



world.  
JOURNEYS

# CHERRY BLOSSOM JAPAN

2024

# CHERRY BLOSSOM JAPAN

*Each spring, Japan's landscape is host to fragile pink and white sakura blooming; stunning colour that is celebrated throughout the entire country. Start this journey in bustling Tokyo and see its impressive gardens, go in search of the famous 'snow monkeys' and the alpine 'old town' of Takayama. On to cultural Kyoto and poignant Hiroshima, ending with spectacular views of Mt Fuji from the top of Mt Owakudani. This unique and incredibly scenic country with enchanting culture, wonderful cuisine, and gracious people awaits you.*

## 17 DAYS • HOSTED JOURNEY

**DEPARTS** 25 March - 10 April 2024



## YOUR JOURNEY AT A GLANCE

- Visit some of the best spots for cherry blossom colour
- Enjoy Tokyo's mix of traditional and modern culture
- Visit the 'snow monkeys' in Yudanaka
- Japan's most atmospheric townscape, Takayama
- See beautiful Buddhist temples, imperial palaces, and the Arashiyama Bamboo Grove in Kyoto
- Visit poignant yet vibrant Hiroshima
- See spectacular views of Mt Fuji, an iconic landmark
- A World Journeys host to guide you every step of the way

## SPECIAL EXPERIENCES

### *The ultimate sushi-lovers experience in Tokyo*

A sushi master will guide us through making sushi rolls and nigiri which we will then enjoy for lunch.

### *Visit steaming hot springs to see monkeys bathing*

Visit Yudanaka Onsen where we hope to see wild 'snow monkeys' (Japanese Macaque) relaxing in the steaming hot springs surrounded by thick forest.

### *Tour the historic villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama*

Located in a mountainous region that was cut off from the rest of the world for a long period of time, these villages with their Gassho-style houses subsisted on the cultivation of mulberry trees and the rearing of silkworms. On this tour we will see the fascinating houses with their steeply pitched thatched roofs, the only examples of their kind in Japan.



Osaka Castle



Snow Monkey, Yudanaka

# CHERRY BLOSSOM JAPAN ITINERARY

ALL FLIGHTS INCLUDED    **B** BREAKFAST    **L** LUNCH    **D** DINNER

## — MARCH 2024

### **MON 25 AUCKLAND > TOKYO**

Morning flight to Tokyo. On arrival we will be transferred to your hotel for an evening at leisure.

### **TUE 26 TOKYO** **B** **L** **D**

Full day tour of Tokyo visiting Meiji Shrine, Tokyo's most famous Shinto shrine which is wonderfully serene and austere. Visit Tokyo Tower, Omotesando Street, Asakua Kannon Temple, Akihabara Electronic Town and drive by the famous intersection of Shibuya, the bustling shopping district. Lunch is included at a local restaurant. Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening.

### **WED 27 TOKYO** **B** **L**

Full day tour of Tokyo where you will visit the Tsukiji Outer Fish Market, then visit a restaurant to learn how to make sushi from a local chef. Visit Ginza Mitsukoshi, the oldest surviving department store in Tokyo. See the Imperial Palace Plaza, Hamarikyu Garden and Ueno Park, a popular spot for cherry blossom parties with more than 1000 cherry trees lining the streets. Evening at leisure.

### **THU 28 TOKYO > YUDANAKA** **B** **L** **D**

This morning depart for Nagano by bullet train and then travel by train to Yudanaka, the spa town. Here we visit the Jigokudani Monkey Park where we hope to see 'snow monkeys' bathing in the steaming natural onsen pools. Check in to our hotel complete with indoor and outdoor onsens (spas). Enjoy a traditional Japanese dinner at your ryokan.

### **FRI 29 YUDANAKA > TAKAYAMA** **B** **D**

Continue to the historical town of Takayama, set in the heart of the Japanese Alps, visiting the Zenkoji Temple, a wasabi farm and Matsumoto Castle en route. This town is beautifully preserved with many buildings dating from the Edo period, when the city thrived as a wealthy town of merchants. They provide a glimpse into the former living quarters of the merchants and exhibit traditional household goods and local arts and crafts. Dinner at the hotel this evening.

### **SAT 30 TAKAYAMA > SHIRAKAWA-GO > GOKAYAMA > KANAZAWA** **B** **D**

Visit the morning markets and the former government house of Takayama. See the Shirakawago UNESCO World Heritage Listed site, famous for its traditional gassho-zukuri farmhouses, with their steeply pitched thatched roofs, some of which are more than 250 years old. Visit the Japanese Paper Village of Gokayama. Finish in Kanazawa a pristine castle town with an array of cultural attractions.

### **SUN 31 KANAZAWA > KYOTO** **B** **D**

Visit Kenrokuen garden, one of Japan's most beautiful gardens. In spring, visitors can see plum and cherry blossoms. We also visit the Samurai House, Gold Museum and Ohmi-cho Market. Then we travel a little over two hours by train to Kyoto.

## — APRIL 2024

### **MON 1 KYOTO** **B** **L** **D**

Kyoto is Japan's cultural heart, known for its Buddhist temples, beautiful gardens and colourful shrines. Enjoy a full

day tour to see the Kinkakuji Temple and Ryoanji Temple, ending with Kiyomizu Temple, perched on a hill overlooking the Kyoto basin and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Dinner at a local restaurant.

### **TUE 2 KYOTO** **B**

Visit Nijo Castle then Arashiyama for a visit to the Sagano Bamboo Grove with thick green bamboo stalks which seem to continue endlessly in every direction. See the 'Moon Crossing Bridge' a central landmark famous for its cherry blossom viewing. Finish with a visit to Tenryuji Temple. Afternoon at leisure.

### **WED 3 KYOTO > NARA > OSAKA** **B**

Touring today includes Nara en route to Osaka. Visits include Todaiji Temple, Nara Park, the Kasuga Shrine, with great views from Osaka Castle.

### **THU 4 OSAKA** **B** **L**

Enjoy a half day tour of Osaka including the Kaiyukan Aquarium. See Umeda, the commercial and business district, with its prominent skyscrapers. Enjoy time at leisure.

### **FRI 5 OSAKA > HIROSHIMA** **B** **L**

We drive to Kobe to visit a sake brewery then have lunch at a Teppanyaki restaurant. In the afternoon take the bullet train to Hiroshima.

### **SAT 6 HIROSHIMA & MIYAJIMA** **B** **D**

Hiroshima has rebuilt itself as one of Japan's most laid back yet vibrant cities full of wide boulevards and art museums, great food and friendly, welcoming people. Visit the Peace Memorial and Museum, A-Bomb Dome and take a short ferry ride out to Miyajima Island, a small wooded island located in the Inland Sea. Here you will find the famous, floating Torii Gate, a shrine known worldwide for being built over water, seemingly floating in the sea.

### **SUN 7 HIROSHIMA > HAKONE** **B** **D**

Take the bullet train to Hakone via Nagoya. Visits the Ichiku Kubota Museum and scenic Lake Kawaguchi before transferring to our hotel. Some great views of Mt Fuji today weather permitting.

### **MON 8 HAKONE > TOKYO** **B** **L** **D**

Ride the cable car up Mt Owakudani, passing over sulphurous vents and hot springs. In this volcanic area, you can eat a hard-boiled egg from the sulphuric hot springs, adding seven years to your life! From the top, if it's a clear day, we will see stunning views of Mt Fuji, Japan's highest and most worshipped mountain, and Lake Ashi. We end with a cruise on Lake Ashi then continue by road to Tokyo where we enjoy our farewell dinner.

### **TUE 9 TOKYO > AUCKLAND** **B**

Morning at leisure before we transfer to the airport for our overnight flight to Auckland.

### **TUE 10 AUCKLAND**

Morning arrival in Auckland.



## HANAMI

Each year, from late March to early May, Japan welcomes the blooming of its iconic sakura trees – cherry blossoms. Witness people gather around cherry blossom trees to enjoy picnics with family and friends under the soft pink and white flowers. This is the perfect time to experience Japan, its culture and traditions.



## THE BULLET TRAIN

Travelling on the bullet train or shinkansen is a joy and an experience like no other. These trains are punctual, run at speeds of up to 300 km per hour and are remarkably quiet. Travel in comfort and safety, with forward facing seats, as the scenery flashes past our window.

### Departs 25 March 2024

Tour Cost

**Twin** *per person*

**Single** *per person*

\$19,890

\$23,990

Premium Economy

Please enquire

Business Class

Please enquire

### INCLUDED

- Economy Class airfares ex Auckland
- Airline and airport taxes
- A World Journeys host
- Accommodation in 4 star hotels
- Transfers, sightseeing, and entrance fees as per the itinerary
- Train journeys as per the itinerary
- Meals as indicated ③ ④ ⑤

### NOT INCLUDED

- Items of a personal nature
- Travel insurance (mandatory)
- Visas (if applicable)
- Optional activities

### GRATUITIES

Tipping is neither required nor expected in Japan.

### BOOKING CONDITIONS

A non-refundable deposit of \$1,500 per person is required, with the balance due 22 Dec 2023. In order to maintain the advertised tour price, it may be necessary to collect the airfare portion earlier than the final balance date. As cancellation fees apply, travel insurance is mandatory. Please refer to World Journeys terms and conditions [www.worldjourneys.co.nz](http://www.worldjourneys.co.nz).

### NOTE:

Due to the lack of porters in Japanese railway stations and the unavailability of storage on Japanese trains your luggage will travel separately from you on days that involve train travel. From Kyoto your luggage will travel directly to Tokyo so you will travel with a small overnight bag for 3 nights. The separate transfer of luggage within Japan is done by courier and is in the interest of your safety and comfort on the tour.

### WELCOME BACK

If you have travelled on one of our Hosted Journeys before, we would like to welcome you back with an extra saving of \$400 per couple or \$200 for a single traveller.