



07 - 21 November 2022

# Japan's Sacred Mountains & beyond UNESCO World Heritage Autumn Leaves Tour

## Pricing

Share Twin: \$7055.00  
Single : \$7670.00

Pricing is per person, land only and subject to exchange rate (terms and conditions apply)

For more information, please contact your travel agent

# Where do we go - And Why?



There are only two UNESCO World Heritage Listed pilgrimage walks. One being "The Way of St. James" in Spain and the other "Kumano Kodo" in Wakayama Prefecture Japan. In 2014 Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau and Turismo de Santiago de Compostela signed a Partnership Cities Agreement to promote and preserve the unique UNESCO World Heritage Pilgrimage Routes of Kumano Kodo and the Way of St. James. They are the pilgrimages of the Rising and the Setting Sun.

By completing one of the options for both the Kumano Kodo and the Way of St. James (Camino de Santiago) and registering at a designated site, one can become a "Dual Pilgrim". 2015 was a very significant year as it marked the 1200th Anniversary of the establishment of Koyasan. Until 1873 women were not permitted to enter this sacred and spiritual area of Koyasan.

**Tokyo** the Capital of Japan and home to some 31,000,000 people is one of the most exciting and vibrant cities in Asia. Age old traditions and modern technology meld together in this fast moving metropolis.

**Nara** was the first permanent Capital of Japan founded in 710 and consequently you will find many magnificent historical structures from the 6th - 8th centuries still left intact.

## Kumano Kodo:

There are three unique sacred sites located deep within the rugged mountains of the Kii-Peninsula of Japan. These sacred sites, Kumano Sanzan, Koyasan and Yoshino & Omine and the amazing pilgrimage routes that connect them all were listed on UNESCO's World Heritage List on July 7, 2004. They are known as the "Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes of the Kii Mountain Range".

This Mystical area encompasses spiritual Koyasan and the Kumano Sanzan (Grand Shrines of Kumano Hongu Taisha, Kumano Hayatama Taisha and Kumano Nachi Taisha). Walk in the footsteps of pilgrims past and present, visit Yunomine Onsen which is the only UNESCO World Heritage listed Hot Springs that you can bathe in.

In Koyasan we will stay in a Buddhist Temple which has a history of over 1000 years. Witness the day-to-day life of the Buddhist Monks including the Buddhist morning ceremony and Gomataki Fire Ritual.

Soak in one of Japan's three most famous "beautifying" Onsens at the Kamigoten Ryokan in Ryujin Onsen and enjoy delicious food from the mountains and the sea. Watch the sunset and sunrise over the Pacific Ocean from the base of the working lighthouse at the Japan Holistic Hotel Taiji. Enjoy a thrilling ride on the Dorokyo Gorge Jet Boat. Experience age old traditions of indigo dyeing, Taiko drumming and enjoy Ume (Plum Liqueur) tasting.

In 794 **Kyoto** or as originally known as Heian-kyo "Tranquillity and Peace Capital" became the seat of Japan's Imperial Court and remained the capital of Japan until 1868 when at the time of the Imperial Restoration the Government was transferred to Edo now known as Tokyo. Whether you are looking for history, art, craft, culture, gardens, Temples, Shrines, excellent restaurants and beautiful walks Kyoto has it all and more on offer.

From Tokyo to Nara the original Capital of Japan, to Koyasan and through the Sacred Mountains of Japan to Kyoto an elegant and cultural delight, this Tour opens a new and exciting door into Japan each and every day.

This is a small group tour of maximum 14 clients plus an Experienced Australian Tour Escort. Our Japanese Government Certified Guide joins the tour 12th November through to 16th November 2022..

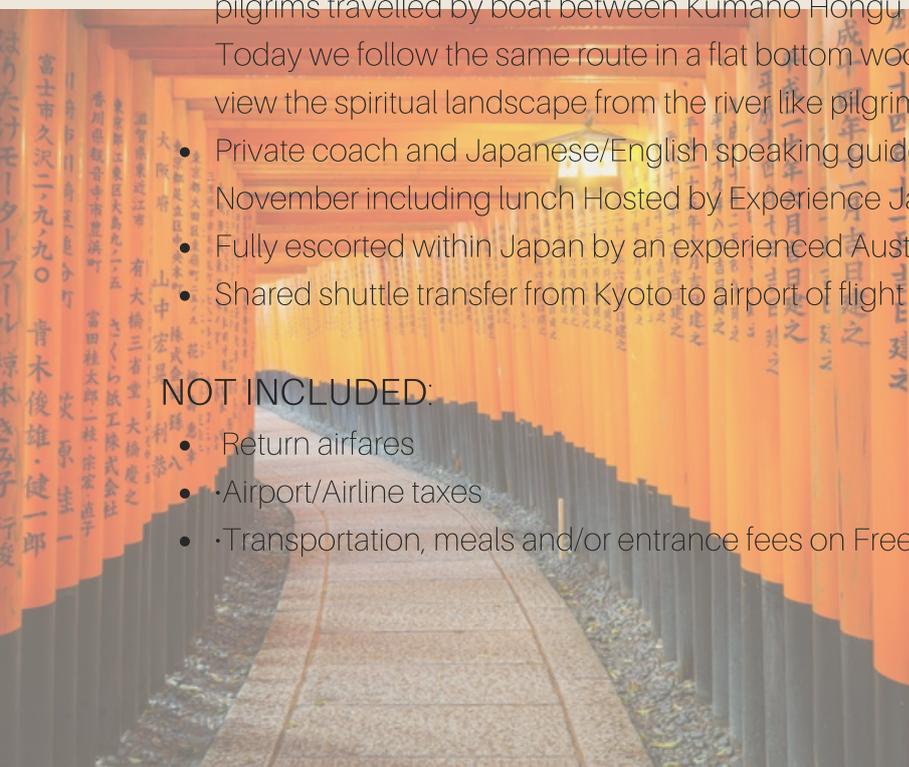


# Inclusions

- 14 night's accommodation including one night Temple stay and two nights traditional Japanese Ryokan accommodation
- Meals : 12 breakfasts : 3 lunches : 6 dinners
- All transportation as per itinerary including Shinkansen (bullet train)
- Shared private shuttle transfer from arrival at Narita Airport to Tokyo Hotel or taxi/shared shuttle from Haneda Airport to Tokyo Hotel
- Luggage transfer Tokyo to Kyoto (1 piece of luggage per person)
- All sightseeing and entrance fees as per itinerary
- Private coach and Japanese/English speaking Government Certified guide 12th November to 16th November 2022 whilst travelling through UNESCO World Heritage Kumano Kodo.
- Walk 7.3kms on UNESCO World Heritage Kumano Kodo trail (alternative arrangements available for those not wishing to walk)
- Cultural activities e.g. indigo dyeing, visiting a cultural centre in Kumano Kodo, Ume (Japanese plum wine) tasting and visiting a unique Wood Jewellery Shop
- Traditional Boat Ride on the Kumano River. The Kumano River is the only waterway on the planet that is registered as a UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE Pilgrimage Route. Historically, pilgrims travelled by boat between Kumano Hongu Taisha and Kumano Hayatama Taisha. Today we follow the same route in a flat bottom wooden boat. This is an excellent way to view the spiritual landscape from the river like pilgrims past.
- Private coach and Japanese/English speaking guide for private day tour of Kyoto on 18th November including lunch Hosted by Experience Japan
- Fully escorted within Japan by an experienced Australian Escort
- Shared shuttle transfer from Kyoto to airport of flight departure e.g. Itami/Osaka or Kansai

## NOT INCLUDED:

- Return airfares
- Airport/Airline taxes
- Transportation, meals and/or entrance fees on Free Days



# Itinerary

## Monday : 7th November :

Arrival into Narita Airport and transfer by shared private shuttle to our Tokyo Hotel for our three (3) night stay.

If arriving into Haneda Airport transfer by taxi/shared shuttle to our Tokyo Hotel.

Accommodation: Shiba Park Hotel Tokyo: 7th - 10th November

## Tuesday : 8th - Wednesday : 9th November : At Leisure :

There are optional tours available which are highly recommended to pre-book prior to your departure from Australia.

Alternatively your Tour Escort is readily available for suggestions and assistance and will take you sightseeing around Tokyo by subway and local transport. (B)

## Thursday : 10th November : Tokyo to Nara via Kyoto :

Those wishing to transfer their large luggage to Kyoto please have your luggage available adjacent to the Reception Desk on the Ground Floor no later than 7:15am. (1 piece of luggage per person included in Tour).

Transfer to Tokyo Station by mini-bus and depart on the Shinkansen for Kyoto with an onward transfer by local train for Nara.

Our accommodation is located adjacent to Nara Station. Leave our luggage at our Hotel and visit Todaiji Temple and the Giant Daibutsu (Buddha). Remainder of day at leisure.

Accommodation: Piazza Hotel Nara : 10th - 11th November

## Friday 11th November : Nara to Koyasan :

Depart Nara this morning by local train for Koyasan. We will be changing trains at Shin-Imamiya and then change again at Gokurakubashi for the Cable Car to ascend the mountain to Koyasan. Bus from Koyasan Cable Car Station to Koyasan and our Temple accommodation for the night.

After lunch we will have an escorted tour through the sacred area of the Okunoin Cemetery where amongst hundreds of centuries old towering cedar trees lie over 200,000 gravestones.

Koyasan is registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. (B/D)



Accommodation: Eko-In Temple – Koyasan : 11th - 12th November

**Saturday : 12th November : Koyasan to Ryujin Onsen :**

Early morning Buddhist ceremony including the Fire Ceremony and after breakfast we will meet with our Guide and visit other important areas in Koyasan.

These will include Kongobuji which is the Head Temple of Koyasan Shingon Buddhism and the Danjo Garan Complex.

We will depart Koyasan at 2:00pm and travel over the beautiful Skyline drive to Ryujin Onsen for our overnight stay. Relax in the Onsen (Hot Springs) tonight. (B/D)

Accommodation: Kamigoten Ryokan in Ryujin Onsen : 12th - 13th November

**Sunday : 13th November : Ryujin Onsen to Kawayu Onsen :**

After breakfast this morning we will drive through to Kawayu Onsen and the Midoriya Hotel for our 2 night stay.

Today is a cultural day and in the morning we will have the experience of Indigo dyeing and will also visit a local craft centre. Drive to Takahara and enjoy lunch at Kiri No Sato whilst taking in some spectacular scenery.

Onto Yunomine Onsen for a visit and this is one of only two UNESCO World Heritage Listed Hot Springs but it is the only one that you can bathe in. Drive to Kawayu Onsen for our two (2) night stay. (B/L/D)

Accommodation : Midoriya Hotel in Kawayu Onsen : 13th - 15th November

**Monday : 14th November :**

Breakfast and then we will drive to Hongu and visit the Hongu Visitor's Centre. Those not wishing to do the walk today can remain in Hongu sightseeing and relaxing then meet with the walkers later this afternoon.

The walk today is a lovely walk through the mountains and small villages. The walkers will take the bus through to Kumano Kodo Hosshinmon-oji and walk the World Heritage Kumano Kodo trail through to Kumano Hongu Taisha (7.3 kms). All the walks on the Kumano Kodo Trail are graded with the most difficult walk being 5.0. Today's walk is graded as a 2.0 degree of difficulty. We will then meet with the non-walkers and tonight after dinner we will enjoy Taiko (Japanese Drumming) (B/L/D)



### **Tuesday : 15th November : Kawayu Onsen : Kii Katsuura :**

Breakfast and then we will drive through to Michi-no-Eki Kumanogawa where we will embark on a Traditional Boat Ride on the Kumano River. The Kumano River is the only waterway on the planet that is registered as a UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE Pilgrimage Route.

Historically, pilgrims travelled by boat between Kumano Hongu Taisha and Kumano Hayatama Taisha. Today we follow the same route in a flat bottom wooden boat. This is an excellent way to view the spiritual landscape from the river like pilgrims past.

This afternoon we will visit the Kumano Hayatama Taisha, Daimonzaka, Kumano Nachi Taisha, Seiganto-ji Temple and walk to the famous Nachi waterfalls. Onto the Hotel Urashima for our overnight stay and enjoy the famous Bokhido Cave baths. (B/D)

Accommodation: Hotel Urashima : Kii Katsuura : 15th - 16th November

### **Wednesday : 16th November : Kii Katsuura to Tanabe :**

After breakfast this morning we will have a brief visit to the Fish Markets, then on our way to Tanabe we will visit the 1000 tatami mat rock formation, Hashigui-Iwa rocks and relax our feet in the footbath at Shirahama.

Lunch at Tore Tore Ichiba and then we will visit a liqueur tasting factory before arriving into Tanabe around 3:00pm. Afternoon free and tonight we will enjoy dinner at an Izakaya Pub. (B/D)

Accommodation: Hanaya Hotel Tanabe or similar : 16th - 17th November

### **Thursday : 17th November : Tanabe to Kyoto :**

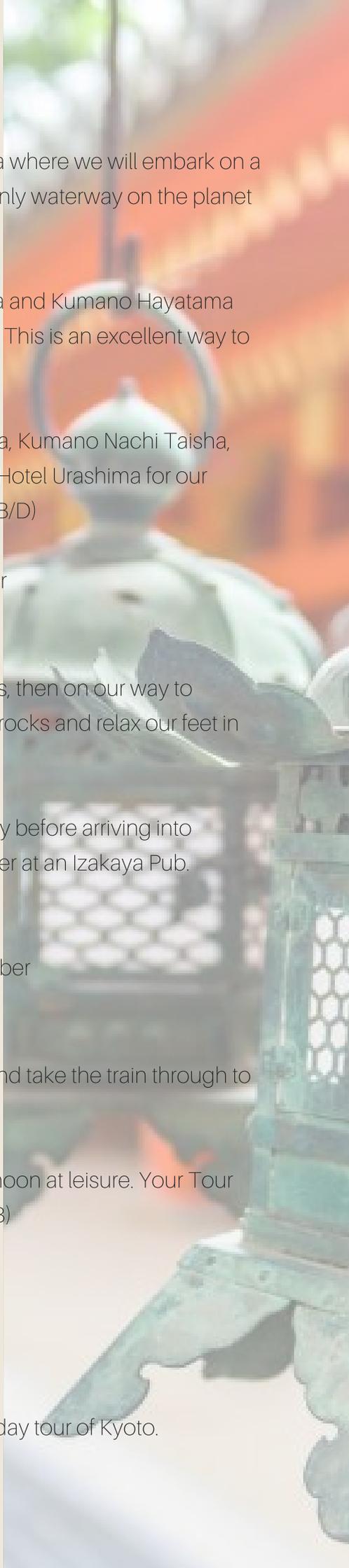
Breakfast this morning and then make our way to Kii Tanabe Station and take the train through to Kyoto.

On arrival at around midday we will transfer to our Hotel by taxis. Afternoon at leisure. Your Tour Escort can assist with sightseeing and/or shopping options. (B)  
Alternatively join the "Tea with Maiko" afternoon tour.

Accommodation: Karasuma Hotel Kyoto : 17th - 21st November

### **Friday : 18th November : Kyoto :**

Breakfast and then meet with our local Tour Guide and coach for our day tour of Kyoto.



With the exception of Fushimi Inari Shrine all the sightseeing venues today are UNESCO World Heritage Listed. Visit the famous Ryoanji Temple with its beautiful Zen Garden which dates from the 15th century.

Onto Kinkakuji "Golden Pavilion" whose walls are completely covered with gold leaf. Our next stop is Nijojo Castle built in 1603 as a residence for the first Tokugawa Shogun.

After lunch (Hosted by Experience Japan) we traverse to the opposite side of Kyoto and visit the Fushimi Inari Shrine which is the headquarters of about 40,000 Inari shrines all over Japan. Founded in 711 it is also noted for the sight of 7,000+ torii (shrine gates) that are positioned over a long path up to the hill behind the shrine. (B/L)

### **Saturday : 19th November : Kyoto at leisure :**

Day tours such as Hiroshima/Miyajima, Walking Arashiyama are available. It is recommended to prebook these tours prior to your departure from Australia.

If you would like to join with your Tour Escort she is happy to take you sightseeing and/or shopping around Kyoto. Some sights to be included would be Kiyomizu-dera, Sannenzaka & Ninnenzaka, Maruyama Park, Ginkaku-ji and the Path of Philosophy (B)

### **Sunday : 20th November : Kyoto at leisure :**

Your Tour Escort can give you suggestions for sightseeing or if you wish, she will take you sightseeing - Heian Shrine, Miyako Messe Exhibition Hall and maybe Arashiyama and the famous Bamboo Groves.

Later this afternoon or early evening you will be advised of your pickup time for the Airport Shuttle tomorrow morning to take you to either Itami or Kansai Airports. (B)

### **Monday 21st November : Departure for Australia :**

This morning please check-out of your room. The Hotel will mind your luggage until it is time for your departure on the Airport Shuttle. Please be in the Hotel Foyer 10 minutes prior to pick-up time. (B)