SIGNATURE JOURNEY

Discover Corps

*Unforgettable Vacations With Purpose*

FAMILY TRAVEL ASSOCIATION MEMBER

# **JAPAN**: CULTURAL ODYSSEY

*Experience Japan, a place where modern life is infused with ancient traditions on this cultural exploration.*

## MOMENTS THAT MATTER:

- Experience the dazzling lights and sounds of the famous Shibuya Crossing in Tokyo
- Go behind the scenes in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony and learn about the cultural significance of this ancient tradition
- Take a class in sushi-making and the ancient art of calligraphy
- Uncover the traditional gardens of the Golden Pavilion in Kyoto
- Stay in a traditional Japanese “ryokan” style inn

## TRIP AT A GLANCE

### TOKYO

**Day 1** - Arrive in Tokyo and enjoy a delicious welcome dinner with your guide.

**Day 2** - Visit the Sensoji Temple and enjoy a bird's-eye-view over Tokyo from the Sky Tree. Dine with Sumo Wrestlers in the evening.

**Day 3** - Explore Tsukiji Fish Market, learn to make sushi and visit the world-famous Shibuya Crossing.

### HAKONE

**Day 4** - Visit Mt. Fuji National Park and stay in a traditional Japanese ryokan.

### KYOTO & WAZUKA

**Day 5** - Board the bullet train to Kyoto, visit the Imperial Palace before a Samurai and Ninja experience.

**Day 6** - Hike through tea plantations and learn more about Japanese tea culture as you experience a traditional tea ceremony and tea tastings. Experience a calligraphy lesson in the evening.

**Day 7** - Visit Arashiyama Park, take a rickshaw ride through a bamboo forest and settle-into a Zen Meditation experience at a local temple. Enjoy a memorable Farewell Dinner tonight.

**Day 8** - Return home

# **JAPAN:** CULTURAL ODYSSEY

## OUR PURPOSE

Discover Japan's unique culture and experience first-hand the values and traditions practiced across the country. Over a sushi-making and calligraphy class, learn how Tokyo changed from a small fishing village into the largest metropolis in the world, and how the influence of Japanese culture has spread across the globe. By going behind the scenes and meeting those who call Japan home, you'll get an up-close look into modern day Japan.

Over the course of this eight day adventure, you'll take in the sensory overload of the capital, Tokyo, marvel at the beauty of Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park, and soak up the history of one-time imperial capital, Kyoto. You'll also visit the relaxing tea fields of Wazuka, explore Arashiyama and enjoy unforgettable views of Mt. Fuji.

Japan is known for its collision of the modern and traditional. Find yourself one day experiencing the sights and sounds of Shibuya Crossing in Tokyo, and another taking in the city from the Sky Tree, the tallest tower in the world. Departing Tokyo, you'll board a cutting-edge bullet train, only to end up in Kyoto, the ancient former capital famous for its temples, shrines, and the glittering Golden Pavilion.

# HIGHLIGHTS

## FUJI-HAKONE-IZU NATIONAL PARK

Mt. Fuji is the highest peak in Japan and is perhaps the most recognizable symbol of the country. It's an active volcano (don't worry – it last erupted in 1707), a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the most climbed mountain in the world. In Japanese culture, the peak is seen as a place of good fortune, because people are said to feel instantly calm and relaxed when they see it.

## THE GOLDEN PAVILION

The Golden Pavilion at the Kinkaku-ji Zen Buddhist Temple is an icon of Kyoto and one of Japan's most beautiful buildings. The top two stories of the three-story structure are covered with pure gold leaf, said to purify negative thoughts and feelings towards death. The pavilion is surrounded by a magnificent Japanese strolling garden, and the sight of its golden tiers reflecting off the surrounding pond is surely one of the most beautiful sights in all of Japan.

## SUSHI MAKING

Sushi is not merely a dish in Japan, but a culinary art form deeply tied to the country's rich history, starting as a ancient method of preserving fish in fermented rice and evolving into a globally recognized symbol of Japanese culture. It embodies the core philosophical principles of Japanese cuisine (washoku), prioritizing seasonality, precise knife craftsmanship, and an unyielding dedication to highlighting the natural flavors of high-quality, fresh ingredients. Work alongside an accomplished sushi master to learn this ancient (and tasty!) art.

## SAMURAI & NINJA EXPERIENCE IN NAKAGYO

Dive deep into Japanese Samurai and Ninja culture as you learn more about their history, examples of their wardrobes and weapons, and more. Get hands-on as you learn to throw a Japanese throwing star, dress in traditional Samurai garb, and even get a blow-dart shooting lesson (with rubber versions, of course!). This experience is wonderful for kids and adults alike.

# ITINERARY

## **DAY 1:** Arrive in Tokyo and Enjoy a Welcome Dinner Together

Arrive in Tokyo and settle-in to your hotel located in the traditional Asakusa neighborhood of city. Enjoy a tasty Welcome Dinner with the group before a peaceful night to relax and prepare for the journey ahead. *(D)*

## **DAY 2:** Visit the Sensoji Temple and Take in the Views of Tokyo from the Sky Tree

This morning we'll stroll around the quaint streets of Asakusa, an area known for its history as well as craft shops and traditional culture. We'll learn about Buddhism at the Sensoji Temple before learning to make miniature versions of famous Japanese food - a truly quintessential experience in Tokyo!

Enjoy lunch together before taking in the stunning views of Tokyo from the Sky Tree, the world's largest tower. After some free time in the afternoon, head to a special dinner that features a Sumo Wrestling experience. *(B,L,D)*

## **DAY 3:** Venture to the Tsukiji Fish Market and take a Sushi Making Class

An early start sees us visiting the bustling Tsukiji Fish Market before a sushi-making class with a master chef – followed by a delicious sushi lunch! Afterwards, we'll wander through the forest to the serene Meiji Shrine before heading to the world-famous Shibuya Crossing. Enjoy some free time to shop or simply explore along with a free dinner this evening. *(B,L)*

## **DAY 4:** Marvel at Mt. Fuji and Relax in Hot Springs

Today we'll take a bullet train to visit the Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park and enjoy views of Mt. Fuji, an iconic volcano that has come to symbolize Japan. Take a series of cars and mountain railways through the park before descending for a boat ride on scenic Ashi Lake. In the afternoon, settle-in to your ryokan, a traditional Japanese inn, and enjoy an optional visit to the ryokan's onsen, or Japanese hot spring. *(B,D)*

## **DAY 5:** Board a Bullet Train from Hakone to Kyoto and Visit the Golden Pavilion

Zooming across the country on a bullet train, we'll arrive at the ancient city of Kyoto. Visit Kyoto's stunning Imperial Palace before a Samurai and Ninja experience. Learn about Ninja culture and learn to throw Japanese throwing stars. Enjoy a relaxing dinner in Kyoto tonight. *(B,D)*

## **DAY 6:** Venture outside Kyoto and Experience a Traditional Tea Ceremony

The morning will be spent outside of the city in the quaint town of Wazuka. Known for its association with Japanese tea culture, go behind-the-scenes to learn from the locals more about what it takes to produce Japanese tea and why this is so important to Japanese culture. Experience a tea ceremony, tea tastings, and learn how to master the art of latte art. Afterwards, head back to Kyoto for a private calligraphy lesson with a local artist. Take time to explore Kyoto in the evening and enjoy dinner on your own. *(B,L)*

## **DAY 7:** Bamboo Forest & Meditation

Navigate on a rickshaw through the lush bamboo forests to Arashiyama Park with panoramic views of Kyoto. Afterwards, take a rickshaw ride through Kyoto's iconic bamboo forest. Enjoy a free lunch before heading to the historic Daisenin Temple for a Zen meditation class with a Buddhist monk - a fantastic opportunity to learn about Japanese Buddhism. In the evening, enjoy a memorable Farewell Dinner together in Kyoto's historic Gion neighborhood. *(B,D)*

## **DAY 8:** Return Home

After breakfast, you'll board an airport limousine bus to Osaka Kansai Airport to fly home. For anyone looking to depart from Tokyo, a bullet train supplement can be purchased. *(B)*

## STANDARD LODGING

In Tokyo we'll stay in a 4-star hotel in the historic Asakusa neighborhood, walking distance to some of the city's most popular locales. Enjoy Japanese hospitality and the best of Tokyo at your doorstep. In Hakone, we'll get a true feel for Japanese culture while staying one night in a ryokan (left), a traditional Japanese inn where guests sleep on futon beds laid over tatami mat floors. In Kyoto, we'll enjoy a 4-star hotel with a tranquil Japanese design.

*Please note that the exact properties are subject to change.*

# JAPAN: CULTURAL ODYSSEY

SIGNATURE JOURNEY

8 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

## PRICING

**ADULT: $5,595** **CHILD: $5,395**

*The above prices reflect the price of double occupancy. Single Room Supplements (SRS) are $895 per person. This will guarantee you your own, single occupancy room for the entirety of the trip. If you are a solo traveler and would like us to match you with a roommate of the same gender, please book as double occupancy. Child prices apply to those 16 years younger sharing a room with an adult.*

***SEE WEBSITE FOR CURRENT LIST OF DEPARTURE DATES***

## RECOMMENDED FOR

- Adults & children ages 8+
- Travelers who are comfortable with EASY physical activity

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 7 nights double occupancy lodging in 4-star hotels & ryokans
- Most meals throughout the trip
- English-speaking local guides that are there to support, guide, and inform you throughout the trip
- Admissions and entrance fees to national parks, historic sites and other scheduled events throughout the trip
- All in-country transportation during the trip. Includes combination of bullet trains, local subway and private car.
- $50,000 emergency medical evacuation insurance
- Trip literature and support from Discover Corps
- Turnkey customer support from preparing for your trip to arrival back home

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Tips for the Discover Corps Guide and Driver
- 3 lunches & 2 dinner
- International airfare
- Alcoholic beverages
- Optional bullet train supplement back to Tokyo - Day 8
- Laundry and phone services

## RESERVE YOUR TRIP TODAY

Trips are limited to 16 travelers and do fill. Reserving a trip with Discover Corps is easy. Simply visit our website and fill out the online registration form and pay a $365 deposit and $30 non-refundable booking fee per person. If you have any questions or would like to speak to a Travel Specialist, call/text us at (619) 758-3030 or e-mail us at info@discovercorps.com

## CUSTOM / PRIVATE GROUPS

Have a group of 6 or more? We can operate a trip for your group. Whether it's a family reunion, corporate group, alumni association or a professional or student organization, we'll make it easy and turnkey for your group to have an incredible experience.

## RETURNING ALUMNI?

We like to reward those who travel with us again and again. Enjoy a $250 discount off our trip if you are a returning Discover Corps traveler.

## PAYMENT PLANS

Discover Corps offers monthly payment plan options for all of our trips. Contact us anytime, before or after booking, to sign up for a monthly payment plan or with any questions:

Although unlikely, prices, dates, and accommodations subject to change with a 60 day notice from Discover Corps.

# Our Mission

Discover Corps' mission is to inspire travelers to become advocates for our planet's natural wonders, cultural treasures, and local communities through immersive and sustainable travel experiences.

Certified B Corporation

## OUR DESTINATIONS

- ALASKA
- AUSTRALIA
- BALI
- BAJA
- BHUTAN
- CHILE
- COSTA RICA
- CUBA
- EGYPT
- GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS
- GREECE
- GUATEMALA
- JAMAICA
- JAPAN
- KENYA
- MOROCCO
- OAXACA
- PERU
- SOUTH AFRICA
- TANZANIA
- THAILAND
- UGANDA
- VIETNAM

FAMILY FRIENDLY ~ SMALL GROUPS ~ POSITIVE LOCAL IMPACT ~ DISTINCTIVE LODGING ~ HANDPICKED GUIDES

Discover Corps
*Unforgettable Vacations With Purpose*

**Visit discovercorps.com/register to place a $395 deposit to hold your space, or reach out to us at the contact information below with questions.**

info@discovercorps.com @discovercorps 619.758.3030