



SAMURAI TOURS

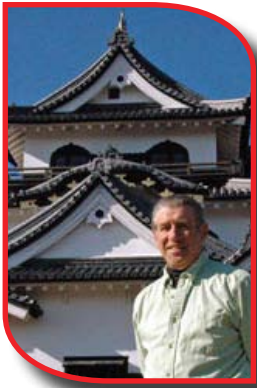
Adventures in Discovering Traditional Japan

THEMED TOURS

2012 INFORMATION & SCHEDULE



SAMURAI TOURS



Mike Roberts, Owner, Samurai Tours

CONTACT INFORMATION

EMAIL US

info@samuraitours.com

USA

Call us toll-free:
1-866-316- SAMURAI
1-866-316-7268

Samurai Tours
7900 East Union Ave, Suite 1100
Denver CO 80237

Fax number: 720-210-5423

JAPAN

Call us: 075-361-7303

Samurai Tours
307 Yodokizu
Fushimi
Kyoto 613-0911 Japan

Kyoto-ken Chijitoroku Ryokogyo 3-576/
Japanese Travel Agency License:
Kyoto Prefecture #3-576



Member Better Business Bureau,
Japan National Tourist Organization
JNTO-approved Japan Travel Specialist,
American Society of Travel Agents,
National Tour Association

About Our Themed Tours

These are small, escorted group tours (maximum of 16 tour members) allowing us to stay in smaller neighborhood hotels and family-run ryokans, use public transportation and to visit destinations and eat in more intimate restaurants that large group tours can only dream of. All of the hotels and ryokans we use have en-suite, attached bathrooms with western-style toilets. Since all of your group transportation costs, admission fees, all breakfasts, half of your lunches and dinners and more are included, there are no hidden costs.

These packages feature:

- Small groups (16 members maximum) with a friendly atmosphere
- Smaller neighborhood hotels and family-run ryokans
- Public transportation (no tour buses)
- Well-rounded and creative itineraries
- Experienced guides and tour leaders
- Mixture of Japanese-style and Western-style food
- Well-balanced cultural activities
- Guaranteed prices with no hidden costs

If the fun, friendliness and flexibility of small escorted group travel appeals to you, join us!

Friendly Groups

“Traveling small” gives our groups a congenial atmosphere. Because of the way we organize our tours, and the way we travel, we tend to attract friendlier, more flexible and fun-loving people for our tours. If you are interested in learning about Japan, its culture, people and want to have fun at the same time, you will fit right in.

Experienced Tour Leaders and Guides

You will enjoy the full-time services of our experienced, bi-lingual tour leaders who will ensure your Japanese experience goes off without a hitch. And our licensed, English-speaking Japanese guides, well versed in Japanese culture, history, art and architecture, provided at the appropriate times during the tour will bring Japan alive with their insights.

Smaller Neighborhood Hotels and Family-run Ryokans

Whenever possible, we prefer to stay in smaller more intimate neighborhood hotels and family-run ryokans in the middle of the sights and culture rather than convenient to the transportation hubs. By staying in central locations, you are within walking distance of what you came to see. This saves you time and money, and gives you lots of independence. All of the hotels and ryokans have en-suite bathrooms. The bathrooms will include a bath/shower combination, sink and western-style toilet.

Public Transportation

We use only public transportation for these tours. We use the same trains, subways, buses, taxis and ferries that millions of Japanese use every day. By traveling this way, you will get much closer to the people and culture you traveled thousands of miles to discover. You won't view Japan through a tour bus window on a whirlwind bus tour. And no trip to Japan is complete without at least one ride on the fast and convenient Shinkansens (bullet trains).

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



[GO TO WEBSITE](#)

SAMURAI TOURS

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

TOKYO

Hama Rikyu Garden
Ginza
Rikiguen Garden

OMIYA

Omiya Bonsai Nursery

KANAZAWA

Kenrokuen Garden
Kanazawa Handicrafts Museum

MATSUE

Adachi Museum of Art and Garden

TAKAMATSU

Ritsurin Koen Garden

OKAYAMA

Korakuen Garden

KYOTO

Arashiyama Bamboo Grove
Tenryu-ji Garden
Zazen Meditation Lecture and Practice
Shojin-ryori Buddhist Vegetarian Lunch
Saiho-ji (Moss Temple)
Ryoanji Garden
Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion) Garden
Diatoku-ji Garden
Koi Farm
Tofuku-ji Garden
Shisen-do Garden
Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion) Garden
Heian Shrine Garden

Gardens of Japan

16 Days | 14 Nights

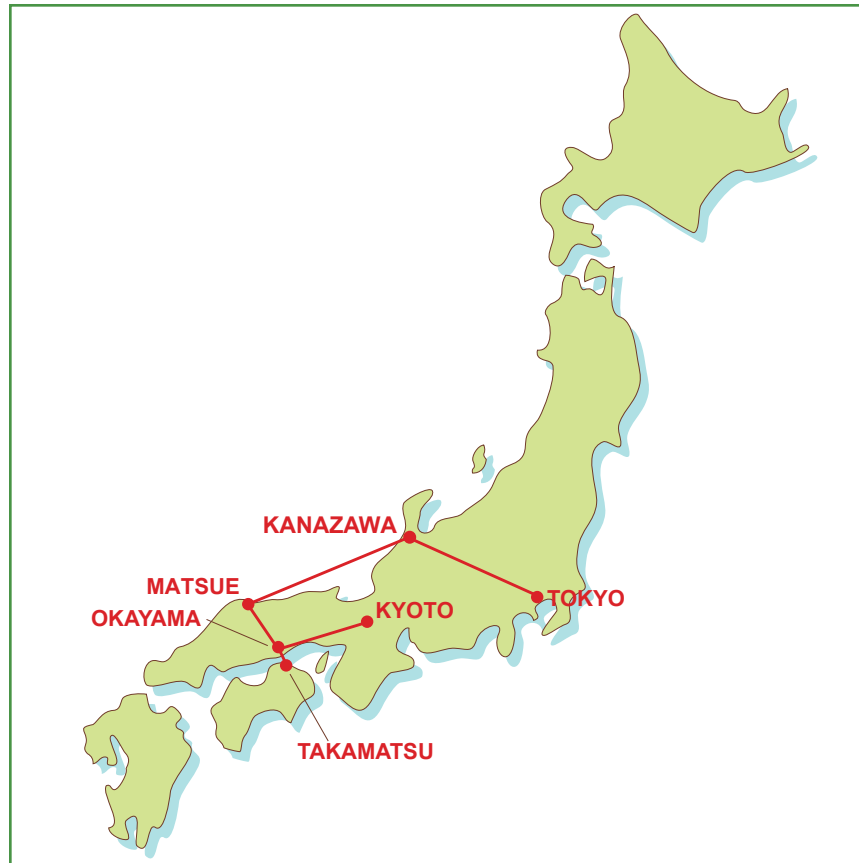
There is no doubt the Japanese have an extraordinary sense of aesthetics. This is evident from their traditional, colorful, silken kimonos to their trend-setting modern clothing designs, the stylized theatrical arts of Kabuki, Noh and Bunraku and the elegant but simple Ikebana floral arrangements. Even Japanese castles, while strategically sound, are among the most appealing castles in the world. But perhaps this sense of aesthetics is no more evident than in Japanese gardens. The simple, minimalistic approach in restrictive, compact spaces belies the graceful results, making Japanese gardens the perfect place to contemplate the existence of nature and the nature of existence.

DESTINATIONS

Tokyo, Kanazawa, Matsue, Takamatsu, Okayama, Kyoto

You'll visit Japan's best gardens as only Samurai Tours can do it. Every day you'll enjoy the friendliness, fun and flexibility of small group travel by experiencing sights, and Japanese restaurants that are off-limits to larger groups. From start-to-finish, all group transportation, group admission fees, travel insurance, lodging, all breakfasts, 8 lunches, 6 dinners, and more are included. All while our tour guide brings Japan alive with exceptional insights.

MAP OF TOUR DESTINATIONS



For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS



GARDENS OF JAPAN - TOUR ITINERARY

- DAY 1** Leave for Japan
- DAY 2** Arrive in Japan, Tokyo
- DAY 3** Tokyo – Hama Rikyu Garden, Ginza, Afternoon free
- DAY 4** Tokyo – Rikiguen, Omiya Bonsai Nurseries
- DAY 5** Travel to Kanazawa
- DAY 6** Kanazawa – Kenrokuen, Kanazawa Handicrafts Museum, Afternoon free
- DAY 7** Travel to Matsue
- DAY 8** Matsue – Adachi Museum of Art and Garden
- DAY 9** Travel to Takamatsu, Afternoon Free
- DAY 10** Takamatsu – Ritsurin Koen, Afternoon Free
- DAY 11** Travel to Okayama, Korakuen Garden, Travel to Kyoto
- DAY 12** Arashiyama – Bamboo Grove, Tenryuji, Zazen Meditation Lecture and Practice, Shojin-ryori Vegetarian Lunch, Saihoji
- DAY 13** Kyoto – Ryoanji, Kinkakuji, Daitokuji
- DAY 14** Kyoto – Koi Farm, Tofuku-ji
- DAY 15** Kyoto – Shisen-do, Ginkaku-ji, Heian Shrine
- DAY 16** Sayonara

DATES & PRICES (Prices are per person and in US Dollars)

[VISIT WEBSITE FOR CURRENT TOUR STATUS](#)

TOUR DATES	PRICES (LAND ONLY)	
May 26, 2012 – Jun 10, 2012	\$4,744	Single Supplement \$494
Sep 1, 2012 – Sep 16, 2012	\$4,744	Single Supplement \$494
May 25, 2013 – Jun 9, 2013	\$4,744	Single Supplement \$494
Aug 31, 2013 – Sep 15, 2013	\$4,744	Single Supplement \$494

From Top to Bottom:
Hama Rikyu Garden,
Kenrokuen,
Saihoji

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS

WALKING LEVEL GUIDE

LIGHT

0-2 miles in flat areas
or 0-1 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs

MEDIUM

2-4 miles in flat areas
or 1-3 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs

HEAVY

4-6 miles in flat areas
or 3-5 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs



From Top to Bottom:
Ginza District at Night
Rikugien Garden

GARDENS OF JAPAN - DETAILED TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1: To Tokyo

Depart Home for Tokyo's Narita Airport (*Travel: 12 Hours, Walking: Light*)

Day 2: Arrive Tokyo

You will lose a day flying to Japan due to crossing the International Dateline, and gain the day back when you fly home. You will be met at Tokyo's Narita airport by a Samurai Tours guide, who will escort you to the ryokan in Tokyo. After checking into the ryokan we will have our welcome/ orientation dinner. Dinner at the ryokan included. (*Travel: 1 Hour, Walking: Light*)

Day 3: Hama Rikyu Garden, Ginza

Hama Rikyu lies on reclaimed marshland where the Sumida River empties into the Tokyo Bay. Constructed in 1654, the garden was initially a waterfowl hunting preserve for the Tokugawa Shoguns. Many modifications were made through the years, until in 1868, the garden was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and used to entertain foreign dignitaries, including US President Grant. Eventually, the property passed into the hands of the Imperial family, and was renamed Hama Rikyu (Hama Detached Palace). It was turned over to the city of Tokyo in 1945 and opened to the public in 1946. There are three ponds, the largest spanned by a trellis-covered bridge that leads to a floating teahouse, Nakajima-no-Chaya. Next to the garden entrance is a sprawling, three hundred year old pine tree and a manicured lawn dotted with sculpted, stunted trees. After touring the garden, we will return to the busy, modern world of today's Japan. After a short walk, we arrive in the heart of the Ginza, home to numerous shopping opportunities and the world's most expensive real estate. After a relaxing lunch of Kushiage (fried meats, fish and vegetables on skewers), you will have some free time to explore the many department stores and boutiques. The evening is free to enjoy the many dining and nightlife options of Tokyo. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch at a local restaurant included. (*Travel: 1 hour, Walking: Heavy*)

Day 4: Rikugien, Omiya Bonsai Nurseries

After breakfast, we visit Rikugien Garden in northern, central Tokyo. Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu, who rose to the lofty status of Daimyo (Feudal Lord) - confidant to the fifth Tokugawa Shogun constructed Rikugien between 1695 and 1702. After his death in 1714, the garden fell into a state of disrepair until 1877, when it was purchased by the founder of the Mitsubishi Corporation. The garden was donated to the city of Tokyo in 1938. The garden's name refers to the six principles of waka (classical short poems of 31 syllables). The garden is organized around a large pond with a treed island and a striking rock composition that represents the island where the immortals live. As part of the original design, 88 miniature landscape scenes from ancient Japanese poetry were created, of which only 18 remain today. There are numerous tea houses, resting pavilions and an artificial hill whose summit provides an excellent view of the pond. After stopping for lunch at a local restaurant, we travel to the city of Omiya by Shinkansen (bullet train). In Omiya we will find a concentration of bonsai nurseries where we will learn some of the practices used for this beautiful Japanese art form. The evening is free after returning to Tokyo by Shinkansen. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch at a local restaurant is included. (*Travel: 1 hour, Walking: Heavy*)

Day 5: Travel to Kanazawa

Today we travel to the city of Kanazawa by Shinkansen (bullet train) and express train. Located in central Japan near the Japan Sea coast, Kanazawa was ruled by the Maeda family during the Edo Period. Because they were one of the richest Daimyo families, and their family lineage included members from the Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi families, the Maeda clan was not trusted by the ruling Tokugawa Shogunate. To avoid suspicion, the Maedas spent large sums of money to sponsor traditional Japanese arts, many of which are still being practiced in Kanazawa today. The Maedas also created Kenrokuen, considered by the Japanese to be one of the three best gardens in Japan. After arriving in Kanazawa, you will have some free time to explore Kanazawa's art and handicraft offerings. We will travel by Shinkansen and express train to Kanazawa. Breakfast at the ryokan and dinner at a local restaurant included. (*Travel: 4 1/2 hours, Walking: Light*)

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS



Day 6: Kenrokuen, Kanazawa Handicraft Museum

Originally created on the outer grounds of Kanazawa castle, and therefore the private garden of the ruling Maeda clan (even Samurai had to get permission to visit the garden), the garden was first built by the fifth Maeda lord in the 1670s. Many modifications were made through the years, but the garden as you see it today was created by the 12th Maeda lord in 1822, and was opened to the public after the Meiji Restoration in 1871. The name (Kenrokuen literally translates to 'combined six' garden) refers to a renowned garden from Sung Dynasty China that required six garden attributes for perfection; seclusion, spaciousness, artificiality, antiquity, abundant water and broad views. The garden is divided into two plateaus. The lower garden is the original and the smaller of the two plateaus. This area contains gourd-shaped Hisago Pond with an island in the middle. The island is unique in that the rock formation on the island is a tsuru-kame (crane-turtle) combination. The same rock looks like a crane when viewed from one direction and a tortoise when viewed from another. The upper plateau contains a pond known as Kasumi-ga-ike (Misty Pond), with its famous two-legged stone lantern shaped like the bridge of a koto (a 13-stringed traditional musical instrument). After touring the garden, we will visit the Kanazawa Handicraft Museum where we will find examples of the many traditional arts and handicrafts still being practiced in Kanazawa today, followed by lunch at a local restaurant. The afternoon and evening is free to enjoy on your own. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch at a local restaurant included. *(Travel: 15 minutes, Walking: Heavy)*

Day 7: Travel to Matsue

Today is a long travel day to Matsue, located on the western Japan Sea coast. Straddling a strip of land between two lagoons, Matsue is blessed with overwhelming beauty and good food. Matsue is a seafood-lovers paradise, bursting with fresh fish including eel, shrimp, shellfish, sea bass and the famous black Shijimi clams from the lagoons. The water from the lagoons also provides the city with a lovely network of canals. The lagoons, rivers, canals and castle moat lends this modern city a soothing, faintly Venetian-atmosphere. As a result, the former castle-town of Matsue is a popular summer vacation spot with the Japanese. We travel from Kanazawa to Matsue by express train, Shinkansen and another express train. Breakfast at the ryokan and dinner at a local restaurant included. *(Travel: 7 1/2 hours, Walking: Light)*

Day 8: Adachi Museum of Art and Garden

Today we visit the Adachi Museum of Art and Garden. Founded by Adachi Zenko, the museum displays over 200 pieces of contemporary Japanese art from the Meiji, Taisho, Showa and Heisei periods. But what makes this museum unique is the perfectly landscaped gardens. Adachi was also an enthusiastic gardener and his passion for the art form shows in the beautiful landscapes which envelop the galleries and steal your attention at every turn. The museum is designed so that, as you move around, views of the Dry Landscape Garden, the White Gravel and Pine Garden, the Moss Garden and the Pond Garden appear like living picture scrolls when viewed through the museum's carefully placed windows, incorporating the gardens with the museum's artworks. The effect is surreal, as though the gardens are a still picture. There are several teahouses where you can enjoy the garden while sipping on tea and eating sweets. In the Juraku-an teahouse, guests are served a bowl of green tea made with water boiled in a kettle of pure gold, said to aid long life. Breakfast at the ryokan included. *(Travel: 2 hours, Walking: Heavy)*

Day 9: Travel to Takamatsu

After breakfast, we travel to the city of Takamatsu. The sprawling city of Takamatsu is located on the northern shore of Shikoku, the smallest, the least populated and least visited of the four major islands of Japan. Despite a relaxed atmosphere, Takamatsu hums with an urban energy. Walking down the city's wide, sunlit boulevards or numerous covered shopping arcades brings you to funky shops, artsy cafes and exciting nightlife. We travel from Matsue to Takamatsu by two express trains. The afternoon is free to enjoy the covered shopping arcades. Breakfast at the ryokan and dinner at a local restaurant included. *(Travel: 4 hours, Walking: Light)*

From Top to Bottom:
Kenrokuen Garden,
Kasumi-ga-ike Pond,
Adachi Museum of Art and Garden

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS



Day 10: Ritsurin-koen

Although Ritsurin-koen is not officially recognized as one of Japan's three best gardens, it could easily be a contender. The origins of Ritsurin-koen are unknown. The oldest rock arrangement excavated appears to have been constructed in the early Muromachi period (14th century). Eventually, the property fell into the hands of the Matsudaira family, who were appointed the Daimyo of the area by the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1642. Construction on the garden soon began, and was finished by the third Matsudaira Daimyo (feudal lord) nearly 100 years later. The 134 acre garden was used by 11 successive Matsudaira family lords as a vacation villa until the Meiji Restoration. In 1872, the garden was turned over to the local prefectural government, and subsequently opened to the public in 1876. In 1953, the garden was designated as a Special Place of Scenic Beauty. Ritsurin-koen is divided into two gardens - a North and South Garden. The North Garden was originally used by the Matsudaira clan for duck hunting, but today is used more as a botanical garden to grow replacement plants for the original South Garden. To the west of the garden is Shiun-zan (Mt. Shiun) forming a backdrop to the garden that seems to be part of the garden, enhancing its size and grandeur (a prime example of the "borrowed scenery" technique). The more than 1,400 twisted and contorted pines set this garden apart from others. The Kikugetsutei (Moon-scooping pavilion), a teahouse originally constructed as part of a villa for the Matsudaira clan is located on the shore of one of the three large ponds and commands a good view of the lake with its famous colorful arched bridge in the background. The afternoon and evening is free. Breakfast at the ryokan included. (*Travel: 30 minutes, Walking: Heavy*)

Day 11: Travel to Okayama, Korakuen Garden, Travel to Kyoto

We travel to the city of Okayama by express train to tour Korakuen Garden, considered one of the three best gardens in Japan. The garden was commissioned by the head of the Ikeda clan in 1687 and completed in 1700. Initially, the garden was used by the Ikeda clan for relaxing, entertaining important guests and training vassals in the literary and military arts, such as archery and horsemanship. The Ikeda family retained possession until 1884 when it became a public park. Its name, Korakuen, means "Garden for Taking Pleasure Later", referring to a Chinese saying that "the lord must grieve earlier but enjoy later than his subjects". The garden is different from other gardens in that it provides broad expanses of grassy lawns. The large pond in the center of the garden, with its three islands, is said to represent the scenery of Lake Biwa, the largest lake in Japan. Behind the pond is Yuishin-zan which provides a panoramic view of the entire garden. A small pavilion on top of Yuishin-zan has long been a favorite spot for moon viewing. Streams wind between the many ponds, one flowing through the center of an open structure where the lord rested when walking in the garden and where poetry contests were held. Throughout the garden are rock compositions symbolizing the male and female principles associated with the Chinese concepts of yin and yang. And the surrounding hills, as well as Okayama's famous black castle, are incorporated into the garden's design using the "borrowed scenery" technique. After touring the garden, we continue to Kyoto by Shinkansen after stopping at a local restaurant for lunch. Steeped in history and tradition, Kyoto has in many ways been the cradle of Japanese culture. A stroll through Kyoto today is a walk through 11 centuries of Japanese history. Kyoto is endowed with an almost overwhelming legacy of ancient Buddhist temples, majestic palaces, and gardens of every size and description. For many, just the name of Kyoto conjures up the classic images of Japan: streets of traditional wooden houses, the click-clack of geta (wooden sandals) on the paving stones, geisha in a flourish of brightly colored silks, and a tea master deliberately warming water and making tea. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch and dinner at a local restaurant included. (*Travel: 3 hours; Walking: Heavy*)

Day 12: Arashiyama Bamboo Garden, Tenryuji, Zazen Meditation Lecture and Practice, Shojin-ryori Vegetarian Lunch, Saihoji

We travel by train to the nearby city of Arashiyama. Once a favorite relaxation spot of the Emperors, Arashiyama is located on the hillsides bordering the banks of the Katsura River northwest of Kyoto. We first visit the bamboo gardens which Arashiyama is famous for, located just outside the north gate of Tenryu-ji. This dense bamboo forest, with its rows upon rows of long, ringed, smooth stems, provide a feeling of composure and tranquility. The sound of the wind blowing through the bamboo, the stems knocking against each other and the rustling of the leaves is revered in Japan. Next, we visit Tenryuji Temple. Tenryu-ji is part of the Rinza school of Zen

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com

From Top to Bottom:
Ritsurin-koen,
Bridge in Ritsurin-koen,
Korakuen Garden



SAMURAI TOURS



Buddhism, and was originally built in 1339 on the former site of Emperor Go-Daigo's villa. A priest had dreamt of a dragon rising from the nearby river, hence the name which means "Heavenly Dragon". The garden represents a transition between earlier pond gardens and the karesansui (dry landscape) gardens that later became popular in Zen temples. The focus of the garden is a pond that lies at the base of the hills rising to Mount Arashi, which is incorporated in to the design of the garden in the earliest known example of borrowed scenery (shakkei). At the far end of the pond are two rock groups. These rock groupings are orientated on a vertical alignment, which was a departure from the horizontal alignments in earlier gardens. After touring the garden, we will receive a lecture from a monk at Tenryuji Temple about Zen Buddhism and the role of Zazen meditation, followed by a short exercise in Zazen meditation. Next, at the temple we will have a Shojin-ryori lunch, the Buddhist vegetarian diet with no garlic or onions. After lunch, we will visit Saihoji (commonly known as Kokedera, or "Moss Temple"). Saiho-ji is considered by many to be one of the best, if not the best garden in Japan. Created in 1339, the garden uses over 100 different types of moss creating waves of varying green colors. The moss is contrasted with trees, rocks and a small pond only. The garden is large (about 4 acres), and moss covers every ground surface and even some of the vegetation, creating a serene environment. The designer of the garden believed firmly in the value of gardens as a meditation aid, writing that the garden could be a means of reaching enlightenment. In addition to exploring the garden, the monks at the temple ask visitors to copy a sutra (a Buddhist scripture), giving you an opportunity to practice your calligraphy skills. Breakfast at the ryokan and Shojin-ryori lunch at Tenryuji is included. (*Travel: 1 Hour, Walking: Heavy*)

Day 13: Ryoanji, Kinkakuji, Daitokuji

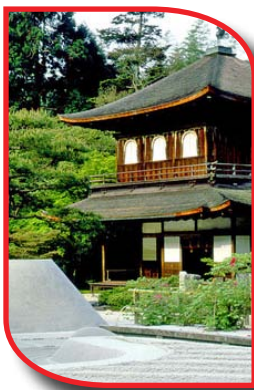
We start the start the day by traveling to Ryoanji. One of the most famous gardens in Japan, Ryoan-ji is part of the Rinzai School of Zen Buddhism. There is considerable debate concerning the origins and evolution of Ryoanji's famous rock garden. The garden's designer is unknown, and left no explanation of the meaning of the garden. The garden is an example of karesansui (dry landscape) garden in its purest form. The dry-style garden consists of three groupings of 15 rocks surrounded by raked sand. The garden is enclosed on three sides by a blank clay wall and on a fourth side by a veranda. From the viewing point on the veranda, only 14 rocks can be seen at one time. Move slightly and another rock appears at the same time that one of the original 14 rocks disappears. In Buddhism, the number 15 denotes completeness. You must have a total view of the garden to make a meaningful experience. And yet, as in the conditions of the real world, that's not possible. Next, after lunch, we visit Kinkakuji. Kinkaku-ji, also known as the Golden Pavilion, was originally built in 1393 as a retirement villa by Yoshimitsu Ashikage, the fifth Ashikage Shogun. After his death, his son converted the villa to a Buddhist temple. The gleaming building covered in gold leaf seems to float on the aptly named Mirror Pond. In the Shinden style of the Heian Period, the pavilion sits on the edge of the pond, surrounded by a Chinese-influenced garden whose focus is the pond studded with rocks and pine-covered islands. Each floor of the three-story structure has a different architectural style, with a golden-colored phoenix standing on the shingle roof. The original building was destroyed by a fire in 1950 set by a mentally-ill monk with metaphysical aspirations. The copy, as seen today, was quickly rebuilt in five years. The exterior of the building was regilded in 1987 at great expense. Yoshimitsu lived his retirement years here in seamless luxury while the rest of the country and Kyoto suffered from a series of famines, earthquakes and plagues. It is thought the local Kyoto death toll alone reached 1,000 people per day during this time. It is unknown, however, if he told his aides to "Let them eat cake". Yoshimitsu designed the garden on the basis of earlier Heian Period gardens, with the pond as the focus of the garden. Though there is a path around the pond, the garden was designed to be viewed from a boat or from the Golden Pavilion. The banks of the pond are planted with bushes and pruned trees, whose size in the foreground, near the pavilion, is small. Taller trees and bushes on the further bank lie in front of even larger trees to create the illusion of considerable space, augmented by the borrowed mountain scenery in the distance. Next we travel to Daitokuji. While not nearly as well-known as the nearby Ryoan-ji, Daitoku-ji, belonging to the Rinzai school of Zen Buddhism, is an extensive complex of 24 sub-temples. The original temple was established in 1319, but fires during the Onin Civil War destroyed all of the buildings. Most of the buildings you see today were built under the

From Top to Bottom:
Arashiyama Bamboo Forest,
Ryoan-ji rock garden,
Daitokuji garden

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS



patronage of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the late 16th century. A few of the sub-temples are open to the public. Daisen-in is perhaps the most well-known of all the sub-temples, partially for its landscape paintings by the renowned painter Soami (1465-1523) and for its famed Muromachi-period dry landscape garden designed by Soko (1465-1548). Circling the building, the rock and gravel gardens depict the flow of life in the movement of a raked river, swirling around the rocks over a waterfall, to finally run into the ocean of nothingness. Ryogen-in has five small gardens of gravel, stone and moss. The A-Un garden has a stone with ripples emanating from it and is said to represent the union of duality, from the “a” sound said at birth to the “un” sound said at death, encompassing all in between. Koto-in is famous for its long, maple-tree-lined approach and the single stone lantern central to the main garden. After returning to the ryokan, the evening is free. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch at a local restaurant is included. (*Travel: 2 hours, Walking: Heavy*)

Day 14: Koi Farm, Tofuku-ji

We travel to the nearby city of Nara, where we will visit a Koi farm. Here we will see how Koi are raised. On our way back to Kyoto, we stop at Tofuku-ji. Established in 1256, Tofuku-ji was once one of the most important religious complexes in Kyoto. Arranged around the main buildings, there are 4 gardens including a dry-landscape garden depicting islands and an ocean. But, Tofuku-ji is perhaps best known for its field of square stones set into a carpet of moss neatly arranged into a checkerboard pattern. Lunch at a local restaurant included. (*Travel: 2 hours, Walking: Heavy*)

Day 15: Shisen-do, Ginkaku-ji, Heian Shrine

Shisen-do, located in northwest Kyoto, combines a dry-landscape garden with perfectly manicured azalea bushes. When viewed from the veranda, the bushes form the garden’s principal subject. But the main beauty of the garden is how the interior of the temple and the exterior garden merge to form a fluid space, with the veranda acting as an intermediary zone. Just where the inside and the outside space begin is difficult to establish. Next, we travel to Ginkaku-ji, also located in northwest Kyoto. Built in 1482 by the eighth Ashikaga shogun, the garden consists of two adjacent yet very distinct gardens. The older part, consisting of a Zen-style stroll garden organized around a pond, features rock compositions, bridges, moss and plants arranged into scenes inspired by famous places described in classical Japanese and Chinese literature. Directly adjacent, departing from common practice, is a dry, landscape garden added during the Edo period. The long furrows of raked sand resemble waves on the ocean in the moonlight - giving rise to its name, Sea of Silver Sand. But this part of the garden is dominated by a perfectly shaped sand cone, known as the Moon Viewing Hill which is said to resemble Mount Fuji. The upper part of the garden is organized around a path providing views of Kyoto that winds along a steep slope featuring a dry-rock arrangement as well as a variety of trees, shrubs and flowering plants confiscated from other temples and villas. Next, we travel to the Heian Shrine. Although the shrine itself copies Heian-style architecture, the purpose of the garden was not to re-create a Heian Period Paradise garden but to provide a large area where visitors could stroll around after visiting the shrine. Consisting of four connected gardens, the gardens are beautifully laid out. In the evening we will have our Sayonara Dinner. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch and dinner at a local restaurant is included. (*Travel: 1 hours, Walking: Heavy*)

Day 16: Home

It’s time to say Sayonara (Goodbye). You will be escorted to the Kyoto train station, where you will take the Express train to the Kansai International Airport on your own, just outside Osaka, or return to Narita Airport by Shinkansen and Narita Express train on your own for your flight back home. (If you are flying out of Narita Airport, be sure to schedule a flight in the late afternoon or evening.) Breakfast at the ryokan included. (*Travel: N/A; Walking: Light*)

From Top to Bottom:
Tofukuji garden,
Shisen-do,
Moon Viewing Hill at Ginkaku-ji

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

GARDENS OF JAPAN - TOUR INCLUSIONS

- The full-time services of a Samurai Tours guide.
- Travel Select Travel Insurance Policy from Travelex, one of the world's largest travel insurance providers. (The insurance provided by Samurai Tours will cover the land portion only. Insurance to cover airfare is the tour member's responsibility.)
- The provided insurance coverage includes
 - Trip Cancellation (up to trip cost)
 - Trip Interruption (up to 150% of trip cost)
 - Trip Delay/Missed Connection (up to \$750)
 - Medical Expense (up to \$50,000)
 - Medical Evacuation/Repatriation (up to \$500,000)
 - Lost or Stolen Baggage (up to \$1,000)
 - Baggage Delay (up to \$250)
 - Coverage for financial default of tour operator
 - A waiver of any pre-existing medical conditions that could eventually cause you to interrupt your trip
- Airport transfer from Tokyo's Narita Airport and airport transfer to Tokyo's Narita Airport or Osaka's Kansai Airport (Transfers to Osaka's Itami Airport are not included.)
- Meeting service at Tokyo's Narita Airport and sending service to the Kyoto train station. (The meeting service will meet you at the airport and escort you to the ryokan in Tokyo. The sending service will escort you to the Kyoto train station and make sure you board the correct train. The sending service will not accompany you to the airport. For those requiring meeting or sending services on other than the scheduled arrival/departure dates, there will be a \$100 fee for the meeting service from the airport into Tokyo or the sending service to the Kyoto train station.)
- Lodging for 14 nights in Japanese-style ryokans.
- Meals
 - Japanese-style or Western-style breakfast every morning
(Please Note: Some ryokans offer Japanese breakfasts only.)
 - Eight Japanese-style or Western-style lunches
 - Six Japanese-style or Western-style dinners
- 14-day Japan Rail Pass (allows unlimited train travel.)
- The appropriate amount of free time to allow you to explore and discover your own personal Japan.
- All transportation costs when traveling with the group. (Transportation costs during scheduled free times are the tour member's responsibility.)



SAMURAI TOURS

BEST OF JAPAN - TOUR INCLUSIONS

- Admission Fees to the following destinations and activities (itinerary specifics subject to change):

TOKYO

Hama Rikyu Garden
Ginza
Rikiguen Garden

OMIYA

Omiya Bonsai Nursery

KANAZAWA

Kenrokuen Garden
Kanazawa Handicrafts Museum

MATSUE

Adachi Museum of Art and Garden

TAKAMATSU

Ritsurin Koen Garden

OKAYAMA

Korakuen Garden

KYOTO

Arashiyama Bamboo Grove
Tenryu-ji Garden
Zazen Meditation Lecture and Practice
Shojin-ryori Buddhist Vegetarian Lunch
Saiho-ji (Moss Temple)
Ryoanji Garden
Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion) Garden
Diatoku-ji Garden
Koi Farm
Tofuku-ji Garden
Shisen-do Garden
Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion) Garden
Heian Shrine Garden

- Welcome dinner at the beginning of the tour and Sayonara dinner at the end of the tour
- Luggage delivery from the ryokan in Tokyo to the ryokan in Kanazawa
- Luggage delivery from the ryokan in Kanazawa to the ryokan in Matsue
- Luggage delivery from the ryokan in Matsue to the ryokan in Takamatsu
- Luggage delivery from the ryokan in Takamatsu to the ryokan in Kyoto
- Each tour member receives a tour handbook. This handbook is full of tips and suggestions taken from our Japan travel experiences that will allow you to better plan and prepare for your trip, and therefore enjoy your trip even more. The tips and suggestions included cover everything from how to save while exchanging money, what to pack, some basic Japanese-language tips, general etiquette do's-and-don'ts, ryokan customs, etc.

EXCLUSIONS

- Airfare is NOT included
- Alcoholic beverages are NOT included - except at the dinner the first evening and the sayonara dinner



SAMURAI TOURS

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

KYOTO

Ryoan-ji
Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion)
Nijo Castle and Garden
Shinsen-en Garden
Shisen-do
Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion)
Nanzen-ji
Tofuku-ji
Saiho-ji (Moss Temple)
Zazen Meditation Lessons
Daitoku-ji
Bonsai Lessons

OHARA

Koi Farm
Sanzen-in

ARASHIYAMA

Bamboo Garden
Tenryu-ji
Shojin-ryori (Buddhist Vegetarian)
lunch

Gardens of Kyoto

9 Days | 7 Nights

[GO TO WEBSITE](#)

There is no doubt the Japanese have an extraordinary sense of aesthetics. Perhaps this sense of aesthetics is no more evident than in Japanese gardens. The simple, minimalistic approach in restrictive, compact spaces belies the graceful results, making Japanese gardens the perfect place to contemplate the existence of nature and the nature of existence.

DESTINATIONS

Kyoto, Ohara, Arashiyama

You'll visit Kyoto's best gardens as only Samurai Tours can do it. Every day you'll enjoy the friendliness, fun and flexibility of small group travel by experiencing sights, and Japanese restaurants that are off-limits to larger groups. From start-to-finish, all group transportation, group admission fees, travel insurance, lodging, all breakfasts, 4 lunches including a Shojin-ryori (Buddhist Vegetarian) lunch, 1 dinner and more are included. All while our tour guides bring Japan alive with their insights.

MAP OF TOUR DESTINATIONS





SAMURAI TOURS



GARDENS OF KYOTO - TOUR ITINERARY

- DAY 1** Leave for Japan
- DAY 2** Arrive at Osaka's Kansai Airport, Travel to Kyoto
- DAY 3** Ryoan-ji, Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion), Nijo Castle and Garden, Shinsen-en Garden
- DAY 4** Tour of Koi Farm, Sanzen-in, Shisen-do
- DAY 5** Ginkakuji, Nanzen-ji, Tofuku-ji
- DAY 6** Arashiyama Bamboo Garden, Tenryu-ji, Shojin-Ryori Lunch, Saiho-ji (Moss Temple)
- DAY 7** Zazen Meditation Lessons, Daitoku-ji, Bonsai Class
- DAY 8** Free Day
- DAY 9** Travel to Osaka's Kansai Airport, Return Home

DATES & PRICES (Prices are per person and in US Dollars)

VISIT WEBSITE FOR CURRENT TOUR STATUS

TOUR DATES	PRICES (LAND ONLY)	
Apr 14, 2012 – Apr 22, 2012	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Jun 9, 2012 – Jun 17, 2012	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Jul 28, 2012 – Aug 5, 2012	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Sep 1, 2012 – Sep 9, 2012	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Sep 29, 2012 – Oct 7, 2012	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Oct 27, 2012 – Nov 4, 2012	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Apr 13, 2013 – Apr 21, 2013	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Jun 8, 2013 – Jun 16, 2013	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Jul 27, 2013 – Aug 4, 2013	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Aug 31, 2013 – Sep 8, 2013	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Sep 28, 2013 – Oct 6, 2013	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294
Oct 26, 2013 – Nov 4, 2013	\$2,244	Single Supplement \$294

From Top to Bottom:
Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion),
Bonsai Nursery,
Saihoji

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS

WALKING LEVEL GUIDE

LIGHT

0-2 miles in flat areas
or 0-1 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs

MEDIUM

2-4 miles in flat areas
or 1-3 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs

HEAVY

4-6 miles in flat areas
or 3-5 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs



From Top to Bottom:
Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion),
Koi Farm

GARDENS OF KYOTO - DETAILED TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1: To Tokyo

Depart Home for Osaka's Kansai Airport (*Travel: 12 Hours, Walking: Light*)

Day 2: Arrive Japan

You will lose a day flying to Japan due to crossing the International Dateline, and gain the day back when you fly home. You will be met at Osaka's Kansai airport by a Samurai Tours guide, who will escort you to the ryokan in Kyoto. No meals included. (*Travel: 1 1/2 Hours, Walking: Light*)

Day 3: Ryoan-ji, Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion), Nijo Castle and Garden, Shinsen-en Garden

We start the start the day by traveling to Ryoanji by bus. One of the most famous gardens in Japan, Ryoan-ji is part of the Rinza School of Zen Buddhism. There is considerable debate concerning the origins and evolution of Ryoanji's famous rock garden. The garden's designer is unknown, and left no explanation of the meaning of the garden. The garden is an example of karesansui (dry landscape) garden in its purest form. The dry-style garden consists of three groupings of 15 rocks surrounded by raked sand, and the garden is enclosed on three sides by a blank clay wall and on a fourth side by a veranda. From the viewing point on the veranda, only 14 rocks can be seen at one time. Move slightly and another rock appears at the same time that one of the original 14 rocks disappears. In Buddhism, the number 15 denotes completeness. You must have a total view of the garden to make a meaningful experience. And yet, as in the conditions of the real world, that's not possible. Next, we take a bus to Kinkakuji. Kinkaku-ji, also known as the Golden Pavilion, was originally built in 1393 as a retirement villa by Yoshimitsu Ashikage, the fifth Ashikage Shogun. After his death, his son converted the villa to a Buddhist temple. The gleaming building covered in gold leaf seems to float on the aptly named Mirror Pond. In the Shinden style of the Heian Period, the pavilion sits on the edge of the pond, surrounded by a Chinese-influenced garden whose focus is the pond studded with rocks and pine-covered islands. Each floor of the three-story structure has a different architectural style, with a golden-colored phoenix standing on the roof. The original building was destroyed by a fire in 1950 set by a mentally-ill monk with metaphysical aspirations. The copy, as seen today, was quickly rebuilt in five years. The exterior of the building was regilded in 1987 at great expense. Yoshimitsu lived his retirement years here in seamless luxury while the rest of the country and Kyoto suffered from a series of famines, earthquakes and plagues. It is thought the local Kyoto death toll alone reached 1,000 people per day during this time. It is unknown, however, if he told his aides to "Let them eat cake". Yoshimitsu designed the garden on the basis of earlier Heian Period gardens, with the pond as the focus of the garden. Though there is a path around the pond, the garden was designed to be viewed from a boat or from the Golden Pavilion itself. The banks of the pond are planted with bushes and pruned trees, whose size in the foreground, near the pavilion, is small. Taller trees and bushes on the further bank lie in front of even larger trees to create the illusion of considerable space, augmented by the borrowed mountain scenery in the distance. Before continuing, we will take a short walk to a nearby noodle shop for lunch. After lunch, we take a bus to Nijo Castle. Built in 1603 as the official Kyoto residence of the first Tokugawa Shogun, its ostentatious style of construction was intended as a demonstration of the Shogun's prestige and to signal the demise of the Emperor's power. The garden next to the Nijo Castle is a perfect example of a Warrior's Garden, meaning it was designed by a Samurai. After finishing the tour of the Nijo Castle garden, we will walk to the nearby Shinsen-en Garden. Shinsen-en is the remnant of a garden that was exclusively used by the Imperial family during the Heian Period (8th to 12th centuries). Afterwards, we will return by bus to the ryokan. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch at a noodle shop included. (*Travel: 2 Hours, Walking: Medium*)

Day 4: Tour of Koi Farm, Sanzen-in, Shisen-do

We will travel to the nearby town of Ohara by bus, where we will visit a Koi farm learn how Koi are raised. Next, we will walk to Sanzen-in. The pleasant road to Sanzen-in winds along a small river and is lined by numerous souvenir shops. Among the local specialties offered are various pickles, including "Ice Kyuri" (Japanese cucumbers mildly pickled in seaweed flavored ice water and served whole on skewers). Sanzen-in is a Tendai Buddhist temple founded in the late eighth century by Saicho, the priest who introduced Tendai Buddhism to Japan. Historically, members of

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS



the Imperial family served for many generations as the heads of the temple. Sanzen-in possesses two small pond gardens that are in sharp contrast aesthetically. The Shuheki-en (“Garden that Gathers Green”) is located to the south and east of the main hall. As the name indicates, it features a dense display of carefully shaped shrubs leading the eye toward a small stone pagoda located at the southwest angle of the garden. The Yusei-en (“Garden of Pure Presence”) flanks one of the other subtemples to which Sanzen-in was joined (Ojo Gokuraku-in or “Temple of Rebirth in Paradise”), a well preserved Amida hall constructed in 985 and rebuilt in 1148. The Amida-Nyorai Sanzon Buddhist statue housed here has been designated an Important Cultural Property by the Japanese government. Its pond is called Kudoku-ike (“Charity Pond”). The large expanse of moss-covered ground to the east of the pond is famous for its cedars and red maples, the latter providing striking color accents in late autumn. The temple is also known for its lovely display of hydrangeas in early summer. After stopping for lunch at a local restaurant, we will continue by bus and train to Shisen-do. Shisen-do, located in northwest Kyoto, combines a dry-landscape garden with perfectly manicured azalea bushes. When viewed from the veranda, the bushes form the garden’s principal subject. But the main beauty of the garden is how the interior of the temple and the exterior garden merge to form a fluid space, with the veranda acting as an intermediary zone. Just where the inside and the outside space begin is difficult to establish. In the late afternoon, we will return to the ryokan by bus. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch at a local restaurant included. *(Travel: 3 Hours, Walking: Heavy)*

Day 5: Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion), Nanzen-ji, Tofuku-ji

After breakfast, we travel by bus to Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion), located in northeast Kyoto. Built in 1482 by the eighth Ashikaga shogun, the garden consists of two adjacent yet very distinct gardens. The older part, consisting of a Zen-style stroll garden organized around a pond, features rock compositions, bridges, moss and plants arranged into scenes inspired by famous places described in classical Japanese and Chinese literature. Directly adjacent, departing from common practice is a dry, landscape garden added during the Edo period. The long furrows of raked sand resemble waves on the ocean in the moonlight - giving rise to its name, Sea of Silver Sand. But this part of the garden is dominated by a perfectly shaped sand cone which is said to resemble Mount Fuji, known as the Moon Viewing Hill. The upper part of the garden is organized around a path that winds along a steep slope with views of Kyoto. We will next travel to Nanzen-ji by bus, and start our visit of Nanzen-ji at the Nanzen-ji Hojo (Chief Abbots Headquarters). The dry garden here was constructed in the 17th century by Kobori Enshu, a samurai general and master of the tea ceremony who also demonstrated his versatility in architecture and gardening. The garden includes an arrangement of rocks called “The crossing of tiger cubs,” depicting a scene where the mother tiger leads its cubs across the river. We will continue on to Konchi-in, another sub-temple of Nanzen-ji. Konchi-in also features a dry garden created by Kobori Enshu. The garden has been designated a national scenic beauty site, and is one of the most celebrated gardens in Kyoto. We will continue by subway and train to Tofuku-ji. Established in 1256, Tofuku-ji was once one of the most important religious complexes in Kyoto. Arranged around the main buildings, there are 4 gardens including a dry-landscape garden depicting islands and an ocean. But, Tofuku-ji is perhaps best known for its field of square stones set into a carpet of moss neatly arranged into a checkerboard pattern. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch at a local restaurant included. *(Travel: 2 Hours, Walking: Medium)*

Day 6: Arashiyama Bamboo Garden, Tenryu-ji, Shojin-ryori Vegetarian Lunch, Saiho-ji

We travel by train to the nearby town of Arashiyama. Once a favorite relaxation spot of the Emperors, Arashiyama is located on the hillsides bordering the banks of the Katsura River northwest of Kyoto. We will first visit the bamboo gardens which Arashiyama is famous for, located just outside the north gate of Tenryu-ji. This dense bamboo forest, with its rows upon rows of long, ringed, smooth stems, provide a feeling of composure and tranquility. The sound of the wind blowing through the bamboo, the stems knocking against each other and the rustling of the leaves is revered in Japan. Next, we visit Tenryuji Temple. Tenryu-ji is part of the Rinzaï school of Zen Buddhism, and was originally built in 1339 on the former site of Emperor Go-Daigo’s villa. A priest had dreamt of a dragon rising from the nearby river, hence the name which means “Heavenly Dragon”. The garden represents a transition between earlier pond gardens and the karesansui (dry

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com

From Top to Bottom:
Shinsen-in,
Koto-in,
Sanzen-in



SAMURAI TOURS



landscape) gardens that later became popular in Zen temples. The focus of the garden is a pond that lies at the base of the hills rising to Mount Arashi, which is incorporated in to the design of the garden in the earliest known example of borrowed scenery (shakkei). At the far end of the pond are two rock groupings. These rock groupings are orientated on a vertical alignment, which was a departure from the horizontal alignments in earlier gardens. After finishing the tour of the temple and garden, we will enjoy a Shojin-ryori lunch (Buddhist vegetarian diet with no garlic or onions) at the temple. After lunch, we will visit Saihoji (commonly known as Kokedera, or “Moss Temple”). Saiho-ji is considered by many to be one of the best, if not the best garden in Japan. Created in 1339, the garden uses over 100 different types of moss creating waves of varying green colors. The moss is contrasted with trees, rocks and a small pond only. The garden is large (about 4 1/2 acres), and moss covers every ground surface and even some of the vegetation, creating a serene environment. The designer of the garden believed firmly in the value of gardens as a meditation aid, writing that the garden could be a means of reaching enlightenment. In addition to exploring the garden, the monks at the temple ask visitors to copy a sutra (a Buddhist scripture), giving you an opportunity to practice your calligraphy skills. Breakfast at the ryokan and Shojin-ryori lunch at Tenryuji is included. *(Travel: 2 Hours, Walking: Medium)*

Day 7: Zazen Meditation Lessons, Daitoku-ji, Bonsai Class

After breakfast, we travel by subway and taxi to Daitoku-ji. While not nearly as well-known as the nearby Ryoan-ji, Daitoku-ji, belonging to the Rinza school of Zen Buddhism, is an extensive complex of 24 subtemples. The original temple was established in 1319, but fires during the Onin Civil War destroyed all of the buildings. Most of the buildings you see today were built under the patronage of Toyotomi Hideyoshi in the late 16th century. Here, we will participate in a Zazen Meditation lesson at one of the sub-temples given by one of the monks from the temple. You will be given the opportunity to practice your newly-learned skills. After the lesson, we will tour two of the sub-temples of Daitoku-ji. Daisen-in is perhaps the most well-known of all the subtemples, partially for its landscape paintings by the renowned painter Soami (1465-1523) and for its famed Muromachi-period dry landscape garden designed by Soko (1465-1548). Circling the building, the rock and gravel gardens depict the flow of life in the movement of a raked river, swirling around the rocks over a waterfall, to finally run into the ocean of nothingness. Ryogen-in has five small gardens of gravel, stone and moss. The A-Un garden has a stone with ripples emanating from it and is said to represent the union of duality (the “a” sound is said at birth and the “un” sound is said at death), encompassing everything in between. Koto-in is famous for its long, maple-tree-lined approach and the single stone lantern central to the main garden. In the afternoon, we will attend a bonsai lesson at a small nursery near the Kyoto train station. At the class, you will be repotting plants, training plants or trimming the plants depending on the time of the year. Breakfast at the ryokan included. *(Travel: 1 Hour, Walking: Heavy)*

Day 8: Free Day

Today is a free day. Walk along the Philosopher’s Path and enjoy one of the many tea shops along the way. Visit the Kyoto Train Station which has won numerous design awards. Or visit the city of Fushimi, a famous sake producing area. Fushimi is also home to the famous Fushimi Inari Shrine, which contains tunnels of vermillion-colored Torii kilometers long. In the evening, we will have our Sayonara dinner. (Breakfast at the ryokan and dinner at a local restaurant included. *(Travel: TBD, Walking: TBD)*)

Day 9: Home

It’s time to say Sayonara (Goodbye). You will be escorted to the Kyoto train station, where you will take the Express train to the Kansai International Airport on your own, just outside Osaka, or return to Narita Airport by Shinkansen and Narita Express train on your own for your flight back home. (If you are flying out of Narita Airport, be sure to schedule a flight in the late afternoon or evening.) Breakfast at the ryokan included. *(Travel: N/A, Walking: Light)*

From Top to Bottom:
Tofukuji garden,
Shisen-do,
Moon Viewing Hill at Ginkaku-ji

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



GARDENS OF KYOTO - TOUR INCLUSIONS

- The full-time services of a Samurai Tours guide.
- Travel Select Travel Insurance Policy from Travelex, one of the world's largest travel insurance providers. (The insurance provided by Samurai Tours will cover the land portion only. Insurance to cover airfare is the tour member's responsibility.)
- The provided insurance coverage includes
 - Trip Cancellation (up to trip cost)
 - Trip Interruption (up to 150% of trip cost)
 - Trip Delay/Missed Connection (up to \$750)
 - Medical Expense (up to \$50,000)
 - Medical Evacuation/Repatriation (up to \$500,000)
 - Lost or Stolen Baggage (up to \$1,000)
 - Baggage Delay (up to \$250)
 - Coverage for financial default of tour operator
 - A waiver of any pre-existing medical conditions that could eventually cause you to interrupt your trip
- Airport transfer from Osaka's Kansai Airport or Itami Airport and return to Osaka's Kansai Airport or Itami Airport.
- Meeting service at Osaka's Kansai Airport and Itami Airport and sending service to the Kyoto train or bus station. (The meeting service will meet you at the airport and escort you to the ryokan in Kyoto. The sending service will escort you to the Kyoto train or bus station and make sure you board the correct train. The sending service will not accompany you to the airport. For those requiring meeting or sending services on other than the scheduled arrival/departure dates, there will be a \$100 fee for the meeting service from the airport into Kyoto or the sending service to the Kyoto train station.)
- Lodging for 7 nights in Japanese-style ryokans.
- Meals
 - Japanese-style or Western-style breakfast every morning (Please Note: Some ryokans offer Japanese breakfasts only.)
 - Four Japanese-style or Western-style lunches including 1 Shojin-ryori (Buddhist Vegetarian) lunch
 - One Japanese-style or Western-style dinner
- The appropriate amount of free time to allow you to explore and discover your own personal Japan.
- All transportation costs when traveling with the group. (Transportation costs during scheduled free times are the tour member's responsibility.)
- Admission Fees to the following destinations and activities (itinerary specifics subject to change):

KYOTO

Ryoan-ji
 Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion)
 Nijo Castle and Garden
 Shinsen-en Garden
 Shisen-do
 Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion)
 Nanzen-ji

KYOTO (CONTINUED)

Tofuku-ji
 Saiho-ji (Moss Temple)
 Zazen Meditation Lessons
 Daitoku-ji
 Bonsai Lessons

OHARA

Koi Farm
 Sanzen-in

ARASHIYAMA

Bamboo Garden
 Tenryu-ji
 Shojin-ryori (Buddhist Vegetarian) lunch

From Top to Bottom:
 Arashiyama Bamboo Forest,
 Ryoan-ji rock garden,
 Daitokuji garden

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS

- Sayonara dinner at the end of the tour
- Each tour member receives a tour handbook. This handbook is full of tips and suggestions taken from our Japan travel experiences that will allow you to better plan and prepare for your trip, and therefore enjoy your trip even more. The tips and suggestions included cover everything from how to save while exchanging money, what to pack, some basic Japanese-language tips, general etiquette do's-and-don'ts, ryokan customs, etc.

EXCLUSIONS

- Airfare is NOT included
- Alcoholic beverages are NOT included - except at the dinner the first evening and the sayonara dinner



GO TO WEBSITE

SAMURAI TOURS

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

SAPPORO

Sapporo Snow Festival

ABASHIRI

Abashiri Ice Flow Museum
Abashiri Harbor Ice Flow Cruise

KUSHIRO

Crane Preserve

YUDANAKA ONSEN

Jigokudani Snow Monkey Park

TAKAYAMA

Miya-gawa Morning Market
Jinya-mae Morning Market
Takayama Jinya

SHIRAKAWA-GO

Shirakawa-go Open Air Museum

KANAZAWA

Kenrokuen Garden

KOYA-SAN

Buddhist Morning Prayer Service
Okuno-in Cemetery and Temple
Garan Temple Complex

KYOTO

Nijo Castle
Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion)
Tea Ceremony
Calligraphy Lesson
Gion Geisha District
Private Maiko Dinner Party

Winter Wonderland

16 Days | 14 Nights

The weather outside may be frightful, but touring Japan in winter is delightful. After you see how beautiful Japan is blanketed in snow, you'll be saying "Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow."

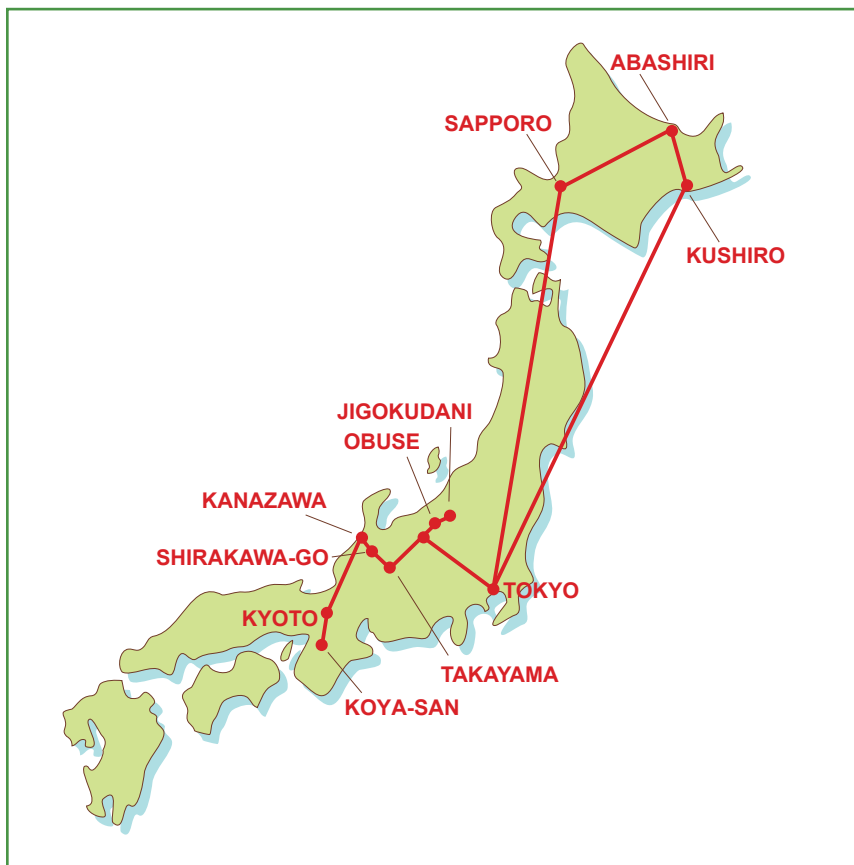
DESTINATIONS

Tokyo, Sapporo, Abashiri, Kushiro, Yudanaka Onsen, Jigokudani Monkey Park, Obuse, Takayama, Shirakawa-go, Kanazawa, Koya-san, Kyoto

When you add the unique opportunities that only Japan winters offer with the small crowds, the result is an unforgettable travel experience. In the best that Japanese winters have to offer, you'll wander through the ice sculptures at the world-famous Sapporo Snow Festival, feast on all-you-can-eat grilled lamb and beer at the Sapporo Beer Garden, slash through the ice flows in an ice-breaker boat in the infamous prison town of Abashiri, contemplate the nearly-extinct, Japanese Red-Crested cranes, revered in Japanese culture, visit with the "snow monkeys" while they rest in thermally-heated mineral water to stay warm, explore quaint Takayama, visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Shirakawa-go with its many snow-covered, thatched-roof gassho-zukuri (praying hand) homes, stroll one of the best gardens in Japan made even better covered with snow, stay overnight at snow-covered mountain-top Buddhist temple and attend the morning prayer service, participate in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, enjoy a private "Maiko" dinner party, enjoy four gourmet Kaiseki-style dinners as well as a Shojin-ryori (Buddhist Vegetarian Cuisine) dinner and grilled lamb dinner, and much, much more.

Every day you'll enjoy the friendliness, fun and flexibility of small group travel by experiencing sights, Japanese restaurants and family-run ryokans that are off-limits to larger groups. From start-to-finish, all group transportation, group admission fees, travel insurance, lodging, all breakfasts, four lunches, ten dinners, and more are included. All while our tour guide brings Japan alive with exceptional insights.

MAP OF TOUR DESTINATIONS



For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS



WINTER WONDERLAND - TOUR ITINERARY

- DAY 1** Leave for Japan
- DAY 2** Arrive at Tokyo's Narita Airport, Stay overnight at hotel next to Narita Airport, Dinner at hotel
- DAY 3** Transfer luggage to Sapporo, Fly to Sapporo's Chitose Airport, Express train to Sapporo, Sapporo Snow Festival, All-you-can-eat grilled lamb dinner at Sapporo Beer Garden
- DAY 4** Sapporo – Sapporo Snow Festival
- DAY 5** Travel to Abashiri – Transfer luggage to Kushiro, Express train to Abashiri, Ice Flow Museum
- DAY 6** Abashiri, Travel to Kushiro – Ice Flow Boat Cruise, Express train to Kushiro
- DAY 7** Kushiro Marshland Crane Preserve – Travel by bus to Crane Preserve, Crane Preserve, Return by bus to Kushiro
- DAY 8** Travel to Yudanaka Onsen – Transfer luggage to Takayama, Fly to Tokyo's Haneda Airport, Bus to Tokyo Train Station, Shinkansen to Nagano, Express train to Yudanaka Onsen
- DAY 9** Yudanaka Onsen – Bus to Jigoku-dani Snow Monkey Park, Jigoku-dani Snow Monkey Park, Return to Yudanaka Onsen by bus
- DAY 10** Travel to Takayama – Express trains to Takayama, Sanmachiujji
- DAY 11** Takayama – Miya-gawa Morning Market, Jinya-mae Morning Market, Takayama Jinya, Afternoon free
- DAY 12** Transfer luggage to Kyoto, Travel to Shirakawa-go by bus, Shirakawa-go Open Air Museum, Shirakawa-go Overlook, Travel to Kanazawa by bus
- DAY 13** Kenrokuen Garden, Travel to Koya-san, Overnight at a Buddhist Temple
- DAY 14** Buddhist Morning Prayer Service, Okuno-in Cemetery and Temple, Garan Temple Complex, Travel to Kyoto
- DAY 15** Kyoto – Nijo Castle, Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion), Tea Ceremony, Calligraphy Lesson, Gion Geisha District, Sayonara Dinner and Private Maiko Dinner Party
- DAY 16** Fly Home

Please Note:
For all of our Specialty Tours, we use a mixture of Japanese-style ryokans and western-style hotels.

DATES & PRICES (Prices are per person and in US Dollars)

[VISIT WEBSITE FOR CURRENT TOUR STATUS](#)

TOUR DATES	PRICES (LAND ONLY)	
	Feb 4, 2012 – Feb 19, 2012	\$3,744
Feb 2, 2013 – Feb 17, 2013	\$3,994	Single Supplement \$494

From Top to Bottom:
 Sapporo Snow Festival,
 Abashiri Ice Flow Cruise,
 Snow monkeys in Jigoku-dari Park,
 Kenrokuen Garden in Kanazawa

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS

WALKING LEVEL GUIDE

LIGHT

0-2 miles in flat areas
or 0-1 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs

MEDIUM

2-4 miles in flat areas
or 1-3 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs

HEAVY

4-6 miles in flat areas
or 3-5 miles in hilly areas
or with many stairs



From Top to Bottom:
Sapporo Snow Festival,
Crane Preserve in Kushiro Marshland

WINTER WONDERLAND - DETAILED TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1: To Tokyo

Depart Home for Tokyo's Narita Airport (*Travel: 12 Hours, Walking: Light*)

Day 2: Arrive Tokyo

You will lose a day flying to Japan due to crossing the International Dateline, and gain the day back when you fly home. You will be met at Tokyo's Narita airport by a Samurai Tours guide, who will escort you to the hotel near the airport where we will be staying for the evening. After checking into the hotel we will have our welcome/orientation dinner. Dinner at the hotel included. (*Travel: 15 minutes Walking: Light*)

Day 3: Fly to Sapporo, Sapporo

After breakfast we will fly to Sapporo's Chitose Airport, and then take an express train into Sapporo. After checking in, we will have time to enjoy the Sapporo Snow Festival. This world-famous, annual event was first held in 1950, when six local high school students created snow statues. In 1955, the Japan Self-Defense Forces from a nearby base joined the fun by creating the first large snow sculpture for which the festival has now become famous. The festival gained its international fame when the city of Sapporo hosted the 1972 Winter Olympics. In the evening, we will have dinner at the Sapporo Beer Garden, located next to the original Sapporo Beer brewery, where you can try the local specialty of grilled lamb, cooked by yourself at the table. Before leaving in the morning, you will need to prepare your luggage to be transferred to Sapporo, and you will be traveling to Sapporo with your overnight bag only. Breakfast at the hotel and dinner at a local restaurant included. (*Travel: 3 Hours; Walking: Light*)

Day 4: Sapporo

The day is free to explore the Snow Festival on your own. You can visit Odori Park or Susukino, the main sites of the festival. Here, you can enjoy the many, large snow and ice sculptures and the concerts using the sculptures as the stage. You can also enjoy the bird's-eye view of the festival from the Sapporo TV Tower, located at one end of the 1.5 kilometer long Odori park. Or visit the family-friendly Sato site, where you will find numerous ice slides as well as a puzzling snow and ice maze. In the evening, you can enjoy the sculptures which take on a totally different perspective when they are lit up. Breakfast at the hotel included. (*Travel: TBD; Walking: TBD*)

Day 5: Sapporo, Abashiri

We travel by express train with overnight bags only to the city of Abashiri on the northeastern coast of Hokkaido. After dropping off our luggage at the ryokan, we will visit the Okhotsk Drift Ice Museum, located at the top of Mt. Tendo. From here, you will get a 360 degree view of the ice flow drifting south from the Okhotsk Sea. Breakfast and kaiseki-style dinner at the ryokan included. (*Travel: 6 Hours; Walking: Light*)

Day 6: Abashiri, Kushiro

In the morning we board an ice-breaker boat, where you can get a close-up view of the ice flow that clogs the Abashiri harbor every winter as the boat breaks its way through the ice flow. In the afternoon, we travel by train to the city of Kushiro, located in southeastern Hokkaido. Breakfast at the ryokan and dinner at a local restaurant included. (*Travel: 3 Hours; Walking: Light*)

Day 7: Kushiro, Kushiro Marshland

Today we travel by bus to the nearby Crane Preserve in the Kushiro Marshland. Cranes are thought to live a thousand years, so they hold a special place in Japanese culture. The Japanese Red-Crested cranes at one time were on the brink of extinction, but with the help of a few dedicated groups, their numbers have been increasing. In the summer, when food is readily available and the cranes are nesting, they retreat deep into the surrounding marshland where they can't be seen. However, in the winter, they can be found near the viewing points on the edge of the marshland. Breakfast at the hotel and dinner at a local restaurant included. (*Travel: 2 Hours; Walking: Light*)

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS



From Top to Bottom:
Red-faced snow monkey
in Yudanaka Onsen,
Snow-covered Gassho-zukuri
in Shirakawa-go,
Kenrokuen Garden in Kanazawa

Day 8: Travel to Yudanaka Onsen

After breakfast, we travel to Yudanaka Onsen with overnight bags only, near Nagano. Yudanaka Onsen in many ways is a smaller version of Yellowstone National Park, with its bubbling, steaming and sulfurous vents and pools. We fly from Kushiro to Tokyo's Haneda Airport, take a bus to the Tokyo Train Station, a Shinkansen to the city of Nagano, and finally an express train to the Yudanaka Onsen. In the evening, relax away the travel stress in one of the many thermally-heated mineral baths, famous for its high sulfur content. Breakfast and kaiseki-style dinner at the ryokan included. *(Travel: 5 1/2 Hours; Walking: Light)*

Day 9: Yudanaka Onsen

After traveling by bus to the Jigoku-dani (Hell Valley), we will delight in the famous "snow monkeys" of Japan. These monkeys are world-famous for using the hot springs baths located in and around Yukanaka Onsen. The Red-Faced "snow monkeys" are only found in Japan, and during the winter, the monkeys enjoy using the baths to stay warm, just like people. Breakfast and kaiseki-style dinner at the ryokan included. *(Travel: 1 1/2 Hours; Walking: Light)*

Day 10: Travel to Takayama

Today we travel to the city of Takayama by express trains. Takayama, in the middle of the Japan Alps, with its traditional inns, shops, and sake breweries, has managed to retain its traditional charm. After checking in, you can stroll around the Sanmachi-suji District, an area of merchant homes dating back to the late 16th century. The evening in Takayama is free. Breakfast at the ryokan included. *(Travel: 6 Hours; Walking: Light.)*

Day 11: Takayama

This morning will be spent at the Farmer's Market strolling past the vegetable stands and stalls selling herbs, pickles, and souvenirs. We will be able to sample the numerous options as we go. After that we will tour the Takayama-jinya, which was the governing office of Takayama and the surrounding area since the early 17th century. The afternoon is free to roam and explore Takayama. Visit the many temples and shrines, museums, rummage through antique shops, relax at one of sake breweries, or enjoy the San-machi-suji, an area of merchant homes dating back to the late 16th century. Breakfast and kaiseki-style dinner at the ryokan included. *(Travel: N/A; Walking: Light)*

Day 12: Shirakawa-go, Kanazawa

We travel by bus to Shirakawa-go, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A number of "gassho-zukuri" style homes have been relocated to Shirakawa-go from surrounding locations. "Gassho-zukuri" literally translates to "praying hands home", and is a fitting description of these thatched-roof A-frame style homes which are well-suited for the large amounts of snow this area of Japan receives. We will visit the Shirakawa-go Open Air Museum, where you will get a glimpse into the hard lives of 18th century Japanese farmers. We will also visit the observation area where you will have a chance to view Shirakawa-go from above. Before leaving for Shirakawa-go, you will need to prepare your luggage for transfer to Kyoto. Later in the afternoon, we will travel by bus to the city of Kanazawa. Breakfast at the ryokan and dinner and lunch at a local restaurant included. *(Travel: 2 Hours; Walking: Medium)*

Day 13: Kanazawa, Travel to Koya-san

Located near the northwestern coast of the Japan Sea, Kanazawa receives a tremendous amount of snow. In the morning, we tour the Kenrokuen Garden, considered by the Japanese to be one of the three best gardens in Japan. The garden takes on a completely different perspective covered in snow. Later in the morning, we board an express train bound for Osaka, and continue to Koya-san by train and funicular. Koya-san is the world headquarters of the Shingon school of Esoteric Buddhism. Kobo Daishi, considered by many to be the most influential religious person in Japanese history, established a religious community here in the year 816. In the winter, Koya-san is truly beautiful and serene. After checking into our shukubo (Buddhist temple lodging), you are free to roam and visit one of the 110 temples in the area, wander through the nearby ghostly cemetery at the famous Okuno-in temple, or just rest in the garden at the shukubo. Your dinner of shojin-ryori (traditional Buddhist vegetarian cuisine - no meat, fish, onions or garlic) will be served. Breakfast at the hotel and shojin-ryori dinner at the temple are included. *(Travel: 2 Hours; Walking: Medium)*

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS



Day 14: Koya-san, Travel to Kyoto

Very early in the morning, we attend o-inori (Buddhist prayer services). Afterwards, a shojin-ryori breakfast is served. Following this meal, we wander through the huge cemetery leading up to the Okuno-in temple. Kobo Daishi is buried at this temple, and many Japanese still believe that Kobo Daishi is not dead, but merely in a very advanced state of meditation, waiting to awaken at the appropriate time. We will stop for a Shojin-ryori lunch before we tour the Garan Temple complex. In the afternoon, we travel to the city of Kyoto. Steeped in history and tradition, Kyoto has in many ways been the cradle of Japanese culture. A stroll through Kyoto is a walk through 11 centuries of Japanese history. For many, just the name of Kyoto conjures up the classic images of Japan: streets of traditional wooden houses, the click-clack of geta (wooden sandals) on the paving stones, geisha in a flourish of brightly colored silks, and a tea master deliberately warming water and making tea. Breakfast at the hotel and lunch at a local restaurant included. *(Travel: 2 1/2 Hours; Walking: Heavy)*

Day 15: Kyoto

We start the day at Nijo Castle. Built in 1603, it was the Kyoto home of Tokugawa Ieyasu, the first Tokugawa Shogun. The ostentatious style of construction was intended as a demonstration of Ieyasu's prestige, and to signal the demise of the emperor's power. The finest artists of the day filled the castle with delicate transom woodcarvings and paintings by the Kano School on sliding doors. One of the castle's most intriguing features is the so-called "nightingale" floors. To protect the Shogun from real or imagined enemies, these floorboards creak when stepped on. Next, we will visit Kinkaku-ji. Kinkaku-ji, also known as the Golden Pavilion, is one of Kyoto's, as well as Japan's, most recognizable attractions. The gleaming building covered in gold leaf seems to float on the aptly named Mirror Pond, especially on a sunny day. After lunch at a local noodle shop, we will participate in an authentic tea ceremony at the tea master's home, followed by a calligraphy lesson. The stylized and regimented Japanese tea ceremony has been performed the same way for over 400 years. Once considered standard training for Samurai, today the tea ceremony is enjoyed by the modern Japanese as a means of relaxation. The English-speaking tea master will explain the history and the concepts behind the tea ceremony. You will also be given an opportunity to make tea yourself. More than just a means of communication, Japanese calligraphy has long been practiced by aristocrats, Samurai and Buddhist monks as a means of artistic expression and mind training. You will learn the proper use of the traditional Japanese calligraphy tools and calligraphy techniques. You will be given a chance to practice these techniques and will be able to take your masterpiece home with you. Afterwards, we will tour the Gion Geisha District. Here we will see the tea houses and geisha houses where the Geisha live and work, to learn more about this mysterious world. In the evening we will have our Shabu-Shabu Sayonara Dinner. During the dinner a "Maiko" (a Maiko is a Geisha in training) will join us for a private Maiko dinner party. You will have an opportunity to meet an actual Maiko face to face, who will perform a traditional Geisha dance, pose for pictures with you, answer any of your questions and play traditional Japanese party games. Breakfast at the ryokan and lunch and dinner at a local restaurant included.

(Travel: 1 Hour; Walking: Heavy)

Day 16: Home

It's time to say Sayonara (Goodbye). You will be escorted to the Kyoto train station, where you will take the Express train to the Kansai International Airport, just outside Osaka, or return to Narita Airport by Shinkansen and Narita Express train on your own for your flight back home. (If you are flying out of Narita Airport, be sure to schedule a flight in the late afternoon or evening.) Breakfast at the hotel included. *(Travel: TBD; Walking: Light)*

From Top to Bottom:
Kyoto Geisha in the snow,
"Meet a Maiko" session,
Japanese-style dinner

For more information call 1-866-316-7268 or email us at info@samuraitours.com



SAMURAI TOURS

WINTER WONDERLAND - TOUR INCLUSIONS

- The full-time services of a Samurai Tours guide.
- Local, licensed, English-speaking, Japanese guides where indicated in the itinerary detail.
- Travel Select Travel Insurance Policy from Travelex, one of the world's largest travel insurance providers. (The insurance provided by Samurai Tours will cover the land portion only. Insurance to cover airfare is the tour member's responsibility.)
- The provided insurance coverage includes
 - Trip Cancellation (up to trip cost)
 - Trip Interruption (up to 150% of trip cost)
 - Trip Delay/Missed Connection (up to \$750)
 - Medical Expense (up to \$50,000)
 - Medical Evacuation/Repatriation (up to \$500,000)
 - Lost or Stolen Baggage (up to \$1,000)
 - Baggage Delay (up to \$250)
 - Coverage for financial default of tour operator
 - A waiver of any pre-existing medical conditions that could eventually cause you to interrupt your trip
- Airport transfer from Tokyo's Narita Airport and airport transfer to Tokyo's Narita Airport or Osaka's Kansai Airport. (Transfers to Osaka's Itami Airport are not included.)
- Meeting service at Tokyo's Narita Airport and sending service to the Kyoto train station. (The meeting service will meet you at the airport and escort you to the hotel near the airport. The sending service will escort you to the Kyoto train station and make sure you board the correct train. The sending service will not accompany you to the airport. For those requiring meeting or sending services on other than the scheduled arrival/departure dates, there will be a \$100 fee for the meeting service from the airport into Tokyo or the sending service to the Kyoto train station.)
- Lodging for 14 nights in Japanese-style ryokans and western-style hotels.
- Meals
 - Japanese-style or Western-style breakfast every morning
(Please Note: Some ryokans offer Japanese breakfasts only.)
 - Four Japanese-style lunches
 - Ten Japanese-style dinners (including five gourmet kaiseki-style dinners at the ryokans)
- 14-day Japan Rail Pass (allows unlimited train travel).
- The appropriate amount of free time to allow you to explore and discover your own personal Japan.
- All transportation costs when traveling with the group. (Transportation costs during scheduled free times are the tour member's responsibility.)



SAMURAI TOURS

WINTER WONDERLAND - TOUR INCLUSIONS

- Admission Fees to the following destinations and activities (itinerary specifics subject to change):

SAPPORO

Sapporo Snow Festival

ABASHIRI

Abashiri Ice Flow Museum

Abashiri Harbor Ice Flow Cruise

KUSHIRO

Crane Preserve

YUDANAKA ONSEN

Jigokudani Snow Monkey Park

TAKAYAMA

Miya-gawa Morning Market

Jinya-mae Morning Market

Takayama Jinya

SHIRAKAWA-GO

Shirakawa-go Open Air Museum

Shirakawa-go Observation Area

KANAZAWA

Kenrokuen Garden

KOYA-SAN

Buddhist Morning Prayer Service

Okuno-in Cemetery and Temple

Garan Temple Complex

KYOTO

Nijo Castle

Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion)

Tea Ceremony

Calligraphy Lesson

Gion Geisha District

Private Maiko Dinner Party

- Sayonara dinner at the end of the tour
- Luggage delivery from Tokyo to Sapporo
- Luggage delivery from Sapporo to Kushiro
- Luggage delivery from Kushiro to Takayama
- Luggage delivery from Takayama to Kyoto
- Each tour member receives a tour handbook. This handbook is full of tips and suggestions taken from our Japan travel experiences that will allow you to better plan and prepare for your trip, and therefore enjoy your trip even more. The tips and suggestions included cover everything from how to save while exchanging money, what to pack, some basic Japanese-language tips, general etiquette do's-and-don'ts, ryokan customs, etc.

EXCLUSIONS

- Airfare is NOT included
- Alcoholic beverages are NOT included - except at the dinner the first evening and the sayonara dinner