



HASTWELL
TRAVEL & CRUISE

Japan

Coast, Culture & Timeless Traditions

A 15 Day Cultural Journey from Hiroshima to Tokyo

8 - 22 May 2027

Hastwell Travel & Cruise - McLaren Vale & Frewville
McLaren Vale 301a Foggo Road, McLaren Vale, 5171
Ph: 8323 9922

Welcome to Japan

Coast, Culture & Timeless Traditions

Join your hosts, Marie Kimber and Vanessa Pellaschiar from Hastwell Travel & Cruise, on a small-group journey through Japan, designed to showcase the country's rich cultural heritage, natural beauty and modern contrasts.

This thoughtfully curated small group journey explores a quieter, more refined side of Japan, travelling through historic towns, coastal landscapes and culturally rich regions.

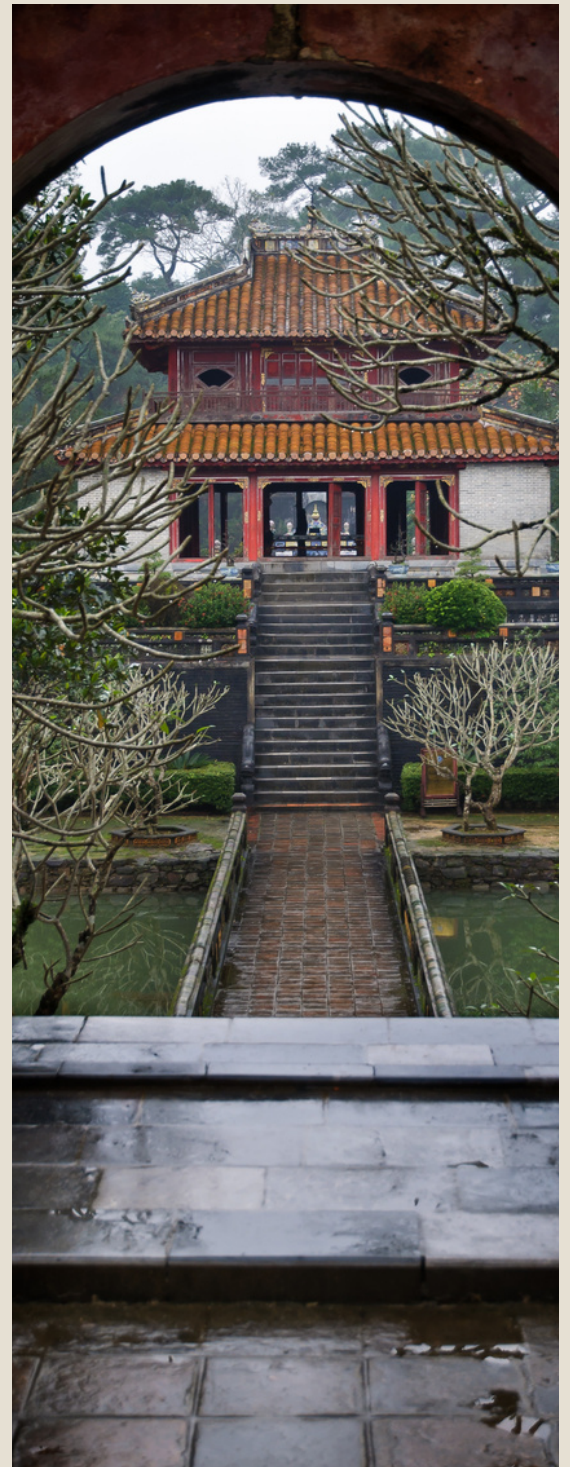
Beginning in Hiroshima and concluding in Tokyo, the itinerary blends iconic landmarks with lesser-visited areas, including the Kumano pilgrimage region and the Japanese Alps.

Over 15 days, the journey has been designed to balance immersive touring with time to pause and appreciate each destination. Extended stays in key locations allow for a more relaxed pace, offering the opportunity to connect with both place and culture.

Highlights include Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park, the sacred island of Miyajima and its iconic floating torii gate, the preserved canal district of Kurashiki, and a traditional onsen stay in the coastal town of Kii-Katsuura.

In the Kumano region, experience the spiritual landscape of ancient pilgrimage trails and the dramatic setting of Nachi Waterfall. Encounters with Japan's cultural heritage continue through traditional craft workshops, a tea ceremony and gold leaf artistry in Kanazawa.

The journey also includes time in Osaka and a visit to the historic city of Nara, where deer roam freely among temple grounds. In the Japanese Alps, visit Nagano — home to the famous snow monkeys — before continuing to Tokyo, where the journey concludes with a memorable farewell.



DAY 1 8 May – Welcome to Hiroshima

Overnight: Hiroshima (3 nights)

Hotel: Hiroshima Tokyu Rei Hotel - or similar



Arrive Hiroshima

Arrive in Hiroshima, where guests travelling on the group-arranged flights* will be met by our English-speaking guide and transferred by private 19-seater coach to the centrally located Hiroshima Tokyu REI Hotel.

Located in Hiroshima's vibrant Naka Ward, the hotel offers contemporary comfort and easy access to nearby dining precincts, shopping arcades and the city's key cultural landmarks.

A smooth and seamless introduction to our journey through Japan.

DAY 2 9 May – Hiroshima – History & Reflection

Overnight: Hiroshima (B, D)

Hotel: Hiroshima Tokyu Rei Hotel - or similar

Hiroshima City Tour

We meet our English-speaking guide and travel by our private coach to Hiroshima's most significant peace sites.

We visit the **UNESCO-listed Atomic Bomb Dome**, preserved as a powerful reminder of the events of 6 August 1945, before walking through the beautifully landscaped **Peace Memorial Park**, created in remembrance and dedicated to peace.

Our visit continues to the **Peace Memorial Museum**, where moving exhibits and personal stories offer meaningful insight into Hiroshima's history, remarkable recovery and enduring message to the world.

This afternoon is at leisure, with the opportunity to further explore Hiroshima. Optional highlights include **Hiroshima Castle**, offering insight into the city's feudal past, or the beautifully landscaped **Shukkei-en Garden**, one of Japan's most elegant traditional gardens.

This evening, gather for a Welcome Dinner with your hosts and fellow travellers.

Our centrally located Hiroshima Tokyu REI Hotel offers contemporary comfort with excellent nearby dining and easy access to key attractions.



DAY 3 10 May – Miyajima Island Excursion

Overnight: Hiroshima (B)

Hotel: Hiroshima Tokyu Rei Hotel - or similar

Miyajima Island



This morning we are transferred to the ferry terminal before boarding the ferry across Hiroshima Bay to **Miyajima Island**, one of Japan's most treasured cultural destinations.

We visit the magnificent **Itsukushima Shrine**, famous for its iconic floating **torii gate**, which appears to rise gracefully from the sea at high tide. Enjoy time for lunch and browsing along lively **Omotesando Street**, known for its artisan shops and local delicacies.

Later, we ride the **Mt Misen Ropeway**, gliding high above ancient forest canopy to reveal breathtaking panoramic views across the Seto Inland Sea, its scattered islands and, on clear days, as far as Hiroshima city beyond.

Return by ferry and our coach to Hiroshima for our final evening in this historic city.

DAY 4 11 May – Hiroshima to Okayama

Overnight: Okayama (B)

Hotel: Hotel Granvia Okayama - or similar

Kurashiki and Cultural Traditions

This morning we travel by coach to the beautifully preserved canal town of **Kurashiki**, one of Japan's most picturesque historic districts.

Enjoy time to explore the atmospheric **Bikan Historical Quarter**, where willow lined canals, white walled merchant storehouses and traditional artisan boutiques evoke the charm of old Japan. There will be free time to wander at leisure and enjoy lunch in this delightful heritage setting.

This afternoon, we take part in an **indigo dyeing experience**, offering a hands-on introduction to one of Japan's oldest textile traditions and the opportunity to create your own unique keepsake.

Later, continue by coach to Okayama and check in to Hotel Granvia Okayama, an elegant hotel offering refined comfort and excellent dining options.



DAY 5 12 May – Okayama to Kii Katsuura

Overnight: Kii Katsuura (3 nights) (B, D)
Hotel: Kamenoi Nachikatsuura - or similar
(Japanese style room)



Journey to the Kumano Coast

Today combines one of Japan's most iconic travel experiences with a scenic journey into the country's spiritual heartland.

Travel aboard the famous **Shinkansen bullet train** to Shin-Osaka before continuing by coach through forested mountains and dramatic coastal landscapes as we journey into the remote **Kumano** region.

Arrive in the seaside town of **Kii-Katsuura**, where we check in to Kamenoi Nachikatsuura, a traditional **Japanese-style ryokan** overlooking the bay.

This memorable stay offers an authentic introduction to Japan's renowned **onsen culture**, where naturally **mineral-rich thermal baths** have been enjoyed for centuries for their restorative and deeply relaxing qualities.

Tonight's included dinner showcases beautifully prepared regional specialties, completing this uniquely Japanese experience.

DAY 6 13 May – Kii Katsuura (Kumano Area)

Overnight: Kii Katsuura (B, L, D)
Hotel: Kamenoi Nachikatsuura - or similar (Japanese style room)

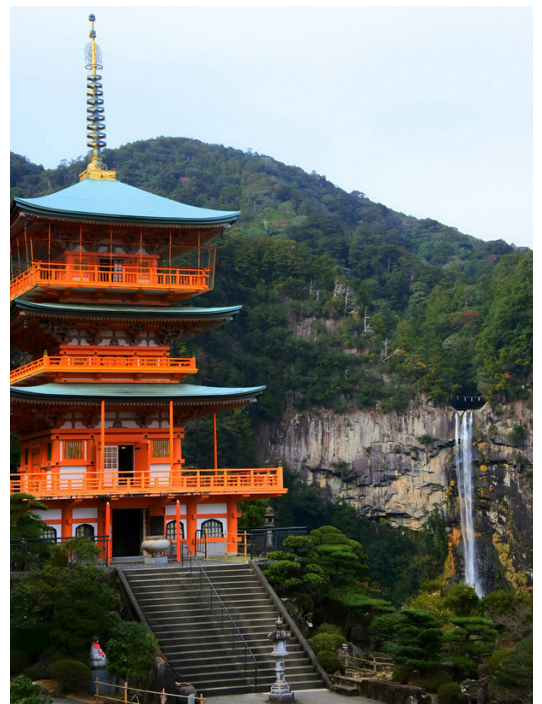
Sacred Kumano Region

Today we journey into the sacred UNESCO-listed Kumano region, one of Japan's most spiritually significant landscapes.

Our guide takes us on a walk of a section of the ancient **Daimonzaka pilgrimage trail**, where towering cedar trees and moss-covered stone pathways create an atmospheric introduction to this historic route, once travelled by emperors and pilgrims for centuries.

We continue to **Kumano Nachi Taisha Shrine** and neighbouring **Seiganto-ji Temple**, before standing before the majestic **Nachi Waterfall**, Japan's tallest single-drop waterfall, dramatically framed by forested mountains.

Lunch is included today, along with a beautifully prepared dinner at our traditional ryokan to complete this deeply immersive cultural day. There will be time, too, to relax in the property's restorative natural hot spring baths.



DAY 7 14 May – Kii Katsuura

Overnight: Kii Katsuura (B, L, D)

Hotel: Kamenoi Nachikatsuura - or similar
(Japanese style room)



Coastal Life & Scenic Cruising

Today offers a relaxed opportunity to experience the coastal traditions and natural beauty of this unique seaside region.

We begin with a visit to the lively **Katsuura Port Market**, renowned throughout Japan for its exceptional tuna and authentic local atmosphere, offering insight into the town's long-standing fishing heritage.

Later, we board the **Ki-no-Matsushima coastal cruise**, gliding past dramatic rock formations, rugged sea cliffs and picturesque offshore islands that make this stretch of coastline one of the region's hidden scenic treasures.

The afternoon is at leisure — perhaps revisit the ryokan's restorative natural hot spring baths or simply relax and embrace the peaceful rhythm of this coastal setting.

This evening, enjoy another beautifully prepared included dinner showcasing regional flavours at our traditional ryokan.

DAY 8 15 May – Kii Katsuura to Osaka

Overnight: Osaka (3 nights) (B)

Hotel: Osaka Excel Hotel Tokyu - or similar

Arrival in Osaka

Meeting our guide and driver, we depart the tranquil Kumano Coast and travel by coach to dynamic **Osaka**, where the pace shifts dramatically from peaceful coastal landscapes to one of Japan's most vibrant urban centres.

On arrival, enjoy time to explore the lively **Dotonbori district**, famous for its dazzling neon lights, giant animated billboards and energetic atmosphere.

Known as "**Japan's Kitchen**," Osaka is celebrated for its exceptional food culture, and this iconic precinct offers the perfect opportunity to sample local specialties while soaking up the city's unmistakable energy.

Later, we transfer to Osaka Excel Hotel Tokyu, a stylish contemporary hotel ideally positioned in the heart of the city, surrounded by exceptional dining, shopping and entertainment.



DAY 9 16 May – Nara Day Trip

Overnight: Osaka (B, D)

Hotel: Osaka Excel Hotel Tokyu - or similar



Nara Heritage

Today we explore **Nara**, Japan's first permanent capital and one of the country's most culturally significant historic centres.

We visit magnificent **Todai-ji Temple**, home to the colossal Great Buddha, one of Japan's most remarkable bronze statues and an enduring symbol of the nation's Buddhist heritage.

Wander through **Nara Deer Park**, where sacred deer roam freely among temple grounds, creating one of Japan's most memorable and uniquely charming cultural experiences.

Later, we explore historic **Naramachi**, known for its preserved merchant houses, traditional tea houses and local sweet shops, before returning to Osaka for the evening.

DAY 10 17 May – Osaka at Leisure

Overnight: Osaka (B)

Hotel: Osaka Excel Hotel Tokyu - or similar

Osaka - Free Day

Today is yours to experience Osaka at your own pace — an opportunity to tailor the day to your own interests and discover more of this dynamic city.

You may choose to visit **Osaka Castle**, one of Japan's most celebrated historic landmarks, offering fascinating insight into Japan's rich samurai history and beautifully landscaped grounds overlooking the modern city skyline, explore the city's **renowned shopping precincts**, wander its colourful neighbourhoods or continue sampling the **exceptional culinary experiences** that have earned Osaka its reputation as Japan's food capital.

Or perhaps simply enjoy a leisurely sleep-in followed by brunch at the hotel's elegant 17th floor restaurant, where chef-crafted dishes are served in a sunlit space overlooking Midosuji Avenue.



DAY 11 18 May – Osaka to Kanazawa

Overnight: Kanazawa (2 nights) (B, L)

Hotel: Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel - or similar



Gardens & Traditions

This morning we meet our guide and driver and transfer to the station. We travel by limited express rail before connecting to Japan's iconic **Shinkansen bullet train** for the journey to **Kanazawa**, a city celebrated for its beautifully preserved cultural heritage.

We will enjoy lunch before visiting **Kenroku-en Garden**, regarded as one of Japan's three most celebrated landscape gardens. Designed to be enjoyed in every season, its carefully balanced ponds, pathways and sculpted greenery create a setting of exceptional tranquillity and beauty.

Later, experience a **traditional tea ceremony** in the elegant surrounds of **Gyokusen-en Garden**, offering a graceful introduction to one of Japan's most enduring cultural rituals.

Tonight we stay at Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel, a refined and centrally located hotel within easy reach of Kanazawa's historic districts and renowned local dining scene.

DAY 12 19 May – Kanazawa City Tour

Overnight: Kanazawa (B)

Hotel: Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel - or similar

Samurai & Artisan Heritage

Today, we are introduced to beautifully preserved cultural districts and long standing artisan traditions, as we travel by our coach to **Kanazawa**.

We begin in the historic **Higashi Chaya District**, where traditional wooden teahouses line narrow streets, offering a glimpse into the elegance of old Japan and the city's **geisha heritage**.

Continue to lively **Omicho Market**, renowned for fresh regional produce and seafood, before visiting the atmospheric **Nagamachi Samurai District**, where preserved residences provide fascinating insight into the lives of Japan's warrior class.

This afternoon, we enjoy a **gold leaf crafting experience**, a hands-on introduction to one of Kanazawa's most celebrated artisan traditions, as the city produces the vast majority of Japan's gold leaf.

Return to Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel or similar for another evening in this elegant and culturally rich city.



DAY 13 20 May – Kanazawa to Nagano

Overnight: Nagano (B, L)

Hotel: Nagano Tokyu REI Hotel - or similar



Japanese Alps & Snow Monkeys

This morning, we witness the breathtaking scenery of the **Japanese Alps**, where mountain landscapes and alpine villages create one of Japan's most picturesque regions.

With our guide, we visit historic **Zenko-ji Temple**, one of Japan's most important and revered Buddhist temples, offering insight into centuries of spiritual tradition.

Later, we continue to **Jigokudani Snow Monkey Park**, one of Japan's most famous wildlife viewing experiences. Set within a natural mountain valley, this remarkable park is home to wild Japanese macaques that roam freely in their natural habitat and are best known for gathering in the area's natural hot springs during colder weather.

Tonight, we stay at Nagano Tokyu REI Hotel, a modern and comfortable hotel conveniently located within easy reach of local dining.

DAY 14 21 May – Nagano to Tokyo

Overnight: Tokyo (B, D)

Hotel: Hotel MONday Akihabara Asakusa-bashi - or similar

Tokyo Highlights & Farewell

This morning, we meet our guide and driver and transfer to Nagano station. We board Japan's iconic Shinkansen bullet train for the exhilarating journey to **Tokyo**, a fitting final rail experience as our journey moves from alpine landscapes to the vibrant energy of Japan's capital.

Arriving in Tokyo, we begin at the **Imperial Palace** precinct, offering a glimpse into Japan's imperial heritage, before continuing to atmospheric **Asakusa**, home to **Senso-ji Temple**, Tokyo's oldest and most revered Buddhist temple.

Stroll along lively **Nakamise Street**, lined with traditional stalls and local treats, before ascending **Tokyo Skytree**, where breathtaking panoramic views stretch across the vast city skyline.

Tonight, we stay at Hotel MONday Akihabara Asakusabashi, a hand picked, contemporary hotel in one of Tokyo's most well connected districts, before gathering for our included Farewell Dinner — a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the remarkable experiences shared throughout the journey.



DAY 15 22 May – Tokyo Departure

(B)



Depart Tokyo

We can enjoy a relaxed morning after breakfast at the hotel, with time at leisure before our onward journey.

Depending on your departure time, you may choose to take a final stroll, enjoy a quiet coffee or revisit a favourite nearby spot before transferring to the airport.

Meet Your Tour Hosts

Marie Kimber

Marie (like Calamari) is passionate about bringing people together through travel. Her small group tours focus on authentic experiences and beautiful destinations, creating memorable journeys shared with fellow travellers who enjoy discovering places properly. A published travel writer, Marie is happiest when exploring new destinations — and even happier when sharing them with others.

"Pack curiosity, bring a sense of humour, and see where the journey takes you."



Vanessa Pellaschiar

Vanessa's love of travel truly began at an early age, and she has been fortunate to explore many incredible destinations. From hosting small group tours to creating custom itineraries, Vanessa enjoys sharing journeys with guests that leave lasting memories and bring the joy of travel to life.

"Travel is meant to be enjoyed – explore endlessly and treasure every moment along the way."



Your Fully Escorted Journey Includes

- ✓ Small group touring
- ✓ 14 nights' accommodation in quality 3 and 4-star hotels, in non-smoking rooms, including 3 nights in a traditional Japanese onsen hotel
- ✓ Daily breakfasts, 4 lunches and 6 dinners as detailed in the itinerary
- ✓ English-speaking guide throughout the tour
- ✓ Private 19-seat vehicle and dedicated transport throughout
- ✓ Convenient luggage forwarding between key destinations
- ✓ Train and ferry journeys as listed, including Japan's iconic bullet trains
- ✓ Entrance fees to all included sightseeing and attractions
- ✓ Group airport transfer on Day 1 for travellers arriving with the group*

**Applicable only to travellers arriving on the designated group arrival. Airport transfers are not included for alternate arrival arrangements.*



Sightseeing Highlights

- **Hiroshima** – visit the Atomic Bomb Dome, Peace Memorial Park and Museum
- **Miyajima Island** – see the iconic Itsukushima Shrine and floating Torii Gate
- **Miyajima Island** – ride the Mt Misen Ropeway for spectacular island views
- **Kurashiki** – wander the historic canal district and enjoy a traditional Indigo Dye Experience
- **Kii-Katsuura** – stay in a traditional hot spring onsen hotel
- **Kii-Katsuura** – visit the lively tuna market and enjoy a scenic coastal cruise
- **Kumano Area** – stroll the ancient Daimonzaka section of the Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage Trail
- **Kumano Area** – visit the magnificent Nachi Waterfall and Nachi Taisha Shrine
- **Osaka** – enjoy sightseeing and lunch in vibrant Dotonbori
- **Nara** – meet the free-roaming deer and visit Todai-ji Temple
- **Kanazawa** – participate in a traditional Gyokusen-en Tea Ceremony
- **Kanazawa** – discover the Higashi Chaya Geisha District
- **Kanazawa** – experience a traditional Gold Leaf Workshop
- **Nagano** – visit Jigokudani Snow Monkey Park, home to Japan's famous bathing snow monkeys
- **Tokyo** – visit the Imperial Palace and take in spectacular panoramic views from Tokyo Skytree
- **Tokyo** – enjoy a farewell evening overlooking the dazzling city skyline

15 DAYS FULLY ESCORTED \$8,878 per person (Twin Share)
Single supplement \$1,800

A deposit of \$1,000 is required within 7 days of booking.

A second payment of \$1,000 is to be made by Monday 9th November 2026, with the final balance due by Monday 8th February, 2027.

A quote will be provided for airfares once group numbers are established. Payment for airfares will be required in full at the time of booking.

Please contact us for a travel insurance quote.

To reserve your place or discuss this unforgettable tour, contact:

Marie Kimber

0408 083 880

marie@hastwelltravel.com.au

Vanessa Pellaschiar

0403 226 329

vanessa@hastwelltravel.com.au

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* Terms & Conditions Apply. Itinerary is subject to change. Price includes accommodation, meals and activities as per itinerary. International flights are not included in the tour price. Travel insurance is compulsory to participate in the tour. Price is subject to minimum numbers being met. Contact Hastwell Travel & Cruise for full Terms and Conditions.