AUTUMN IN JAPAN

31 OCTOBER 2027 - 15 NOVEMBER 2027

Tour Cost ($AUD):$16,990
Single Supplement ($AUD):$2,900

Tour Duration:16 days

OVERVIEW

'Autumn in Japan' is a remarkable 16-day journey to the iconic cities, heritage sites, mountains and lakes of Japan's largest island, Honshu, when the landscape is awash with the red, orange, and golden hues that signal the approach of winter.

Though undoubtedly a visual feast, this tour is much more than just a ramble through the golden landscapes of central Honshu. The tour begins in Tokyo with a three-night stay in the dazzling capital before moving on to Takayama, nestled at the foot of the Hida mountain range. Here we explore the small atmospheric towns and villages that were isolated from the rest of Japan for hundreds of years, and tell the story of the country's ancient past. In this beautiful mountainous region the landscape is dotted with shrines and temples, and trees wearing their autumn cloaks adorn the river banks. We then move south for a three-night stay in the ancient capital of Kyoto which boasts more than a dozen UNESCO World Heritage sites and is home to Japan's largest population of geisha. Continuing south-west via the great 'White Heron' castle of Himeji, we arrive in the sobering city of Hiroshima, where the cataclysmic events of 6 August 1945 etched the city's name permanently in the history books. Yet through the sadness, our exploration of Hiroshima focuses on the amazing resurgence and resilience of the city and its inhabitants. Finally we take a bullet train to Mt Fuji for an overnight stay beside the sparkling lakes lying in the shadow of the iconic mountain. This tour is a fascinating exploration of the history and culture of Japan set against the beautiful backdrop of autumn trees.

Tour Fitness Level: Moderate

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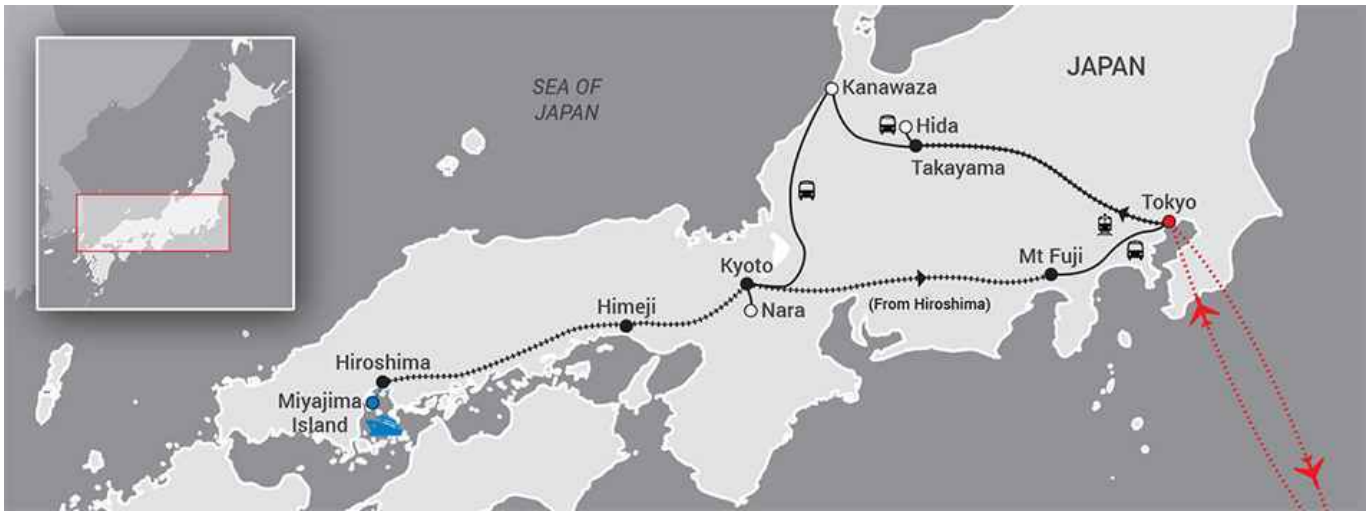
TOUR MAP



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ITINERARY

31/10/2027 Australia · Singapore
Check-in at your chosen Australian airport for the flight to Singapore.

01/11/2027 Singapore · Tokyo (D)
Depart Singapore SQ 632, 08.05
Arrive Tokyo Haneda 15.35
After completing customs and immigration formalities at Tokyo transfer to your hotel.

Grand Nikko Tokyo Daiba (or similar)
Tokyo

02/11/2027 Tokyo (BLD)
Visiting Japan's capital for the first time is a fascinating experience. Very different from Western cities and with an expanding population of more than 12 million within 1300 sq kms, Tokyo is Japan's largest and most densely populated city. Always safe, Tokyo is perhaps the only city in the world that could make New York look like a sleepy town! Today we spend the whole day exploring this exciting metropolis including the Tsukiji Market which is one of the world's largest fish markets, handling more than 2,000 tons of marine products per day. We enjoy a sushi lunch at one of the local restaurants inside the market itself.

03/11/2027 Tokyo (BLD)
Today we start with a visit to Asakusa where 'old Tokyo' still exists and the atmosphere conjures up images of days long gone. We walk through a network of charming streets before taking a cruise on the Sumida River which provide a wonderful viewing platform of autumn colours from the water.

04/11/2027 Tokyo · Takayama (BD)
Leaving Tokyo we travel by train via Nagoya into the heart of Honshu and the beautiful Hida Mountains. The wonderfully atmospheric town of Takayama dates back to the 16th century. Shrines and temples dot the hillsides and a river running through its centre complete an idyllic setting. We arrive mid-afternoon and commence a walking tour of the town, exploring its wealth of narrow winding streets, galleries and museums.

Ryu Resort & Spa (or similar)
Takayama

05/11/2027 Takayama · Shirakawa-go · Takayama (BLD)
Shirakawa-go and the surrounding area was isolated from the rest of Japan for hundreds of years, and as a result it has fostered a distinctly different culture from the rest of Japan. Visiting Japan's 'hidden gem' is like stepping back in time, as we witness a simple lifestyle were locals fish in the rivers and grow vegetables and rice. Surrounded by forest and rice terraces, the architecture is a result of generations of 'master builders' or highly skilled carpenters and the town now provides a fascinating mirror into rural life of previous centuries.

06/11/2027 Takayama · Kanazawa (BLD)
This morning we take a short drive to Kanazawa. Located between the alps and the Sea of Japan, this great castle town escaped any war devastation and has never suffered any significant natural disasters. Thus, Kanazawa is wonderfully preserved. At its heart is the amazing Garden of Kenrokuen, sitting opposite the castle. Formerly a feudal lord's garden, and covering more than 11 hectares, Kenrokuen is a riot of colour in autumn, with the trees adorned with leaves in shades of orange, red and yellow.

Kanazawa New Grand Hotel Prestige (or similar)
Kanazawa

07/11/2027 Kanazawa · Nara · Kyoto (BLD)
After breakfast we begin our journey south to Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan for 1,000 years until 1867 when Tokyo took the crown. Surrounded by mountains, Kyoto is the city that touches the heart of the Japanese in a way that no other place can. Ancient customs and heritage have continued here as Geisha and Maiko scurry between appointments in tiny alleys lit by traditional lanterns. En route we visit Nara Park, a serene place of natural beauty and infinite treasures, and home to around 1,200

freely roaming deer. Among the historic buildings within the park are Todaiji Temple, the world's largest wooden structure, which houses the 'Giant Buddha' that soars 16 metres in height. After our visit here we continue on to Kyoto.

The Prince Kyoto Takaragaike (or similar)
Kyoto

08/11/2027 Kyoto (BLD)
One of the best places to see autumn colours in Kyoto is along the Philosopher's Walk · a pleasant stone path running beside a canal lined with hundreds of cherry trees. From here we continue our exploration of Kyoto with a visit to the Silver Pavilion, set amongst a beautiful moss garden and a unique dry sand garden, known as the 'Sea of Silver Sand'. We also explore the historic Nijo Castle and Kiyomi Zu Temple.

09/11/2027 Kyoto · Fushimi Inari · Kyoto (BLD)
After breakfast we drive to Fushimi Inari Shrine in southern Kyoto. It is famous for its thousands of vermilion torii gates, which straddle a network of trails that lead into the wooded forest of the sacred Mount Inari (233m). Fushimi Inari is the most important of several thousands of shrines dedicated to Inari, the Shinto god of rice.

10/11/2027 Kyoto · Himeji · Hiroshima (BLD)
Today we take a short bus ride to Himeji Castle, also known as The White Heron because of its elegant, white appearance. This is Japan's most imposing castle and its beautiful gardens create a wonderful backdrop to the white edifice. The castle, which like Kanazawa, was never destroyed by war, earthquake or fire, survives to this day as one of the country's twelve original castles. After our visit here we board our bullet train for the two-hour journey to Hiroshima.

Hilton Hotel (or similar)
Hiroshima

11/11/2027 Hiroshima (BLD)
On 6 August 1945, the world's first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. The tremendous impact of the bomb obliterated everything within a 2km radius, and immediately killed more than 80,000 people, with tens of thousands more dying from radiation exposure. After the war, despite some predictions that the city would be uninhabitable, Hiroshima was reconstructed quickly and a large park was built in the centre of the city. This morning we visit Peace Park and Peace Park Museum which provide a powerful reminder of the worst day in Hiroshima's history. We also see the A-Bomb Dome, now a UNESCO World Heritage site, which remains the last visible link and iconic image of this cataclysmic day.

12/11/2027 Hiroshima · Miyajima Island · Hiroshima (BLD)
The so-called 'Island of the Gods', Miyajima Island, is on the beautiful Seto Inland Sea. One of the most picturesque spots in Japan, this romantic and historical island is laced with virgin forest as well as numerous Shinto shrines, temples and monuments. After breakfast we board a ferry for the short trip to the island, and take a cable car to the top of Mt Misen for breathtaking views of Hiroshima and the surrounding islands before reboarding our ferry back to Hiroshima.

13/11/2027 Hiroshima · Mt Fuji (BLD)
This morning we take the Shinkansen bullet train to Mt Fuji. Here we transfer by bus to the magnificent Yamanaka Lake, one of the five lakes at the base of this sacred mountain. Shaped like a whale this area is where some Japanese families have second homes, due to its outstanding natural beauty and scenery. At this time of year the sky is usually clear which provides a stunning vista as the sun sets behind Mt Fuji.

The Prince Hakone Lake Ashinoko (or similar)
Mt Fuji

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14/11/2027 Mt Fuji · Tokyo Haneda Airport (BL)
This morning, weather conditions permitting, we have the opportunity to see the sun rise over magnificent Mt Fuji. The rest of the day is at leisure. Later we board our bus for the 140km journey to Tokyo's Haneda airport, to catch our homeward flight.
Depart Tokyo, Singapore Airlines SQ 633, 17.05
Arrive Singapore 23.05

15/11/2027 Singapore · Australia
On arrival in Singapore we connect with the flight to our chosen Australian airport.