



Craig
travel

JAPAN

AUTUMN COLOURS

NOV 08-21, 2025 | 14 DAYS | 26 MEALS

JOURNEY LEADER: KAREN CULLEN

Mt. Fuji vistas in the fall

Japan, the world's third-largest economic powerhouse, remains a captivating enigma to many outsiders. Renowned for its dominance in electronics, automobiles, and heavy industry, we often overlook the fascinating depths of its history, culture, architecture, and arts. Japan is a multifaceted gem, with neon-lit modern cities, alpine villages nestled amidst mountain regions with pastoral sceneries that appear untouched by the modern world, and relics of an imperial and feudal past, preserved for all to see. Experience the diverse landscapes of Japan on this fall journey, from bustling cities like Tokyo and Hiroshima to tranquil mountain retreats like Hakone, Takayama, and Shirakawago. Discover the historical and religious relics of Kyoto, Japan's imperial capital for nearly 1,000 years, and marvel at the temples of Nara. Immerse yourself in the timeless traditions of a ryokan (traditional inn) and be enchanted by the picture-perfect sights of several Japanese gardens.

Tour Highlights

- Experience Japan during the beautiful fall season, enjoying vibrant autumn colours while avoiding the peak season crowds
- Step into the past at the mountain village of Shirakawago, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Enjoy a relaxing Japanese night in a traditional Ryokan (inn)
- Visit one of Japan's largest and most famous gardens, Kenroku-en, the "Garden of Six Qualities"
- Enjoy a tea ceremony in Kyoto
- Tour Hiroshima and nearby Miyajima island
- Visit Himeji Castle, Kyoto's Nijo Castle, and Nara plus other UNESCO World Heritage sites
- Discover the mountainous interior of Japan where life seems unchanged from centuries past
- Enjoy Japan's extensive and very efficient rail system, including bullet train rides
- Visit the Golden Pavilion (Kinkaku-ji Temple) in Kyoto

Journey Leader

Karen Cullen retired after over 30 years in the travel industry, having worked as a Director in Business Development for both an international travel agency chain and a travel insurance provider. Karen loves learning about new cultures and the history of various countries and has a strong passion for volunteering. Her travels have taken her across Europe, including extensive visits to Italy, Ireland, Greece, Portugal, and Great Britain. She has also experienced glacier hiking in Iceland, kayaking in Newfoundland and Tofino, and skiing in the Rockies. Her adventures extend to Australia, Hawaii, most Caribbean islands and Central American countries, and the Bahamas. Among her proudest accomplishments is volunteering in Malawi with Women for Fair Development. She is excited to share her passion for travel and meeting new people with those who join her.



Inclusive Features

- Return economy group airfare from Canada to Narita (Tokyo)
- 12 nights in first-class hotels as indicated or similar, including 1 night in a traditional ryokan, a Japanese country inn
- 26 meals included as noted in the itinerary (B - 12 Breakfasts, L - 6 Lunches, D - 8 Dinners) featuring traditional Japanese dishes
- Transfers and intercity transportation by private coach and rail service, as indicated
- Services of your Journey Leader plus our professional Japanese tour guide and local guides
- All surcharges, taxes, and fees for included services
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

NOV 8, Saturday

DEPART CANADA

Tour members from across Canada will gather in Vancouver for the overnight flight to Narita (Tokyo).

NOV 9, Sunday

TOKYO, JAPAN

Upon arrival in Tokyo, we'll transfer to our centrally located hotel. After settling in, we will gather for our welcome dinner. **Tokyo Prince Hotel** (3 nights) D

NOV 10, Monday

KAMAKURA / TOKYO

After breakfast, we'll spend the day exploring Kamakura, the 13th century capital and home to countless poets and artists. We'll visit Kotokuin Temple to see the 13.35-metre-high Daibutsu, a giant bronze Buddha. Next, we'll explore Hasedera Temple, famous for its 9.18-metre gilded wooden statue of Kannon (goddess of mercy), and Tsurugaoka Hachimangu, a significant 12th-century shrine dedicated to Hachiman, the Shinto god of war. End the day shopping for local souvenirs and delicacies on Komachi Street before returning to the hotel. BL

NOV 11, Tuesday**TOKYO**

Today we enjoy a full-day Tokyo highlights tour. We'll begin at Asakusa, exploring Nakamise-dori and the Senso-ji Buddhist temple to learn about Japan's unique religious practices, with a photo stop at Asakusa Shinto shrine. Next, we'll visit the Tokyo Skytree for stunning city views. After a delicious lunch of kushiage (fried meat and vegetables on bamboo skewers), we head to the Ginza district, the most expensive real estate in the world, for some free time to explore. Then, we'll visit the Imperial Palace Eastern Gardens, home to 210,000 square metres of green space that is open to the public. We conclude our tour at the world's busiest intersection, Shibuya Crossing, where hundreds of people cross from all directions every time the signal changes.

BL



Experience Japan during the beautiful fall season

NOV 12, Wednesday**TOKYO / HAKONE**

Departing Tokyo, we drive south to Hakone, with potential views of Mt. Fuji (weather permitting). First, we'll visit Owakudani. Walk the trails around the crater to see steam vents and bubbling pools. Try the eggs boiled in natural hot springs, believed to prolong life! Continue via ropeway to Togendai. After a lunch break, we'll visit Hakone Shrine, a popular 12th-century Shinto shrine among samurai, hidden in a dense forest with magnificent torii gates. Afterward, board a boat from Hakonesekisho Ato to Hakone-En. Tonight, we'll stay in a traditional Japanese ryokan, enjoying tatami mats, futons, onsen baths (filled with mineral water from the naturally heated springs), and a delicious dinner. **Yunohana Prince Hotel** (1 night)

BD



Discover Gion, where geishas still live and work

NOV 13, Thursday**HAKONE / TAKAYAMA**

Today we board a bullet train to Nagoya, then switch to a limited express train to Takayama. Upon arrival, our private coach will take us sightseeing to explore the traditional wooden houses and shops on Kami Sannomachi Street and visit the Kusakabe Folk Museum, once the Kusakabe family's residence (merchants that worked for the shogunate in Takayama) and now an important cultural property. We continue to our hotel for dinner.

Hotel Associa Takayama Resort (2 nights)

BD

NOV 14, Friday**TAKAYAMA**

Starting at the Miyagawa Morning Market, one of Japan's largest, we'll enjoy local crafts and produce from independent farmers and craftsmen. Takayama Jinya, the only surviving Edo period government office, is now a museum showcasing well-preserved conference and interrogation rooms with century-old artifacts. Next, explore Hida Folk Village, a museum of rural homes and barns, offering insight into traditional lifestyles of a bygone era. At the Matsuri-no-Mori Museum, we learn about Takayama traditions, featuring massive yatai (parade floats) from the spring and autumn festivals. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure before we head out for dinner.

BD



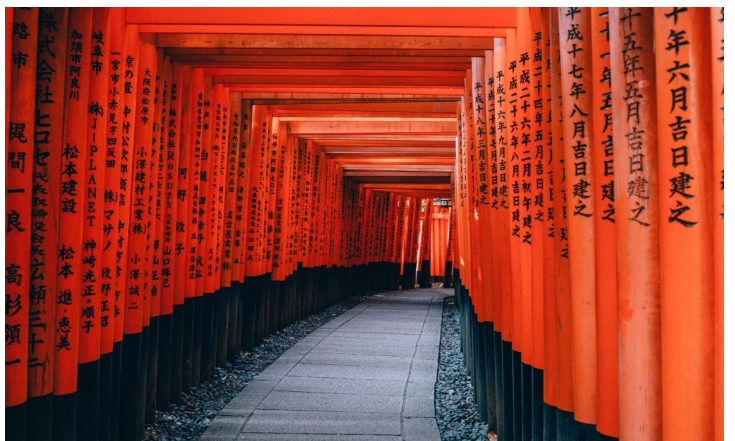
Explore Shirakawago: home to 250-year-old thatched roof farmhouses

NOV 15, Saturday**SHIRAKAWAGO / KANAZAWA**

Our first stop will be at the mountain village of Shirakawago, a UNESCO World Heritage Site noted for its traditional gassho-zukuri (thatched roof) farmhouses, some of which are over 250 years old. Visit the residence of the Iwase family, with its magnificent thatched roof. Later visit Gokayama to observe the intricate and involved process of creating traditional Japanese paper (washi).

Daiwa Roynet Hotel Kanazawa MIYABI (1 night)

BD



Visit Fushimi Inari Shrine, voted a top must-see spot in Japan

NOV 16, Sunday**KANAZAWA / HIROSHIMA**

Walk through one of Japan's most famous gardens, Kenroku-en, the "Garden of Six Qualities." It features magnificent landscaping, flowering trees, and lakes. Visit the Hakuichi Gold Leaf Museum for a demonstration

explaining the art of gold leaf application before travelling by bullet train to Hiroshima.

Grand Prince Hotel Hiroshima (2 nights). BL

NOV 17, Monday MIYAJIMA / HIROSHIMA

Today, we cross the Inland Sea by ferry to Miyajima Island, considered to be one of the top three scenic experiences in Japan. On the island, we will ride the cable car to enjoy the magnificent views from the peak and visit the Itsukushima-jinja Shrine dating from 1168 AD. Hiroshima is best remembered for the event of August 6, 1945, when the atomic bomb decimated the city and surrounding area. The Peace Memorial Museum and Peace Memorial Park are sobering testaments to the event and its aftermath. Time permitting, we shall visit Shukkei-en Garden for a quiet walk with time to reflect. BL

NOV 18, Tuesday HIMEJI / KYOTO

Travel by bullet train to Himeji to see the exterior of Himeji Castle, a 400-year-old UNESCO World Heritage Site and national treasure. Continue by coach to historic Kyoto, the capital of Japan for almost 1,000 years until 1868. This delightful city conjures up classic images: streets of little wooden houses, geta (wooden sandals) clicking on the cobblestones, geisha in brightly coloured silk, tea ceremonies, traditional gardens, and more.

Hotel Vischio Kyoto (3 nights) BLD

NOV 19, Wednesday KYOTO

Our day begins with a walk through the unique Arashiyama Bamboo Grove, one of Kyoto's most popular attractions, followed by the Kinkaku-ji Temple, or Golden Pavilion. The three-story pagoda, covered in gold foil, is set next to a tranquil reflecting pool and surrounded by gardens and pine forests. Nearby are the gardens and palace of Nijo Castle, a UNESCO Site noted for the great Ninomaru Wing and Audience Hall with its nightingale floors. Next, you will walk through the Higashiyama District, with its narrow cobblestone streets and tiny shops, and into the Gion, where geisha still live and work. Tonight enjoy a special kaiseki dinner at a local restaurant. BD

NOV 20, Thursday NARA / KYOTO

We'll start our day with a tea ceremony experience, learning about the various types of tea and the instruments used to prepare it. You'll discover the significance of each movement and the cultural importance of serving tea in Japan. Next, we'll visit Fushimi Inari Shrine in Kyoto's Fushimi ward, famous for its thousands of vermilion torii gates that form an iconic pathway through the sacred forest of Mount Inari. Before lunch, we'll head to the gracious town of Nara to visit Kasuga Taisha Shrine, founded in the 8th century to protect the capital. The shrine grounds feature around 3,000 stone lanterns, which are lit during special festivals. At Todaiji Temple, we'll explore Daibutsuden Hall, once the largest wooden building in the world, housing a great bronze seated Buddha. Enjoy a stroll through the peaceful Deer Park. Tonight, we will gather for a farewell dinner. BLD

NOV 21, Friday KYOTO / TOKYO / CANADA

After breakfast, we'll board a bullet train to Shinagawa, then transfer to Narita Airport to catch our flights bound for Canada, arriving home the same day. B

CT Rating 3.5/5 - Challenging: This journey is designed to provide an in-depth exploration of all that is Japanese. It will feature an overnight stay in a Japanese ryokan (traditional inn), sleeping and eating in tatami-matted rooms, as well as a variety of different meals featuring traditional Japanese cuisine. By its nature, this journey involves a lot of walking, with some long walks and numerous visits involving many steps. To fully enjoy this journey, members should be fully mobile with **no walking limitations** and be in good physical health.



**Book by May 30, 2025
and save \$200 per person**



Cost in Canadian Dollars Per Person

Land Only* (Join / Leave at hotel).....	\$9,245
Toronto	\$11,295
Ottawa / Montreal	\$11,445
Halifax / St John's.....	\$11,595
Winnipeg.....	\$11,255
Regina / Saskatoon	\$11,255
Victoria / Vancouver	\$10,995
Calgary / Edmonton.....	\$11,195
Single Supplement	\$2,195

*Land-only price is based on joining at the hotel in Tokyo and leaving at the hotel in Kyoto and excludes flights and airport transfers.

Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Air inclusive prices are estimated and subject to confirmation before final payment. Refer to inclusive features for details.

Tour price is based on sharing a twin room at hotels and on a minimum of 20 members, based on rates, taxes and fees effective June 2024 and are subject to change due to factors beyond our control. Group to be escorted from Canada with a minimum of 20 group members.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

**Final payment is due August 7, 2025
Deposit is \$800 per person**

To reserve your spot on this tour, you can either book online through our website or submit an enrollment form along with your deposit to:

1092 Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, ON M4P 2M6
416-484-0926 • 1-800-387-8890
tours@craigtravel.com • craigtravel.com

Special Note: For three nights, our luggage will be unavailable to us. Please bring a small overnight bag to carry clothes and other personal items for these occasions. Porters may not be available at all hotels and some visits may need to be adjusted or revised.



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