and adhering to countries' specific entry requirements. You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up-to-date information about your destination on the same website.

## AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice along with a link to our website where you can find your visa information (if applicable) and other important information. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

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