

# Kyushu and Shikoku

## Japan 2025 - Limited Edition - Off The Beaten Track

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

6 Days, 5 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.

Travel to the outer islands of Kyushu and Shikoku, regions that offer hundreds of years of history, culture and religion, as well as some of the best onsen hot springs and food experiences you will have anywhere in Japan.

Journey across the Seto Inland sea with its mild climate and relaxed island feel and enjoy views of the ocean and the many smaller islands that make up the region.

Kyushu and Shikoku offer beautiful vistas of both sea and mountain, an incredible array of culinary delights, and places that are unique, ancient, and undiscovered.

### Tour Starts:

19 May to 24 May 2025

### Tour Highlights

- Incorporating walks in Kyushu and Shikoku with one optional cycle ride of the Shimanami Kaido.
- The tour starts in Hiroshima and finishes in Onomichi.
- Sumptuous Japanese banquet dining
- Onsen hot springs bathing experience
- Island hopping
- Optional Zazen meditation

### Tour Cost:

2025

NZD\$5625

This covers ground arrangements as per the itinerary.

Airfares to Japan are at your own cost.

Deposit is \$1500 pp.

Single Supplement is \$750:

Based on twin share.

This tour can be combined with our Nakasendo Walk 10-18 May 2025.

Book both tours and save \$1000.

Optional bike hire for the Shimanami Kaido:

Standard bike hire: 3000 yen (approx. \$35)

E bike hire: 8000 yen (approx. \$90)



Tuatara Tours NZ Ltd, PO Box 13544, Christchurch 8141, New Zealand  
Phone: New Zealand: 0800 377 378, Australia: 1 800 044 633, World: +64 3 962 3280  
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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.

### Inclusions

Includes daily breakfast, 4 dinners and 3 lunches, 5 nights accommodation, admissions to all sites listed in the itinerary, all transport including 2 ferry rides, local trains and buses, portage of luggage while walking or biking and services of guide throughout.

### Trip Grading

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 **6 Day Kyushu and Shikoku** 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 guide you in the right direction.



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### Itinerary

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### Day 1 Hiroshima - Yabakei No walking today

The tour meets at 12.00 midday at Hiroshima Station. We transfer by bullet train to Nakatsu in Kyushu and then from Nakatsu we then travel 30 minutes by private-hire vehicle to Yabakei, where we stay the night in the surroundings of a delightful onsen inn. Yabakei is known for its picturesque valleys, verdant forests, sparkling streams and, of course, its many onsen thermal hot springs.

After checking in, we have time to immerse ourselves in the onsen baths. Refreshed, we enjoy a sumptuous welcoming banquet.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: D

### Day 2 Yabakei - Usa - Makioto - Fuki-ji 7kms

For those awake early enough, a dip in the onsen baths is a great way to start the day. Breakfast is followed by a short vehicle transfer to Usa Jingu, one of Japan's grandest shrines. It is also one of the most important as it serves as the head shrine deifying Hachiman, the protector god of the nation. Usa Jingu was also instrumental in the development of the distinctively different Buddhism found on the neighbouring Kunisaki Peninsula.

From here we transfer to the impressive Kumano Magaibutsu. The largest Buddha relief carvings in Japan, they are little-known outside of the immediate region. Perhaps the short but steep climb through a deep forest to see them precludes visits by many. The effort, though, is well worth it.

Nearby is Makioto, a rather basic temple building that has become a treasure house of Buddhist relics saved from some of the temples that have, over the centuries, fallen into ruin on Kunisaki. A gentle stroll from here takes us through Tashibu-no-sho, a charming village with some of the most picturesque countryside found in Japan. Along the way we come across stone and wooden Buddhist statues perched in caves overlooking farmland scenery that seems to have changed little since Kunisaki's origins as a Buddhist centre some 1,200 years ago.

We end the day at a Japanese inn set in a delightful rural hamlet and adjacent to Fuki-ji, a temple that includes one of the simplest and most beautiful Buddhist structures in Japan.

Once again, our inn has onsen baths to relax in before dinner, a feast of local produce. We stay here for two nights.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B,L, D

### Day 3 Fuki-ji - Coton-mura - Kyu-Sento-ji - Fuki-ji 7kms

Breakfast is followed by a visit to Fuki-ji temple, immediately adjacent to our accommodation and for those that would like to join in the opportunity for a 30 minute Zazen meditation at the temple, lead by the local priest. We soak up the serene atmosphere here before transferring to Coton-mura, a lakeside park, where we begin our hike today. Our walk takes us past the dam holding back the lake, through forest and a quiet hamlet.

This is followed by a climb up and around the side of Yayama, an imposing tent-shaped mountain, to Choan-ji, at one time the most powerful temple in Kunisaki. A castle once dominated the area high above on Mt. Yayama, and the well-tended garden is renowned in the area for its flowers, which bloom throughout the year, as well as its autumn leaves.

After lunch, a quick visit to Tennen-ji temple. The last resident priest has long gone but the locals maintain the thatched main building that is built into the side of a high cliff.



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### Itinerary Continued

We continue to the grounds of Kyu-Sento-ji, a once-powerful temple. Little now remains of the temple buildings but stone Buddha statues, impressive stone walls and hundreds of monks' gravestones allude to the long-disappeared religious community. The gravestones include that of Ninmon, the legendary monk reputed to have brought Buddhism to Kunisaki over 1,200 years ago. We climb to Itsutsu-ji Fudo, a small temple structure set into the side of a giant rock outcrop.

On a clear day, from here we enjoy views across Kunisaki to the Seto Inland Sea and beyond to Honshu and Shikoku, respectively Japan's first and fourth main islands.

We return to our accommodation at Fuki-ji for a second night.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B, L, D

### Day 4 Fuki-ji - Ota - Kitsuki - Beppu

5.5kms

This morning we travel by vehicle a short distance through valleys at the heart of Kunisaki to visit Ota. We stroll through a delightful, quiet rural district on old trails, past farmhouses, kitchen gardens, paddy fields and through forests for an intimate exploration of rural life in modern Japan.

We then set off for Kitsuki, once the seat of Kunisaki's daimyo baron. Now a quiet, elegant town, Kitsuki still retains an air of its feudal past, and is a pleasant place to enjoy lunch.

In the afternoon, we stroll through the streets of Kitsuki to a lovely and rare bukke-yashiki, a thatched-roofed building that was formerly the residence of a senior samurai aide to the daimyo.

A further journey brings us to Beppu. With more hot springs than anywhere else in Japan, it takes the crown as the nation's top onsen destination. We explore the old quarter of Kannawa, where we also spend the night in a local inn. Not only does our accommodation have its own hot spring baths, but onsen literally surround us. Water vapour emanates from grilles in the streets, and above us from towering vents. Locals are to be seen throughout the day to-ing and fro-ing with towels in hand to the many public baths in the neighbourhood.

MEALS INCLUDED TODAY: B, L, D

### Day 5 Beppu- Matsuyama (Shikoku)

6kms

Our stay in Kyushu ends after one last Japanese breakfast at our inn and we travel to Beppu Port, a short journey by taxi, to catch our ferry over to Shikoku, the next island destination on our itinerary.

The ferry ride is a scenic 3 hour trip beside the Sadamisaki Peninsula and across the Bungo Channel, and you can enjoy views of sea birds and the occasional dolphin enroute.

On arrival in Shikoku we travel to the main city of Ehime Prefecture- Matsuyama - and after dropping off our bags at our hotel we head out for an afternoon of walking, taking in the sights of the city.

Shikoku is home to the Shikoku 88 pilgrimage. This pilgrimage, is registered as an important Japanese cultural treasure that significantly represents the soul of both the nation and its people. We will visit temple number 51 on the pilgrimage route, a temple said to be built in honour of Kukai (Kobo Daishi) a celebrated Buddhist Monk. We will also finish our day with a soak in the famous Dogo Onsen complex, a public bath which boasts the title of the oldest onsen in Japan with a 3000 year history of hot spring bathing. This evening you are free to explore Matsuyama or relax at the hotel after our onsen soak.

MEALS INCLUDED: B

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### Itinerary Continued

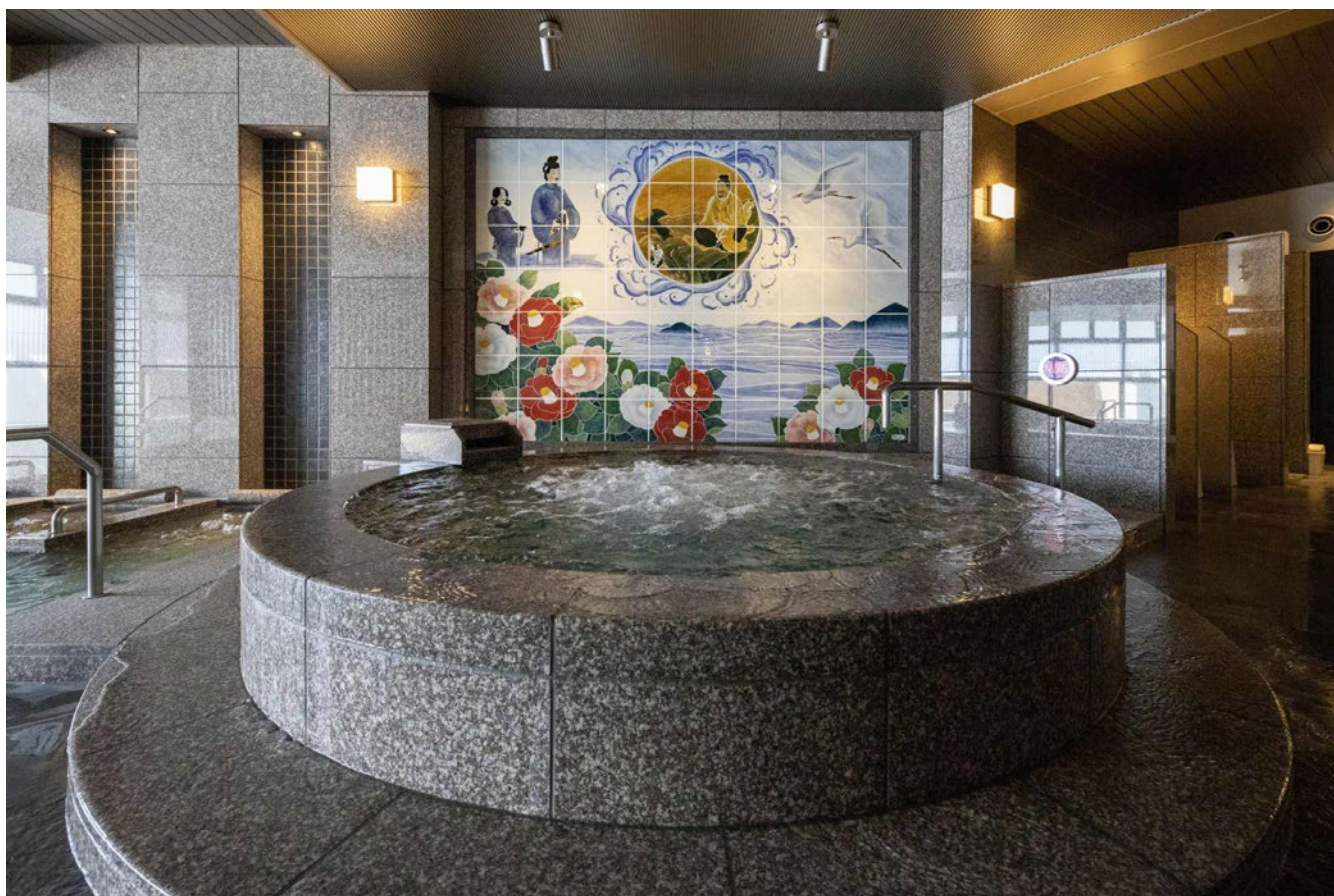
#### Day 6 Matsuyama (Shikoku)- Onomichi

Biking: (optional) 43km

This morning we leave Matsuyama for a journey through the Setonaikai (Seto Inland Sea). For those that would like to experience the journey by bike, there is the opportunity to cycle part of the famous Shimanami Kaido cycle route. With a route linking islands with a number of suspension bridges over the sea, it features special lanes for cyclists and pedestrians and can be enjoyed by everyone from beginning cyclists to seasoned athletes. The optional biking is 43km and both E bikes and standard bikes are available for hire. For those that prefer not to bike, the island hopping can be done by bus.

We will all regroup at Setoda, for one last ferry journey to Onomichi and back to the mainland where our tour will end. You may wish to stay a night in Onomichi and relax after your bike ride, or journey onwards to other destinations in Japan. Nicky can help with suggestions for onward travel.

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 meeting point?

We recommend arriving a day or two before the start of your tour, to give you time to adjust to the climate and the pace of life in Japan. If you are arriving for an extended stay prior to your tour, Nicky can advise on where to be for the start of the tour as well as tips on how to maximise your time in Japan.

#### Transport

The tour includes bullet trains, local trains, buses and ferries to get you from location to location. All the transport required from start to finish of the tour is included in your tour package.

#### Clothes & Luggage

We provide a comprehensive list of gear for you in the tour trip notes (sent to you on completion of the booking process.) Because the tours are planned for the warmer months of spring and autumn in Japan you will not need a large amount of heavy clothing however we do suggest a good rainproof jacket and a fleece, merino top or similar for the cooler evenings. During your stay at the ryokans you will be provided with a yukata, or cotton kimono, which is your evening wear and can be worn around the inn and for dining. We travel between the major cities using public transport and you need to carry your belongings with you on these trips (bullet trains and local trains) so luggage needs to be kept to one small to medium suitcase and one day pack for ease of handling. A small to medium size suitcase should be sufficient for all your clothing requirements, and ideally on wheels so that it can be pulled along.

#### Accommodation

This tour showcases the best of Japanese hospitality with stays in Ryokan (Inns) for the first 4 nights, these are traditional rooms with tatami mats on the floor, futon bedding and yukata robes for wearing in the evening and to dinner. Each of the inns we stay at has the added luxury of its own hot springs thermal bath, so we can enjoy a hot soak and relax in the evenings, or in the mornings also if you are an early riser.

On our last night in Matsuyama we stay at a modern city hotel-Western Style- with a bed and full ensuite facilities.

#### Food

Daily breakfast, 4 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, 4 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.

#### Fees

Admission to all temples and sightseeing spots in your itinerary



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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 advisable 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 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 Japan's 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. Japan's first permanent imperial court was established at Nara in 710.

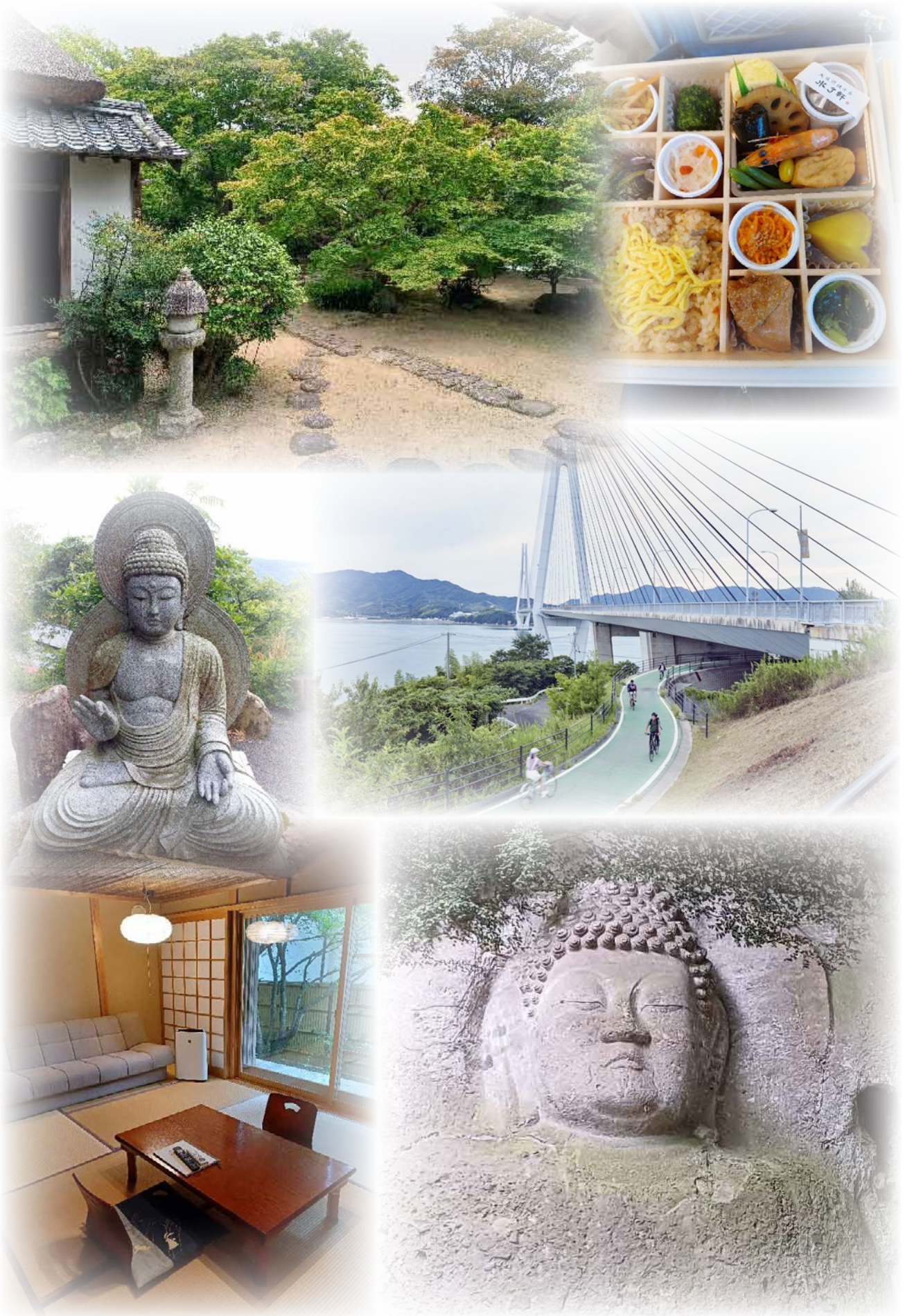
In 794 the capital city moved from Nara to Heiankyo (the present day Kyoto) and a period of peace and prosperity continued until around 1185 with the ascendancy of the warrior class known as samurai. The Military clans pushed Japan into a series of civil wars, with the regional warlords becoming more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

#### Contract

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 terms.

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.

#### Cancellation

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

1. 91+ days prior to departure – no fee
2. 90-60 days prior to departure – Deposit Non refundable
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
5. 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.

#### Weather

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](http://www.tuataratours.co.nz)

