



# Japan Kumano Kodo Walking

**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 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**

## Unrivaled 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 Tour Company in 2022 by USA Today's 10 Best 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 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 with each day ending at a charming ryokans or hotels with onsens.

## 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

Four days of moderate hiking, cultural touring on foot, with easy walks to explore historical wonders.



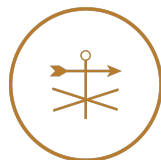
### LODGING

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



### CLIMATE

Spring and fall temperatures range from the mid 60°Fs to the high 70°Fs/low 80°Fs. The rainy season in Japan is from mid-June through July. Fall months can be slightly wetter than the spring months.



## KNOW BEFORE YOU BOOK

### Meals

Many of the inns visited will be smaller establishments so dining choices might be much simpler for gluten or fish allergies. Please let us know if you have any dietary restrictions. You should be comfortable with sitting down on the floor at meals.

### Transportation

Most of the transfers will involve using public transportation and several different modes of public transport will be used on some days. In addition, we transfer luggage on several nights, where you will pack your essentials in a backpack and be without your main luggage for one or more nights.

### Accommodation

Solo travelers booked into single rooms may be asked to share with a same-gender traveler in the ryokans. Ryokans and minshuku are traditional inns that may have tatami mat floors, futon beds, and shared bathing facilities.



# Japan Kumano Kodo Walking

## 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:** 5–15 Guests

**ACTIVITY:**



Check [mtsobek.com](https://www.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.

**MEALS:** Dinner

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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.

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 2.5-hour train ride and 40-minute bus journey

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

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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.

**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

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## 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 and is dedicated to Shinto's main deity, the sun goddess Amaterasu. 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. Transfer to Kawayu Onsen for an overnight stay.

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 1-hour bus transfer

**ACTIVITY:** 3 hours/5 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 Danichi-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 take a coastal train journey to the small port and fishing town of Kii Katsuura.

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 25-minute train ride

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

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## 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.

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 4.5-hour train ride

**ACTIVITY:** 1 mile/1 hour hiking with 656' elevation gain

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## 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.

**MEALS:** Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

**TRANSPORTATION:** 15-minute train ride

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## 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.

### **Excel Tokyu Osaka**

The entrance of Excel Tokyu Osaka frames a nearby temple gate, leading you into the hotel and more thoughtful touches that reflect the traditions of the world outside while offering the comfort of today. Surprisingly spacious rooms include a bathroom with all the amenities and a full bathtub. The restaurant and bar command spectacular views of the city and there is even a Starbucks onsite for that familiar cup of coffee.

### **Organic Hotel Takahara Kiri-no-sato**

Tucked away in the Hatenashi mountain range, Organic Hotel Takahara Kiri-no-Sato 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.



# Where You'll Stay

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

## **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.

## **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 15-22, 2024

May 24-31, 2024

September 25-October 2, 2024

October 23-30, 2024

November 13-20, 2024

November 26-December 3, 2024

March 2-9, 2025

March 12-19, 2025

March 22-29, 2025

April 16-23, 2025

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

# 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 portorage

## 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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The Adventure Company | Est. 1969

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