

Jewels of Japan

Classic Tour | 12 Days | Physical Level 1

Tokyo – Mount Fuji – Mishima– Kyoto – Hiroshima – Miyajima – Himeji – Osaka

See the classic sights of Japan, visiting modern Tokyo, iconic Mount Fuji and historic Kyoto. A visit to Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park and the charming island of Miyajima complete this fascinating tour.

- Discover the delights of vibrant Tokyo
- Admire breath-taking Mount Fuji
- Experience the world-famous bullet train
- Uncover the story of Hiroshima
- Explore Japanese culture in Kyoto

TOUR MAP



JEWELS OF 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 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.

'Jewels of Japan' falls under Physical Level 1. A reasonable level of fitness is required. Expect to be on your feet for most of the day, walking around sights, often including steps and getting on and off coaches, trains and boats. Occasional longer walks may be included.

Sightseeing may often involve walking for a reasonable duration, sometimes over multiple steps, or uneven surfaces. You will be required to get on and off the boat in Tokyo Bay without assistance, and navigate multiple steep, polished wooden staircases in socks if you wish to explore inside Himeji Castle. Socks with grip are recommended for this site.

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'.

For travellers that have booked a 'Land Only' tour with no international flights, please note the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if you are arriving on the start and departing on the conclusion date of your tour, or when booking pre/post night accommodation with Wendy Wu Tours.

Join the tour on Day 2 in Tokyo and end the tour on Day 11 in Osaka. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to 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.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Days 1-2: Tokyo Meals: D



Arrive in Tokyo, Japan's buzzing capital city. On arrival, you will be met by an English-speaking representative and transfer approximately 1 hour 30 minutes to your hotel.

Please note: Early check in is not included. If your flight arrives in the morning and you wish to arrange this, please speak to your reservations consultant.

You will be transferred by shared coach with other passengers who are not part of a Wendy Wu Tour. If you are on a shared bus transfer, you may have to walk for a few minutes to get to your hotel.

Destination Information

Tokyo – One of the world's most cutting-edge capital cities, Tokyo is a city of contrasts, famous for its neon-lit landscape, 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 in the late 1860s.

Day 3: Discover 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.

Drive by the Imperial Palace en route to the Tokyo National Museum.

(Please note: The Tokyo National Museum is closed on most Mondays. If your group's visit falls on a Monday, you will visit the Museum when it reopens on Tuesday).

Next, head to the old district of Asakusa and soak up the atmosphere at Sensoji, Tokyo's oldest and most famous temple, before browsing the stalls on Nakamise Shopping Street.

Due to the limited coach parking, you may need to walk around 15 minutes on flat but busy road to reach the temple area.

Later, head to the Tokyo Skytree and ascend to the observation deck for panoramic views over the city.

You will be on your feet for 4-5 hours during your touring in Tokyo.

Destination Information

Tokyo National Museum – Located in Ueno Park, the Tokyo National Museum is Japan's oldest museum. Here, you'll find a curated collection of Japanese art, including ancient pottery, Buddhist sculptures, samurai swords, colourful woodblock prints and elaborate kimonos.

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 adorns an image of the Buddhist Goddess Kannon, who was said to have been rescued by two fishermen from the Sumida River in Tokyo.

Tokyo Skytree – The tallest structure in Japan and the tallest tower in the world, Tokyo Skytree is predominantly a television and radio broadcast tower and is earthquake-resistant.

Day 4: Meiji Shrine

Meals: B, L, D



Begin the day with a wander through the classical landscapes of the Hamarikyu Gardens before heading to Meiji Jingu Shrine, located in a green forest within the city.

After lunch, return to your hotel, passing by the Shibuya Scramble Crossing en route. The rest of the afternoon is free for you to explore independently or relax in the hotel. Your guide will let you know what time to meet for this evening's dinner cruise.

Tonight, transfer from the hotel to your boat and take a leisurely dinner cruise on Tokyo Bay for some excellent city vistas. You will need to get on and off your boat this evening without assistance.

Destination Information

Hamarikyu Gardens – Hamarikyu Gardens are a beautiful example of Japanese garden style, sitting at the mouth of the Sumida River.

Meiji Shrine – This Shinto shrine is dedicated to Emperor Meiji (reigned 1867-1912) and his wife, Empress Shoken. His rule is associated with the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the restoration of imperial power, and it was under his rule that Japan transitioned from an isolationist state to a global world power. The shrine is located in an evergreen forest within the busy city and consists of 120,000 trees which were donated by people from all over Japan when the shrine was established.

Day 5: Mount Fuji & Mishima Meals: B, L, D

Drive 2-3 hours (traffic depending) from Tokyo through the foothills of the iconic Mount Fuji to reach the mountain's base. The region is spectacular; look out for the surrounding lakes, formed by past volcanic eruptions. In good weather, their calm waters beautifully reflect Mount Fuji's picture-perfect cone. If weather permits, drive up to Mount Fuji's 5th Station and enjoy the view.



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).

After lunch, explore Iyashi no Sato Historical Village, located on the western shores of Lake Saiko. The village is famous for its thatched-roofed houses. If local opening hours permit, you will also visit the small Itchiku Kubota Art Museum; please be aware that the museum's opening days change frequently, and often at short notice.

Later, drive approximately one hour to your hotel in the Mishima area.

*For **May** departures only: Instead of visiting the Iyashi no Sato historical village, a visit to the Fuji Shibazakura Festival has been included. This is the best time of the year and one of the most scenic places in Japan to see the pink moss phlox in full bloom. Please note that the flowers' bloom is weather-dependent.*

Destination Information

Mount 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.

Itchiku Kubota Art Museum – Kubota Itchiku revived the lost art of Tsujigahana silk dyeing, used to decorate elaborate kimono during the Muromachi Period (1333-1573). The museum exhibits several of his kimono creations, while the extensive gardens, designed by Kubota Itchiku himself, are also worth a stroll.

Iyashi no Sato Historical Village – Iyashi no Sato is a reconstruction of a former farming village which was destroyed by a landslide in 1966. The houses here have traditional thatched roofs and are built in the *kabuto-zukuri* (samurai helmet-shaped roof) style, reconstructed in their original form using old lumber. A charcoal-making hut and sericulture (silkworm-raising) room have also been reproduced.

Day 6: Bullet Train to Kyoto Meals: B, L, D



Drive around 45 minutes to Oshino Hakkai, a scenic area of ponds full of crystal-clear spring water created by Fuji's melting snow. Stroll around the area before trying your hand at making traditional Japanese soba noodles, which you will tuck into for lunch.

Drive around 2 hours to the station to board a 2-hour bullet train to Kyoto. An enchanting city, Kyoto was the capital for a thousand years; today it is the legacy of ancient Japan, full of tranquil temples and sublime architecture. Check in to your hotel and have dinner at a local restaurant.

Please note that your luggage will be transferred separately to your hotel in Kyoto and arrive later the same day (max one suitcase per person).

Destination Information

Oshino Hakkai – Oshino Hakkai is a set of eight ponds in Oshino, a small village in the Fuji Five Lake region, located on the site of a former sixth lake that dried out several hundred years ago.

Kyoto – Kyoto was the ancient capital of Japan for approximately 1,000 years, until it was moved to Tokyo by the newly-restored emperor in the late 1860s. Now a popular tourist destination, Kyoto still retains its historic charms and its proudly-maintained ancient temples.

Day 7: Explore Kyoto Meals: B, L, D



Enjoy a full-day tour of Kyoto. Begin at the spectacular Kiyomizu Temple. You will spend 1.5 hours on foot exploring the temple and surrounding area.

Next, immerse yourself in Japanese culture, learning the traditional Japanese handicraft of origami and enjoying the art of a tea ceremony.

Next, visit Fushimi Inari Shrine, one of Kyoto's most famous sites. The shrine is renowned for its thousands of vermillion torii gates, which frame a scenic path up the mountain's forested slopes.

Due to 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 a short section of the mountain.

Destination Information

Kiyomizu Temple – Kiyomizu Temple is a 16th century Buddhist Temple in Kyoto. A highlight is the Hondo's veranda which is perched over the hillside, offering spectacular woodland vistas.

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.

Fushimi Inari Shrine (Taisha) – An important Shinto shrine 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. Fushimi Inari is famous for its thousands of vermillion torii gates, which form a network of tunnels around the main shrine buildings. For hundreds of years, believers have donated torii gates as a plea for a wish to come true, or out of gratitude for a wish that has been granted.

Day 8: Kyoto & Hiroshima

Meals: B, L, D

Begin the day with a visit to Ryoan-ji Temple, home to Japan's most famous zen garden, and Kinkaku-ji Temple, nicknamed the Golden Pavilion due to its gold leaf exterior.



Bid farewell to Kyoto and transfer to the train station, where you'll board the bullet train for a 2 hour journey to Hiroshima.

A modern and prosperous city, Hiroshima will be forever remembered as the world's first atomic bomb target. *You will be on your feet for approximately 2-3 hours today.*

Please note: *You will need to pack a smaller overnight bag for tonight. Due to the bullet train's limited suitcase capacity, your main luggage will be transferred to Hiroshima separately (max one suitcase per person), arriving at your hotel the following day.*

Destination Information

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.

Kinkaku-ji 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.

Hiroshima – At 8.15 a.m. on 6th August 1945, the US military dropped the world's first nuclear bomb on Hiroshima. The destructive power obliterated nearly everything within a 2km radius, killing more than 70,000 people immediately; a further 20-70,000 subsequently died from injuries or radiation within the next year. Today, the city has risen phoenix-like from the ashes; it is now a powerful international symbol for peace.

Day 9: Hiroshima & Miyajima Meals: B, L, D



Hop on the ferry to Miyajima Island, where sightseeing will be at a leisurely pace on foot. Admire Itsukushima Shrine and its huge Torii gate, which at high tide is surrounded by the water.

Enjoy some free time to explore the island's main shopping street. During your free time, you might like to purchase the local speciality - momiji manju, a confectionery shaped like a maple leaf and filled with sweet bean paste. Fillings such as chocolate, matcha, and custard are also popular.

Return to Hiroshima on the mainland before lunch. Later, walk through the famous Peace Memorial Park and visit the Peace Memorial Museum before ascending Orizuru Tower (*Please be aware that the museum may be confronting and upsetting for some group members. It is at your discretion if you wish to visit or enjoy more time at leisure exploring the Peace Memorial Park.*)

You will be on your feet for approximately 4-5 hours today.

Destination Information

Miyajima – Miyajima is a small island less than 1 hour outside Hiroshima. While officially named Itsukushima, the island is more commonly referred to as Miyajima, Japanese for 'Shrine Island', because of its well-known main attraction, Itsukushima Shrine, a giant torii gate, which at high tide seems to float on the water.

Peace Memorial Park and Museum – The Peace Memorial Park and Museum is one of the most prominent features of the city. The trees, lawns and walking paths are in stark contrast to the surrounding downtown area. Before the bomb, the area of what is now the Peace Memorial Park was the political and commercial heart of the city and this is why it was chosen as the pilot's target. The museum focuses on the events of August 6 and the subsequent outcome for the residents.

Orizuru Tower - The 50-metre-tall Orizuru Tower is located beside the A-Bomb Dome and is one of the few tall buildings around the Peace Memorial Park. It offers a great view of the surroundings, including the less commonly seen view of the A-Bomb Dome from above.

Day 10: Himeji Castle Meals: B, L, D

Travel 3.5 hours by coach to Himeji, with a rest stop en route. On arrival, enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before visiting the beautiful Himeji Castle and neighbouring Koko-en Garden.



Continue to Osaka, the end point of your tour, and check in at your hotel ahead of tonight's farewell dinner.

Please note: The castle is largely in its original condition, including steep wooden steps, so please be mindful of your step when strolling around. You will have to remove your shoes before walking along some of the wooden floors. You will be on your feet for 3-3.5 hours during the visit. The main keep is not furnished.

After the reopening in March 2015, Himeji Castle has welcomed many visitors. Therefore, during busy times, the number of visitors may be limited or there may be a long waiting time to enter; precise entrance times cannot be prebooked. Please note that this means that there may be very rare cases where some visitors are not allowed to enter the Main Keep.

Destination Information

Himeji – Himeji is the second largest city of Hyogo Prefecture after Kobe, with approximately half a million inhabitants. It is most famous for its magnificent castle.

Himeji Castle – Widely considered as Japan's most magnificent castle for its imposing size and beauty, the well-preserved Himeji castle is both a national and world heritage listed treasure. Himeji Castle has never been destroyed by war, earthquake or fire and survives to this day as one of the country's twelve original castles. Though fortifications began in the 1400s, the castle as it survives today was completed in 1609. Floors are unfurnished.

Koko-en Garden – Koko-en opened in 1992, but its 9 beautiful gardens were built in the style of the Edo period of 1603-1807. Edo period gardens are characterised by their return to extravagance and recreation, in sharp contrast with the minimalism of the Zen-influenced Muromachi period which had come before. The gardens are built on the former site of the feudal lord's west residence.

Days 11-12: Depart Osaka Meals: B

This morning is free at leisure before transferring to the airport for your return flight home, arriving the following day.



Please note: Late check-out is not included. If you wish to pre-book late check-out for your final day in Osaka, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price, 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.

JEWELS OF 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 **Classic** group tours from dinner on the day of arrival until the morning 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 - practising is advised, as Western cutlery is not always available at restaurants.

Breakfast will mostly be buffet-style. Lunches are mostly pre-set options as is custom in many local restaurants. Dinner is often buffet-style, featuring a wide selection of high-quality Japanese and Western dishes. We usually find this style of dining suits the wide and varied tastes of our customers on tour. 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 your home country.

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 in Japanese culture. Please note, double bed requests can be made at the time of booking but cannot be guaranteed; twin beds are more common in Asia.

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 minimum 10 travellers 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 or expected, if you feel you have received an excellent service, please feel free to tip your guide at your discretion. Traditionally, the polite method of gifting money in Japan is to use an envelope (available at convenience stores or occasionally hotel receptions); however, this is not required.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES:

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 (and some restaurants). 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. Socks with grip are useful at sites like castles with steep wooden steps.

In shops, there is a small coin tray at the till. This is where you should place your money and collect any change, rather than handing it directly to the assistant. If the card machine is behind the desk, do the same with your card.

Shaking hands is not typical in Japan. Instead, stand and bow slightly (about 15 degrees) from the waist. Do not put your hands together prayer-style as in some other Asian countries.

Two essential phrases: Please = Kudasai. Thank you: Arigatou or Arigatou gozaimasu.

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 TOURINGS:

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 castles 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 polished wooden steps tend to be quite steep, narrow, uneven 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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