

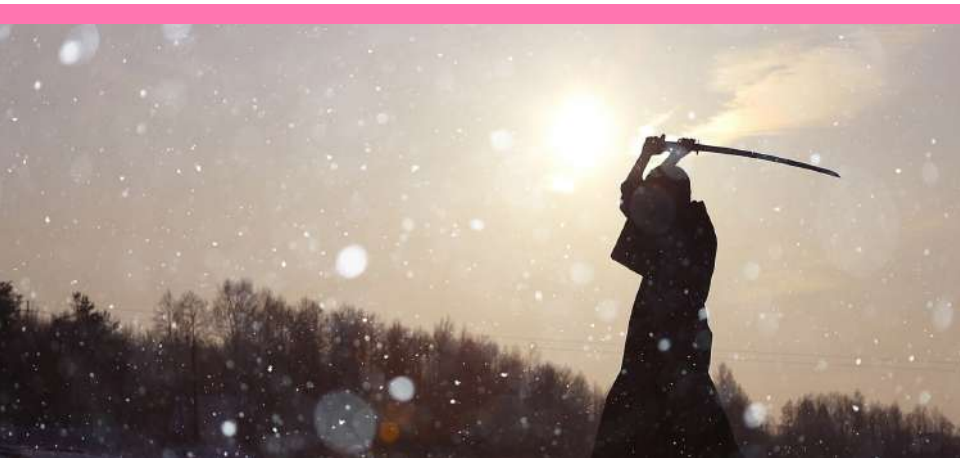


Japan Holidays
EXCLUSIVE TOUR

CHERRY BLOSSOM & LAST SAMURAI TOUR 2018

Wed 28th March – Fri 6th April 2018

Price from \$5,175 per person



TOUR DESCRIPTION

Introduction:

Departure Date:

Wednesday 28th March 2018 Australia

Arrival Date:

Saturday 7th April 2018 Australia

(Depart Japan Friday 6th April)

Period:

10 Days/9 Nights

Price:

From \$5,175 per person

* Price subject to exchange rate

Inclusions

- 9 B'Fasts, 8 Lunches, 8 Dinners
- 9 Nights accommodation Western or Japanese Ryokans
- Transfers, Tours & Entrances as per itinerary
- Private Escort/Guide in Japan

Non Inclusions

- International & Domestic Flights

Highlights:

This itinerary introduces an authentic Japan as never seen before by introducing so many aspects of Japanese culture and scenery that can only be witnessed on this Tour.

- Stay in the Home of Heike Clan Samurai family enjoying meals around an open fire
View the breath taking beauty of Mount Aso - an active volcano- caldera from up close
- Stroll through the Japanese Gardens of Kumamoto and enjoy a traditional tea ceremony
- View the Cherry Blossoms and picturesque waterfalls of the mountains surrounding Kumamoto
- Experience traditional handicrafts- e.g. indigo dyeing and pottery making.
- Hot spring bathing in onsens and staying in local Japanese Inns
- Feel the warmth of the local hospitality and cuisine unique to the Kyushu area

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ITINERARY

Day 1 - Wed 28th Mar : Tokyo

Arrive Narita International Airport. After clearing Customs transfer by shared shuttle to hotel near the Narita Airport

Accommodation: Narita View Hotel



Day 2 - Thu 29th Mar : Tokyo - Fukuoka - Kumamoto (B / L / D)

After an early Breakfast – Depart Narita on Jetstar flight GK0505 to Fukuoka arriving at 10:15 approximately. Upon arrival, Ken Takenaga, your expert local guide for the tour will meet you. Depart Fukuoka Airport to visit one of the most prominent shrines, Dazaifu Tenmangu . Lunch at a traditional local restaurant and later visit Yachiyoza Kabuki Theater in Yamaga City, which was built in 1910 and designated as the National Important Asset in 1988. We will transfer from Yachiyoza Kabuki Theater to Kumamoto City by a chartered bus. Check into your accommodation for tonight. Dinner at local restaurant, one of Kumamoto's favourite restaurants.

Accommodation: Hotel Nikko Kumamoto

Day 3 - Fri 30th Mar : Kumamoto (B / L / D)

After breakfast, we will find our way to the Suizenji Japanese Garden – one of Japan's most acclaimed Japanese gardens, after which we will venture to Jyosai En Cultural Center to experience the history of Kumamoto through virtual reality. Lunch at sumptuous buffet restaurant "Ginnan" and after walk to the Kumamoto Castle to see damages caused by the earthquakes of April 16th 2016 and current recovery progress. Next we visit the Kumamoto Prefectural Traditional Craft Center to view various local traditional products which we can also purchase e.g. Japanese kitchen Knives that are made by ancient sword makers. Afterwards visit Tsuruya Department Store for shopping opportunity. Tonight enjoy more tastes of the region.

Accommodation: Hotel Nikko Kumamoto



ITINERARY

Day 4 - Sat 31st Mar : Kumamoto (B / L / D)

Today you will really gain an understanding of why Kumamoto is referred to as

The Land of Fire and Water. After breakfast, we will drive to Daikambou Observation Point to view the World largest Caldera measuring more than 120 km around and visit Nakadake - an active volcano if weather permits. After a local hotplate – Higo Steak - lunch, we will visit the 2,200 years old Aso

Shrine which was damaged by the earthquakes of April 16th 2016 , but currently in the process of restoration. We then walk the nearby street to taste various spring water each shop provides. Tonight enjoy more differing foods of the region. Overnight Hotel Nikko Kumamoto

Accommodation: Hotel Nikko Kumamoto



Day 5 - Sun 1st Apr : Kumamoto (B / L / D)

After breakfast we will commence our journey to Gokanosho – the Land of the Last Samurai. Gokanosho is located in the centre of Kumamoto Prefecture and is often called the last secluded region in Kyushu. These villages are known as the “Home of the Heike fugitive legend” or the Hidden Samurai. Gokanosho with its combination of waterfalls, mountains and dense forest offers an escape into a splendid piece of natural scenery never seen on regular sightseeing tours of Japan. On the way we will stop by the Sendan Totodo Waterfall and walk the suspension bridges. Stay at a traditional homestay -Heike-so or Sakura-so with the local mountain people and enjoy their generous hospitality that you will remember for your life. The food and local “moonshine” is superb. Stay overnight Heiko-so or Sakura-so Minshuku, Gokanosho

Accommodation Heiko-So

Day 6 - Mon 2nd Apr : Amakusa (B / L / D)

Say goodbye to Gokanosho after a sumptuous Japanese breakfast and leave for Amakusa. On our way travelling by a private car over the 5 scenic famous bridges to Amakusa we will stop for a local lunch. A highlight for the women today will be the Honda Pearl Center. Amakusa produces Japan's highest quality pearls, which are sold in the major stores in Tokyo and the upmarket known area of Ginza. This is a must for those looking for some precious souvenirs. Next we will move to the Christian Museum and learn about the history of the Hidden Christians in Amakusa. Later this afternoon, we will check into Kameya Hotel Hana Tsubaki and relax in hot onsen bath. Tonight we will eat an amazing seafood (or alternative) dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation: Kameya Hotel Hana Tsubaki



ITINERARY

Day 7 - Tue 3rd Apr : Amakusa (B / L / D)

After breakfast, we visit a local Tokoji Buddhist Temple to meet Head monk - Master Okabe. This will be an opportunity to learn about local Buddhist beliefs, experience meditation and view the Temple. Today we travel along the beautiful West Coast overlooking the East China Sea and wind through rice farms before stopping at a local ceramic pottery factory. Next we arrive at Sakitsu Cathedral. The area around this church has been designated one of Japan's 100 Most Beautiful Beaches and 100 Best Sceneries. This is followed by a visit to Oe Cathedral. Father Garnier built this Romanesque -style church from his private funds in 1933. In the chapel, you can see sacred paintings, which are few in number in Japan. Return to the Hotel. Tonight we will have traditional Hanami (Cherry Blossom) party under the cherry trees with Bento boxes and drinks.

Accommodation: Amakusa Santa Coming Hotel (Seaside Hotel formally)



Day 8 - Wed 4th Apr : Amakusa-Shimabara-Takeo City-Saga prefecture (B / L / D)

After Breakfast, we will depart Amakusa on a vehicular ferry to Shimabara. First visit the ruin of Hara Castle, the battleground of the Christian rebellion in the year 1637. Inspect Mt. Fugen Volcanic museum followed by lunch. Then onto the Shimabara Castle where we will try traditional amour, and view the castle and sights from the top. We then drive to Takeo City, Saga Prefecture, which is known as a city having 1,300 years old hot spring spa. Check into Takeo Onsen Hotel Toyokan.

Accommodation: Takeo Onsen Hotel Toyokan

Day 9 - Thu 5th Apr : Takeo City-Saga prefecture (B / L / D)

After breakfast, we will first visit Takeo Shrine, which is said to be 1,200 years old shrine. A highlight of which is a 3,000-year-old camper tree, located in the back of the shrine. Lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch, we will meet Master Ogata, Indigo specialist, at the Akane Indigo Studio to learn Japanese indigo dying technics and then make your own indigo scarf. Return to the hotel. Enjoy hot spring spa and Kaiseki dinner - a Japanese tradional Ryokan dining experience.

Accommodation: Takeo Onsen Hotel Toyokan



ITINERARY

Day 10 - Fri 6th Apr : Shiga - Next Destination (B / L)

In the morning we will travel to Arita City to view Kyushu Ceramics Museum. After Lunch at a local restaurant, we will meet Master Koga at the Kameokina Kiln. Master Koga is a famous potter using the clay of Takeo and you will have chance to make your own product. For those travelers extending their stay in Japan depart Takeo City for Shin Tosu by local express train and then connect with the Shinkansen to Hiroshima or through to Osaka or Tokyo. Those travelers departing Japan here transfer to local express from Takeo City to Hakata Station and then cab to Fukuoka Airport to connect with flights to Tokyo or other ports.



End of Tour

Sayonara

***OPTIONAL EXTENSION TOURS AVAILABLE
PLEASE ENQUIRE***

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