8 Days Best Japan Group Tour: Japan Highlights & Hiroshima

Trip overview

Experience the very best of Japan on this classic 8-day itinerary that perfectly bridges ancient traditions and modern wonders. Starting in the bustling metropolis of **Tokyo**, you will marvel at dynamic streetscapes, sacred shrines like **Meiji Jingu**, and iconic landmarks including **Shibuya Crossing** and **Senso-ji Temple**. Journey to **Lake Kawaguchi** for breathtaking views of **Mount Fuji** from **Arakurayama Sengen Park**, then ride the world-famous **Shinkansen bullet train** to **Kyoto**.

Step back in time as you explore Kyoto's world-famous UNESCO Heritage sites—from the dazzling golden **Kinkakuji Temple** to the vermilion tunnels of **Fushimi Inari Taisha** and the geisha district of **Gion**. Continue to **Nara** to feed friendly free-roaming deer and experience **Osaka's** vibrant food scene in **Dotonbori**. To top off your adventure, enjoy a seamless day excursion to **Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park** and the stunning floating Torii gate of **Itsukushima Shrine** on **Miyajima Island**.

- **Durations:** 8 Days
- **Destinations:** Tokyo - Kyoto - Nara - Osaka - Hiroshima - Osaka
- **Tour inquiry:** https://www.asiachinatour.com/8-days-japan-highlights-with-hiroshima/

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Tokyo — Welcome to Japan's Capital & Airport Transfer

onnichiwa! Welcome to **Tokyo**, Japan's vibrant capital and one of Asia's largest economic and cultural hubs. Arrive by plane at either **Narita International Airport** (located 63.5 km from the city center) or **Tokyo International Airport (Haneda Airport)** (situated 17 km from downtown) based on your flight schedule. After clearing customs, make your own way to your designated 4-star hotel in a convenient downtown location. Spend the remainder of the day settling in and taking your first look at Tokyo's dynamic blend of modern technology, shopping centers, and rich culinary culture.

Meals: On your own

Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel in Tokyo

Expert Transit Insights:
To save costs and avoid heavy traffic congestion, using public transportation systems such as subways and JR trains is highly recommended. Taxis in Tokyo have a starting fare of around 660 Japanese yen with additional distance charges, and 20% surcharges apply during nighttime and peak hours, In addition, expressway tolls and large luggage are additional.

Day 2: Tokyo to Lake Kawaguchi — Arakurayama Sengen Park, Lake Kawaguchi Cruise & Mount Fuji Views

Depart Tokyo on a full-day round trip to admire the breathtaking views of **Mount Fuji** from **Lake Kawaguchi**. Mount Fuji is the tallest mountain in Japan, standing at 3,776 meters as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a famous volcano with a perfectly symmetrical cone shape, and a revered spiritual landmark recognized as a holy mountain in Shintoism. Its iconic form is celebrated worldwide, notably in Katsushika Hokusai's *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji*—created by one of the "Three Greats of Ukiyo-e"—whose masterpiece *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* appears on the 1,000 Japanese yen bill.

Begin your journey at the renowned **Arakurayama Sengen Park**, where you can admire the magnificent view of a five-story pagoda set against a backdrop of majestic mountains. Hike about 15 to 20 minutes up to **Arakurayama Sengen Shrine**, dedicated to the mountain god and surrounded by beautiful gardens offering a peaceful atmosphere. Soak in the gorgeous scenery and capture iconic photographs at the famous **Red Fuji Observation Deck**.

Next, head to **Lake Kawaguchi**, an excellent location to leisurely view Mount Fuji across crystal-clear waters that provide breathtaking vistas and a serene atmosphere. Enjoy a cruise on the tranquil waters to marvel at the stunning reflection of Mt. Fuji, followed by a leisurely stroll around the lake to explore nearby parks, galleries, and museums based on your interests. In the evening, head back to Tokyo for your overnight stay and a restful night.

Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel in Tokyo

Expert Journey & Viewing Insights:
This is a long day trip, and a surcharge will apply if the tour exceeds 8 hours for the guide, driver, and vehicle. While clear weather offers magnificent views of Mt. Fuji, unfavorable weather may obscure visibility. The best time to view Mount Fuji is generally from December to February for clear skies and snow-capped peaks, April to May for blooming cherry blossoms, and October to November for autumn foliage. Early mornings provide the best visibility before clouds roll in, and different locations around the mountain offer unique perspectives.

Day 3: Tokyo City Tour — Meiji Shrine, Shibuya Crossing, Senso-ji Temple & Tsukiji/Toyosu Market

After breakfast at your hotel, your guide and driver will pick up your group for an amazing small-group day exploring Tokyo's iconic cultural and modern landmarks.

Begin at **Meiji Jingu Shrine**, a Shinto shrine dedicated to Emperor Meiji (1852–1912) and Empress Shoken (1849–1914), who modernized Japan while excelling in Waka poetry. Nestled within a 70-hectare tranquil forest containing over 100,000 donated trees, the shrine offers a

peaceful escape. Walk through Japan's largest natural wooden Torii gate (weighing 13 tons) and view the impressive Sake Barrel Wall reflecting the Emperor's fondness for Western culture. Witness locals washing their hands at the Purification Font, offer a 5-yen coin for good connections, and perhaps catch a traditional Japanese wedding procession. (*Optional sights include the Meiji Jingu Inner Garden and Meiji Jingu Museum*).

Next, move to **Shibuya Crossing**, one of the busiest intersections in the world accommodating roughly 3,000 people per minute. Famous from films like *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift*, it is a vibrant hub where you can also visit the touching bronze statue of **Hachiko**, the loyal dog, located outside Shibuya Station.

In the afternoon, head to **Senso-ji Temple** in Asakusa, Tokyo's oldest and most famous Buddhist temple dedicated to Kannon Bosatsu, founded in 645 AD. Enter through the iconic **Kaminarimon** (Thunder Gate) with its massive red lantern, stroll down the lively **Nakamise Street** lined with traditional snack and souvenir stalls, and pass the Hozomon gate to reach the main hall and five-story pagoda. Looking south from the temple, capture striking photos contrasting historic buildings with the modern **Tokyo Skytree Tower** (Japan's tallest tower at 634 meters).

Conclude your day at **Tsukiji Fish Market / Toyosu Market**. Tsukiji Fish Market was once the world's largest fish market, famous for its tuna auctions. Though the inner wholesale market relocated to Toyosu in 2018, the vibrant outer market remains a premier destination to sample fresh sashimi, sushi, and seafood rice bowls, or browse specialty kitchenware. Afterward, your group will be escorted back to your Tokyo hotel.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel in Tokyo

Expert Visiting Insights:
*When visiting **Meiji Jingu Shrine**, wear modest clothing and maintain a quiet, respectful atmosphere. For **Shibuya** and **Senso-ji**, expect large crowds during peak afternoon hours, so comfortable walking shoes are essential.*

Day 4: Tokyo to Kyoto by Shinkansen — Kinkakuji Temple & Nijo Castle

Begin your morning as your private Tokyo driver escorts you to **Tokyo Station** to board the high-speed **Shinkansen** bound for **Kyoto Station**. During this fast, smooth, and comfortable 2.5-hour journey, you can relax and watch the scenery shift dynamically from bustling urban landscapes to the serene rural countryside of Japan.

Upon stepping off the train, you arrive in the Kansai region at **Kyoto**—Japan's former imperial capital and the absolute heart of traditional Japanese heritage. Famed for its tranquil temples, exquisite landscape gardens, colorful shrines, and grand palaces, **Kyoto** preserves 17 UNESCO World Heritage sites alongside more than 1,000 Buddhist temples and 400 Shinto shrines, making it one of the world's most culturally rich destinations. It remains the premier stage for classical Japanese arts, including tea ceremonies, multi-course kaiseki dining, ikebana flower arranging, and the refined world of geisha culture. Your local Kyoto guide and professional driver will be waiting in the designated arrival area to warmly greet you and escort you straight into your afternoon explorations.

Dive into your sightseeing at **Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)**, a UNESCO World Heritage Zen Buddhist site renowned worldwide for its breathtaking appearance. Originally established in 1397 as a retirement villa for Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu and later converted into a Zen temple

in accordance with his wishes, the structure's top two floors are entirely sheathed in brilliant gold leaf. Take time to wander the grounds and capture photographs of the dazzling golden pavilion mirroring itself across the tranquil waters of the surrounding **Mirror Pond (Kyoko-chi)**.

Next, journey deeper into Japan's feudal history at **Nijo Castle**, another prestigious UNESCO World Heritage landmark. Constructed in 1603 to serve as the Kyoto residence of Tokugawa Ieyasu—the inaugural shogun of the Edo period—its grand scale and ornate architecture vividly reflect the immense power and wealth wielded by dominant samurai clans between 1603 and 1867. Pass through the imposing **Kara-mon Gate** into the **Ninomaru Palace** complex, where multiple interconnected chambers feature masterwork screen paintings crafted by the legendary Kano school. Listen closely as your footsteps trigger the famous "nightingale floors," ingeniously engineered to squeak and sing at every step as an ancient security measure against intruders, and stroll through the stunning **Ninomaru Palace Garden** laid out by celebrated tea master and landscape architect Kobori Enshu.

Conclude your afternoon tour as your team escorts you to your comfortable 4-star hotel in Kyoto for a restful evening.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel in Kyoto

Expert Transit & Sightseeing Insights:
*The bullet train ride offers smooth, high-speed regional transit; keep your tickets easily accessible. When exploring historic interiors like **Ninomaru Palace**, note that photography is generally restricted inside the buildings to protect ancient painted screens and delicate architectural elements.*

Day 5: Kyoto Cultural Tour — Fushimi Inari, Kiyomizudera, Ninenzaka & Sannenzaka, Yasaka Shrine & Gion

After breakfast, set out on a full-day immersive exploration of **Kyoto**—Japan's former imperial capital, home to 17 UNESCO World Heritage sites, over 1,000 Buddhist temples, and 400 Shinto shrines, renowned for traditional arts, tea ceremonies, and geisha culture.

Begin your morning bright and early at **Fushimi Inari Taisha Shrine** to beat the crowds. Founded in 711 AD and dedicated to the Shinto god of rice, agriculture, and industry, the shrine is famous for **Senbon Torii** (*thousands of vermilion torii gates*) that form a seemingly endless, highly photogenic corridor across the wooded hillside. Along the way, spot numerous guardian fox statues—messengers of Inari—many holding keys to the sacred rice granaries. (*Tip: While a full hike to the summit takes 2–3 hours, most visitors walk 30–40 minutes to the Yotsutsuji intersection*).

Next, visit **Kiyomizudera Temple**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site perched on eastern Kyoto's hillside. Admire the legendary main hall constructed entirely without nails, and step out onto the iconic wooden stage jutting over the hillside for stunning city and nature views. Explore the grounds to drink from the wish-granting **Otowa Waterfall**, visit **Jishu Shrine** and the **Hondo (Main Hall)**, and experience the spiritual **Tainai-Meguri** room.

Afterward, take a nostalgic stroll up the well-preserved sloping streets of **Ninenzaka and Sannenzaka**, lined with traditional wooden storefronts, quaint tea houses, and local craft shops.

Continue your day at **Yasaka Shrine**, the 1,350-year-old guardian shrine of the Gion district famously associated with good fortune, wealth, and beauty, and the home of July's vibrant **Gion Matsuri** festival. Adjacent to the shrine lies **Gion**, Kyoto's most famous geisha district. Wander through cobblestone lanes framed by preserved **machiya** (wooden townhouses) and **ochaya** (teahouses), catching glimpses of **Geiko** and **Maiko** (apprentice geishas) in elaborate kimonos heading to evening appointments as lanterns glow at dusk. Conclude your tour as your team escorts you back to your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel in Kyoto

Expert Sightseeing Insights:
Fushimi Inari *and* ***Kiyomizudera*** *are exceptionally scenic year-round, from spring cherry blossoms to autumn foliage. Wear comfortable walking shoes, as exploring the temple staircases and stone slopes of* ***Ninenzaka and Sannenzaka*** *involves significant walking on foot.*

Day 6: Kyoto to Nara and Osaka — Todaiji Temple, Nara Park, Osaka Castle & Dotonbori

Depart **Kyoto** this morning for **Nara**, Japan's first permanent capital and second most culturally rich city boasting 8 World Cultural Heritage sites. Arrive at **Todaiji Temple**, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of Japan's most historically significant temples. Step inside the **Daibutsu-den (Big Buddha Hall)**—one of the world's largest all-wood buildings—to view the world's largest bronze statue of the B**uddha Vairocana**, which stands just over 16m high and consists of 437 tonnes of bronze and 130kg of gold. It represents Vairocana Buddha and is flanked by two Bodhisattvas.

Walk next into **Nara Park**, famous for hundreds of freely roaming deer considered sacred messengers in Shinto tradition. Purchase deer crackers (*shika senbei*) to feed them as you stroll toward **Kasuga Taisha (Kasuga Grand Shrine)**, Nara's celebrated UNESCO-listed Shinto shrine renowned for thousands of stone and bronze lanterns lining its forested paths.

In the afternoon, board your private vehicle for a 45-to-60-minute drive to **Osaka**, Japan's third-largest economic hub and famously known as the "nation's kitchen". Visit **Osaka Castle Park**, spanning 105.6 hectares. Built originally in 1583 by **Toyotomi Hideyoshi**, explore the massive moats, gates, and gigantic stone walls inscribed with feudal crests, overlook the towering **Main Tower (Tenshukaku)**, and wander through **Nishinomaru Garden**.

Conclude your day shopping at **Shinsaibashi-suji Shopping Street** and exploring the vibrant entertainment district of **Dotonbori**, where luminous neon signs line the waterways. Snap a photo at the iconic **Glico Man sign** and sample local specialties like *takoyaki* (octopus balls), *kushikatsu* (deep-fried skewers), and *okonomiyaki* (savory pancakes). (*Free time idea: Visit the nostalgic Showa-era neighborhood of* ***Shinsekai*** *to see the historic* ***Tsutenkaku Tower***). Afterward, your team will escort you to your 4-star hotel in Osaka.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel in Osaka

Expert Transit & Sightseeing Insights:
Moving between Kyoto, Nara, and Osaka by private vehicle ensures a smooth, luggage-friendly transition across the Kansai region. When feeding deer in Nara Park, keep snacks securely stored

until you are ready to feed them.

Day 7: Osaka to Hiroshima & Back by Shinkansen — Peace Memorial Park, Atomic Bomb Dome & Itsukushima Shrine

Set out early this morning as your guide meets you at your **Osaka** hotel to accompany you to **Osaka Station**. Board the high-speed **Shinkansen** for a fast and efficient 300-kilometer journey (~1.5–2 hours) to **Hiroshima**, a modern city defined by broad boulevards and meandering rivers that tirelessly champions global peace and understanding. Upon arrival at **Hiroshima Station**, your guide will assist you with local public transit to explore the city's profound historical and cultural landmarks.

Visit the **Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park**, a poignant monument dedicated to the victims of the August 6, 1945 atomic bomb. Stand before the iconic **Atomic Bomb Dome** (the former Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall), which miraculously survived being located just 160 meters beneath the bomb's hypocenter and now stands as a UNESCO World Heritage site symbolizing peace and a warning against nuclear warfare. Explore the **Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum** to view powerful exhibits, personal artifacts, and photographs detailing the tragedy and the city's remarkable post-war recovery.

In the afternoon, journey to nearby **Miyajima Island** on a short ferry ride to visit the world-renowned **Itsukushima Shrine**. Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, marvel at the architectural wonder of the shrine and its famous giant red **Torii Gate** that appears to float magically on the sea during high tide.

Conclude your day as your guide escorts you via public transit back to **Hiroshima Station** to board the **Shinkansen** return trip to **Osaka**. Upon arriving back at **Osaka Station**, you will be transferred smoothly back to your 4-star hotel for a restful evening.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: 4-Star Hotel in Osaka

Expert Transit & Travel Insights:
Because the round-trip distance between Osaka and Hiroshima spans roughly 300 kilometers each way, taking the Shinkansen is by far the most efficient option compared to a 4-to-5-hour driving time. For hotel transfers to Osaka Station, private vehicles are arranged for groups exceeding 8, while smaller groups experience local public transportation alongside your guide.

Day 8: Osaka Departure — Farewell to Japan & Airport Transfer

After breakfast at your hotel, your 8-day Japan group tour comes to an end. Depending on your flight schedule, make your own way to **Kansai International Airport (KIX)** in Osaka for your departure flight. (*Tip: If you prefer a private transfer from your hotel to the airport, you can contact travel experts in advance to arrange it*). Thank you for choosing us for your journey. Have a safe trip home, and we look forward to welcoming you on your next adventure in Asia!

Meals: Breakfast

Booking Policy

Cancellation Policy

Cancellation by Customer

- Cancellation received before 60 days: FREE of charge
- Cancellation received from 30 days to 59 days prior arrival date: 20% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 15 days to 29 days prior arrival date: 40% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 7 days to 14 days prior arrival date: 70% of total rate
- Cancellation received less than 7 days prior arrival date or No show: 100% of total rate

Children Policy

The rate for children applicable for one child sharing a twin or double cabin with two adults.

- For infant (<04 years old): Free of Charge
- 04 - 11 years old without bed: 50% adult rate
- 04 - 11 years old with extra bed: 75% adult rate
- Above 11 years old with extra bed: 100% adult rate

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