



Japan Kumano Kodo Walking & Hiking

An Inspiring Journey through Japan's Cultural & Spiritual Landscapes

Thank you for checking out our adventures and for downloading this itinerary. Please note that this itinerary and accommodations may be subject to change depending on the specific departure date. Be sure to check with us before scheduling any flights.

We love talking travel!
Contact us at info@mtsobek.com
or call **800-974-0300**



Feel the difference

with **Mountain Travel Sobek**

Unrivalled Expertise

MT Sobek started it all! Since our first Everest Base Camp trek in 1969, we've been leading award-winning adventures and building authentic connections in far-flung locations around the world. We were named Best Adventure Travel Company by Newsweek Readers' Choice Awards.

Unique Trip Design

Our adventures are perfectly paced, with incredible attention to detail — the right mix of fun, learning, and challenge that guarantees lifelong memories. Plan nothing, enjoy everything. We take care of all of the logistics so that you can have more time to do what's most important: relax, take in the experience, and enjoy!

Small Groups

We keep our groups intentionally small — usually fewer than 10 people. This allows you a more intimate experience with the people and wildlife you encounter. With a smaller group size, we can take advantage of many unexpected invitations and opportunities that would be impossible with larger groups.





Leading the Way

World-Class Local Guides

Our knowledgeable and passionate expert guides effortlessly create an immersive local experience for you. They are trained to the highest professional standards and are at the heart of everything we do. They make it possible to meet the challenges of adventure travel, and help create lasting memories and lifelong friendships... we can confidently say our guides are the best in the business.





Why take this trip with us?

REASON 1

MT Sobek has been operating award-winning adventures in Asia since 1969, working with the best local guides to ensure an immersive and unforgettable adventure.

REASON 2

This well-paced 8-day hiking trip follows the spectacular Kumano Kodo pilgrimage trail on the Kii Peninsula and includes four nights at charming ryokans with onsen baths.

REASON 3

Our local expert guides go the extra mile and are the perfect travel companions. Come away with a unique understanding of the Shinto grand shrines and historic sites along this fascinating route.

At A Glance

ACTIVITIES

Five days of moderate hiking on rustic trails with some steep and continuous ascents, plus a day of extensive city walking and cultural touring, linked by scenic train rides.



LODGING

Stay in traditional ryokans (inns) and unwind in onsen (hot springs) for four nights on the Kumano Kodo, and in comfortable hotels with modern amenities in Kyoto and Osaka.



CLIMATE

Spring and fall temperatures from mid 60°Fs to high 70°Fs/ low 80°Fs. Rain is common throughout the year; fall tends to be slightly wetter than spring.



KNOW BEFORE YOU BOOK

Meals

Meals are usually Japanese cuisine, including many breakfasts, and seating is often on cushions on the floor. We're not able to arrange 100% fish-free or 100% gluten-free meals.

Transportation

Most of the transfers involve different modes of public transportation. We transfer luggage ahead on two occasions, while you carry a small duffel and backpack with your essentials for two nights each time.

Accommodation

Five nights of the trip are at traditional lodgings that have futon beds atop mat floors, with shared bathing and toilet facilities for 2-4 of those nights. At hotels, most rooms have two beds rather than one double bed. Solo travelers who have a single room at hotels, may be asked to share a room with a same-gender traveler at the traditional lodgings.



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An Inspiring Journey through Japan's Cultural & Spiritual Landscapes

This immersive journey contrasts Japan's cityscapes with its spiritual countryside and ancient pilgrimage traditions on the Kii Peninsula. Start in Osaka, the bustling business hub of modern-day Japan, and end in Kyoto, Japan's former ancient capital and the repository of its cultural heritage. Hike along the spectacular Nakahechi section of the UNESCO-listed Kumano Kodo, an age-old web of pilgrimage routes. Soak up stunning scenery, marvel at sacred shrines, rest in ryokan inns, dine on the freshest local ingredients, and end rewarding days of hiking by relaxing in natural hot springs.

8 Days

Start: Osaka, Japan

End: Kyoto, Japan

Departing: March, April, May, September, October, November

Activities: Cultural Discovery, Hiking & Trekking

Lodging: Comfortable Hotels, Rustic Lodging

Group Size: 5–14 Guests

ACTIVITY:



Check mtsobek.com for date-specific pricing.

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“Great experience every time with some of the most knowledgeable guides in their fields. We always come home with wonderful memories of the people we meet and things we see.”

- Bob J.

The Itinerary

DAY 01

Meet in Japan's 'Second Capital' Osaka

Arrive at Osaka airport and join your transfer to the hotel. At 7pm, meet with your Mountain Travel Sobek guide and other tour participants in the hotel lobby for a short orientation, then head to a nearby restaurant for the welcome reception and dinner.

ACCOMMODATION: Hotel Royal Classic Osaka

MEALS: Dinner

DAY 02

Embark on the Kumano Kodo Nakahechi Trail

Today enjoy the train ride along the coast of the Kii peninsula to Takijiri, the traditional starting point of the ancient Kumano Kodo pilgrimage. Embark on the Nakahechi trail, a route that links three of the most important Shinto and Buddhist shrines, along the way dotted with smaller shrines called oji. Finish this first hike at the mountainside Takahara village, whose nickname kiri-no-sato translates to 'village in the mist.' Wrap up the day unwinding in Japanese baths at the ryokan inn.

ACCOMMODATION: Organic Hotel Kiri-no-sato Takahara

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 2.5-hours total by train (broken into shorter segments) and 40-minute bus journey

ACTIVITY: 2 hours/3 miles hiking with 820' elevation gain and 575' elevation loss

DAY 03

Explore the Mountains Between Takahara & Chikatsuyu

Continue eastward along the Nakahechi pilgrimage trail, and dive deeply into the sacred ambiance of hinoki (Japanese cypress), oak and cherry forests. Along the way, spot small bodhisattva statues that honor Jizo, the patron saint of travelers; old cha-ya (tea houses) that provided rest to pilgrims right up until the early 20th century; and find Gyuba-douji, a small stone statue depicting a man riding astride a cow and horse. Descend to the quiet village of Chikatsuyu for a transfer to the inn for dinner.

ACCOMMODATION: Organic Hotel Kiri-no-sato Takahara

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 30- to 60-minute private transfer

ACTIVITY: 4 hours/6.5 miles hiking with 1,575' elevation gain and 1,700' elevation loss



DAY 04

Marvel at Hongu Taisha & Explore the Ancient Shugendo Religion

From Chikatsuyu, follow the trail up to Nonaka and Tsugizakura-oji, one of the many small shrines along the route. Nobles would rest at these sub-shrines, called oji, to refresh themselves and compose poems. Next, transfer from the Nonaka to Hosshinmon-oji and hike through scenic ridgetop villages to reach Hongu Taisha. This is one of the Three Grand Shrines of the Kumano region and enshrines several Shinto deities. En route, meet a local Shugendo monk to learn about this syncretic faith that draws on multiple spiritual traditions. From there, marvel at the stunning Oyunohara Torii gate, which is one of the largest in the world! The gate marks the spot where the Shinto shrine was originally located and is a scenic and peaceful destination. Enjoy hot springs baths at your ryokan accommodations this evening.

ACCOMMODATION: Fujiya Ryokan or Yunominesou

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 1-hour bus transfer

ACTIVITY: 5 hours/7 miles hiking with 1,300' elevation gain and 1,180' elevation loss

DAY 05

Take in Yunomine Onsen & Cruise the Kumano River

Soak up the cool shade of the forested Dainichi-goe trail that connects Hongu Taisha with Yunomine Onsen, where pilgrims used to perform purification rituals. Take a scenic boat ride on the Kumano River that connects Hongu Taisha to Hayatama Taisha, the second Grand Shrine. Explore its precincts on foot, then journey to the small port and fishing town of Kii Katsuura.

ACCOMMODATION: Hotel Urashima

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 25-minute train ride or public bus

ACTIVITY: 1.5 hours/2.2 miles hiking with 625' elevation gain and 820' elevation loss



Discover Nachi Taisha & Travel to Kyoto

The third Great Shrine awaits today at the top of Daimon-zaka, a cobblestone staircase that runs through cedar forests and bamboo groves up to the majestic sacred landmarks. Admire the Buddhist Seiganto-ji pagoda, poised in front of the mighty Nachi waterfall, then marvel at the Nachi Taisha shrine, a visit that completes the pilgrimage to the Grand Shrines of Kumano. On your afternoon train journey to Kyoto, enjoy a traditional Japanese take-out bento box for lunch.

ACCOMMODATION: Noku Hotel, Kyoto

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch

TRANSPORTATION: 4.5-hours total by train (broken into shorter segments)

ACTIVITY: 1 hour/1 mile hiking with 656' elevation gain plus 1 hour additional walking between modes of transportation



Roam the Temples of Kyoto & Attend a Tea Ceremony

Take a train to Fushimi Inari shrine, dedicated to the Inari spirit, protector of rice cultivation famous for thousands of Torii gates that snake up the mountainside. Next, explore the sights of Kyoto's cultural district of Higashiyama and walk up to the 8th-century Kiyomizu temple to admire city panoramas from its expansive veranda. End on a high note with a ritual tea ceremony, steeped in the ichi-go ichi-e philosophy that deems each encounter unique and inimitable. Take in the mesmerizing streetscapes of Kyoto on the walk back to the hotel, where you'll enjoy farewell dinner.

ACCOMMODATION: Noku Hotel, Kyoto

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 15-minute train ride

ACTIVITY: 8 hours/5-6 miles city walking with negligible elevation gain or loss



Bid Farewell to Japan

On the last day of your tour, transfer to Kansai International Airport or Osaka International Airport (Itami).

MEALS: Breakfast



Where You'll Stay

These accommodations may be subject to change depending on your date of travel.

Hotel Royal Classic Osaka

Set inside the historic Osaka Shin-Kabukiza theater building, the Royal Classic Osaka couples a vivid past with Western-style design and contemporary lines. Staying here, you will be in the center of the lively Namba district known for its thriving theater and restaurant scene. The well-appointed rooms come equipped with en-suite facilities, AC, TV and fridge.

Organic Hotel Kiri-no-sato Takahara

Tucked away in the Hatenashi mountain range, Organic Hotel Kiri-no-Sato Takahara showcases breathtaking vistas of the surrounding scenery. This friendly lodge, made of local wood features eight rooms: three Japanese-style tatami rooms and five with twin beds. Along with its restaurant and café/bar, and Wi-Fi throughout, the inn features onsen (hot spring) baths, ideal for soaking in after a long hike.

Fujiya Ryokan

This traditional Japanese-style inn offers airy interiors and a classic Japanese experience. Its eight minimalist rooms feature exposed-wood detailing and tatami (straw) floors. The inn is located in Kawayu Onsen, which features hot spring bathing opportunities aplenty, from private baths at the inn to bathing in thermal waters which bubble up through the river bed opposite the ryokan.



Where You'll Stay

These accommodations may be subject to change depending on your date of travel.

Yunominesou

One of Japan's oldest onsen towns, the UNESCO-listed Kumano Kodo trail passes through Yunomine—a welcome stop for tired legs through the ages. The Inn is a modern building where the mineral-rich spring water flows into tiled indoor baths, and outdoor baths set in gardens. All rooms are Japanese-style with futon beds and have en-suite toilets. Enjoy a kaiseki dinner with traditional dishes each evening.

Hotel Urashima

Perched at the edge of the ocean, Hotel Urashima boasts five traditional Japanese onsen (hot spring baths). The Boki-do bath's therapeutic waters are sheltered by a natural cavern and look out onto the tranquil sea. The resort offers a selection of Japanese and Western style rooms, each designed to maximize relaxation. Meals are prepared with locally-sourced produce and seafood to further enhance your wellness journey, and service is warm and welcoming at this waterfront retreat.

Noku Hotel

Located in a quiet part of Kyoto, the Noku Hotel is just a short walk from the Imperial Palace and easily accessible to the subway station. Experience lavish comfort and luxurious amenities in a warm and welcoming environment that captures the shokunin spirit of Kyoto life. Each room comes equipped with free pajamas, a 40-inch TV, Wi-Fi, a mini bar, and 24-hour front desk service.

Departure Dates

This trip is available to run in: March, April, May, September, October, November

Book early for a greater choice of available dates.

Once you book, your price is GUARANTEED!

May 14-21, 2025

May 23-30, 2025

September 24-October 1, 2025

October 22-29, 2025

November 12-19, 2025

November 26-December 3, 2025

March 11-18, 2026

March 21-28, 2026

April 16-23, 2026

May 5-12, 2026

May 13-20, 2026

May 22-29, 2026

September 26-October 3, 2026

October 22-29, 2026

November 11-18, 2026

November 24-December 1, 2026

What's Included

PRICE INCLUDES

- Expertise and services of our experienced adventure guides
- All accommodations as noted in the itinerary
- All breakfasts, almost all lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Snacks and water between meals
- Additional regional guides and experts on many trips
- Comprehensive Trip Planner with detailed pre-trip information
- Private guided tours at historic sites, museums, wineries and other select attractions as noted in the itinerary
- Special events and other select attractions as mentioned in the itinerary
- All gratuities at hotels and restaurants
- Equipment and experienced guides for activities as described in the itinerary
- Park and other entry fees (unless otherwise noted)
- Fares for trains, ferries and other modes of travel as listed in the itinerary
- Select transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Baggage transfers and portage

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare, airport taxes, and excess baggage fees
- Alcoholic beverages (MT Sobek provides wine at select events)
- Gratuities for MT Sobek guides and guide-drivers
- Travel Protection Program
- Personal expenses



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