



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 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!
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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

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 cultural touring and 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. In springtime, there is a fair chance of rain.



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.



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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, Luxury Hotels, Rustic Lodging

Group Size: 5-12 Guests

ACTIVITY:



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

“

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!

MEALS: Dinner

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. We'll then have an early lunch before we continue on to Ryoanji to see its famous rock garden. Then, we 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 we return to our hotel to freshen up before dinner.

MEALS: Breakfast | Dinner

DAY
03

Travel the Scenic Nankai Railway and Follow the Pilgrim's Trail to Mount Koya

We travel by train along the scenic Nankai railway line to Mount Koya, 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, Mount Koya has been a place of religious devotion and ceremony. Today there are more than 100 monasteries, many of which have shukubo (temple lodgings). We will visit Kongobu-ji temple and there will be 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 luggage will be transferred by courier this morning from Kyoto, so you will be without your luggage for two nights, and will need a bag or pack to carry your overnight items.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 3-hour train ride



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. We 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. We continue to Mount Wakakusa for a walk that gives us a view of the city.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch

TRANSPORTATION: 2-hour train ride

ACTIVITY: 2 hours/3 miles hiking



Explore Nara and the Kiso Valley

This morning, we visit Todaiji temple - the world's largest wooden building - which houses one of Japan's largest bronze statues of Buddha. We then travel by 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 we will enjoy the hospitality of villagers who have converted their traditional 'machiya' houses into inns. We arrive at our Japanese style inn on time for dinner. Your luggage transferred from Kyoto will be waiting for you.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 5-hour train and bus transfer



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 Tsumago, we'll have a short ride to our accommodation.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

ACTIVITY: 3 hours/5.2 miles walking with 1,070' elevation gain & 1,400' elevation loss



DAY 07

Follow the Old Nakasendo from Tsumago to Nenoue Toge

Today you'll continue your journey through the Kiso Valley and along Nakasendo today, 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!

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 30-minute or 45-minute train ride

ACTIVITY: 5 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. Your luggage will be transferred by courier this morning to Tokyo, so you will be without your luggage for one night, and will need a bag or pack to carry your overnight items.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

TRANSPORTATION: 45-minute train ride

ACTIVITY: 3 hours/4 miles walking with 1,130' elevation gain & 885' elevation loss



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 transferring to Shinjuku Station in Tokyo, where you'll have free time to explore before dinner at your leisure. The luggage transferred from Day 8 will be waiting for you.

MEALS: Breakfast | Lunch

TRANSPORTATION: 3.5-hour train ride

ACTIVITY: 1 hour/1.6 miles walking



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 for lunch and to visit the Meiji Shrine, a beautiful place of quiet reflection located within an evergreen forest. Then 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.

MEALS: Breakfast | Dinner



Depart from Tokyo

Your guide is on hand this morning to help you transfer to Narita Airport for homeward-bound flights.

MEALS: Breakfast



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.

Cross Hotel Kyoto

Located in the heart of Kyoto, this boutique hotel offers a prime location for exploring the city's rich cultural heritage and historic landmarks. The hotel's architecture and interior design are a harmonious fusion of sleek, minimalist elements and classic Japanese motifs, creating an inviting and sophisticated atmosphere. The Cross Hotel also boasts a range of facilities, including a rooftop terrace with panoramic views of the surrounding area.

Shojoshin-in Shukubo

Shojoshin-in is a *shukubo*, or lodging, in a Buddhist temple. In fact Shojoshin-in is attached to one of Mount Koya'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.



Where You'll Stay

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

Yochi-in

Yochi-in is a rare opportunity to stay in a shukubo, authentic Buddhist temple lodging attended by young monks in training. Yochi-in temple was built in 1153 AD and is surrounded by beautiful reflective ponds, cherry and maple trees, raked sand and moss gardens. 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.

Hotel Nikko Nara

Situated in the center of Nara prefecture, Hotel Nikko Nara is a four-star relaxing retreat with a Japanese-style bath house, fitness center, spa and massage facilities. Each room offers complimentary Wi-Fi, a coffee/tea kettle and a flat-screen TV. Dine at one of the hotel's four restaurants featuring European, Chinese, and Japanese cuisine or take short stroll to any of the local restaurants nearby.

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.

Tajimaya Minshuku

Experience an authentic *minshuku* at charming Tajimaya. Located in Magome along the Old Nakasendo, Tajimaya offers traditional Japanese-style rooms where guests share all bathroom facilities. The Japanese *irori* (hearth) is over 100 years old and still in use. Tajimaya's owners serve fresh, local cuisine, and guests can relax in the wooden tubs after a long day's hike.

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.



Where You'll Stay

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

Daikichi Minshuku

We use two *minshuku* (guesthouse) in Tsumago: Daikichi and Matsushiroya. Daikichi is a traditional, family-run inn with five tatami-mat guest rooms. The family serves dinner consisting of many small dishes featuring locally grown ingredients. Guests lay out their own futons in the evening and take turns to use the bath privately — and soak in the bathtub made from Kiso cypress.

Matsushiroya Minshuku

Matsushiroya is a traditional-style inn established in 1804, offering six tatami-mat guest rooms, several toilets and wash basins, plus two rooms for bathing. Usually one bathing room is used communally by men and one is used communally by women, but depending on occupancy levels, the inn may suggest that guests take turns bathing privately.

Hotel Kisoji

Immerse yourself in nature in this European-style onsen resort surrounded by hot springs water. As one of Japan's largest bathing facilities, take a moment to relax in one of the open-air springs under a starry night to soothe away the miles from your hike. Hotel Kisoji offers spacious rooms in a minimalist style with flat screen TVs and internet access.

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. Dine on multicourse kaiseki meals with seasonal ingredients including Murasawa beef, a rare delicacy.

Komanoyu Ryokan

Komanoyu has lovely, big *onsen* baths with indoor and outdoor sections (separate baths for men and women). Just grab your traditional Japanese towel for modesty and pad down to the bathing space for complete relaxation. 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. 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.

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. Wi-Fi is available in the rooms. Meals are Japanese-style set menus featuring local specialties.

Park Hotel

Park Hotel is a luxury hotel ideally located in Shiodome, a bustling center of Tokyo's business and culture. The hotel's art theme is reflected in the 17 artist-designed guest rooms, the various art installations and exhibitions the hotel displays, and the creative cuisine served in its many restaurants. The Park Hotel Tokyo offers traditional Japanese hospitality in a modern setting.

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!

April 16-26, 2024

May 12-22, 2024

September 16-26, 2024

September 28-October 8, 2024

October 13-23, 2024

October 22-November 1, 2024

November 3-13, 2024

March 23-April 2, 2025

March 30-April 9, 2025

April 6-16, 2025

April 15-25, 2025

May 11-21, 2025

September 14-24, 2025

September 28-October 8, 2025

October 12-22, 2025

October 19-29, 2025

November 2-12, 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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