Japan Ancient and Modern

Tuatara Tours will show you Japan from a local perspective, whether it be shopping on the Ginza, snacking on street food, sleeping on a futon or soaking in a hot springs bath

9 Days, 8 Nights

Moderate Grade



Join Tuatara Tours on a fully guided walking tour of Japan and let Nicky, our Tour Manager (and fluent speaker of Japanese) take care of the details for you. Nicky spent several years living in Japan and looks forward to sharing her love of this fascinating country with you.

See Japan from a local perspective, not from a tour bus window. Our small group tours provide a more up close and personal experience of Japan, its culture and its people.

Your journey covers Japans capital cities, ancient and modern, and the most picturesque section of the Nakasendo, the ancient travellers highway that was a vital link between these capitals in the feudal era. You will start by exploring Tokyo on foot and experience the feel of modern Japan first hand, and from here , step back in time and follow in the footsteps of merchants and samurai , walking on the most historic stretch of the Nakasendo. You will pass through traditional villages and stay in local family run inns; enjoy picturesque scenery and great food and hospitality.

The Trail finishes with a stay in the beautiful and historic city of Kyoto, with its many UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Tour Starts:

10 May to 18 May 2025

Tour Highlights

- Tokyo River Cruise
- A visit to Tokyo's oldest temple.
- Riding the Shinkansen Bullet train.
- Experiencing local hospitality in Japanese Inns, sleeping on tatami mats and dining on traditional cuisine.
- Natural hot springs bathing.
- UNESCO World Heritage sites and the historic beauty of Kyoto.

Tour Cost: 2025 NZD\$7495 This covers ground arrangements as per the itinerary.

Airfares to Japan are at your own cost.

Deposit is \$1500 pp.

Based on twin share.



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Your Host

Join Tuatara Tours on a fully guided walking tour of Japan and let Nicky, our Tour Manager (and fluent speaker of Japanese) take care of the details for you.

Nicky spent 3 years living in Japan and looks forward to sharing her love of this fascinating country with you.



To determine the grade of a particular adventure we consider a number of factors.

These include the condition of the terrain, the altitude and the length of the trip.

The **9 Day Nakasendo Trail - Japan Ancient and Modern tour** is graded Moderate

An above average level of fitness, you should be comfortable walking 20 to 25km on formed tracks and roads with some average to steep inclines at times.

We also include non walking options on this tour.

Adventure Travel

By its very nature adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are mentally flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise.

If you are uncertain about your suitability for this tour, speak with us and we can help quide you in the right direction.







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Itinerary

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Day 1 Tokyo

On arrival at Narita Airport, please clear customs and immigration. You will then proceed to Narita Airport Station for your train ride in to Tokyo. This will take approx 1 hour. From Tokyo Station either walk or take a short taxi ride of 1km to our hotel

If you wish to relax and have an early night, you may want to dine at the hotel, or those that want to venture out can try one of the local eateries this evening. Nicky will be on hand to help with suggestions.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: None

Day 2 Tokyo Highlights - 6-7kms

The group will come together over breakfast at our hotel, after which we will set out to explore Tokyo, on foot, by boat and using the rail network. Our travels will take us to central and northern Tokyo today, to see a glimpse of the Tokyo of old, before it became the world's most populous metropolis.

Starting from our hotel we head out on foot past Tsukiji Market (the market has recently relocated but there are still many markets stall left on site) to the Hamarikyu Garden and board our Sumida River boat for a 40-minute cruise up the river for a unique opportunity to view Tokyo from the water.

The ride finishes at Asakusa, where an atmosphere of the Tokyo of past decades survives. Asakusa's main attraction is Sensoji, Tokyo's most famous Buddhist temple, built in the 7th century. We will also spend time at Nakamise, a traditional shopping street that has been providing temple visitors with a variety of traditional, local snacks and souvenirs for centuries. For those that wish to view Tokyo from a height, a 20-minute walk from Asakusa brings you to the Tokyo Skytree, the second tallest structure in the world at the time of its completion. (Optional. Admission not included in today's activities). Those that prefer to keep their feet on the ground can choose to return to Ginza after our sightseeing tour and explore its beautiful upmarket department stores or take a stroll around the grounds of the Imperial Palace, or you may wish to journey to Ueno with its bustling market streets and museums and continue exploring here. Nicky can provide directions and suggestions for the remainder of your day in Tokyo.

The rest of your day is free at your leisure to relax and prepare for the next few days of walking.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B

Day 3 Tokyo- Nagoya - Magome - 8kms

After an early start we travel on the bullet train to Nagoya and then on to Nakatsugawa, formerly an old post town and now a pleasant regional town. We have a leisurely lunch before an afternoon walk in hilly countryside through the small post-town of Ochiai towards Magome, our destination for today. It's a stiff climb, but the last section passes along one of the best-preserved parts of the old highway, and perhaps one of the most photogenic too.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B, L, D



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Itinerary Continued

Day 4 Magome - O Tsumago - Kiso Fukushima - 13kms

Today we begin by exploring Magome post town, birth-place of Shimazaki Toson, Japan's first modern novelist and author of Before the Dawn. Perched on a hill and boasting grand views of the surrounding countryside, Magome retains a charming character despite increasing numbers of visitors. Leaving the town, we follow the way up the appropriately named Magome Pass and meander slowly downhill through the woods, passing a pair of historic waterfalls before we reach the small hamlet of O-tsumago and, about 20 minutes further on, the village of Tsumago itself.

Tsumago is the best preserved and arguably the most attractive of all the post towns. The inhabitants take great pride in their town and have banished telephone poles, electric lines and vending machines from the main street. We follow the old highway, passing idyllic hamlets and fields, until it descends to the town of Nagiso. From here, a local train takes us to Kiso-Fukushima and our accommodation for the evening.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B, L, D

Day 5 Kiso Fukushima - Kaida Plateau - 14kms

Departing our inn, we transfer part-way to the Kaida Plateau by bus, where our morning's walk follows an ancient path, up over the Jizo Pass. The plateau is dominated by Mt. Ontake, an active volcano that is considered sacred by Esoteric Buddhists.

After lunch, our afternoon's excursion takes us over another high pass that, on a clear day, provides views over the plateau to Mt. Ontake. We descend from here to our accommodation: another delightful, modern Japanese inn with onsen baths.

MEALS INCLUDED: B, L, D

Day 6 Kaida Plateau - Narai - Matsumoto - 11kms

Returning from the Kaida Plateau to Kiso Fukushima we transfer by a short rail journey to Yabuhara, where we begin our climb of the Torii Toge (Torii Pass). The pass is named after the Shinto torii, or gate, that marks one of four protective sites surrounding the sacred Mt. Ontake. At 1,197 meters, Torii Pass is also the second highest point on the Nakasendo.

The descent into Narai post-town takes us along narrow mountain paths until we emerge at the outskirts of this famous post-town next to a joyato, stone night lantern.

We have some time to explore Narai. This is an area well known for its lacquer ware and we will have some free time here to explore, relax in cafes and do some local shopping before transferring by train to Matsumoto. Matsumoto is set in Japan's Central Alps on a plateau famous in Japan for its apples, grapes, and wine.

Our final night in the Kiso region is spent at a modern hotel, dining together at a restaurant in the city this evening.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B, D

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Itinerary Continued

Day 7 Matsumoto - Kyoto - 4-5kms

Breakfast is followed by a guided visit to Matsumoto Castle, the keep of which is an impressive structure, symbolic of the powerful samurai clan that once controlled this region. Now a rarity, it is one of only 4 castle keeps listed as National Treasures in Japan.

The Kiso Valley walking section of our tour finishes after exploring the castle but you may wish to include a visit to the Matsumoto Art Gallery, which has an excellent permanent collection of works by Kusama Yayoi, probably Japan's most famous living artist or explore the merchant houses, with their beautiful stone masonry.

We have some time free in Matsumoto before travelling back down the Kiso Valley towards our next destination, Kyoto.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B

Day 8 Kyoto Highlights - 6-7kms

After breakfast, we head out today to explore Kyoto on foot. Our focus today will be on the eastern fringes of Kyoto. Kyoto was the Imperial Capital of Japan for more than 1000 years and is steeped in history and tradition. It has 1600 Buddhist temples and 400 Shrines and among those we will visit is Kiyomizu-dera, one of the most famous temples in Japan and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, we will also pay a visit to Sanjusangendo, the temple of 1001 statues.

Walking through the city along the narrow back streets of Gion, we may catch a glimpse of Kyoto's famous Maiko-san, the elegant and mysterious geisha.

Our last night together will be spent in Kyoto's entertainment district enjoying a final farewell dinner where we can try some local specialties and perhaps a few sake's to celebrate your visit to Japan.

MEALS INCLUDED: B, D

Day 9 Kyoto

Our tour finishes after breakfast today, and you will have your own arrangements in place for onward travel.

For those staying in Kyoto, please ask Nicky for some suggestions on how to maximize your stay. Nara, Kanazawa and Hiroshima can be visited as day excursions out of Kyoto if you wish to extend your stay and explore further and there is plenty more to see and experience in and around Kyoto as well.

If you are considering a number of extra days in Japan and travelling further, it may well be worth considering a Rail Pass, Nicky can provide further information on this if required.

We hope you have enjoyed your time in Japan and thank you for travelling with Tuatara Tours.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B



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What you can expect

Guides

Guide and interpreter service throughout

When should I arrive and how do I get to the hotel?

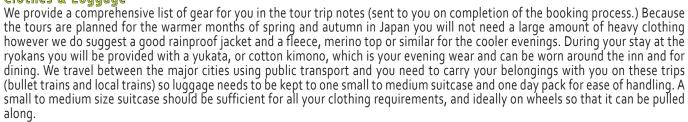
If you are travelling to Tokyo on the day of the tour, Nicky can advise the best flights and times to book.

If you are arriving for an extended stay prior to the tour, Nicky will advise how to get into Tokyo and where to meet us for the start of the tour as well as tips on what to see and do to maximise your time in Japan.

Transport

Bullet train, local trains and buses from start in Tokyo Day 1 to finish in Kyoto. Portage of luggage on the Nakasendo

Clothes & Luggage



Accommodation

- Tokyo: We stay at a modern western style hotel in central Tokyo, handy to the Ginza district and its elegant department stores. Rooms are twin with ensuite facilities. Hotels in Japan are quite small compared to Western equivalents, an average double room is only 20-30sqm. The room typically contains a small private ensuite bathroom, known as a "unit bath", with shower over Japanese bathtub, toilet and hand basin. The room will usually have a television, an electric pot for boiling water for a hot drink, phone and internet access, hairdryer, air conditioning and a fridge.
- The Nakasendo: We stay in Japanese minshuku (B&B) and Ryokan (Inns). These are traditional rooms with tatami mat floors, futon bedding and yukata robes for wearing in the evenings and to dinner. On our tours some of the inns are more rustic and atmospheric, while others more modern and luxurious. Most are family run and have been in the same family for several generations. As is traditional, in some inns bathing and toilet facilities are shared but others have en-suite facilities.
- Kyoto: We stay in a Western Style Hotel close to Kyoto Station, and shops and restaurants. Rooms are twin with ensuite facilities and the hotel has a restaurant specialising in Vietnamese, Japanese and Western cuisine.

Food

Daily breakfast, 5 dinners and 3 lunches.

Japan is a food lovers paradise, as well as all the traditional local favourites, Japan offers an amazing choice of international restaurants, coffee shops, bars and food outlets.

On your tour we provide a hearty breakfast each day to set you up for the day and you also have the opportunity to experience traditional home cooked dishes during your stay at the inns. The tour includes a daily breakfast, 5 dinners and 3 lunches.

Travel Insurance

Medical services in Japan are good but the cost of treatment is high and you can expect to pay the full cost of any treatment you receive. For this reason we require all tour participants to have a comprehensive medical insurance in place.

Tipping

There is no tradition of tipping in Japan and it is not a requirement at restaurants or hotels that you tip for services provided.

However if you feel you have been provided with excellent service and you would like to reward that, please feel free to offer a tip.



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country information

Overview: Japan is situated in northeastern Asia between the North Pacific and the Sea of Japan. The area of Japan is 377,873 square kilometers, nearly equivalent to Germany and Switzerland combined or slightly smaller than California. In comparison New Zealand is 268,021 square kilometres. Japan consists of four major islands, surrounded by more than 4,000 smaller islands. Japan's population is over 126 million. Most Japanese reside in densely populated urban areas. Japan's capital city is Tokyo. The population of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area including the city, some of its suburbs and the surrounding area is approximately 12 million.

Currency: The unit of Japanese currency is yen. Coins are available in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 50, 100 and 500 yen and bank notes in denominations of 1,000, 2,000, 5,000 and 10,000 yen. Currently Japanese consumption tax (equivalent of GST) is 10%, and is already included in the cost of most goods and services. Tipping is not customary in Japan.



Electricity: The voltage used throughout Japan is uniformly 100 volts, A.C. There are two kinds of frequencies in use; 50 Hertz in eastern Japan and 60 Hertz in western Japan (including Nagoya, Kyoto and Osaka). A convertible type of electrical appliance such as a travel hair dryer, travel iron and shaver will therefore be handy; otherwise a step-down transformer is required to convert the voltage. There are no columnar-shaped plugs or 3-pin plugs used in Japan but 2-flat-pin plugs are used instead. It is therefore adviseable to purchase a plug adapter beforehand.

Drinking water: Tap water is safe to drink anywhere in Japan. Mineral water including major imported brands can be easily obtained from super markets, convenience stores and other similar places.

Vaccinations: There are no vaccinations required for entering Japan from anywhere around the world. Visas Visas are not required for visitors from New Zealand, for other countries please check with your local Japanese embassy or Consulate. Visitors on a current New Zealand passport valid for 6 months or more can enter Japan as tourists for a period of up to 90 days.

Dining out: One of the highlights of any visit to Japan is the opportunity to sample an amazing array of delicious food, from a

simple noodle snack served at a street stall or a full Japanese banquet, a feast for the eye as well as the palate.

Japanese cuisine is traditionally based on rice and fish, vegetables and soup with an emphasis on seasonal produce. It is considered a healthy, low calorie diet and is often touted as the secret behind Japans longevity statistics. Each region in Japan has its own food culture and promotes its own regional specialities whether they be pickles, noodles or sweets. Japan has also adopted a number of dishes from the western world and other parts of Asia such as curries and these are popular alternatives to the more traditional way of eating.

Japan also produces excellent local beers and its indigenous rice wine, sake.

A brief historical overview: Japan was first mentioned in historical documents around the 5th century when the Emperor Jimmu became the first in a long imperial line which still continues today. Japans first permanent imperial court was established at Nara in 710.

In 794 the capital city moved from Nara to Heiankyo (the present day Kyoto) and a period of peace and prosperity continued until around 1185 with the ascendancy of the warrior class known as samurai. The Military clans pushed Japan into a series of civil wars, with the regional warlords becoming more and more powerful and toppling the aristocracy from power. Of these the most powerful was Tokugawa leyasu who established his shogunate government in Edo (present day Tokyo) and to secure his supremacy forced Japan in to a period of isolation from the outside world until the mid-19th Century.

In 1853 Commodore Perry of the US Navy sailed his "black ships" into Japan, and with the arrival of the West and its more advanced technology, the Shogunate was forced to give in to the rising tide of modernisation. Emperor Meiji was restored to power and embracing western culture, dress, food and architecture he set Japan on the path to the modern industrialised nation we see today.

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TERMS & CONDITIONS

Tuatara Tours NZ Limited accepts bookings subject to the following conditions:

This contract is between Tuatara Tours and you the client being any person travelling or intending to travel on a tour supplied by Tuatara Tours as the operator. The contract, including all matters arising from it, is subject to New Zealand law and the exclusive jurisdiction of the New Zealand courts. Only Employees and Directors of Tuatara Tours have authority to vary or omit any of the

Cancellation Policy due to travel restriction that is imposed by either the New Zealand government or any other government. Should your trip be impacted by a travel restriction that is imposed by either the New Zealand government or any other government, we will either work with you to transfer your trip to a future date at no additional cost, or provide you with a full refund.

Price

The price is quoted in New Zealand dollars and includes GST of 15%. The price is based on prices at time of publishing and Tuatara Tours hereby reserves to modify without notice those prices in any way considered necessary or desirable.

Organised tour accommodations are based on a twin/double share accommodation. Individual travellers will be placed in rooms together with other individual travellers of the same sex. A single supplement is available on request.

Confirmation of Booking

Bookings are confirmed upon receipt of the full tour price which is payable 90 days prior to the commencement of the tour. Tuatara Tours or their agents reserve their right to decline any booking at their discretion.

If a client wishes to cancel a Tour the following charges will be applied: (Unless stated otherwise)

- 2. 90-60 days prior to departure no fee
 3. 59-30 days prior to departure 30% of total package cost applies
 4. 29-0 days prior to departure 100% of total package cost applies
- After tour commencement no refund available.

These cancellation fees are not negotiable, therefore we strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance.

Travel Insurance

Tuatara Tours recommends that the client take out tour cancellation insurance together with all other necessary travel insurances. Obtaining all necessary insurances is the responsibility of you the client and Tuatara Tours can not held liable for any failure on your part to get insurance.

Medical conditions

When you book you must notify us of any medical condition, medical history or medication that you are on.

Changes to Tours

Tuatara Tours will use its best endeavours to ensure that all tours are operated as advertised. It may be that reasonable changes in the itinerary may need to be made where is deemed necessary or advisable by Tuatara Tours. Changes will be advised to the client as soon as is reasonably possible. Where a tour service needs to be changed, a substitute or similar quality or standard will be provided.

Adverse weather conditions may mean that planned activities cannot proceed as intended. A decision to change an advertised tour based on the weather conditions will be made by a tour guide at the time and is made in the best interest of the group and their safety. Tuatara Tours and or their contracted suppliers can not be held responsible to any changes as a result of the weather.

General conditions

Tuatara Tours, its agents, contractors and guides do not accept responsibility or liability for loss, damage to, or theft of personal belongings (owners risk) or for any expenses, including medical and transport expenses arising from a personal accident, injury, illness, or hospitalisation. Tuatara Tours and their guides reserve the right to make any alterations to the itinerary in the interest of safety, or unforeseen circumstances due to causes such as weather, illness or misadventure. Every reasonable endeavour will be made to keep to published schedules but no guarantee is given. Tuatara Tours will not be held liable for costs incurred by change, delay or the missing of connecting services. Tuatara Tours reserves the right to exclude a person from a tour at any time, if in the opinion of the guide or operator, that person may be likely to risk the health, safety or comfort (including unsociable behaviour) of other clients, him or herself or the environment. In such circumstances, Tuatara Tours will not be obliged to offer any refund or transfer ticket. These terms and conditions apply to each participant including in a group booking. Where a booking is made on behalf of a group or two or more people then each participant in the group must be made aware of and accept these terms and conditions.

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RISK DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In any adventure activity, there is an element of risk involved. Risks in undertaking this activity include (but are not limited to): hypothermia, heat exhaustion, physical injury caused by environment i.e. rock falls, and physical injury caused by self, i.e. falling over.

Tongariro National Park is an active volcanic area, and eruptions from any of the volcanoes can happen at any time. Early warning systems and alarms are in place that indicate times of increased volcanic activity, however events can occur without any warning.

The staff and management of TuataraTours and any of its agency partners take all practicable steps to identify and minimise potential dangers. The Operator makes all arrangements for all tours on the condition that it shall not be liable for any sickness, injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned, either directly or indirectly, by reason of any defect in any vehicle, vessel or aircraft, by weather, by any other cause, or through acts of default of a company or person engaged in conveying the passengers, or in carrying out arrangements for these activities.

We strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance prior to your trip. By participating in this activity, you are expressly assuming those risks and responsibilities and are, to the maximum extent permitted by law releasing the Operator, its officers, employees, directors, agents and any other person associated with us, from any liability, claims, loss, damages or expenses (whatsoever and irrespective of whether direct, indirect or consequential) caused by any event including but not limited to: personal injury or death; property loss or damage; acts which may be construed as negligible or accidental; any other loss, damage, suffering, emotional or nervous disorder suffered by you or any other person in relation to this activity. You accept that you have been advised to obtain adequate travel insurance for all persons named on the booking.

In participating in the activity, the customer agrees to be bound by the following conditions:

- My successors, executors and administrators are bound by the Terms and Conditions:
- I agree not to commence any litigation proceedings in any country in relation to the risks and liabilities set out above and to indemnify the Operator against any claims;
- I confirm and warrant I am physically fit and suffer no medical conditions, which may affect my ability to participate in the activity;
- I confirm I am aware that professional medical assistance may be difficult
 and/or take some time to access due to the remote areas in which we
 are travelling;
- I consent to receive medical treatment in the case of injury, accident or illness during the activity and to indemnify the Operator against any claims, costs or expenses in respect of the treatment;
- I agree that any film, sound, video or other recordings taken of or during the activity will not be used in any production, or advertising without prior consent of the Operator, however the Operator may use such recordings itself at its complete discretion without any prior approval; and
- I agree to listen to my driver/guide/host, follow their instructions and make sure any children in my care do the same. Furthermore, the Operator will not be responsible for any personal injury and/or property damage caused by you and any costs for such injury/damage will be your responsibility. You shall indemnify the Operator in relation to such costs.

NZ Walking Tours

The Akaroa Walk
The Queenstown Ben Lomond Walk
The Queen Charlotte Walk
The West Coast Trail
The Hump Ridge Track Walk
The Coromandel Explorer Walk
The Tongariro Crossing Walk
The Waikaremoana Discovery
Great Barrier Island Escape
The Abel Tasman Walk - 3 Days
The Abel Tasman Walk - 5 Days
The Abel Tasman Walk/Kayak - 3 Days
The Abel Tasman Walk/Kayak - 5 Days
Bucket List Walk

NZ Cycling Tours

Around The Mountains Cycle Trail
The Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail
The West Coast Wilderness Cycle Trail
The Queenstown Cycle Trail
The Otago Rail Trail
The Tasman Great Taste Trail and
Golden Bay Explorer

Overseas Tours

Bhutan Tours Japan Walking Tours Australia Walking Tours

All of these tours and more available at www.tuataratours.co.nz

