



# Japan Kyoto to Tokyo Walking

## Ancient Trails, Sacred Temples & Bamboo Forests

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](mailto: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

Perfected over 20 years, this popular 11-day Kyoto to Tokyo adventure is a well-paced walking tour into the heart of Japan. Explore idyllic landscapes and stay at charming shukubo and ryokan.

## REASON 3

Our local expert guides go the extra mile and are the perfect travel companions. Come away with a deep understanding of Kyoto, Tokyo, and the historic Nakasendo Trail.

## At A Glance

### ACTIVITIES

Moderately paced hikes up to 4-9 miles a day on paved and dirt trails, plus 2 days of extensive city walking and cultural touring, linked by scenic train rides.



### LODGING

Enjoy stays in traditional ryokans (inns) — many with onsen (hot springs) — and comfortable hotels with modern amenities.



### CLIMATE

Spring and fall temperatures range from 50°F to the high 70°'s F, and there is a fair chance of rain.



## 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.





# Japan Kyoto to Tokyo Walking

## Ancient Trails, Sacred Temples & Bamboo Forests

This enchanting journey through Japan combines stunning vigorous walks with timeless tradition. Beginning in the old imperial city of Kyoto and ending in modern Tokyo, follow the historic Nakasendo Way, a network of ancient trade routes once used to travel between these important cities. By way of temples, shrines, and hamlets, take in ethereal landscapes of lush gardens, misty forests and possibly cherry blossoms. Along the way, enjoy generous Japanese hospitality in a shukubo (temple lodging) and family-run inns, and the contrasts between old and new in this magical land.

### 11 Days

**Start:** Kyoto, Japan

**End:** Tokyo, Japan

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

**Activities:** Hiking & Trekking, Cultural Discovery

**Lodging:** Comfortable Hotels, Rustic Lodging

**Group Size:** 5-12 Guests

**ACTIVITY:**



Check [mtsobek.com](https://mtsobek.com) for date-specific pricing.

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*This was an amazing trip and exceeded my hopes. The variety of experiences, the culture and history our very excellent guide provided, the size of the group, the accommodations, everything was simply wonderful. The trip was well-organized.*

- Sara H.



# The Itinerary

## DAY 01

### Arrive in Kyoto

Welcome to Japan! Meet the group at the hotel in Kyoto and convene for a welcome dinner at a restaurant in the city center. With over 1,000 Buddhist temples, sublime gardens, and excellent cuisine, it's easy to see why Kyoto has been voted *Travel+Leisure's* Best Overall City two years in a row!

**ACCOMMODATION:** Hotel Granvia Kyoto (or Hotel Vischio Kyoto for March 23 2025 departure)

**MEALS:** Dinner

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## DAY 02

### Explore Kyoto's Magnificent Temples & Gardens

This morning transfer to Arashiyama, a beautiful area in northwest Kyoto known for spring cherry blossoms, dramatic autumn foliage, forested mountains and Togetsu-kyo Bridge over the Katsura River. Visit the famous bamboo groves and Tenryu-ji Temple. Enjoy time in the vicinity for an early lunch on your own, then gather and continue on to Ryoanji to see its famous rock garden. Then, head to the extraordinary 14th Century Kinkaku-ji or Golden Pavilion - named for its top two stories covered in gold leaf. Explore the Zen Buddhist temple's magnificent Japanese strolling garden and mirror pond before returning to our hotel to freshen up before dinner.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Hotel Granvia Kyoto (or Hotel Vischio Kyoto for March 23 2025 departure)

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Dinner

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

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## DAY 03

### Travel the Scenic Nankai Railway and Follow the Pilgrim's Trail to Koyasan

Travel by bus, cable car and train to Koyasan, a bowl-shaped valley filled with stands of cedar trees 2600 feet up in the mountains of the Kii Peninsula. Since the 9th century, when the priest Kukai (also known as Kobo Daishi) founded the first temple and the shingon sect of Buddhism, Koyasan has been a place of religious devotion and ceremony. Today there are more than 100 monasteries, many of which have shukubo (temple lodgings). Visit Kongobu-ji temple and enjoy a guided walk through the vast Okuno-in cemetery, with thousands of graves and memorials to feudal lords and other past luminaries before arriving at one of the elegant shukubo (pilgrims' lodgings), run by the monks, and dine on shojin-ryori (Buddhist vegetarian cuisine). Your main suitcase will be transferred by courier this morning from Kyoto, and you will be without your luggage for two nights; you'll need a smaller duffel and/or daypack to carry your essentials for two nights.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Shukubo lodgings at Koyasan (specific shukubo varies by departure)

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 4 hours total by local bus, cable car, and train (broken into shorter segments)

**ACTIVITY:** 3-4 hours/4-5 miles walking between modes of transportation and at Okuno-in cemetery

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## Ride the Train to Nara

This morning you will have the opportunity to get up early to join in the Buddhist service at the temple. After breakfast travel onward by funicular and trains to Nara. On a much smaller scale than Kyoto, Nara was established in 710 AD as Japan's capital, and is home to the famous Nara park, where the semi-tame deer roam. Walk to Kasuga Taisha Shrine, a Shinto shrine established in the 8th century. Stone lanterns line the path to the entrance, and inside hundreds of bronze lanterns hang from the building. Continue to Mount Wakakusa for a walk that provides a view of the city.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Piazza Hotel Nara

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch

**TRANSPORTATION:** 4 hours total by local bus, cable car, and train (broken into shorter segments)

**ACTIVITY:** 2 hours/3 miles hiking plus 1 hour additional walking between modes of transportation

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## Explore Nara and the Kiso Valley

This morning visit Todaiji temple - the world's largest wooden building - which houses one of Japan's largest bronze statues of Buddha. Then travel by bus and train to the Kiso Valley, part of the ancient 'Nakasendo' trail passes through the valley, linking Kyoto and Edo (medieval Tokyo). Meaning 'road through the mountains', the Nakasendo has villages known as 'post towns' located along its route. Many of these have been preserved through the effort of the local residents, and it's a treat to enjoy the hospitality of villagers who have converted their traditional 'machiya' houses into inns. Arrive at your Japanese style inn on time for dinner. Your luggage transferred from Kyoto will be waiting for you.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Hotel Hanasarasa, Magome (Nakatsugawa Onsen)

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 5 hours total by local buses and trains (multiple shorter segments)

**ACTIVITY:** 3-4 hours/4-5 miles walking between modes of transportation and at Nara's Todaiji temple

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## Discover Magome & Hike a Forested Trail to Tsumago

Explore the small town of Magome before walking over Magome Pass (2,625') to the village of Tsumago-juku. The trail rises gently, passing through another small village before reaching Magome Pass and then descending on a mixed paved and dirt trail through forest to Tsumago-juku. This small village has many restored *machiya* houses lining the main street, and there are small shops selling local crafts as well as snacks such as *gohei-mochi*, rice paste covered in miso and nut-based sauce. After sightseeing in Tsumago, take a short ride to your accommodation.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Hotel Keigetsu, Tsumago (Hirugami Onsen)

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**ACTIVITY:** 4-5 hours/6 miles hiking with 1,070' elevation gain & 1,400' elevation loss

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## DAY 07

### Follow the Old Nakasendo from Tsumago to Nenoue Toge

Today you'll continue your journey through the Kiso Valley and along the Nakasendo, walking a forested route from Nagiso to Nenoue Touge. Enjoy the lovely trail along empty country lanes and paths that weave their way beside rice fields and the gardens of village houses. From Nenoue Toge (where the trail turns into paved road) travel by private vehicle to Kiso Fukushima, and stay at a ryokan with its own hot spring. There are more than three thousand named hot springs in Japan, fed by Japan's abundant volcanic activity. Soak your muscles after your hike with a quintessential Japanese onsen experience! Your main suitcase will be transferred by courier to Tokyo, and you will be without your luggage for two nights; you'll need a smaller duffel and/or daypack to carry your essentials for two nights.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Ryokan lodgings in Kiso Fukushima (specific ryokan varies by departure)

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 30-minute or 45-minute train ride

**ACTIVITY:** 5-6 hours/8 miles of hiking with 2129' ascent and 750' descent

## DAY 08

### Climb to Torii Pass & Explore Narai-juku Village

After a short train ride to Yabuhara, climb to Torii Pass, with good views over the Kiso Valley. In early spring, snow may dust on the mountaintops, but from mid-April onward the scenery is lush, green forest. Come early afternoon arrive in the well-preserved village of Narai-juku. Your *ryokan* dates back over 200 years and is typical of the merchant houses that line the village's main street. Take time to explore the atmospheric village, and perhaps try one of the local specialties.



**ACCOMMODATION:** Hotel Iseya, Narai

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 45-minute train ride

**ACTIVITY:** 3-4 hours/5 miles hiking with 1,130' elevation gain & 885' elevation loss

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## Walk the Nakasendo from Narai to Hirasawa, Transfer to Tokyo

After breakfast in Narai-juku, set out for a short walk to Hirasawa, renowned for its lacquer-ware artisans. Stop in at a workshop and meet local artisans before a 3.5-hour train journey to Tokyo (changing trains twice en route). Check in to your Tokyo hotel, where the luggage transferred from Day 7 will be waiting for you. Enjoy free time to explore, before dinner at your leisure.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Celestine Tokyo Shiba

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch

**TRANSPORTATION:** 3.5 hours total by train (changing trains twice)

**ACTIVITY:** 2 hours/3 miles hiking plus 1-2 hours/2 miles walking between modes of transportation

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## Tour Tokyo's Top Sights

Today's Tokyo tour includes walks around Nihonbashi, the elegant Ginza shopping district, and the Imperial Palace. The contrast of the Imperial Palace's large grounds, deep moat, and historic buildings with downtown Tokyo's modern office buildings reflects Japan's twin identities of modernity and tradition. Continue to Harajuku to enjoy free time for lunch on your own, then visit the Meiji Shrine, a beautiful place of quiet reflection located within an evergreen forest. Walk along the fashionable, tree-lined Omotesando — the Champs-Elysees of Tokyo — to the bustling entertainment area of Shibuya. Return to the hotel before your farewell dinner.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Celestine Tokyo Shiba

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Dinner

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

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## Depart from Tokyo

Transfer by pre-booked shared taxi to either Narita Airport or Haneda Airport, according to your homeward-bound flights.

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**TRANSPORTATION:** Pre-booked shared taxi transfers to Narita and Haneda airports





## Where You'll Stay

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

### Hotel Granvia Kyoto

The Hotel Granvia Kyoto is a four star property easily accessible within the JR Kyoto Station. Its sleek architectural decor is paired with modern amenities in each room, such as complimentary Wi-Fi, electric kettles and flat screen TVs. Guests can choose to relax in the hot tub, wander through the thousands of pieces of art work on the property or walk over to the Kyoto Tower.

### Hotel Vischio Kyoto

The Hotel Vischio Kyoto is a four-star property and sister hotel of Hotel Granvia Kyoto, located just two minutes from the JR Kyoto Station, easily accessible via train and subway lines. Its sophisticated urban decor is paired with modern amenities in each room, such as complimentary Wi-Fi, electric kettles and flat screen TVs. Guests can choose to relax in the hot tub, work out in the fitness room, or walk over to the Kyoto Tower.

### Hotel DoubleTree Kyoto Station

Riding the trains is one of delights of traveling in Japan, and what could be better than an inviting stay, just moments away from the station? Your comfy climate-controlled room includes all of the amenities to make your stay enjoyable. Beautiful lighting and Japanese-modern style create a quiet atmosphere in this lovely property, and it's ideally situated for a day of exploring Kyoto's incredible temples, shrines, and markets.



# Where You'll Stay

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

## **Shojoshin-in**

Shojoshin-in is a *shukubo*, or lodging, in a Buddhist temple. In fact Shojoshin-in is attached to one of Koyasan's oldest Buddhist temples! Built as a thatched hut more than 1,150 years ago, today it boasts attractive 150-year-old buildings with 22 guest rooms and two large communal bathing areas — one for men and one for women — with beautiful Hinoki cypress wood bathtubs.

## **Eko-in**

Eko-in is a temple at Koyasan with a 1,200-year history, and offers a rare opportunity to stay in a *shukubo*, authentic Buddhist temple lodging attended by young monks in training. Guests eat Buddhist vegetarian food and sleep on futons in traditional rooms with sliding screens and shared bathroom facilities, and have the opportunity to attend morning prayers with the monks.

## **Mitsugon-in**

Mitsugon-in is a rare opportunity to stay in a *shukubo*, authentic Buddhist temple lodging attended by young monks in training. It's housed within the Mikkyo-in temple, linked to the Shingi Shingon sect's founder Kokyo Daishi Kakubanjojin (or Kakuban) in the early 12th century. Daishi Kakuban lived, trained and worshiped on site, and later constructed a temple on Mount Negoro to the northwest that was the foundation for the Shingi Shingon Buddhism sect. The current building was rebuilt in 1931, then renovated in 1988, and preserves this historic site. Today it boasts 30 simple guest rooms and two large communal bathing areas — one for men and one for women - as well as a lovely traditional garden. Guests eat Buddhist vegetarian food and sleep on futons in traditional rooms with sliding screens and shared bathroom facilities, and have the opportunity to attend morning prayers with the monks.

## **Renge-in**

Renge-in is a rare opportunity to stay in a *shukubo*, an authentic Buddhist temple lodging attended by young monks in training. Renge-in is both a temple lodging and the family temple for the entire Tokugawa clan. The temple has a long history and was refurbished in 2015. Guests eat Buddhist vegetarian food and sleep on futons in traditional rooms with sliding screens and shared bathroom facilities, and have the opportunity to attend morning prayers with the monks.

## **Piazza Hotel Nara**

A fusion of Japanese and European sleek design, the Piazza Hotel Nara is a short walk from Nara Park and offers many modern amenities, including complimentary Wi-Fi. Watch as chefs cook authentic Teppanyaki-style dishes in front of your table at the live dining restaurant. Afterwards, head over to the hotel's jazz bar for live musical performances or relax with cocktails on the rooftop terrace.





# Where You'll Stay

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

## Hotel Hanasarasa

Hotel Hanasarasa is located in the Nakatsugawa Onsen area, sitting at the base of Mount Ena. It is close to Magome, gateway to our walk on the Nakasendo Trail. The hotel's baths are onsen baths (mineral hot springs) and the baths in this area are known for their beautifying properties! Adjoining the hotel is a larger onsen facility with a selection of indoor and outdoor hot springs baths and swimming pools. Meals at the facility showcase local cuisine, including river fish and the Hida beef of Gifu prefecture. Rooms are equipped with en suite toilets and other amenities; bathing facilities are shared in the case of most guest rooms.

## Shinchaya

Experience an authentic *minshuku* (family-run traditional lodgings) at charming Shinchaya, which means literally "new teahouse". Located in the peaceful village of Magome along the Old Nakasendo, Shinchaya offers traditional Japanese-style rooms where guests share all bathroom facilities. As is usually the case at minshukus, the futon beds need to be laid out and put away by guests themselves (rather than by staff). Shinchaya's owners serve fresh, local cuisine (much of which they grow themselves), and guests can take turns to relax in a single-person hinoki cypress wooden tub after a long day's hike.

## Keigetsu

A traditional Japanese inn nestled between lush mountains and clear springs, Keigetsu's large onsen, or hot spring baths are fed by the Hirugami spring. Soak in mineral-rich waters said to smooth and hydrate the skin. Sleep in traditional style rooms with tatami mats and futons or Western bedding, all with ensuite toilet and shower or bathtub. Dine on multicourse kaiseki meals with seasonal ingredients including Murasawa beef, a rare delicacy.

## Komanoyu

Komanoyu is nestled in the mountains above Kiso Fukushima and has lovely, big onsen baths with indoor and outdoor sections (separate baths for men and women), fed by natural hot springs. Just grab your traditional Japanese towel for modesty and pad down to the bathing space for complete relaxation (all bathroom facilities are shared in the case of most guest rooms; in limited cases, some rooms also have en-suite toilet and sink - these rooms can not be guaranteed). Sleep well atop futons in the spacious guest rooms, and enjoy traditional Japanese dishes. Wi-Fi is available in the lobby area.

## Onyado Tsutaya

A 350-year-old traditional Japanese inn, Onyado Tsutaya welcomes guests with both open-air mineral and indoor herbal onsen (hot spring baths) with the sounds of the Kiso River nearby. Ideally located for those walking the Nakasendo Trail, the inn offers traditional rooms with sliding screens and tatami mats, which come with either futon or Western style bedding. Rooms are equipped with en suite toilets and other amenities; bathing facilities are shared. Sample traditional cuisine with ingredients unique to Kiso with a multicourse dinner.





# Where You'll Stay

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

## **Tsutaya Tokinoyado Kazari**

A modern ryokan, Tsutaya Tokinoyado Kazari welcomes guests with both indoor and outdoor hot spring pools. Ideally located for those walking the Nakasendo Trail, the inn offers traditional rooms with sliding screens and tatami mats, which come with either futon or Western style bedding. Rooms are equipped with en suite toilets and other amenities; bathing facilities are shared. Sample a multi course dinner of traditional cuisine with ingredients unique to Kiso during your stay.

## **Iseya**

Iseya is a traditional *minshuku* established in 1818. The friendly, family-run inn occupies the original wooden building and a newer annex. There are 10 tatami-mat guest rooms, several guest toilets and wash basins, plus two rooms with Kiso umbrella pine tubs for bathing (all bathroom facilities are shared). Wi-Fi is available in the rooms. Meals are Japanese-style set menus featuring local specialties.

## **Celestine Tokyo Shiba**

Experience the Japanese aesthetic in the heart of Tokyo at the Celestine Tokyo Shiba. Stay in a historic district formerly occupied by the residences of feudal lords, today filled with embassies and luxury high-rise buildings. Touches of luxurious leather and marble complement the natural wood and large windows in the rooms. A leafy patio, restaurant, café, spa, and fitness center offer plenty of ways to relax.

# 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!

September 14-24, 2025

September 28-October 8, 2025

October 12-22, 2025

October 19-29, 2025

November 2-12, 2025

March 23-April 2, 2026

March 31-April 10, 2026

April 3-13, 2026

April 10-20, 2026

May 14-24, 2026

September 15-25, 2026

September 26-October 6, 2026

October 12-22, 2026

October 20-30, 2026

October 31-November 10, 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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