

Tailor-Made Japan Explorer

hosted by Leah Mullen from Tailor-Made
Travel Mt Gambier



About Your Trip

Start Location

Tokyo – Japan

Finish Location

Okinawa – Japan

Accommodation

Hotel (14 nights)

Included Meals

Breakfast (14)

Lunch (1)

Dinner (4)

Transport

Air-conditioned vehicle for airport transfers. Bullet train, local train, public transport

Leader/Guide

English Speaking Leader throughout

Included Activities

Per Daily itinerary

Entrance/Admission Fees

Where applicable with included activities

Airport Transfers

Arrival and departure transfers are included on a group basis

Support

24-hour support from our local office

Exclusions

- International airport departure tax
- Any visas required
- Services not mentioned in the itinerary
- Late check out at hotels
- Meals and drinks not mentioned in the itinerary
- Drinks with included lunches and dinners
- Tips for leaders, guide and driver
- Expenditure of personal nature
- Personal Insurance
- Optional activities

Tailor-Made Japan Explorer

15 days/ 14 nights

10th October – 24th October 2024

Day 1 / Thursday, 10 October 2024

Arrival (NRT/HND) – Tokyo

Meals Included: Dinner

Konnichiwa! Welcome to Japan. Your adventure begins in the country's lively capital, Tokyo. You will have a private transfer for the whole group and meet your tour leader at the airport.

If you get to the city early, there are many sides of Tokyo to explore, from fascinating museums and world-class shopping, to neighbourhood backstreets lined with hole in the wall eateries and bars. After your meeting, have a welcome dinner at a local restaurant. Tokyo's food scene is undoubtedly one of the world's best, and the city truly celebrates the art of eating well. Sample a range of regional and seasonal delights including handmade soba noodles, crispy tempura and yakitori. After dinner, you may like to experience Tokyo's vibrant drinking culture and head to a local izakaya.

Arrival Transfer

- Included (Group Basis)

Included Activities

- Tokyo – Welcome meeting & Dinner

Accommodation

Asakusa View

Special Information

Flights booked independently by travel agent
10 October Flight QF 79 - MEL-NRT (1025 – 1900)

Day 2 / Friday, 11 October 2024

Tokyo

Meals Included: Breakfast

Bursting with contemporary urban culture and historic temples and shrines, Tokyo has so much to uncover. Exploring the world's largest city alone can be a daunting task, but today your leader will

introduce you to the old and new Tokyo on a half-day tour. Begin in the Asakusa area, one of the older and more traditional parts of Tokyo, often called the temple district. Here you'll stop by Sensoji, the city's oldest temple – founded almost 1400 years ago when Tokyo was nothing more than a fishing village. Browse the many interesting stalls filled with tasty treats, crafts and souvenirs that line the shopping street of Nakamise dori. Then jump on the metro to explore the buzzing Shibuya area.

Afterwards, enjoy some peaceful bliss at Yoyogi Park and Meiji Shrine before diving into Harajuku district, the home of quirky youth pop culture. Then get a birds-eye view of Tokyo from Shibuya Sky, a three-floor, 360-degree, open-air observation deck 46 storeys above the city. Enjoy a toast to Tokyo with an included drink at the rooftop bar, as you soak in the view.

Included Activities

- Tokyo – One Day Subway Pass
- Tokyo – Asakusa Sensoji Temple
- Tokyo - Meiji Jingu Shrine & Harajuku
- Tokyo - Yoyogi Park
- Tokyo - Shibuya Sky with Drink

Accommodation

Asakusa View

Day 3 / Saturday, 12 October 2024

Tokyo

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

This morning, get ready for a delicious experience at the famous Tsukiji Outer Market, where fresh seafood from Tokyo's largest wholesale fish market (recently relocated to a new site at Toyosu) is delivered and ready to sample daily. Your leader will provide insight into the underwater treasures that go into the local cuisine, then you will attend a wonderful sushi making class from a 4th generation sushi family to learn about the art and history of this Japanese cuisine that's so loved across the world. Learn how to make nigiri sushi and hand-rolled sushi, then enjoy your fresh creations for lunch.

After learning some valuable skills to take home with you, you can join your leader for a short walking tour in the Ginza area and then enjoy a free afternoon in the city. Perhaps check out the Yayoi Kusama Museum for its amazing exhibits by the avant-garde artist (advance reservation required), browse high-end shops in Ginza, experience the theatre of a kabuki play, or create your own entertainment with some karaoke.

Included Activities

- Tokyo – One Day Subway Pass

- Tokyo - Tsukiji Outer Market
- Tokyo - Sushi Making Class

Accommodation

Asakusa View

Day 4 / Sunday, 13 October 2024

Tokyo - Hakone

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

Say sayonara to Tokyo this morning and board a train bound for the mountainous onsen (hot spring) town of Hakone. Away from the hustle and bustle of Tokyo, Hakone offers tranquillity among stunning natural scenery. On arrival, take a cable car up the mountains to the sulphur vents of Owakudani, followed by a boat trip across the serene Ashinoko Lake. Enjoy spectacular views, and on a clear day, you will catch a glimpse of Mt Fuji in the distance. Check in to the hotel, accommodation for the evening. Here you'll experience the design and ambience of a traditional Japanese ryokan without sacrificing modern comforts. Each room comes with a private onsen, and there are also larger public indoor and outdoor onsens that overlook the surrounding greenery to make use of.

Tonight, you'll enjoy dinner at the on-site restaurants which serves up a feast of classic Japanese dishes, then after getting your fill, spend a blissful evening relaxing in your onsen.

Included Activities

- Hakone – Hakone Free 2 days pass
- Hakone – Cable car/Ropeway
- Hakone – Lake Ashinoko boat cruise

Optional Activities

- Hakone – Yunessan Onsen – From JPY2500

Special Information

People with tattoos may not be allowed to enter the public bath. In that case, ask the tourism office for some places that may have a private bath.

Accommodation

Ichinoyu Susukinohara

Day 5 / Monday, 14 October 2024

Hakone - Takayama

Meals Included: Breakfast

Today, travel to Takayama via shinkansen (bullet train), with a few changes along the way.

Takayama is a charming Edo-period town located in the Japanese alps. Renowned for its traditional

inns, sake breweries and tranquil atmosphere, this riverside jewel of central Honshu may well be one of the most enjoyable stops on your trip.

On arrival, head out on a walking tour with your leader who will point out examples of beautiful traditional architecture as you explore the old part of town. Learn how the town's isolated location caused it to develop a unique culinary scene. The area is particularly famous for Hida beef, which comes from a black-haired Japanese cattle breed that has been raised in Gifu Prefecture for at least 14 months. Stop off on your tour to sample delicious Hida beef sushi or skewers.

Enjoy a free evening and your leader will be able to point out some great restaurants to try more signature local food.

Included Activities

- Takayama – Leader-led walking tour (with street food sampling)

Special Information

We will send your suitcases on to Hiroshima today, since you will travel a lot by trains and public transportation during the next days. Please prepare a light overnight backpack for Takayama. Your guide will help you this morning. One suitcase per person is included; if you wish to send additional luggage, the cost is around JPY1800-2500 per bag paid locally.

Accommodation

Around Takayama

Day 6 / Tuesday, 15 October 2024

Takayama

Meals Included: Breakfast

Start the day with a visit to the Takayama morning market. The Gifu region is known for its production of high-altitude vegetables, and local women have been travelling in from the countryside to sell their produce for more than 600 years. Your leader will guide you through the market stalls selling colourful pickles, bags of miso wrapped in leaves, genkotsu ame (soy bean candy), preserved fish, spices, and the delicious marshmallow treat of owara tamaten.

After some time to peruse the local treats, hop on a public bus and head to the village of Shirakawa-go, home to charming thatched-roof cottages built in the gassho-zukuri style. Learn about ancient countryside life with your leader and explore the fairy-tale village against the magnificent backdrop of the Japanese Alps. Enjoy some free time in Takayama after you return in the afternoon. Perhaps check out Takayama Festival Floats Exhibition Hall which has an excellent array of festival floats on display.

Included Activities

- Takayama – Morning Market visit
- Takayama – round-trip to Shirakawago Village by public bus

Optional Activities

- Takayama – Festival Floats Exhibition Hall – JPY 1000

Accommodation

Around Takayama

Day 7 / Wednesday, 16 October 2024

Takayama - Hiroshima

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

Today you will travel by train to Hiroshima, a friendly and cosmopolitan city with a tragic past. Today Hiroshima is thriving – the city is full of distinctive cuisine, tightknit communities and a focus on promoting world peace. On arrival, head out with your leader for an orientation walk to familiarise yourself with the city. After working up an appetite, head to a local restaurant for dinner and try some of Hiroshima's signature dishes. The city is renowned for its fantastic oysters and okonomiyaki – a delicious savoury pancake made with egg, cabbage, soba noodles and meat or seafood.

Included Activities

- Hiroshima – Leader-led orientation walk
- Hiroshima – Okonomiyaki Dinner

Accommodation

Intergate Hiroshima

Day 8 / Thursday, 17 October 2024

Hiroshima

Meals Included: Breakfast

This morning you'll visit the Genbaku (A-Bomb) Dome and the Peace Memorial Park and Museum. Your leader will share the devastating story of the fateful day in August 1945 when Hiroshima was attacked by atomic warfare. The dome was just metres from the atomic site and was able to retain its shape – serving as a reminder of the attack and now symbol of peace. The memorial park serves a similar purpose, and has museums, memorials and monuments dedicated to the memory of victims, education on what led to the bomb's use, as well as advocating world peace.

After your visit, take a short ferry ride to the island of Miyajima. The island is home to the Shinto shrine of Itsukushima, known for its huge bright orange gate (torii) that rises majestically out of the sea. Miyajima is an ideal place for walking. There is the lovely Momiji Park from where it is possible to walk or take a cable car up to the top of Mt Misen. Return to Hiroshima for an evening at leisure.

Included Activities

- Hiroshima - Miyajima Island day trip
- Miyajima - Itsukushima-jinja Shrine
- Hiroshima - Peace Park & A - Bomb Dome
- Hiroshima - Peace Museum

Optional Activities

- Miyajima – Mt. Misen Ropeway (round-trip) – JPY 2000

Accommodation

Intergate Hiroshima

Day 9 / Friday, 18 October 2024**Hiroshima - Kyoto**

Meals Included: Breakfast

As you speed north to Kyoto on shinkansen, you'll stop en route at Japan's most impressive samurai castle at Himeji. The building, which has survived earthquakes and war since the mid-16th century, was restored to its full glory in 2015. Explore the castle that was once home to over 10,000 samurai families, learn about their lives and look out over the castle grounds and the city below.

Arrive in Kyoto mid-afternoon. Originally founded as Heian-kyo (literally 'tranquillity and peace capital') by Emperor Kammu in 794, Kyoto had its golden age during the imperial court's heyday from 794 to 1185. Join your leader and walk around Gion, Kyoto's most famous geisha district, and learn about the history of geisha culture as you explore old wooden teahouses and exclusive restaurants. It's a great idea to return here in the evening when it really springs to life. You might spot geikos (geishas) or maikos (apprentice geishas) with their elaborate dress and make up on their way out to events.

Included Activities

- Himeji – Himeji Castle
- Kyoto – Gion district walk

Special Information

We will send your suitcases on to Kyoto today, since you will travel a lot by train on the next day. To be safe, please prepare a light backpack with the most necessary belongings. Your guide will help you this morning. One suitcase per person is included; if you wish to send additional luggage, the cost is around JPY1800-2500 per bag paid locally.

Accommodation

Intergate Kyoto Shijo Shinmachi

Day 10 / Saturday, 19 October 2024

Kyoto

Meals Included: Breakfast

Begin your day with a city tour around some of Kyoto's sights. Visit the extravagantly decorated Kinkakuji Temple, immortalised in Yukio Mishima's novel 'The Golden Pavilion'.

Afterwards visit Daitokuji Temple –the head temple of the Daitokuji School of the Rinzaï sect of Zen Buddhism – built about 800 years ago. Take part in a short guided meditation session, then enjoy a cup of green tea while you speak to a monk about the philosophy of Zen Buddhism and the art of meditation, dedicated to finding inner peace. This spiritual experience will reveal a side of Japan that most visitors don't get to see, and is sure to be one of the lasting memories of your journey.

The rest of the day is yours to enjoy – perhaps grab a bite to eat at the Nishiki Market, called 'Kyoto's kitchen' by the locals.

Included Activities

- Kyoto – Kinkakuji temple (Golden pavilion)
- Kyoto – Daitokuji temple
- Kyoto – Zen meditation session
- Kyoto – One day metro & bus pass

Optional Activities

- Kyoto – Kiyomizu temple – JPY400
- Kyoto – International Kyoto Manga Museum – JPY900
- Kyoto – Arashiyama Bamboo forest

Accommodation

Intergate Kyoto Shijo Shinmachi

Day 11 / Sunday, 20 October 2024

Kyoto

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

This morning, head to Kyoto's famed Fushimi Inari Shrine – known throughout the world as the 'Path of the Red Gates.' Take time to appreciate the quieter corners of the shrine, and if you're feeling fit, a walk to the halfway point provides stunning city views. Continue with a short train ride and walk to a renowned sake brewery. Your visit to the brewery covers every aspect of sake creation – with full-scale historical artefacts in abundance, and a chance to taste different types of sake at the end of your visit.

Included Activities

- Kyoto – Fushimi Inari Shrine
- Kyoto – Sake brewery visit & tasting

Optional Activities

- Kyoto – Nijo Castle – JPY1300
- Kyoto – Kodaiji temple – JPY600

Accommodation

Intergate Kyoto Shijo Shinmachi

Day 12 / Monday, 21 October 2024**Kyoto – Okinawa (Naha)**

Meals Included: Breakfast

This morning, you'll have a private coach to ITM/KIX airport, then fly to Okinawa. Upon arrival at Naha airport, make your way to Okinawa World, a cultural theme park located near the southern tip of Okinawa Honto, about ten kilometers south of Naha. Explore the massive natural cave and experience the cultural attractions. After your visit, head to your hotel in Naha, the capital city of Okinawa, for an overnight stay.

Included Activities

- Kyoto - Departure airport transfer
- Naha – Arrival airport transfer
- Naha – Okinawa World

Accommodation

Tokyu Stay Okinawa Naha

Special Information

Flights booked independently by travel agent
21 October Flight JL2087 - ITM -OKA (1450 – 1655)

Day 13 / Tuesday, 22 October 2024**Naha - Onnason**

Meals Included: Breakfast

Begin your day with a visit to Kokusai Dori in Naha, where you can explore the bustling shopping street and savor local delicacies.

Then, head to the majestic Shuri Castle, a World Heritage site, and immerse yourself in the rich history and architecture of Okinawa.

Afterward, make your way to Himeyuri no To, a memorial dedicated to the tragic events of World War II, and pay your respects, before continue your journey to Nakijin Gusuku, a stunning fortress offering panoramic views of the surroundings.

Conclude your day by heading to your hotel in Onnason, a resort area known for its beautiful beaches and luxurious accommodations, where you can unwind and relax after a day of exploration.

Included Activities

- Naha – Kokusai Dori Street
- Shuri – Shuri Castle
- Itoman – Himeyuri no To
- Itoman – Okinawa Peace Memorial Museum
- Nakijin – Nakijin Gusuku ruin

Accommodation

Kafuu Resort Fuchaku

Day 14 / Wednesday, 23 October 2024

Onnason

Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner

Today, you'll have a full day at your leisure. Onna-son, a village in Okinawa, has a rich historical background, with cultural properties dating back to the Gusuku era 3,500 years ago. The area is known for its picturesque coastal scenery, making it a popular tourist destination. Onna is known for its popular attractions, including Blue Cave, Cape Manzamo, Cape Maeda, Manza Beach, and Ryukyu Mura. The village offers a serene and scenic setting for visitors to enjoy nature and explore the local culture and history. In the evening, you'll have a farewell dinner to feast for the end of your trip!

Included Activities

- Onnason – Farewell dinner

Accommodation

Kafuu Resort Fuchaku

Day 15 / Thursday, 24 October 2024

Departure from OKA

Meals Included: Breakfast

Your adventure comes to an end today. There are no further activities planned and check out is by 10 am. You will have a private group transfer to Naha according to your flight time. Sayonara, Japan!

Departure Transfer

- Included (Group Basis)

Special Information

Flights booked independently by travel agent

24 October Flight JL912 - OKA -HND (1400-1625)

24 October Flight QF60 - HND -SYD (2200-0955+1)

24 October Flight QF411 - SYD - MEL (1200-1335)

Finishing Point

Kafuu Resort Fuchaku Condo Hotel

Japan, 〒904-0413 Okinawa, Kunigami District, Onna, 富着志利福地原246-1

Phone: +81 98-964-7000

Finishing Point Instructions

Date	Flight	Departure Time
24th October 2024	JL0912	1430

Your group departure transfer has been organised for the above flight details. If you have not been notified of your collection time, please ask at your hotel reception.

If you are not departing with the rest of the group, please contact your agent to organise a separate transfer at an additional cost.

Package Price

In order to proceed, a non-refundable deposit of AUD1000per person is required and the remaining balance will need to be supplied at [Final.Payment] days prior to departure.

Pricing <u>per person</u> (twin share basis)	Price	Passengers	Subtotal
Tailor-Made Japan Explorer Price per person, including international and domestic flights	\$14,095.00	1	\$14,095.00

Total

\$14,095.00

Additional Services	Price Per product
Single Supplement Single Supplement is compulsory for all single rooms	\$4,450.00

Itinerary Disclaimer

Travel is always an adventure. Our leaders are experts when it comes to dealing with anything unexpected along the journey, so pack your understanding and flexibility, sit back and relax while they take care of the rest.

The word 'adventure' gets thrown around a lot these days. But the way we see it, there are adventures, and there are Adventures. As this itinerary may explore areas that we don't usually go to with our regular product range, places you don't find in your typical travel brochure, it may not have been tried and tested.

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we are visiting on this itinerary sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should anything unexpected occur while you are on your trip, it is best that you discuss this with your group leader or our local representative straight away so that they can do their best to address it and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

For us, adventures like this are at the heart of what it means to be Intrepid: something original, unexpected, and as far from 'the usual' as you're going to get. Wave goodbye to that beaten path.

Pre Departure Information Japan

Important Notes

- Japan is best to explore on foot. In fact, most travellers are surprised at how much distance they end up covering just exploring places on foot! Make sure your shoes are comfy and you are fit enough to spend most of each day on your feet.
- This trip travels primarily on public transport, as it is so efficient and convenient in Japan. Fast trains are used to move between cities, as well as public buses and metro. In order to make the travel easy, we have included luggage transfer (one piece of luggage) between destinations when we are travelling on the train. But please ensure you are still packing light for the trip. You will be expected to transport your luggage through the train stations.
- It is essential you pack light and compact for rail travel in Japan. One piece of big luggage is included for transfer from destination to destination on this trip when we are travelling on the train. For any additional luggage to be transferred, additional charges will apply. There are size restrictions for luggage on Shinkansen trains if you plan to take them with you. Luggage over 160–250 cm may require an additional JPY1000 fee per train journey. Luggage over 251 cm will NOT be permitted on the Shinkansen trains. Please notify your group leader at the welcome meeting if your luggage is over 160–250 cm so they can help you make the necessary arrangements. Please review the Packing section of the ETIs for more details on luggage transfers.

Group leader

On this trip you will be accompanied by one of our tour leaders. The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible.

Your leader will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the places visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We aim to support local guides who have specialised knowledge of the regions we visit. If you were interested in delving deeper into the local culture at a specific site or location then your leader can recommend a local guide service in most of the main destinations of your trip.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

A selection of optional activities that have been popular with past travellers are listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This isn't an exhaustive list and should be used as a guide only. Prices are approximate, are for entrance only and don't include transport to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated. All activities are subject to availability and it may not be possible to do all the activities

listed in the time available at each destination, so some pre-planning for what you are most interested in is advised. When it's recommended that travellers pre-book these activities, look for a note in the Special Information section of the day-to-day itinerary. For most, they can either be organised independently on the day, or just let your leader know you are interested and they can assist.

Where activities are considered medium or high risk, we work with operators whose safety and credentials we have sighted and assessed. This means that it is possible that you may find the same activity cheaper with another operator on the ground, however we cannot vouch for the safety or quality of that operator. Activities not listed above have not been assessed by us and as such our staff and leaders are unable to assist you with organising these activities.

FEEDBACK

Can't stop thinking about your adventure? Tell us all about it! We read each piece of feedback carefully and use it to make improvements for travellers like you. Share your experience with us at: <http://www.intrepidtravel.com/feedback/>

Passports, visas and entry requirements

PASSPORT

You'll need a valid passport to travel internationally and most countries require your passport to have a minimum of 6 months validity, so remember to check the expiry date.

We need your passport information to get everything ready for your trip so it's important that the information on your booking matches your passport exactly. Please take care to provide the correct details. We recommend carrying a copy of the photo page of your passport while travelling and leaving a copy at home with family or friends.

VISAS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Many countries require a visa and obtaining the correct visa for your trip and any countries you may transit through is your responsibility. We recommend you check your visa requirements as soon as you have booked your trip. This will ensure you have time to prepare your documents and for your visa application to be processed. You can check the entry requirements for your nationality on your government's foreign travel advisories, consular websites or on our page here: <http://www.intrepidtravel.com/visa-entry-requirements>

Medical and health information

GENERAL HEALTH

All travellers need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully on this trip. For the safety and wellbeing of yourself and others, if you are unwell prior to travelling, please stay at home and contact us to make alternative arrangements.

When selecting your trip please make sure you have read through the itinerary carefully and assess your ability to manage and enjoy our style of travel. Please note that if in the assessment of our group leader or local representative a traveller is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, we reserve the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip without refund.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information or for any necessary vaccinations before departure. We recommend that you carry a first aid kit as well as any personal medical requirements in their original packaging as they may not easily be obtained while travelling. If you are carrying medication, ensure you check your government's foreign travel advice for any local restrictions or requirements.

Food and dietary requirements

FOOD IN JAPAN

The Japanese daily diet contains gluten (ie. in flavourings such as soy sauce) and seafood (dashi, or fish stock, is the basis of most dishes, even vegetable ones), so we highly recommend that vegetarians, vegans and coeliacs do their own online research before travelling about some of the options that might be available to them. While our leaders will assist you whenever they can, there may be some included meals that are fixed in advance and not flexible, such as those included at ryokans, and cannot be modified for different diets. For those suffering from particular food allergies, your group leader will endeavor to disclose to their fullest knowledge the main ingredients in dishes being consumed. It is, however, still your personal responsibility to ensure that you do not ingest any foods to which you are allergic.

Food and drink are such a high part of Japanese culture. Here are some links to get your tastebuds tingling:

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/adventures/japan-convenience-store-food/>

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/adventures/traditional-tokyo-alleyways-locals-guide/>

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/adventures/eat-and-drink-like-a-local-in-japan/>

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/adventures/vegetarian-vegan-travel-japan/>

Accommodation

RYOKANS & MINSHUKUS

Japanese-style accommodation - ryokans or minshukus (traditional inn/guesthouse) involve sleeping on futons or mattresses on tatami mat floors, with bedding often packed away during the day. Attached bathrooms/toilets will usually be very small and many will only have shared bathing facilities with certain hours, or times available for booking at reception. Your leader will explain etiquette involved in using the shared facilities. As this style of

accommodation will often not have furniture (ie. chairs or beds) in the rooms, please consider choosing a different trip style in Japan if you have difficulty getting up from the floor or have knee, hip or back issues. Some establishments may have a curfew when travellers need to be back in the accommodation - this is usually around midnight. Please also be aware that you would normally be required to change to slippers when entering into your room in such properties. Extra fees will be charged if dirty marks are left on their beddings or towels that require professional cleaning.

AVAILABILITY

The recent huge increase in tourism to Japan has put a lot of pressure on accommodation. On occasion, we may need to change accommodation from what is listed in the itinerary in order to operate your departure with minimal changes.

ONSENS

We like to encourage travellers to visit traditional Japanese 'onsens' while in the country as it is a quintessential local experience. In public onsens this means bathing naked with others of the same gender. While the experience can feel strange at first for some, most of our groups end up enjoying this activity. There is very specific etiquette for visiting onsens - your leader can give you some tips and instructions. Please be aware that travellers with tattoos may not be permitted to enter public onsens. Private onsens may also be available - talk to your leader for more information. See our guide to onsens here: <https://www.intrepidtravel.com/adventures/japan-onsen-guide/>

Transport

Public Bus, Metro, Train, Bullet Train

Money matters

SPENDING MONEY

When it comes to spending money on the trip, every traveller is a little different. You know your spending habits better than we do, so please budget an appropriate amount for things like optional meals, drinks, shopping, optional activities, and laundry. Make sure you have read the itinerary and inclusions thoroughly so you know what is included in the trip price and what you may need to pay for while travelling.

CONTINGENCY FUNDS

We try to plan for every eventuality, but there are still some things beyond our control. We reserve the right to change an itinerary after departure due to local circumstances or a Force Majeure Event. In such emergency circumstances, the additional cost of any necessary itinerary alterations will be covered by you. Please note we are not responsible for any incidental expenses that may be incurred as a result of the change of itineraries including but not limited to visas, vaccinations or non-refundable flights. Make sure you have access to an extra US\$500 for emergencies (e.g. severe weather, natural disasters, civil unrest) or other events that result in unavoidable changes to the itinerary (e.g. transport strikes or cancellations, airport closures). Sometimes these things necessitate last-minute changes to enable our trips to continue to run, and as a result, there may be some extra costs involved. The recommended amount is listed in USD for the relatability of universal travellers, however, local currency may be needed once in the country to cover these costs.

BUDGET FOR MEALS NOT INCLUDED:

Please budget for additional meals and expenses while on your trip. Our suggestion is based on past traveller feedback but you may choose to spend more or less.

The official currency of Japan is Yen (JPY). Japan is predominantly a cash society and locals carry large amounts of cash for daily business. International credit cards can usually only be used at major department stores or large restaurants but cash from non-Japanese bank accounts can be withdrawn via the Cirrus and Maestro systems by direct debiting (as well as Mastercard and Visa cash advance). This is now available at all post office ATMs around the country, as well as 7 Eleven convenience store ATMs, making it very easy to get access to cash throughout the trip at each location 24 hours a day.

Packing

MAIN LUGGAGE

On this trip you will need to carry your own luggage for up to 30 minutes at a time. Train stations are quite complex and usually require a lot of stair climbing, especially when doing a quick transfer from train to train. Elevators aren't always available and cannot accommodate many people at a time, so if you are choosing to bring a suitcase, please ensure you are able to lift and carry it up and down stairs yourself without difficulty. A backpack is

often preferred by travellers for this reason. Our ryokans allow suitcases but you'll need to carry instead of wheeling it onto the tatami floor in the room. Japanese public transport is often quite small and cramped without large luggage racks for big suitcases (even on the shinkansen trains), so it's best to pack as light and small as possible so that you are not blocking aisles or taking up extra seats on trains. If you have a lot of luggage you may need to use luggage forwarding services. These are economical and efficient - please speak to your leader if you need to get your baggage to another destination in Japan.

DAY PACK

A day pack for carrying essentials when exploring destinations, while on public transport as well as for any shorter overnight stays will be useful.

WATER BOTTLE

Cold tap water in Japan is generally safe and good to drink so you can avoid the purchase of bottled water by bringing your own bottle and refilling from the tap or public water fountains.

OTHER USEFUL THINGS TO TAKE

- reusable shopping bag for buying supplies for long journeys
- travel mug, cutlery, plate/bowl for preparing any self catered meals
- plastic lunch box for storing food & snacks
- slippers or flip flops
- torch/flashlight
- travel wipes
- small towel
- ear plugs & eye mask

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

- check weather in destinations you are travelling to online a few days before you go to make sure you pack appropriate clothing
- laundry facilities may not be available in all destinations, so make sure you have a few cycles of clothes to tide you over until your next chance to wash

WINTER

You will need to take into consideration the below freezing temperatures you are likely to encounter travelling in Japan in the winter months and ensure that you bring appropriate clothing for spending time outside in the elements:

- Hat
- Gloves or mittens
- Scarf
- Windproof, warm jacket or coat suitable for temperatures below zero (just a fleece will not be sufficient!)
- Warm socks
- Waterproof boots suitable for walking on snow and ice
- Thermals or clothing that can be easily layered
- Snow pants may be useful if you are planning to do any outdoor activities

In the northern area especially in Tohoku or Hokkaido where there will be heavy snow, it's important to have sturdy waterproof footwear that's suitable for snowy or icy conditions. You can also bring crampons or buy them in Japan which cost around 2000JPY.

Climate and seasonal information

PEAK TRAVEL TIMES

Please be aware that while travelling during major national holidays (late Apr to early May) and peak seasons in Japan (Apr-May/Sep-Oct) are fascinating and exciting times to travel, there are also some downsides. There will be huge crowds at most tourist attractions and on all public transport. It's common for there to be difficulties in securing train tickets at our usual preferred times, hotels become overbooked, traffic jams and changes to the itinerary without prior notice can be necessary. If you decide to travel during peak periods come with a sense of adventure and flexibility and we are sure that your experience will still be rewarding and memorable.

Group Leader

All group trips are accompanied by one of our group leader or local representative. The aim of the group leader or local representative is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. Intrepid endeavours to provide the services of an experienced group leader or local representative however, due to the seasonality of travel, rare situations may arise where your group leader or local representative is new to a particular region or training other group leader or local representative.

Your group leader or local representative will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense, you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the places visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious, and social aspects. At Intrepid we aim to support local guides who have specialised knowledge of the regions we visit. If you are interested in delving deeper into the local culture at a specific site or location then your group leader or local representative can recommend a local guide service in most of the main destinations of your trip.

Due to the rapid increase in tourism in Japan and in the lead up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics it has been necessary to go outside our traditional sources for employing tour leaders. As a result, our passionate, professional and trained tour leaders may either be Japanese or long term foreign residents in Japan.

Safety

Most national governments provide regularly updated foreign travel advice on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure and ensure that your travel insurance covers you for all destinations and activities on your trip. Please refer to our website's safety page for links to major travel advisories and updates on safety issues affecting our trips here: <https://www.intrepidtravel.com/travel-alerts>

We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe-keeping of your passport, flight tickets, cash and other valuable items. Leave your jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of our hotels have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage.

Your group leader or local representative will accompany you on all included activities, however, during your trip you'll have some free time to pursue your own interests or relax and take it easy. While your group leader or local representative will assist you with the available options in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your Intrepid itinerary, and Intrepid makes no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgement when selecting an activity in your free time. Please also note that your group leader or local representative has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it's deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

Intrepid's operational safety policies can be viewed on our website at the link below. We recommend that you take a moment to read through this information before travelling, and would appreciate any feedback on how safety is being managed on our trips.

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/safety-guidelines>

JAPAN

Crime levels are low. It is generally safe to walk around at night and to travel on public transport, but you should maintain the same level of vigilance as you would at home and take sensible precautions. Reports of inappropriate touching or 'chikan' of female passengers on commuter trains are fairly common. The police advise that you shout at the perpetrator to attract attention and ask a fellow passenger to call the train staff. The Roppongi entertainment district of Tokyo is considered a higher risk area for crime.

A couple of rules

We like to think our Intrepid travellers are all connected by a love of adventure and passion for seeing the world in a different way. We've laid down a few non-negotiable rules to ensure everyone feels connected, comfortable and safe on our trips.

We ask that you respect your fellow travellers, group leader or local representative, and local people and places we visit in all circumstances. We don't tolerate any forms of violence and expect that you follow the local laws, customs and regulations in any destination we travel to. Any behaviour contrary to the above, including any behaviour that prevents our staff from performing their duty of care or continuing the itinerary as planned, may result in travellers being removed from the trip.

If you consume alcohol while travelling, we encourage responsible drinking and expect you to abide by local alcohol laws.

To ensure the well-being of everyone on the trip, all decisions made by group leaders or local representatives and ground staff are final.

Romantic relationships between travellers and group leader or local representative are not permitted while on trip.

By travelling with us, you agree to comply with these rules and the laws and customs of all countries visited.

If something is concerning you during your travels with us, please speak to your group leader or local representative immediately. Alternatively, contact us on the emergency contact number detailed in your Essential Trip Information's Problems and Emergency Contact section.

Travelling on a group trip

As you travel on a group trip you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling in a group. Your fellow travellers will probably come from all corners of the world and likely a range of age groups too. We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group - patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting. We have found time and time again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well - this takes just a little effort on your part. Due to privacy reasons, we are unable to provide you with contact details and any personal information about your fellow travellers booked on your trip prior to departure.

SOLO TRAVELLERS

The beauty of our style of travel is that it caters to travellers who are travelling solo and who want to meet and share experiences with like-minded people.

On our trips rooming is organised on a twin-share basis. We pair up solo travellers with another traveller of the same gender as per the gender marker on each of their passports.

As a responsible tour operator, we strive to create a safe and inclusive environment for everyone. In the case that your gender identity differs from what is indicated on your passport, please contact us so that we can discuss rooming options with you.

We also have an optional single supplement available on most trips for travellers who prefer to have their own room. Please note that this only applies to accommodation during the tour. Pre-trip and post-trip accommodation booked through us will be on a single room basis.

On a small selection of itineraries some accommodations are booked on an open gender, multi-share basis (for example on a felucca in Egypt or an overnight train in Vietnam). In those instances it will clearly be stated in our Essential Trip Information prior to booking and travelling.

A Single Supplement to have your own room is not available to purchase on this trip due to hotels having limited number of rooms and the high demand on availability.

Travel insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all our trips for those travelling internationally. We require that at a minimum you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation. If you are travelling within your home country or region please confirm before travel that you are entitled to access the public medical system easily should an accident occur. We strongly recommend all travellers have a policy that also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage or personal effects. For international trips, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance and the insurance company's 24-hour emergency contact number has been sighted by your group leader or local representative.

If you have credit card insurance your group leader or local representative will require details of the participating insurer/underwriter, the level of coverage, policy number, and emergency contact number rather than the bank's name and your credit card details. Please contact your bank for these details prior to arriving in-country.

For travellers who reside within the European Union, Switzerland or USA the requirement to purchase travel insurance cannot be compulsory. However the purchase of travel insurance is still highly recommended, and travellers from these regions who decline travel insurance when travelling outside of their home region must sign a Travel Insurance Waiver Form at the Group Meeting, recognizing personal responsibility for emergency medical and repatriation costs should they arise.

For assistance with travel insurance or other services, please visit the link below:

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/booking-resources/our-services>

Responsible travel

Our Responsible Travel Policy outlines our commitment to preserving the environment, supporting local communities, protecting the vulnerable, and giving back to the places we travel. All our trip group leaders or local representatives, suppliers, and staff are trained on these principles and are core to us delivering sustainable, experience-rich travel.

Explore the different parts of our Responsible Travel Policy by visiting:

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/responsible-travel>

LOCAL CUSTOMS

It's always a good idea to learn something about local customs before you travel, and visiting Japan is no exception. Your leader will be on hand to guide you through cultural differences during your trip, but here are some tips to get you started: <https://www.intrepidtravel.com/adventures/etiquette-in-japan/>

CLOTHING

While Japan is known for its 'out there' fashions overall it is quite a conservative country. Please remember that we spend time at temples, working monasteries, holy shrines, recreated villages and castles, cooking schools and

ancient gardens. At these places it is important to be respectful to the staff and other visitors by wearing clothing that covers your shoulders and knees.

WHALE MEAT

We are big supporters of the protection of endangered species around the world. It is against our Responsible Travel policy for our leaders to take passengers to places that use cruel practices or supply or serve foods that are on the endangered species list, such as whale, turtle, tiger, bird's nests, pangolin and shark. Although a global ban on commercial whaling came into effect in 1986, approximately 1,000 whales are still being killed every year. We do not visit places that serve whale meat on any of our trips, nor will your leader guide you to where it is offered.

TATTOOS IN JAPAN:

Please note, decorative tattoos are uncommon in Japanese culture and therefore you may receive curious and sometimes disapproving looks from locals. Generally, nobody will make a comment about your tattoos but please endeavour to wear modest clothing and check rules for public onsens.

The Intrepid Foundation

We created our not-for-profit, the Intrepid Foundation because you – our travellers – told us you wanted to make an even greater impact in the communities you visit.

The Foundation works by teaming up with partners around the world so that together we can deliver greater positive impact at scale. Partners are identified by our local staff who live and work in our destinations. They harness their powerful community connections to determine the issues that matter most and select local partners who can deliver real solutions.

Since 2002, the Intrepid Foundation has raised more than \$14million dollars and supported more than 160 communities worldwide. Now, with over 40 partners all over the world, your donations are helping to restore forests in Kenya, empower women in Honduras and promote elephant welfare in Laos, to name just a few.

For more information about the Intrepid Foundation, please ask your group leader or local representative or visit our website: <http://www.theintrepidfoundation.org/>

This trip supports Eden Reforestation Projects, who are tackling climate change by restoring forests across the world; they also hire locally and create job opportunities within communities. Donations support restoration across planting sites in 10 countries, including Kenya and Nepal. Intrepid will double your impact by dollar-matching post-trip donations made to The Intrepid Foundation.

To find out more or make a donation, visit: <http://www.theintrepidfoundation.org/t/eden-reforestation-projects>